Dear Colleagues,

Watersheds are gaining significant prominence as an important scale to address water quality and quantity issues for the future. For example, the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) provides funding for projects that utilize a watershed scale as a mechanism to address non-point source pollution and the adoption of Best Management Practices (BMPs). Watersheds provide an important ecologically relevant scale for research, outreach, and other efforts to address issues of water quality and quantity, especially for growing populations. However, watershed-based management also presents many challenges, for example, watershed boundaries do not adhere to political boundaries or jurisdictions, and management in such settings often involves collaboration among competing interests and overlapping regulatory directives. For successful collaborations, an accurate understanding of the resource is essential, and using the geo-spatial framework of a watershed to frame research and analyses facilitates the development of analytical techniques that can more clearly address growing threats to water quality, such as non-point source pollution (NPS), within bounded systems. Similarly, a constituent’s attitudes towards water issues, attachment to place, and other important social factors affecting the management of water resources are well understood at a watershed scale. This Special Issue of Water is designed to contribute to the growing body of literature that focuses on the watershed scale as a mechanism to address threats to water quality, as well as serve as effective vectors for water stewardship and conservation. The information and analyses are intended to contribute to a better understanding of how we can utilize the watershed scale framework to protect our water resources around the globe and into the future.

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- watershed protection
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- policy

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