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## **The Worst Environmental Disaster in US History? How long will we pay for the Deepwater Horizon disaster?**

On the 20<sup>th</sup> of April 2010 the explosion of the Deepwater Horizon oil platform in the Gulf of Mexico resulted in hundreds of millions of gallons of oil leaking into the sea. The spill has had a disastrous impact on surrounding environment and wildlife, as well as livelihoods throughout the Gulf Coast.

100 days after the disaster the central questions begging to be asked are: **who** is responsible for this devastation, **what** is being done to manage the spill and, most crucially, **how** can we prevent such a catastrophe in the future?

The article '[Promoting Ecological Sustainability and Community Resilience in the US Gulf Coast after the 2010 Deepwater Horizon oil spill](#)' by Jason Levy and Chennat Gopalakrishnan was recently published in the [Journal of Natural Resources Policy Research](#) and aims to answer some of these questions.

The article's co-author and Editor of *Journal of Natural Resources Policy Research*, Chennat Gopalakrishnan comments "**We are now in uncharted waters: there remains significant uncertainty with respect to the impacts of this unprecedented spill on human health, oceans, marshlands and wildlife. It is hoped that this crisis will serve to transform policies and regulations in order to promote disaster resilience, energy security and ecological integrity. While there are reasons to be cautiously optimistic that the worst may now be behind us, the spill is a multifaceted disaster which continues to place Gulf coast ecosystems, livelihoods and cultures in peril.**"

The economic impacts of the oil spill are likely to be severe and long-lasting. The Gulf coast region's travel industry could lose up to \$22.7 billion in the next three years. Even though BP has been spotlighted as the guilty culprit, arguably, a number of other parties are liable too. Who will really pay in the long run?

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