- New York City's air quality has improved over the years but still has compliance problems with the standards for ozone (photochemical smog) and inhalable particulates. Some air pollution is transported here from states to the west of New York, but some is generated here. While power plants and other larger sources of pollution have been brought under permit controls through the Title V air permit program, building boilers and traffic cumulatively remain important culprits.

- New York City's drinking water, with the exception of a small area in southeastern Queens, comes from upstate reservoirs, not from groundwater. So drinking water quality is mostly dependent upon the measures taken upstate to protect that watershed.

- Historically, much of the City's freshwater and tidal wetland areas were filled with coal ash and other waste to create more land. They were seen by many as a nuisance. Today their value is better understood. About 1,600 to 2,000 acres of freshwater wetlands are left in New York City (a 99% loss), and roughly 4,070 acres of tidal wetlands. Precise numbers for historic tidal wetland acreages in New York City are not readily available, but the entire Hudson Raritan Estuary contains roughly 14 square miles of tidal wetland area out of the original 86 to 100 square miles – an 83% to 86% loss.

- Harbor Dredge Management: The shipping industry is changing, using deeper draft vessels that require more dredging. At the same time, New Jersey's capacity to absorb dredged material from the harbor is becoming more limited. The pressure is on for New York City to find options for dredged materials management.

- New York Shipping Industry: In keeping with the trend toward deeper draft vessels, the New York Container Terminal is seeking to expand so that it can better compete with New Jersey terminals for shipping business.

- Coastal Erosion Hazards and In-water Development: Two factors – (a) the high cost of land in New York City and (b) the real estate value and public attraction of waterfront features – are generating great pressure to build over water or in coastal erosion hazard areas. In one case, several units of a condominium built illegally in a coastal erosion hazard area became uninhabitable because a portion of the bluff beneath it subsided after a nor'easter.