

# CSIS: Keeping the story alive



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Society of Environmental Journalists

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# BP BOP a lulu

## 3 THE BLOWOUT PREVENTER FAILS

The BOP stack is a 450-ton series of valves developed to prevent a gusher if the mud control is overwhelmed.

**TWO ANNULAR VALVES:** Closes in and seals on the drill pipe. Or if the drill pipe is not in use, it closes the open hole.

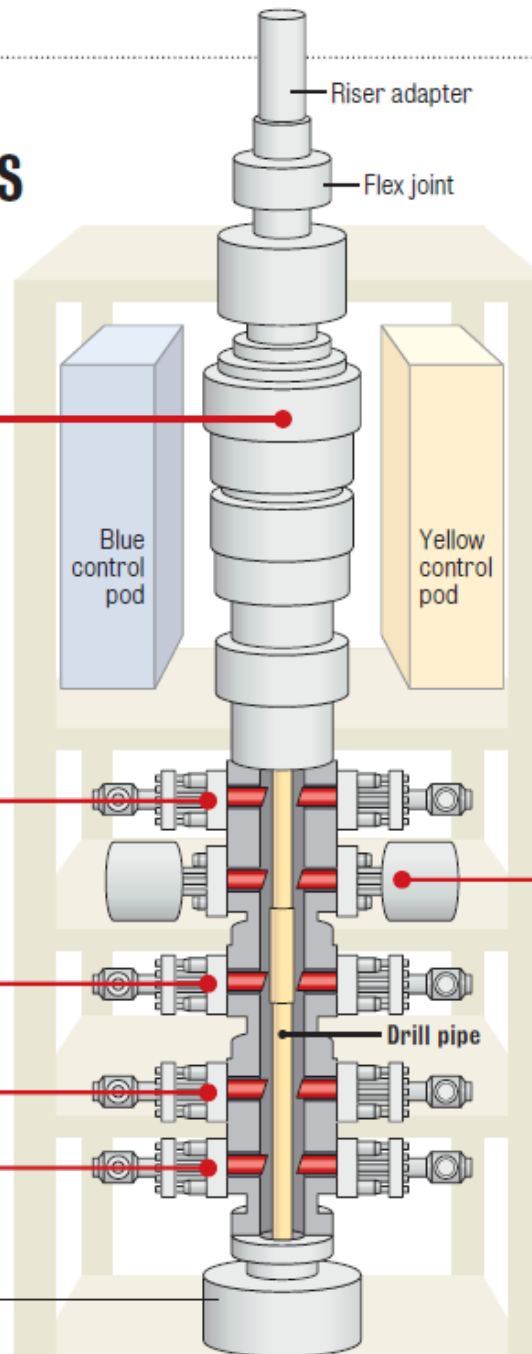
**FOUR BLIND RAMS:** Can withstand more pressure than annular valves over open holes. Not used with a drill pipe in place. Two metal blocks close on each other, sealing the well.

### PROBLEM:

With only seconds to react, rig operators fired off the shear ram, but it only partially sheared the drill pipe. A joint may have been in the way, or the ram was fouled by pieces of casing or cement from the blowout. For days, remotely operated robots tried to fire off the ram manually, but failed.

**SHEAR RAM:** The final fail safe, it is designed to close the well by cutting through and sealing the drill pipe. But they are not designed to cut through joints where two drill pipe sections connect.

Wellhead connector



Note: Man shown for scale. BOP is located on the sea floor 5,000 feet below the surface.

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Source: Staff research

EMMETT MAYER III AND DAN SHEA / THE TIMES-PICAYUNE

# BP BOP a lulu

- Blowout preventer dissection
- Use of information in criminal/civil trials
- Changes in BOP regs and effects on existing/new operations.
- Similar changes for other countries?
- Research into new blowout prevention methods?

# Response plan - Ocean



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# Response plan - Ocean

- Coast Guard changes?
- Rule changes for dispersants?
- Baseline research still in hands of BOEM?
- What happens to 1990s era response corporations?
- Where does the new four-behemoth plan fit?
- Similar changes in other countries?

# Response plan- Shore



# Response plan- Shore

- Lessons learned
- Beaches
- Wetlands
- Response corporations/new local positioning requirements?
- Lines of sand?
- Changes in other countries?

# Cleanup

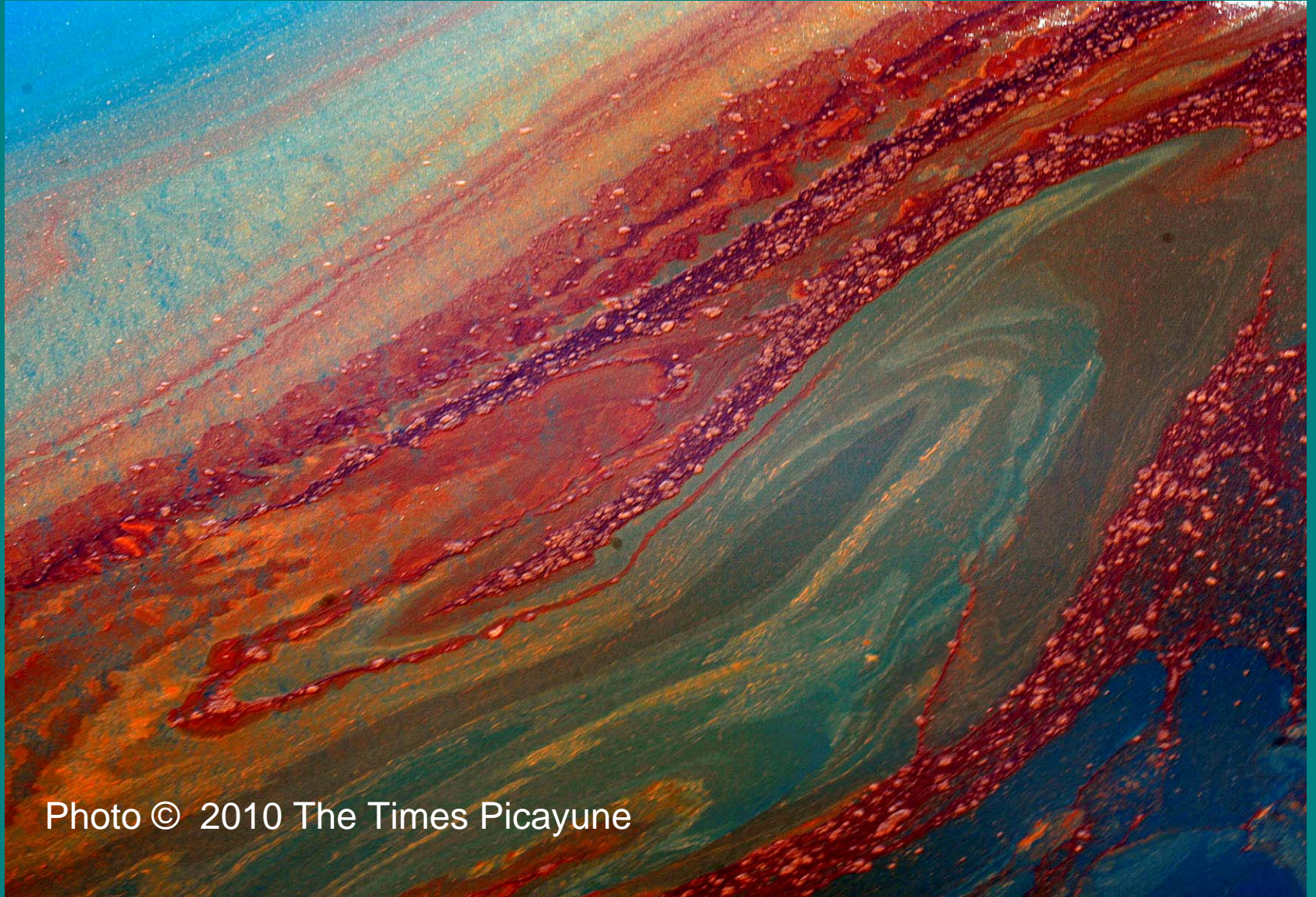


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# Cleanup

- New technologies, bioremediation
- Old technologies
- How clean is clean?
- Who says?
- Standards different in other countries?

# Future of Gulf drilling



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# Future of Gulf drilling

- Status and effects of moratorium on jobs
- What are the Gulf's reserves/national reserves, and what effects from spill?
- What about Obama's lease area expansion plans?
- Effects on supply industry
- Effects on rig construction
- Too small to fail?

# Other Gulf/offshore info



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# Other Gulf/offshore info

- Who's still drilling and where?
- What are the riskiest places to drill?
- What do workers say about safety/corner cutting?
- What effect on future development of methane?
- Where will the next accident happen?

# Alternative Energy

- Is Obama the next Jimmy Carter?
- Wind/solar/wave/river current
- Biofuels/ethanol and nutrient pollution
- Hydrogen

# THE LOUISIANA COAST IN 2100?

Global warming

Lafayette

Baton Rouge

New Orleans

Projected future land loss of 10,500-13,500 km<sup>2</sup>

Graphic © 2010 The Times Picayune

# Global warming

- Did Deepwater Horizon change anything in Congress? World?
- Other disasters with GW links: fires in Russia, droughts, glacier disappearance



# Critters



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# Critters

- Status updates of: brown pelicans, wading birds, neotropical migratory songbirds, ducks/geese
- Atlantic bluefin tuna, red snapper, other gamefish, anadromous species
- Whales, dolphins, manatees
- Crabs, oysters, shrimp
- Benthos

# Critters - 2



Photo © 2010 The Times Picayune

# Critters - 2

- How are effects on organisms determined?
- How did initial claims of doom or recovery work out?
- When do rescue groups go home?

# Wetlands

- What damage did the oil actually do?
- How is cleanup occurring in the wetlands?
- Are there ways to speed breakdown in wetlands?
- Are the rules for how clean is clean different?
- Effects on invasives?

# Deepwater

- Who determines effects on deepwater species like tuna, squid, etc.
- What damage has been done to coral systems?
- Where did all the oil go? Will there be surveys to determine underwater deposits?
- What role of other governments, ICCAT?

# Natural Resource Damage Assessment



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# Natural Resource Damage Assessment

- Problems with access to information
- Science for hire
- Coastal restoration vs directed projects
- Advance payments?
- Track record?
- Avoiding court
- States at disadvantage
- Similar process in other countries?



# Science



# Science

- No umbrella
- Lack of money for independent research
- Applied research for cleanup/cap
- NRDA research by BP, feds, state/other trustees
- Role of nonprofits
- Effect of spill on direction of research, on grad students
- BP sponsored research, fed research

# S e a f o o d



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# Seafood

- Effects of spill on fishermen
- Effects of spill on packers
- Effects of spill on local restaurants
- Effects of spill on national restaurants
- Spill of money to regain consumer acceptance
- National seafood prices
- Effect on international tuna market

# Seafood testing

- How extensive was FDA testing before spill?
- How much testing is being done?
- States' testing
- BP money for testing
- What are other countries doing about Gulf products, fish that spend some time in Gulf?

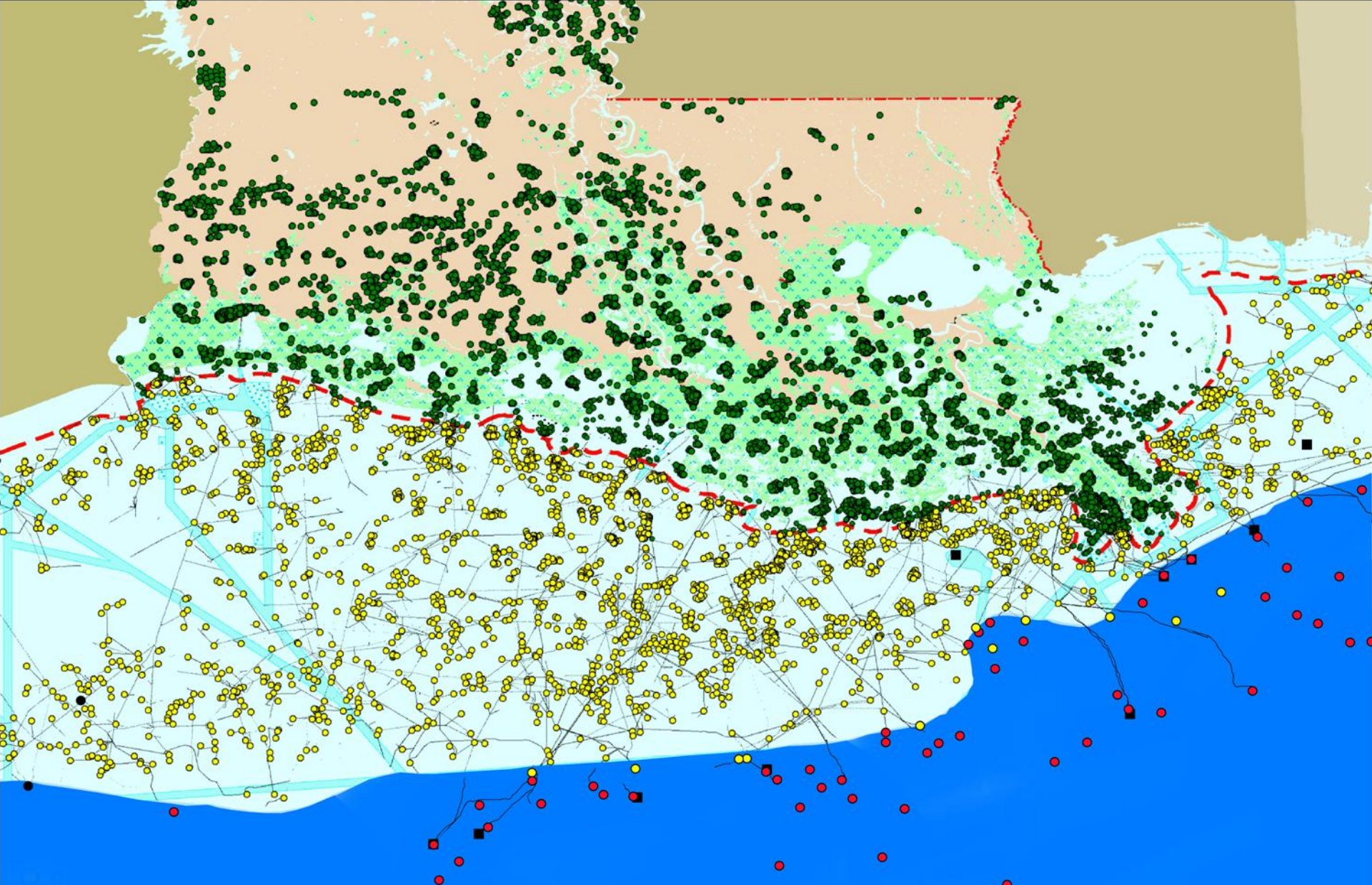
# Who got hurt?



Photo © 2010 The Times Picayune

# Who got hurt?

- Who didn't get reimbursed and why?
- Did fishermen get double paid by participating in Vessels of Opportunity and getting claims paid? Was that fair?
- Were Vietnamese-Americans properly reimbursed?
- Does the moratorium's effects speak to what will happen when peak oil hits?
- What were long term effects on beach tourism?



Oil industry



# Oil industry

- Public acceptance post-spill?
- Any real changes in exploration strategy?
- Alaska? Virginia? California? Cuba? Other countries?
- Effects on insurability?
- Results of post-spill inspections of other facilities?
- Changes to drilling rules in deepwater?
- Changes to rules in shallow water?
- Produced water rules? Flares?

# Regulation



# Regulation

- Spill's impact on public attitude towards regulation of oil/gas, other energy sources.
- Impact on federal regulation of other industries?
- Impact on OSHA?
- Impact on liability protection under federal law for oil, nuclear, other industries?
- Effects on foreign regs, laws

# Louisiana, other states



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# Louisiana, other states

- Long term implications for coastal restoration?
- Long term implications for Jindal? Crist? Other govts? Foreign leaders?
- Why haven't Congressmen, state elected officials been hurt by spill because of their support for the oil industry, opposition to environmental regulation? Overseas?
- Changes in Clean Water Act? Coastal Zone Management Act? International treaties?

# Replacing petroleum

- What effect has spill had on efforts to replace petroleum as fuel, raw material?
- What are the alternatives? Cost? Their problems?
- Relationship to coal mining?
- Clean fuel?

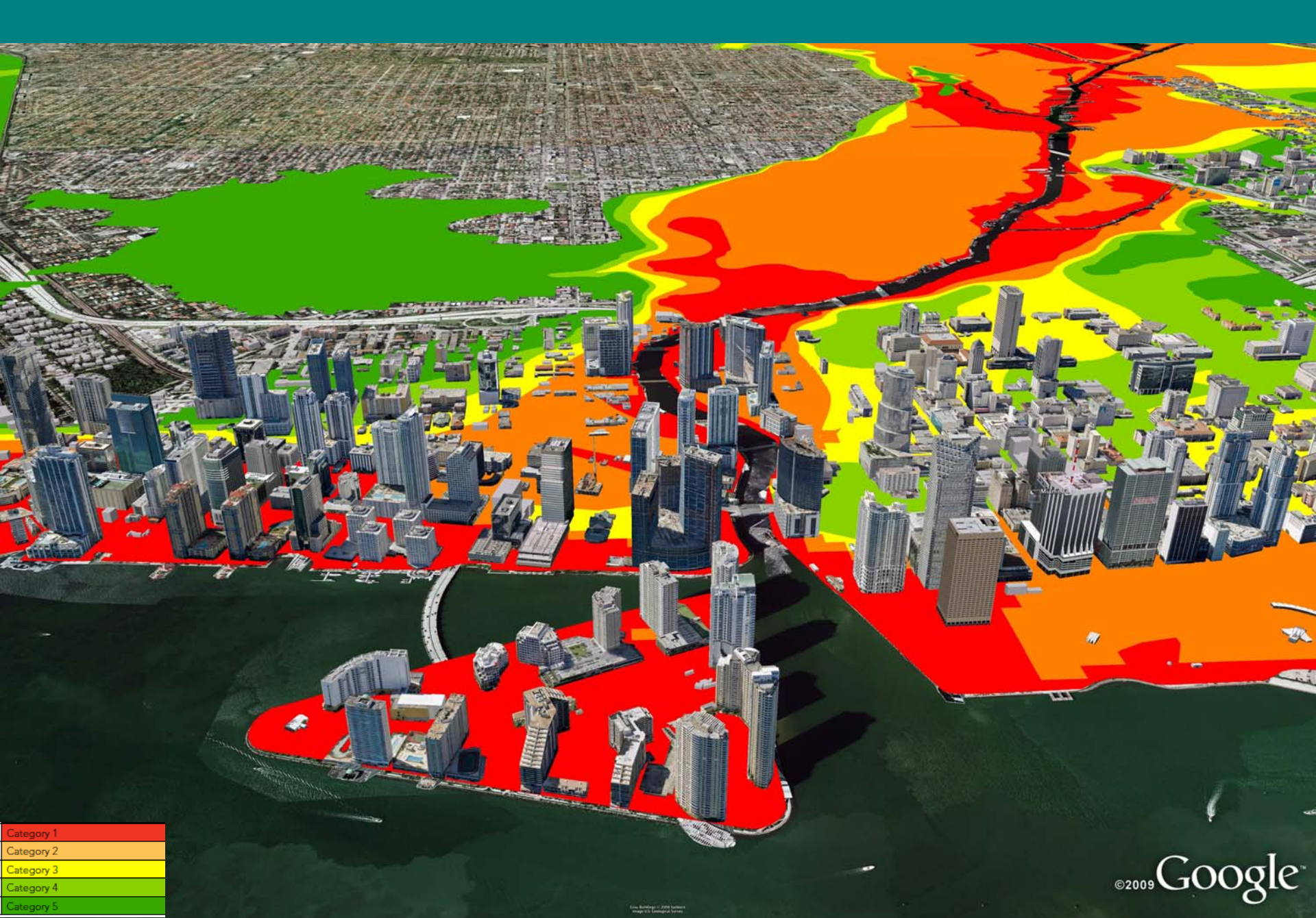
# Public health

- Exposure concerns about oil, Corexit
- Health issues facing those who live on oiled beaches
- Health problems of cleanup workers, compared to Exxon Valdez
- Mental health issues
- Who pays for health costs?
- Who decides who is included in long term health studies?
- Children

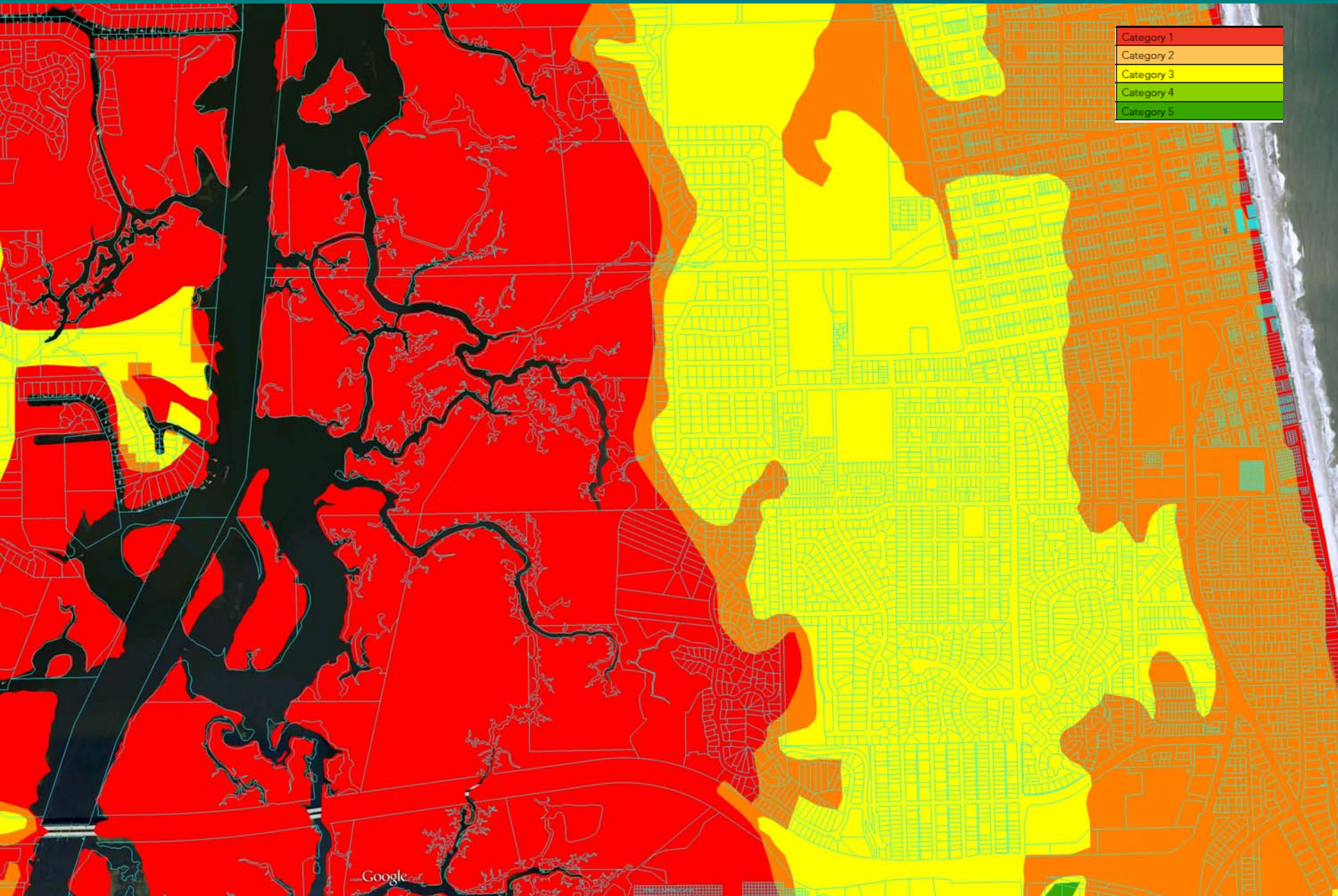
# Other risks

- What will be the next human-made disaster? Other risks involving fossil fuel? Other areas?
- Residual risk planning
- Role of government
- Role of individuals



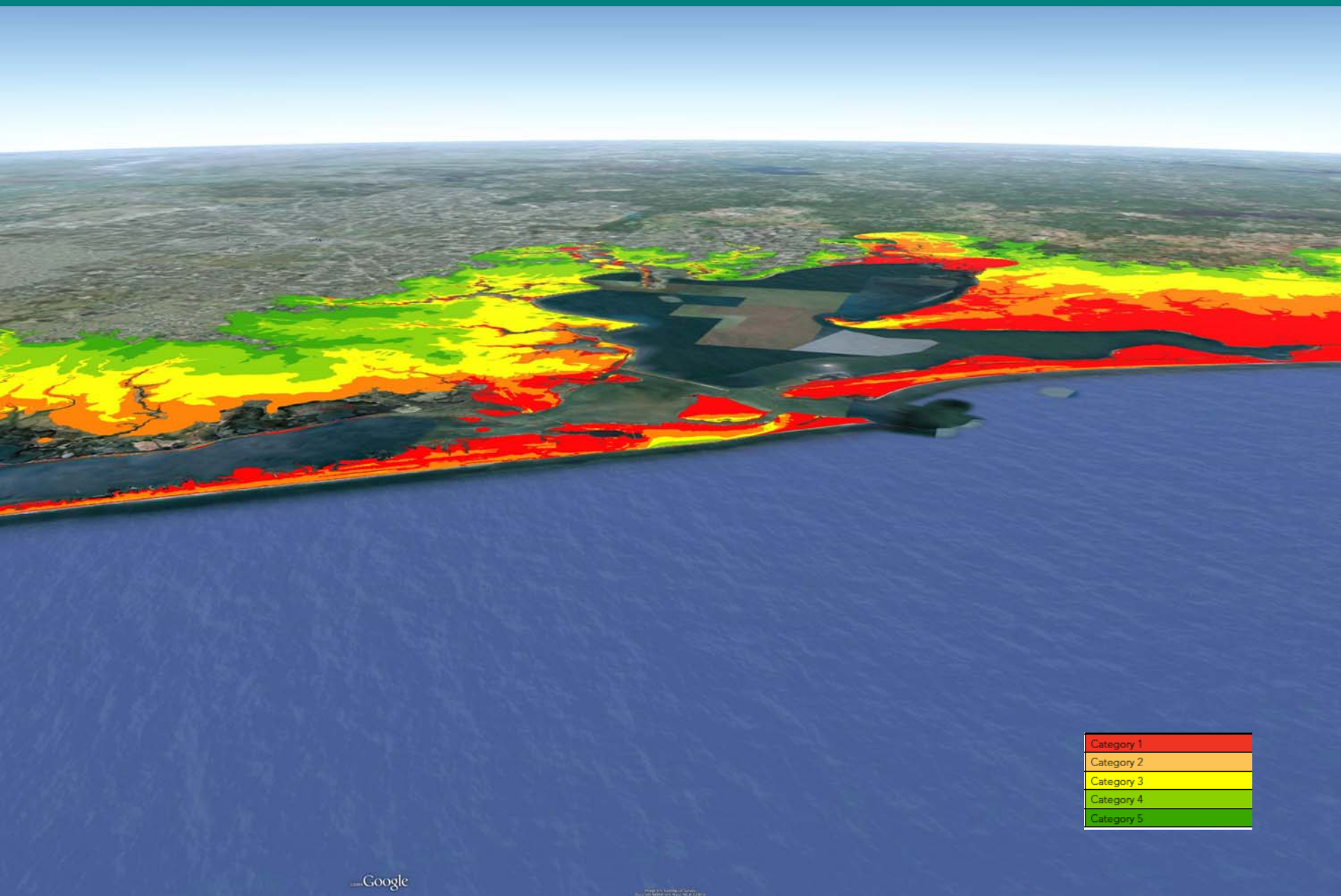


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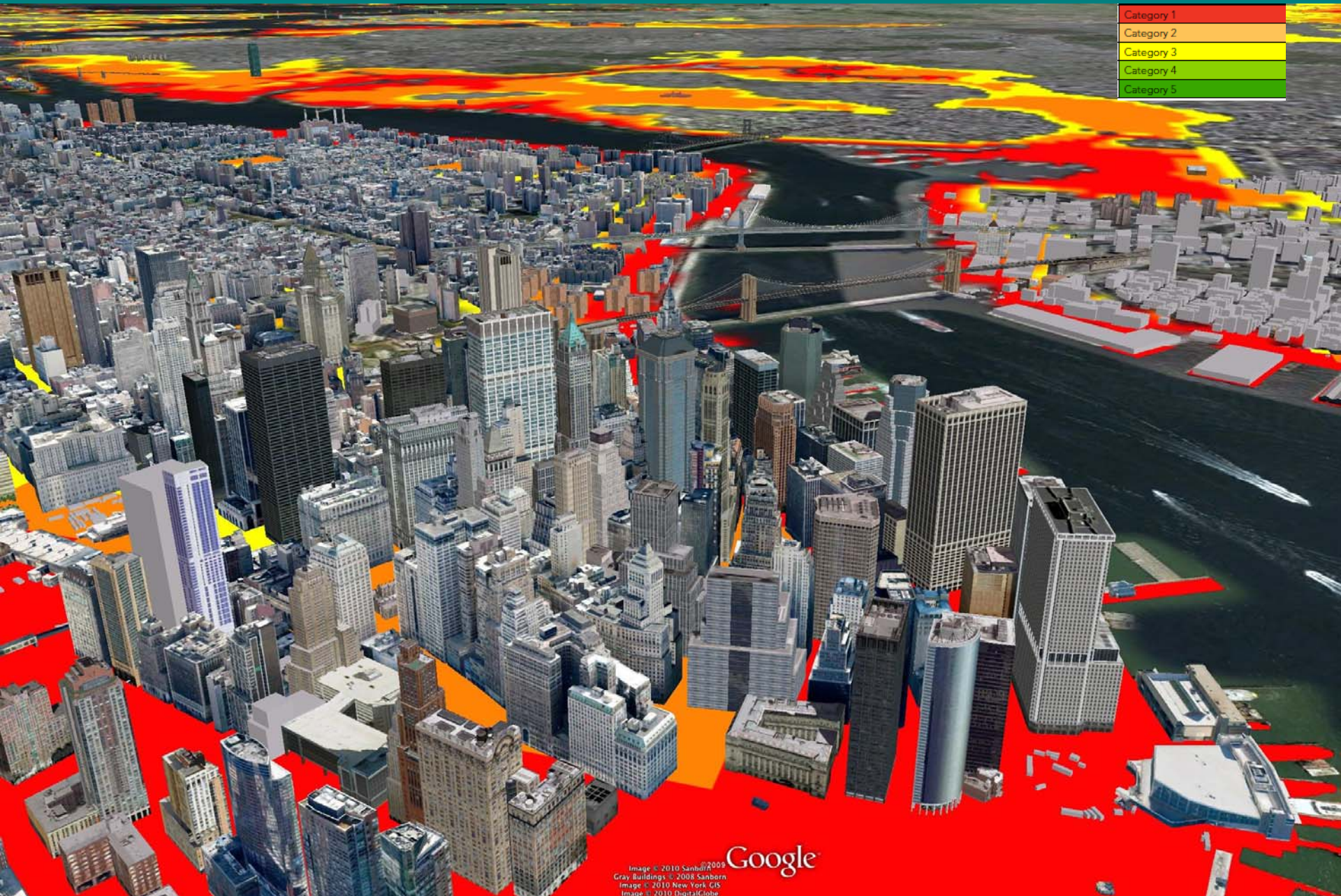
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# Crisis Communication



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# Crisis Communication

- What lessons has Deepwater Horizon taught?
- How much money was spent on communications vs cleanup? BP/federal, state governments
- What were BP's mistakes? Feds? States?
- How did enviros take advantage of spill? Where did they go wrong?