



Three millimeters, about one-eighth of an inch, may not sound like much. But when it's the height water is steadily rising outside your doorstep every year, it may as well be three feet if it's anything at all.

On the eastern shores of Maryland, ocean levels are climbing by at least this much — nearly two times the global historic average, according to the state's Department of Natural Resources — and those waters are pushing several small fishing communities to the brink of extinction. Photographer Greg Kahn set out to capture what it's like for these sinking towns in his new series "3 Millimeters."

"The most I had heard [about sea-level rise] was ice caps and glaciers melting and things that were all happening far away that didn't really connect with American soil," he told [weather.com](#). "This was real life being affected by sea-level rise.... It had reached our shores. This was no longer something far off in the distance."

Two years ago, Kahn went to places like Crisfield, Maryland, once considered the seafood capital of the world, now losing new generations of watermen as crab and oyster populations diminish and as water slowly but steadily creeps closer to their homes. "One gentleman I spoke to this weekend said for his entire family history, all he's known are watermen. He's now looking to go into another profession because it's not worth it for him. And he's 18 years old," Kahn said. "There's this huge historical lineage that goes back as far as any of them know. And now that cycle is starting to break."

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