

## **KIRIBATI - a climate change reality**

You are going to watch a short video about an island republic called Kiribati, in the Central Pacific Ocean, approximately 8,000km east of Australia.

Before you watch, look at the expressions and words below. They are used in the video. What do you think the video will be about?

Scientific research	Under water
High tide waves	Extremely vulnerable
Climate change	Victims
Moving to a new house every three years	Relocating the population
Houses disappeared	Maintain identity and the culture
To leave where you come from	Refugees
4 metres high	

Watch the video about Kiribati and check to see how similar your predictions are to the actual video. Tick the expressions from the table as you hear them.

### **Video transcript**

Scientific research shows that the Pacific is the region most affected in the entire world by climate change.

"Our house disappeared because of the erosion. Ten years ago we lived down there. I'm angry because it is where I grew up. I don't want to leave."

In Kiribati one of the biggest threats is sea level rise and that's because Kiribati, which is composed of 33 low-lying atolls, is no more than 4 meters high at the highest point and ... we can say that 100% of the population lives within one kilometer of the coast . So the country is extremely vulnerable.

Given that the scientific research shows that by 2100 it's almost certain now that we'll have more than a meter of sea level rise, on a flat island like Kiribati that amount of sea level rise comes very far inland, so it's a very serious situation, and for that reason the government is looking at options for relocating the population.

"When I came here in 2002 this place now has been completely changed now. As you can you can see it's like a swamp right? How many more years time and then it will be completely ... nobody lives in this village ."

"We've seen the scenarios. The projections put forward by the scientific community I am NOT being pessimistic I'm being very realistic. And I think as a leader it's important that we provide options even if there is that 1% possibility that it will happen, we must provide the options for our people.

"One thing that I want and I've always emphasized is that we never wish to be refugees and we would be refugees if we don't do anything now because a refugee is a response to an unexpected event, okay?

"But we know it's coming so we should be acting accordingly, beginning from now and then we would have our people, if they need to migrate, to migrate with dignity not as refugees."

"I have moved three times. Every three years I moved. My first house was about 20 meters from here - 15 meters, 20 meters from where I'm standing. After another three years I have to move away from here and build another home there."

"And that's your house just over the seawall?"

"Yeah that's my last house. I'm not quite sure how long I will be there, but that depends on how strong my sea wall here (to) stand high tide waves. Nothing we can do about it."

"The younger people are beginning to understand but the older ones it's very very hard for them because they are very attached to the land.... your land you have to stay and die there and it's very hard to leave your island.

"One time we went through the cemetery and there was a funeral took place and this coffin was put into the ground but somehow is floating .... they have to put stones to put it right...

"To us it's very important for our ancestors where you bury your dead."

"I don't want to leave here because I was born here and my sister she's here as well but it's ..... I feel very sad in its (horrible) to leave where you come from."

"The scientists say that in 50 years..... submerged underwater. That's not a happy thought."

"Carbon trading will be of no consequence to us. So there has got to be some very special provisions for the victims not the potential victims the victims because we are victims and so discouraged... there's got to be some very deep soul-searching on the part of people to do something about it.

"We will we remain a sovereign nation, we will remain a people. Will we be able to maintain the identity and the culture that we have? And my answer is yes I will do everything in my power to be able to do so. But at what cost and who is going to pay for it?"

**For questions 1 - 5** choose the best option (a), (b) or (c)

1. According to scientific research, the Pacific is the region most affected by...

A: climate change

B: pollution

C: rising sea levels

2. Kiribati is...

A: lower than 4 metres above sea level

B: a maximum of 4 metres above sea level at the highest point

C: only 4 metres from the sea

3. The projections from scientists make the president of Kiribati feel...

A: pessimistic about the future

B: optimistic about the future

C: realistic about the future

4. According the president of Kiribati, becoming a refugee is caused...

A: by events happening that are expected

B: by events that we can plan for

C: by events that haven't been planned for

5. Tangaroa says that older people from Kiribati don't understand the problems because...
- A: they believe they should stay on their land until they die
  - B: they find it difficult to sell their property
  - C: they have never left before

### **Discussion**

The video you have watched shows how climate change and rising sea levels are affecting the islands of Kiribati and its people. Think about the following questions:

In what way has climate change affected where you live?

How will it affect where you live in 5, 10, 20 or 50 years from now?

How do you feel when you hear people say that climate change isn't real?

<https://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/article/climate-change-0>

Link to the video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cIG7vt1ZPKE>