



WUR Student  
Challenges

Nature-based  
**Future**  
Challenges

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Future Challenge!

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## What is happening in the Delta?

The area faces **significant challenges**, including a 33% poverty rate, ongoing racial and economic inequalities, and limited access to healthcare and education for residents.







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## Unemployment and population shifts

Significant **changes to traditional industries** such as farming, manufacturing, and fishing, have led to unemployment and population shifts **challenging communities across the region**





## The “Cancer Alley”

**Economic and environmental concerns** related to the proliferation of **petrochemical plants** along the river, often referred to as "Cancer Alley", are significant. These facilities release toxic chemicals into the environment posing **significant health risks to nearby communities**, which are often low-income and predominantly African American.







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## The effect of climate change on the

This is in addition to other **critical environmental concerns** such as rapid wetland loss, significant coastal erosion and habitat change, and water quality issues.

Climate change **amplifies** these challenges by increasing the frequency and magnitude of extreme weather events including hurricanes and, in recent years, droughts and wildfires.







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## How can Nature-based solutions contribute?

Nature-based solutions can play a crucial role in addressing these challenges, particularly when implemented as part of a comprehensive regional strategy.

By harnessing **the power of natural processes**, these solutions can help **restore** wetlands and coastal habitats, **reduce** land loss and **enhance** flood risk reduction efforts. These approaches also contribute to **climate resilience** by absorbing storm surges and sequestering carbon.





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## What to strive for?

With petrochemical and other industries likely to remain a significant presence in the region, **nature-based solutions** can be designed to work alongside and mitigate the impacts of these industries and contribute to **improved quality of life** for delta residents.

A regional approach can create **new economic opportunities and green jobs**, potentially diversifying the local economy and reducing dependence on polluting industries.





**We invite researchers to envision nature-based solutions that can transform the Mississippi Delta.**

**How will you contribute to creating a more sustainable and resilient future?**

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