



BLUE DUNES

WEST8 AND TEAM WXY
THE FUTURE OF COASTAL PROTECTION

THE EASTERN SEABOARD,
UNITED STATES

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Resiliency seems to be on the tips of everyone's tongues, from architects and planners to city officials. Hurricanes Harvey and Irma demonstrated how vulnerable global coastal cities really are to sea level rise, coastal storms, and flooding. Greater attention must be placed on enhancing the adaptive capacity of built environments around the world.

Addressing these issues requires thinking across neighborhood, metropolitan, and regional scales. This framework is inherently interdisciplinary and will breed solutions that are entangled in governmental and ecological processes. That is not to discount the architectural dimension, which can play a powerful role in communicating these proposals to the public.

Blue Dunes, a project by Claire Weisz of WXY Architecture and West 8, combines all these aspects into a plan that would build artificial barrier islands along the Mid-Atlantic coast of the United States.

The regional scale of Blue Dunes complements local projects and allows for economies of scale; complex and combined protection systems, physical coupling of on and off shore systems, enhanced feasibility of financial risk mitigation through more affordable pricing and more efficient supply of insurance, reinsurance and catastrophic bond products.

The scientists, engineers, planners, economists and maritime stakeholders that have participated to date have identified the key issues that need to be addressed, including water quality, habitats, recreation, navigation, constructability, further planning and funding. The team proposed the creation of an initiative, Blue Dunes Research Initiative – BDRI – to explore these issues and develop a new approach to coastal protection. The initiative seeks to ensure the safety of the citizens who live in the coastal cities of New York and New Jersey and to guarantee to the extent possible,