

suspect

WATER



Title: 'Aqua diluvii super terram'
Artist: Salvador Dalí



Rodanthe, Cape Hatteras NC, 2010
Photographer: Gary Braasch
WorldViewOfGlobalWarming.org

As noted in the competition prompt "urban waterfronts are unrivaled in their potential for providing for an exceptional or celebratory enterprise". I absolutely agree; however, the urban waterfront is changing and is at risk of being **globally washed away** – the sea level is rising due significantly to global warming.

Sea level rise has occurred at a mean rate of 1.8 mm per year for the past century and at rates estimated up to 3.1 mm per year more recently due to thermal expansion and the melting of continental ice sheets. The Scientific Committee on Antarctic Research (SCAR) calculated that if temperatures continued to increase at the present rate, by 2100 the sea level would rise by up to 1.4 meters — twice that predicted two years ago. More than two-thirds of the world's large cities are in areas vulnerable to rising sea levels, and millions of people are at risk of being swamped by flooding and intense storms. **634 million people** live in the threatened coastal areas worldwide and the number is growing.



Lochachara Island
swallowed by the sea in 1996

180 countries have populations in low-elevation coastal zones, and about 70 percent of those have urban areas of more than 5 million people that are under threat. Among them: Tokyo; New York; Mumbai, India; Shanghai, China; Jakarta, Indonesia; and Dhaka, Bangladesh. Rising seas have already washed an inhabited island off the face of the Earth. The obliteration of India's Lochachara Island (once home to 10,000 people) marks the moment when one of the most apocalyptic predictions of environmentalists and climate scientists has started to come true. As the seas continue to swell, they will swallow whole island nations, from Maldives to the Marshall Islands, and inundate vast areas of Bangladesh to Egypt.

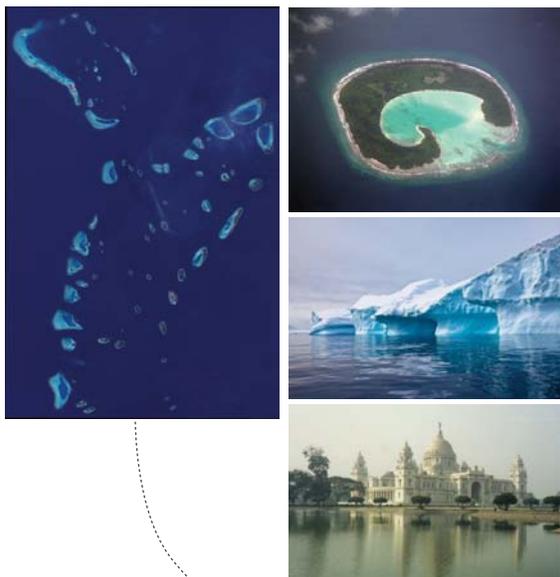


"Of the more than 180 countries with population in the low-elevation coastal zone, 130 of them - about 70% - have their largest urban area extending into that zone...Furthermore, the world's large cities - those with more than 5 million residents - have, on average, one-fifth of their population and one-sixth of their land area within this coastal zone."

-Bridget Anderson, research associate at Columbia University's Center for International Earth Science Information Network.



Areas in the United States that would be affected by a 1 meter rise in the water level



It is imperative that architects, designers, and the general public recognize the rising water level as an **inevitable challenge**. It is too late to reverse the process; however, we can challenge the rise with invention and implementation. In addition to salvaging the areas currently at a severe risk of total inundation, we must understand, speculate and define what urbanism can be with a dominant presence of water.

MOMA is currently exhibiting "Rising Currents: Projects for New York's Waterfront", an installation that presents five fresh proposals for a changing New York coastline. All projects utilize the rising sea level as a design opportunity by integrating the water into functional urban systems (old and invented). The city's relationship to the water is less a coastal "edge", and is more a seamless and systematic blend among the buildings, infrastructure, sea, and nature.

The travel proposal **Suspect: WATER** intends to:

(1) **Document**_ The sea level is permanently erasing as it rises. I will document both natural and built environments of civilizations at risk of inundation and natural features disintegrating due to the temperature rise.



(2) **Study**_ Varying methods of dealing with the rising water level and its effects are already being practiced and explored. I hope to develop a catalog of current architectural, urban, and social strategies for dealing with the water level rise.



(3) **Speculate**_ How can cultures, natural environments, and built civilizations resolve, or at least accept, the inevitable water rise? As information is gathered, I will encourage my creativity to apply observed and learned concepts.

Documentation, Study, and Speculation will be conducted using a variety of mediums: hand and computer drawing, photography, writing (journal and online blog), collage, and digital video. Production will be both informative (raw facts) and experimental (intuitive expressions). All materials will be compiled into a book at the end of the trip. A small installation/presentation will be necessary to exhibit videos and speculations.

Suspect: WATER tentative itinerary:

