Response to Water Crisis

Point 1

For several decades, Hellespont has been negatively affected by the pollution coming out of nearby communities, chiefly Terrarivum and Hudson Harbor. These cities, which occupy critical waterfront junctures of Jazzland, have been recklessly fouling the bay area for years as they have grown industrially. Consequently, the already old water infrastructure system of Hellespont has been under great strain as sewage and thick algal blooms have been backing up the community’s water treatment plant & accelerating the dilapidation of the extensive network of pipelines underneath Hellespont. This is not the only crisis Hellespont is facing, however. Outside of the city to the west lies some of Jazzland’s most beautiful wetland regions. These fragile ecosystems are a vital part of Hellespont’s remaining natural capital, and they offer great importance for both recreational tourism and research. These wetlands have been under attack for some time, though, as business interests have been pressuring city officials to sell the land for development, which would encourage more urban sprawl and further cripple the already strained social capital that exists between the urban residents and the outlying rural fringe.

These issues are significantly affecting each of our seven community capitals in a variety of ways. First and foremost, Hellespont’s natural capital is being affected as pollution discharge fills the bay area. The contaminated water has caused harm to waterfowl, fish, oysters, and numerous other ocean creatures that are economically and ecologically important. In turn, financial capital has suffered as the once great seafood industry of Hellespont has all but disappeared thanks to the callous behavior of the city’s nearby neighbors. Additionally, the out of date and failing water infrastructure that supplies the city’s potable water is negatively affecting human capital by inhibiting the public’s access to resources and threatening public health. Moreover, farms in the area outside of the town center have taken a hard hit
from the frequent flooding that occurs after bad storms, causing higher taxes to be placed upon the citizens due to less food. Built capital is suffering the worst, as a pipeline overhaul has been needed for quite a while. In the last year alone, the Hellespont City Water Department responded to over 500 leaks. Water main breaks during cold periods and road potholes resulting from the constant freeze-thaw cycles during the winter months have also taken a toll on Hellespont. Despite its desire to improve the water infrastructure, the city’s government has only had the funds to “band-aid” the problem, which has been detrimental to the political capital of the city as well. This ties in with financial capital, as community leaders are experiencing difficulty producing a plan of action on an extremely tight budget. Since there are no financial resources for the major sewer system overhauls that are needed, disagreements are on the rise as to how to allocate funds. Widespread community concern over both the water crisis and the potential loss of the pristine wetlands has created a decrease in recreation and community participation, harming the human and cultural capital as more people have grown disheartened with the situation and have refrained from fully engaging in the Hellespont community. It is no secret either that rural Hellespont is suffering the worst from this water crisis. Social capital has taken a major hit as the rural and outlying suburban populations are feeling the least supported and assisted during this difficult period.

**Point 2**

In the mid 1950’s wastewater and potable water infrastructure in the city of Hellespont began to show signs of wear and tear. This was due to over 120 years of use without update. Right about this time, the economies of nearby Jazzland communities Zabiznar, Hudson Harbor, and Terrarivum all began to take off, and the pollution levels in the bay swelled. During this period, Hellespont was undergoing a mild recession and was unable to adequately address its complex network of underground pipelines, deciding instead to forego the needed repairs. Although a large and pertinent issue, the government concluded there was not enough financial capital to immediately allocate to the situation. Unfortunately, this began a slow downward spiral for the city of Hellespont.
Since this time, pollution from sewer overflows of other cities of Jazzland have caused terrible algal blooms, and a build up of harmful e coli bacteria in the bay on which Hellespont depends for many things. Eutrophication of the water supply severely depleted oyster and fish stocks, thus devastating the thriving seafood industry, which once brought prosperity to the area. Not only has this pollution caused a critical portion of Hellespont’s economy to suffer, but it has also affected the natural, cultural, and financial capitals of surrounding communities. This resulted in a burgeoning tension between Hellespont, and the communities of Hudson Harbor and Zabiznar; both of which also rely on the bay but have been reluctant to take care of this precious natural resource.

When all of the hysteria over the struggling water infrastructure waned for a short time, attention was turned to the largely pristine wetlands that lie just outside of Hellespont’s fringing suburbs. Many in Hellespont see the wetlands as a safe haven for wildlife from the polluted waters of the bay, and hold an affinity the natural glory that once shaped the city. Others, largely outsiders, want nothing more than to get their hands on that land to turn it into fertile farm acreage. Citizens campaigned for the long-term protection of the wetlands, yet the government was largely hand-tied in with these matters. The only way to protect the delicate land would be to buy it out, a truly expensive investment. To date, the city leaders of Hellespont have continued to fend off greedy land-grabbers, but many in the community fear that it’s only a matter of time before the wetlands are destroyed.

The government’s apparent apathy in addressing and solving both of these issues due to a lack of sufficient funding has created major distrust between the citizens and their local leaders in Hellespont. This has caused a long term spiraling down of political capital. Although new citizens and the largely transient student population were largely uninformed of past political injustices, old residents and farming families on the outskirts of town remain distrustful and wary. Recent efforts made by the government to amend relations proved futile, as many families continue to flee the peninsula for other Jazzland cities due to fear of health problems, loss of seafaring jobs, and the inability to farm the flooded agricultural fields. There has been no conclusive evidence of any immediate health risks posed
by the dilapidated infrastructure; nonetheless, some members of the community remain vigilant and pessimistic.

The good news for Hellespont is that the water quality issues resulting from worn pipes and the incentive to study the wetland ecosystem were the impetus behind the ascent of the university’s top-ranked environmental science and engineering programs. Today, the university allows students to gain practical research experience in studying and addressing a “broken system” in need of considerable improvement.

In dealing with this situation, an action plan is vital to help ensure the city’s sustained prosperity. There are quite a few ways to help correct the issues with the old water infrastructure. One way is to obtain a grant for a full-scale replacement of water infrastructure, which would be a large step towards the spiraling up of Hellespont. A grant has the potential to impact almost every capital in a positive way. Natural capital would be positively impacted, as the bay would be cleaner and healthier. Built capital would improve, as Hellespont would have the funds to repair infrastructure, rebuild neighborhoods and develop sustainable initiatives. Water conservation goals would consist of more reliable water provision to rural areas, which could be implemented with grant funds. Social capital would also improve, because long-term residents will relocate or return to Hellespont. Although citizens would likely have to pay higher taxes up front to help offset the costs of a full-scale project, the financial capital would benefit from lower utilities taxes in the future. Strong public relation techniques could potentially restore faith in the leaders of Hellespont, and positively impact political capital. Cultural capital would benefit from the return of recreational activities along the oceanfront. Many of these, of course, would be contingent upon adequate restoration of the natural capital.

One specific economic goal would be to return the fishing industry back to its former vibrant glory. Cleaning up the water is an important first step towards this return, as it would significantly improve the depleted fish, oyster, and other seafood stocks. The resulting flow of new income could be used to begin offsetting some of the large costs this project will impose. Another goal of the action plan is to implement new entrepreneurial and sustainability internships for students. This
would be achieved through the creation of new internships and job opportunities in water management, coastal restoration, sustainable fishing, and wetland research initiatives. Falling water costs in the long term due to new infrastructure and elimination of the burgeoning threat of water shortages will hopefully draw businesses back to Hellespont. Moreover, the city is graced with the expertise and advice of university faculty in regards to the implementation of new waterworks in a sustainable, cost-efficient way. As home to the best environmental research institution in the country, Hellespont is wanting and willing to use its resources to their full advantage. Temporary job positions for other citizens will swell, particularly in construction management and civil engineering. All of these components will build the story of Hellespont and shape the overall image of the city in the future.

A grant to fund the long overdue sewer project and to protect some of the country’s most beautiful natural areas would bring the city back together and reunite residents of urban and rural areas. It would reestablish the once strong bond between the community and its local leaders, which is crucial for any society to remain stable. It would expand and modernize infrastructure and put Hellespont back on the map as a thriving economic powerhouse, perhaps even as an all around vacation destination for families and individuals from all walks of life.

**Point 3**

The water polluting Hellespont is not the direct fault of the citizens or the authority in charge. This crisis could have been averted though if the officials of Hellespont were able and willing to commit more resources to our failing sewer infrastructure. With that being said, our community is taking this opportunity to grow from this experience, instead of spiraling into a more devastating situation. The citizens of Hellespont have been seen as uncooperative in the past, but we are taking this unfortunate situation to head our community's culture in another direction. Hellespont has the unique opportunity to help solve this water quality issue not just for ourselves, but also for Hudson Harbor, Terraravium, and Zabiznar. Hellespont is home to the best environmental research institution in the country of Jazzland, and we are wanting and willing to use our resources to their full
advantage. We also want to take this opportunity to protect some of our country’s most beautiful natural resources. This collective approach will boost our already outstanding University, protect important areas from development, and hopefully stop this incident from ever occurring in Hellespont again.

In order to come up with a solution to this problem, a community wide action team was created with members including representatives from the environmental college of the University, local government officials, active local community leaders and community leaders from the outlying rural districts of Hellespont. After several meetings, they were able to reach a solution in order to plan where the funds from the national government could be best allocated to not only fix the water pollution crisis plaguing the city, but to help with other community problems as well. A public forum was held at the University’s main auditorium after the meetings with the action team concluded so that citizens of Hellespont could be instructed on what exactly the cause of the water crisis was by the University's environmental scientists and be enlightened on what the action team is deciding to do in order to fix the problem and how community members from university staff to rural residents can help implement the entire process.

The funding from the President of Jazzland is needed for three key areas. First, we want to preserve 200 acres of undeveloped land, 100 of which are wetlands on the outskirts of Hellespont that are currently under threat of development projects. This will reduce further development expansion and pollution near our beloved Bay. It will also help us from continuing our urban sprawl, which is further separating our city. The urban sprawl is further separating the university district of the city with the outlying rural area so by reducing this effect, the goal is for these two areas of Hellespont to become interconnected once again. Second, we want to expand our research facilities into these wetlands to research and prevent future contamination problems. Our University has been collecting data on the pollution levels for the past 20 years, and we have seen an alarming increase of pollution into the bay. Our university needs new locations and facilities to take this important data and translate it into meaningful public works. Lastly, the City of Hellespont would take this funding and put it towards restoring
our crumbling sewer system. This system has been failing our citizens for years, and we currently only have funds to “band-aid” the situation, which is not acceptable. We would take the funding for the government to curb the tax increases need to perform such an extensive project. Our citizens our willing to help the country solve this crisis, so we hope the country will do the same for us. Besides fixing the sewer problem by itself, the community action team has decided to pursue installing green roofs and rain gardens throughout key areas of the city as well. This will not only help more with the water issue by being able to reduce the amount of storm water runoff into the city's sewer infrastructure, but can also be used as a social capital building element as the entire community will be helping to install these eco-friendly projects around the city.

**Point 4**

The water crisis will initially cause a spiraling down of the community capitals of Hellespont; however, our community will spiral up in the long run due to the overall improvement of infrastructure, sustainability, and relations with neighboring communities among other things. As the pollution of the nearby bay has gotten worse, Hellespont has not had the built capital to deal with the crisis. The out-of-date wastewater and potable water infrastructure have been detrimental to the community, negatively impacting each one of the community capitals.

The spiral-down of natural capital due to the irresponsibility of surrounding communities has contributed to the decline of Hellespont’s built capital as well. The community has and will continue to experience the spiral down of financial, political, and social capital if the issues at stake are not addressed immediately. This will result in more residents moving out of the community, thus causing a further loss of human capital. Hellespont will lose its main industries, leadership, and social ties, which will leave the community in dire need of an action plan to rejuvenate the area. We will implement such a plan and begin striving towards goals of rebuilding our community, capital by capital. We will eventually see a spiral up of these capitals once again, and Hellespont will come out of this crisis even stronger than it began. This water crisis forces the government of Hellespont to take action and create
stronger bonds with the citizens, thus improving the overall political capital. Also, built capital will be greatly improved after this crisis because of the necessary repairs and updates that will need to be made to the water systems.

Hellespont was founded in 1829 as a proud fisherman’s village, known for its top quality seafood including some of the best fisherman’s stew around. Tourists would come from far and wide just to have a taste. Even though Hellespont consisted of only a few, year around citizens, the small village began to prosper. With prosperity came change, and over the course of time so did the villages self-identity. Soon, people began to flood Hellespont and it grew into a bustling town. In 1907 a university was founded in Hellespont, and the once fisherman’s village became a university town. Ever since, the town has enjoyed a certain level of prosperity and growth, which have come at a cost. Many of our built capital resources are in desperate need of repair, yet there is not enough in the budget to support such intensive public project.

A federal grant would be allocated to the cleanup of the public water supply and would almost certainly result in a resurgence of the once proud fishing community, solidifying something that the proud citizens of Hellespont have always known to be true. There is a lot of potential in this town and it's just waiting to be realized. If the federal grant money is allocated to fix the current pollution and infrastructure problems, the town of Hellespont is determined not to repeat its past mistakes. That is why federal dollars would also be used to set up university programs for students studying sustainability to gain real life experiences. These programs would allow students an opportunity to work on maintaining the new infrastructure as well as cleaning the existing water supplies and increasing fish populations with the instruction of some of the world's best professors in the field of sustainability. The hope is that these programs would put Hellespont's university at the forefront of sustainable research and action, and would help foster a self-identity in the town as a hub for environmental action and outreach. If this community can achieve a new self-identity, then it would be setting itself up for the revival of a once prosperous fishing industry as well as exponential growth in a host
of other economic activities. The new university program would attract high caliber
students from all over the world and draw citizens back to a place where they'll be
proud to live. This international attention would bring monetary gains to the area,
and would dramatically shift the downward spiral Hellespont is currently facing.

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