

Lesson 17: Environment

The Threat to Kiribati



The people in Kiribati are afraid that one day in the not-too-distant future, their country will disappear from the face of the earth - literally. Several times this year, the Pacific island nation has been flooded by a sudden high tide. These tides, which swept across the island and destroyed houses, came when there was neither wind nor rain. "This never happened before," say the older citizens of Kiribati.

What is causing these mysterious high tides? The answer may well be global warming. When fuels like oil and coal are being burned, **pollutants** are released; these pollutants trap heat in the earth's atmosphere. Warmer temperatures cause water to expand and also create more water by melting glaciers and polar **ice caps**.

You can see the whole lesson from your teacher, please ask them to send it to you before the class.

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