



The Flooded Earth: Our Future In a World Without Ice Caps

By Peter D. Ward

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Sea level rise will happen no matter what we do. Even if we stopped all carbon dioxide emissions today, the seas would rise one meter by 2050 and three meters by 2100. This—not drought, species extinction, or excessive heat waves—will be the most catastrophic effect of global warming. And it won't simply redraw our coastlines—agriculture, electrical and fiber optic systems, and shipping will be changed forever. As icebound regions melt, new sources of oil, gas, minerals, and arable land will be revealed, as will fierce geopolitical battles over who owns the rights to them.

In *The Flooded Earth*, species extinction expert Peter Ward describes in intricate detail what our world will look like in 2050, 2100, 2300, and beyond—a blueprint for a foreseeable future. Ward also explains what politicians and policymakers around the world should be doing now to head off the worst consequences of an inevitable transformation.

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Drawing from research on polar melting and current climate studies, paleontologist and NASA astrobiologist Ward (*Under a Green Sky*) depicts grim scenarios of the future as the ice caps melt away. Ward imagines Canadian indigenous people waging guerrilla warfare in 2030 on a government poisoning their bodies and ancestral lands with tars sands mining; Miami in 2120 as a lawless island abandoned by a federal government overwhelmed with building dikes to protect less doomed cities; topsoil from a dried-out Midwest being shipped in 2515 to an Antarctic Freehold State, one of the few locations where crops could still be grown; Bangladeshi refugees, fleeing their flooded nation after a 24-foot sea rise in 3004, being gunned down by Indian Border Security Forces. Ward assures us that it doesn't have to be this way and attempts a feeble optimism. He recommends a combination of lifestyle changes and technical solutions, although he warns that the latter are fraught with unknown perils. This is indisputably important information, but Ward's conclusion that hope is perhaps itself a goal, makes for a depressing read. (*July*)

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Review

Kirkus

“NASA astrobiologist [Peter] Ward describes the disastrous changes that can be expected as sea levels continue their accelerating rise due to global warming... a blunt, vivid warning.”

SALON.com

“A beautifully written, thoroughly research and relentlessly terrifying work, and a must-read for anybody with an interest in the environment or the future of our planet.”

About the Author

Peter D. Ward is a Professor of Biology and Earth and Space Sciences at the University of Washington in Seattle. He also serves as an astrobiologist with NASA. Ward is the author of more than a dozen books, including the highly acclaimed *Rare Earth: Why Complex Life Is Uncommon in the Universe* with Donald Brownlee and *Out of Thin Air: Dinosaurs, Birds, and Earth's Ancient Atmosphere*. He appeared in the PBS documentary “Shape of Life” and was the chief scientist for Animal Planet's *Animal Armageddon*, a multi-part series on animal extinction. He lives in Seattle, Washington.

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