

*Mitigating Climate Impacts for the  
World's Major Food-Producing  
River Basins*



# MRCTI COP 27

Mississippi River Cities & Towns Initiative  
United Nations Climate Talks, Egypt 2022

AMERICA IS  
ALL IN

DUCKS  
UNLIMITED



COP27  
SHARM EL-SHEIKH  
EGYPT 2022







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MRCTI International Food and  
Water Security Program

### Mayors of the Mississippi River Come to COP 27 With Major **Announcement**

The Mississippi River Basin is the most important food-producing river basin in the world—supplementing the diet of 1 in every 12 people across the globe. Rivers are the most tapped source of freshwater. Mounting climate risk is compromising the ability of watersheds around the world to provide the most critical staples of

life—food and freshwater.

Free and equitable access to water is essential not only for drinking supply, but also to power the major economies of cities including manufacturing and agriculture.

Because cities contain the most valuable built assets of national economies, cities can be the driving force to restore and sustain the most valuable natural assets that make possible the built ones. 102 U.S. cities have banded together to mitigate climate impacts at watershed scale.

### Cities Deploy Natural Infrastructure at Watershed Scale to Mitigate Climate Change



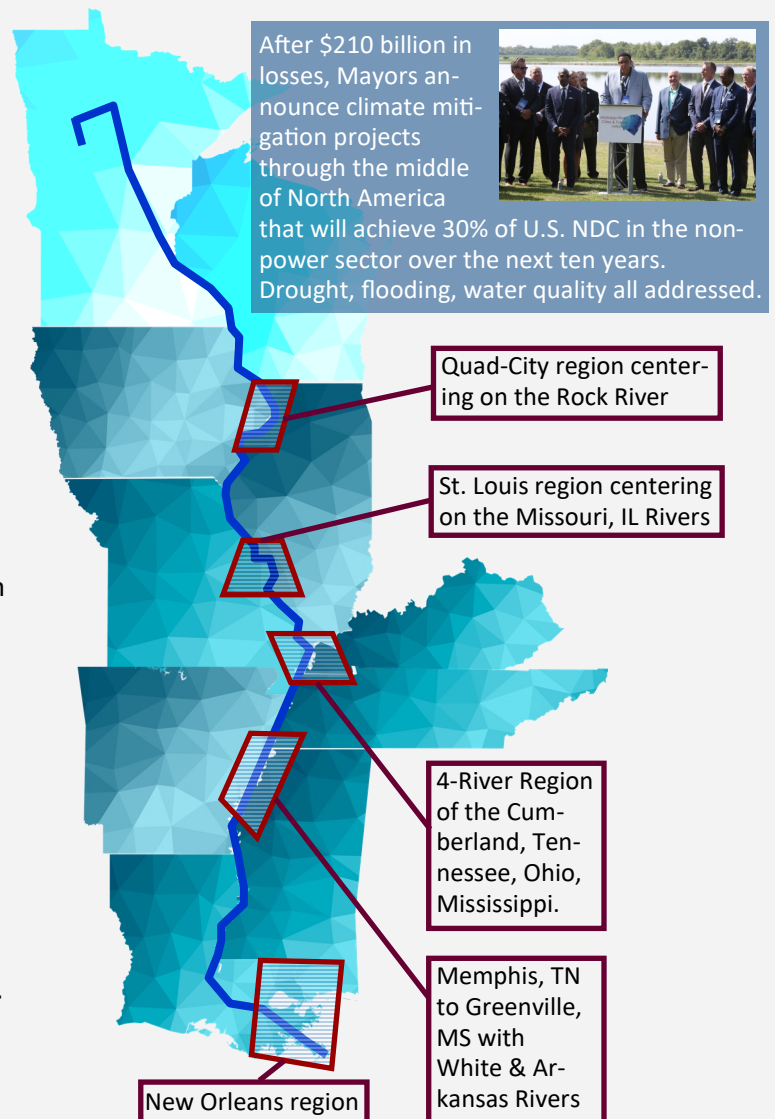
Errick Simmons  
Mayor  
Greenville, MS  
MRCTI Co-Chair



Dr. Karen Waldrop  
Global Chief of Conservation  
Ducks Unlimited

The project cohort includes eight American states, thirty cities, federal agencies, and delivery partners such as Ducks Unlimited have come together to mitigate climate impacts at a new level of subnational cooperation sequestering over 166,000 tons of carbon in the near-term and 350,000 tons in the medium-term.


The project regions marked to the left show the most vulnerable areas of the Mississippi River Corridor where the benefits of deploying wetlands, marshes, forests, and reconnected backwater areas will garner the most results.

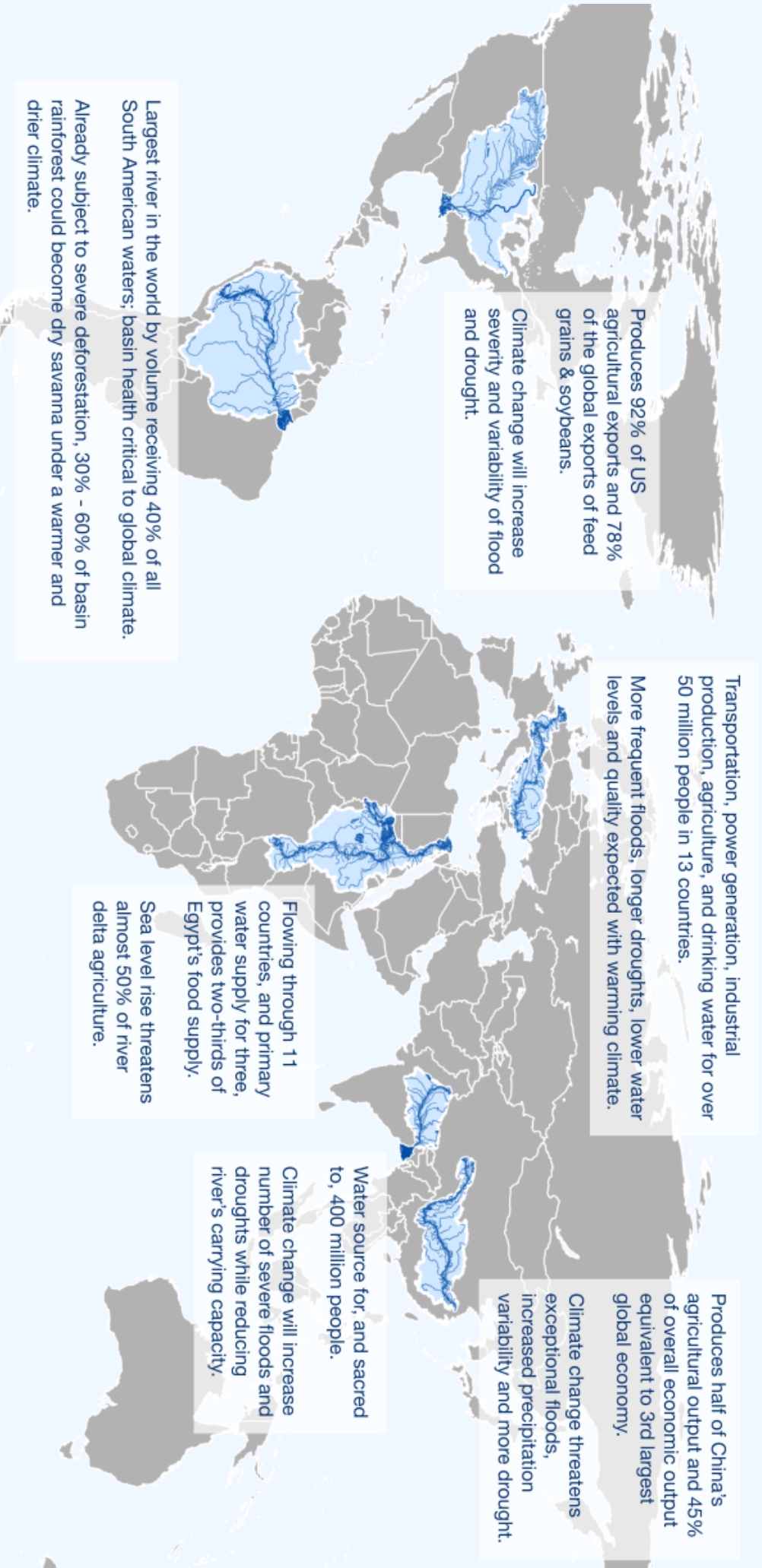


# Protecting World's Major Food-Producing River Basins is Essential to Meeting the Climate Challenge

Shown here are those river basins providing the largest share of agricultural commodities with the Mississippi River ranked #1. Multiple economies and environmental services sustained by these basins can't be replaced.

*In 2015, MRCITI Mayors proposed the first River Basin Food and Water Security Agreement which was signed*

**by**  **Giro Intelligence** *by basins covering over 70 nations. Agreements like this will be needed to achieve mitigation*



# Mayors and Congress Propose Climate-Ready Program for Mississippi River Corridor



The Andrew Young Safeguarding the Mississippi River Together, or SMRT Act (HR 4729) proposes the United States' first national program for the world's most important working river providing commodities to one in every twelve people on Earth.

Mayors from the tip of the St. Lawrence Seaway to the Gulf of Mexico have united with conservation groups, industry, and water quality organizations to move the SMRT Act forward in both the House and Senate.

The Act establishes a national program office and management plan for the Mississippi River while at the same time authorizing new grants to build resil-

ience, sustainability, and ecological restoration into the Mississippi River system.

"The sustainability of the Mississippi River Corridor has world-wide implications we cannot ignore. I am proud to be working directly with the Mayors of MRCTI in not just moving innovative proposals like the Andrew Young SMRT Act, but also attracting global investment into Middle America," asserted former **U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations, Andrew Young**.

In September 2022, Mayors and Congressional champions advanced a major priority of the SMRT Act through U.S. Senate passage of the first ever ecosystem restoration project.

"This pilot project in the Senate-passed WRDA bill that I have worked on with the support of Mayors of the Mississippi River will allow communities and private entities to apply for federal assistance to help with conservation efforts. I'm excited about this new and important project and the potential to improve conservation along the Mississippi River. Mayors' voices have been critical in shaping this measure," said **John Boozman, United States Senator (AR)**.

More work is ahead as Mayors plan to reintroduce the rest of the SMRT Act in the next Congress.

"I am proud to have introduced The SMRT Act on behalf of my friend, Ambassador Andrew Young to assist with efforts, and grow the economy throughout the Mississippi River. By introducing this bill, it will provide funding opportunities to maintain the Mississippi River, which is vital to the State of Mississippi. The SMRT Act would provide up to \$500 million per year for five years to fund grants and studies for maintaining the river," explained **Bennie Thompson, United States Representative (MS)**.

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