

Islands that will vanish when sea levels rise

As the climate warms, sea ice and the ice sheets in Greenland and the Antarctic continue to melt. These and other factors lead to increases in sea level and further warming of the Earth. Climate change will manifest in many ways, including changes in weather patterns and more extreme weather events.

For some, though, rising sea levels may leave them underwater

The global sea level has risen by eight inches since 1870. This change is already affecting many low-lying islands that have had to adapt. Some populations are moving to higher areas, or are trying to buy land from other countries to migrate its citizens, and some have even developed new ways of farming to protect their agriculture.

2007 estimates suggest that global sea level will increase 8 to 16 inches above 1990 levels by 2090. The National Academy of Sciences predictions from 2009 suggest that by 2100, sea level could increase by anywhere from 16 inches to 56 inches, depending how the Earth responds to changing climate.

Here is one of many countries that have been and will be affected by rising sea levels.

Kiribati is about halfway between Hawaii and Australia and is made up of 32 low-lying atolls and one raised island. Most of its population has already moved to one island, Tarawam, after the rest of their land disappeared beneath the ocean.

Villagers on Abaiang, one of the Kiribati Islands, had to relocate the entire village of Tebunginako and the president of Kiribati, Anote Tong, is in talks with Fiji's military government to buy up to 5,000 acres of land in order to relocate the 102,697 people that live in his country.

Other countries and islands include the Maldives, Seychelles, Torres Strait Islands, Tegua, Solomon Islands, Micronesia, Palau, Carteret Islands, Tuvalu.

By Stephen Lally

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