LOCAL POLICY ACTIONS TO COMBAT COASTAL ACIDIFICATION WILL MAKE A DIFFERENCE. HERE'S WHAT WE CAN DO:

Coastal acidification is a danger to our region's economy, food security, ecosystem, and culture— but local-level actions can and will make a difference in mitigating damage and preparing for the future. **It's time for elected officials to publicly acknowledge the threat coastal acidification poses, work locally to implement policy changes, and support educational initiatives that will empower the next generation of coastal champions.**

CONTRIBUTORS TO ACIDIFYING CONDITIONS	WHAT IT DOES	CAN WE DO ANYTHING ABOUT IT?	WHAT POLICY ACTIONS CAN WE TAKE?
Nutrient Pollution 	• Creates harmful algal blooms that cause extreme pH swings • Closes shellfish areas to harvesting • Can cause massive fish & shellfish die-off • Closes beaches to swimming	**YES**	• *Point source pollution*: refine the Clean Water Act's technology-based standards • *Non-point source pollution*: impose and enforce limits on total maximum daily load of pollution • Support local estuaries in the National Estuary Program and the National Estuarine Research Reserves that protect important habitats and serve as focal areas for place-based research • Support tertiary system sewage treatment plants
Habitat Destruction 	• Estuaries and wetlands are important carbon mitigators; less habitat means less carbon mitigation • Loss of vital habitat/nurseries for shellfish and baby fish • Fewer wetlands & aquatic vegetation exacerbates low-oxygen "dead zones" and shore erosion	**YES**	• Legislate a state version of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) to ensure that projects requiring government action can be directed *(CT, MD, MA, NJ, NY, VA & D.C. already have state-level NEPAs)* • Continue to empower coastal management programs through the Coastal Zone Management Act, and encourage planning bodies to support habitat restoration projects • Require that environmental impact assessments include analysis of potential contributions to coastal acidification
CO_2 Emissions 	• The ocean is the world's largest "sink" for CO_2, making seawater more acidic • Additional CO_2 in the atmosphere traps heat, causing climate change	**To a degree;** local action helps, but must be part of a national & global effort	• Regulate local area CO_2 emissions through the Clean Air Act • Improve public transportation infrastructure to remove vehicles from the roads • Implement green building codes for new structures and provide incentives to improve the energy efficiency of older, less economical buildings • Invest in renewable energy
Upwelling	• Creates corrosive conditions as cold, acidic water rises up from deep offshore and mixes on the coast	NO	• Upwelling is a natural process that happens on a global scale; the process is changing due to rising ocean temperatures and increased acidity, which can only be slowed by reducing CO_2 emissions
Fresh Water Inundation	• Floods the coastline with corrosive, mineral-poor water • Lowers the salinity in estuaries to the point where shellfish are biologically stressed	NO	• Spring snow melt and rain are a natural part of the climate cycle, though climate change is causing unprecedented amounts of precipitation, which is worsening the effects of freshwater inundation. This cycle can't be slowed without significant reduction in CO_2 levels.

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