

Gulf Future

Restore the Gulf * Defend our communities * Create a clean future

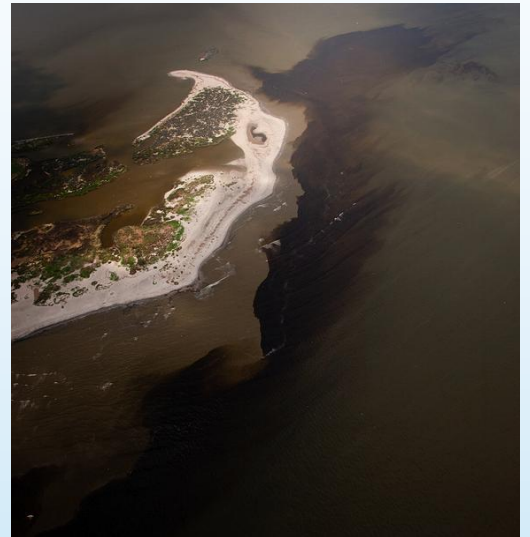
A Unified Action Plan for a Healthy Gulf

One year after it first began, BP's oil drilling disaster is not over. America's Gulf Coast is still suffering, and we need the support of the nation for a full and fair recovery. This is an on-going environmental and humanitarian crisis. BP's crude and toxic dispersants continue to impact the Gulf of Mexico and the Gulf Coast, poisoning people, killing wildlife, threatening ecosystems, and putting fishermen and tourism workers out of jobs.

After a full year, Congress and the federal government have yet to adequately act to restore and protect the Gulf, and BP is working to minimize their liability and the perception of the severity of their disaster's impacts.

All along the Gulf Coast, however, communities, citizens, and non-profit organizations are coming together to address the crisis and restore our Gulf. We are a diverse group made up of fishermen, faith leaders, environmentalists, clean-up workers, and residents who live, work, and play on the Gulf Coast. We come from all five Gulf Coast states, and represent culturally and racially diverse communities.

We've all been impacted by the BP oil disaster, and together, we have come up with a way forward. This is the *Gulf Future: A Unified Action Plan for a Healthy Gulf*. Divided into four areas of concern, marine restoration and resiliency, coastal restoration and resiliency, community recovery and resiliency, and public health, this plan represents our immediate goals—including specific demands of Congress, federal agencies, and the Obama administration—for a healthy and whole Gulf Coast. In the coming weeks and months, we will work together to realize these goals.





Costal Restoration and Resiliency

80% of Clean Water Act fines resulting from the BP drilling disaster must be directed to ecosystem restoration in the Gulf coast.

Federal and state restoration plans must support ecosystem and science-based strategies to increase ecological and community resiliency and sustainability. These strategies must:

- Have measurable objectives that address root causes of degradation and injury.
- Include a set of priorities on how to implement restoration projects, a timeline for implementation, and a process to evaluate their ecological effectiveness following implementation.
- Incorporate stakeholder input in the decision-making process.

All Gulf restoration efforts must have a governing structure to direct restoration efforts across agencies.

Congress must act now to ensure the **Natural Resource Damage Assessment process is fully funded.**

Please visit <http://gulffuture.org> for a restoration project decision matrix.

Marine Restoration and Resiliency

To provide that injury to the marine environment of the Gulf is fully assessed, we must ensure that (1) the Ecosystem Restoration Task Force strategy is **comprehensive** (e.g. includes marine considerations), **thorough, transparent, and participatory**; (2) that the **NRDA process fully assesses damage** to the marine environment; (3) there is funding for independent scientific research, and there is **ongoing monitoring and assessment of damage and restoration progress.**

When future spills occur, **local residents must be provided with access to impacted areas**, allowing citizens and local officials' oversight of the response by responsible parties and the government.

The administration and Congress must take action now to **implement the Oil Spill Commission recommendations**, including the creation of a **Regional Citizens Advisory Council** to oversee future oil and gas activity in the Gulf, and **prohibit the use of dispersant until found to be safe to the marine environment.**



Community Recovery and Resiliency

State and Federal government must build a shared resilience strategy for all communities to self-determine and **engage in a meaningful way** in the recovery of the Gulf Coast.

- Create a formal **Community Advisory Mechanism** that will contribute toward building resilient Gulf communities and a sustainable economy.
- Create and sustain **community-based capacity** to mitigate and respond to incidents.

State and Federal government must **create a sustainable and diverse economy** by Gulf States leading the nation in incentives and **investment in renewable energy industries**.

- Ensure **local communities can compete for jobs** in this new economy by providing education, training and workforce development and giving preferences to utilizing and benefiting local workers, businesses and institutions.
- Restoration legislation must foster **innovative collaborations for economic diversification**, equitable and sustainable economic growth, and new career pathways connected to Gulf Coast restoration, science, and monitoring.

Public Health

Affordable, accessible health care must be made available at the county/parish level provided by well-trained medical professionals who understand chemical exposure issues.

- **Educate healthcare providers** and the public on oil-spill related illnesses addressing both physical and mental health impacts.
- **Track health impacts** and illnesses through government studies and community efforts.
- **Secure affordable, accessible, and quality healthcare** by opening community clinics, holding health fairs, and requesting emergency clinics.

We must have an **integrated environmental assessment program** that monitors health and ecosystem risks in Gulf for ten years.

- **Long-term monitoring** of water, soil, air, and biota for oil-spill related contaminants by relevant state and federal agencies that addresses current gaps and is informed by community concerns.
- **Public clearinghouse of environmental data** that includes agency monitoring and studies, academic research, community testing, and NRDA studies/results.
- **Training and certification** of Gulf Coast **residents** to conduct environmental **monitoring**.
- **Independent review** of the safety of dispersant chemicals and other oil treatments.

We must establish **new comprehensive federal monitoring standards** that guarantee **safety of seafood** eaten in quantities typical of Gulf Coast populations.

- **Independent scientific review of FDA** Gulf seafood safety **assessment** methods.
- **Revised standards** for contaminant levels in Gulf seafood that **protect vulnerable populations** and reflect the full spectrum of oil-spill related contaminants (including metals and oil-range-organics).
- **Long-term seafood monitoring** program of state and federal waters.
- Revised **education and outreach materials** that identify and inform vulnerable populations.

We support this action plan:

Advocates for Environmental
 Human Rights
 Alabama Rivers Alliance
 Apalachicola Riverkeeper
 Asian Americans for Change
 Bayou Healers
 Bayou Interfaith Shared
 Community Organizing
 Boat People SOS
 Citizens League for
 Environmental Action Now
 Clean Water Network of Florida
 Emerald Coastkeeper
 Galveston Baykeeper
 Guardians of the Gulf
 Gulf Coast Fund
 Gulf Islands Conservancy
 Gulf Restoration Network
 Immaculate Heart Community
 Development Corporation
 Louisiana Bucket Brigade
 Louisiana Environmental Action
 Network
 Lower Mississippi Riverkeeper
 Mary Queen of Vietnam
 Community Development
 Corporation
 Mercy Housing & Human
 Development



Mississippi Center for Justice
 Mississippi Coalition for Vietnamese-
 American Fisherfolks and Families
 Mobile Baykeeper
 On Wings of Care
 Oxfam
 Robert F. Kennedy Center for
 Justice and Human Rights
 Sierra Club
 South Bay Communities Alliance
 Southern Mutual Help
 Association
 Southwings
 South Walton Community
 Council
 Steps Coalition
 Surfrider Foundation
 TEJAS
 Turkey Creek Community
 Initiative

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