



When the Seas Rise: Global Changes and Local Impacts

Heather Dewar

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The University of Florida has an ambitious goal: to harness the power of its faculty, staff, students, and alumni to solve some of society's most pressing problems and to become a resource for the state of Florida, the nation, and the world.

Sea levels are rising around the globe, and in Florida—with its 1,200 miles of coastline and mostly flat topography—this is of particular concern. The state depends on coastal cities, where 75 percent of the population lives and where more than four-fifths of its economic activity takes place. When economists tally up the likely costs of rising seas, they rank Florida as the most vulnerable state in the nation and Miami as one of the most vulnerable major cities in the world.

When the Seas Rise takes us on an alarming journey from the dying coastal forests, where salt-killed tree trunks stand like sentinels of a retreating army, to the high tide-flooded streets of cities from St. Augustine to Key West. Meet the scientists at the University of Florida—researchers in biology, geology, entomology, horticulture, urban and regional planning, as well as other fields—who, along with other experts around the state, are planning for the sea change already upon us and the greater changes to come. They are working around the clock to predict how global climate shifts will affect the state; to protect drinking water and slow the effects of flooding; to develop new ways to farm; to save our butterflies, sea turtles, Key deer and other endangered creatures; to preserve the state's economy; and to help coastal dwellers plan future havens for the people and wildlife of Florida.

The stories chronicled in GATORBYTES span all colleges and units across the UF campus. They detail the far-reaching impact of UF's research, technologies, and innovations—and the UF faculty members dedicated to them. Gatorbytes describe how UF is continuing to build on its strengths and extend the reach of its efforts so that it can help even more people in even more places.

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