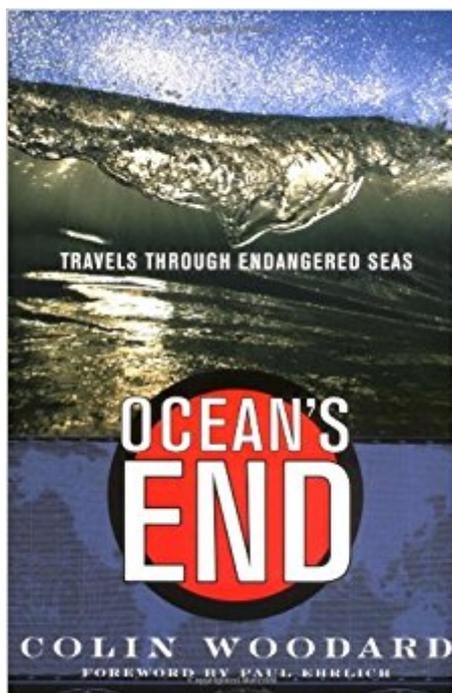


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Ocean's End: Travels Through Endangered Seas



Synopsis

The Black Sea is already dead. Because of sea-level rise, an entire nation in the South Pacific, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, is being washed away. Throughout the Caribbean Sea, vast stretches of coral reef-called the "rainforests of the ocean" because of their diversity of life-are dying at increasingly rapid rates. The reefs along the entire north coast of Jamaica are dead. *Ocean's End* is not about the damage our oceans could suffer (and inflict) in ten or a hundred years, if we're not careful. It's an eyewitness account, in compelling and vivid detail, of the massive worldwide destruction that's already happened.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Take a pristine coral reef off the mangrove-forested coast of Belize, one that draws a handsome roster of fish and other sea creatures--and, therefore, a complement of scuba divers, sports fishermen, photographers, and other consumers of nature. Add an airstrip to serve these cash customers, then a hotel, then a seawall, then a golf course, then a desalination plant. In no time, thanks to the changes you've wrought on the coastal ecology, you'll have a dead reef in a dead patch of sea. Such wanton destruction is the norm for today, writes science journalist Colin Woodard, who debarks from his travels on the world's seas with depressing and unremittingly bad news. One of the victims is the Black Sea of Eurasia, once a thriving extension of the Atlantic, now all but destroyed by "overfishing, oil spills, industrial discharges, nutrient pollution, wetlands

destruction," and other ills. The ravaged Black Sea is mirrored in other places to which Woodard travels: the South Pacific, the Gulf of Mexico, the Antarctic. In such places significant ecological transformations are occurring, all in a very short period of time, all perhaps irreversible, all certainly dangerous to the health of the biosphere. "The oceans," Woodard urges his readers to consider, "are finite and destructible. Wastes dumped and drained into the ocean do not disappear; they are neither economic nor ecological externalities. Likewise, marine fish and animals are not commodities like iron, wheat, or broilers; they are wildlife." Adding to works such as Carl Safina's *Song for the Blue Ocean*, Woodard makes a clear and urgent call for the reversal of all this destruction and for the protection of the world's waters. --Gregory McNamee --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Drawing on his travels across six continents and 100,000 miles, Woodard skillfully supports his argument that pollution, harmful fishing practices, ignorance and global warming are destroying the world's oceans. A global affairs writer for the *Christian Science Monitor*, he swam through algae and human sewage in the Dead Sea, dived among both pristine and bleached coral reefs in the Caribbean waters around Belize and braved the glaciated coasts of Antarctica to see the melting polar ice sheets. With vivid, detailed descriptions, he successfully brings to life the fascinating mysteries of marine science. Most engaging and poignant are Woodard's myriad interviews with people living alongside troubled oceans. From Newfoundland fishermen, out-of-work since the Grand Banks' massive cod stocks were exhausted, to beleaguered residents of the Pacific Ocean's Marshall Islands, who battle fast-encroaching waters and continued contamination from American nuclear weapons testing, he uncovers a colorful cast of scientists, officials, activists, divers and religious missionaries who attest to the human and economic costs of ecological decline. Woodard also outlines strategies that, he contends, must be taken to save our seas. Although his approach is somewhat one-sided, it is a sobering call to action for those interested in the plight of the world's oceans. (Apr.) Copyright 2000 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

As an avid outdoorsman and frequent ocean traveler and steward of 12 Islands along the Maine Coast this book reveals some frightening reality. The read is very difficult at times to get through due to its daunting facts and what we face as a race if we do not start to turn the tide.

Wow, on the heels of reading *Our Stolen Future*, this was a bit of a shock...you know I had no idea

the Black Sea was in such bad shape...I guess I really am out of touch with the world these days. Living in my own particular inner bubble, as it were, I seem to have missed out on some doings I used to pay a great deal of attention to. I've long felt that we're slowly destroying our oceans and seas; I didn't realize we had actually accomplished it somewhere already. I strongly believe that nature is resilient and that it rights itself by restoring balance after we wreak havoc...but we also need to be taking some action and this book really brought that home for me. *Ocean's End* follows Woodward from the Black Sea forward on a global journey that touches on Newfoundland, the Mississippi Delta, Belize and the Great Barrier Reef, the Federated States of Micronesia, and finally to Antarctica. In a compelling journey the documents the once pristine conditions, teeming with in all of these areas with their intensely interesting and varied ecosystems and the native peoples who lived (and still are trying to live) there, to the decline/destruction of these ecosystems and the empty bag they fisherman and villages in these places are left holding. He also takes care to point out that the decline of each ecosystem affects others and the world wide "chain" of them are all interconnected. Additionally, he points out that it's not a localized problem, many of the causes of an ecosystems decline happen far from the location where the ultimate damage is done (the Mississippi Delta for example). Woodward really weaves it all together into a nice package that lays out the depth of the problem and he does give tentative solutions...if anything can successfully be done to "fix" this problem, it won't come easy or cheap and we definitely need to get away from the short-sighted profit driven solutions that have been developed in the past. I'd recommend this in a heart beat, if you don't think this is a serious problem, you should definitely read this book!

Woodard takes us on a world tour of the crisis facing the oceans. From the Antarctic ice sheet to the Cancer alley of the lower Mississippi, Woodard travelled the globe, interviewing policy makers, scientists, and ordinary people affected by the environmental changes. The style is both readable and rigorous. Woodard takes great pains to make clear what is known and what is not, and while clearly reaching "green" conclusions, he is careful to examine different perspectives. Woodard is a master storyteller. The people he comes across in his travels come to life as each chapter unwinds another environmental and economic tragedy in progress. This is a very human book. Woodard doesn't wallow in the "fish-kissers" moral approach to environmentalism (what did that shrimp do to you?). Nor does he delve too deeply into the minutia of the science affecting a particular ecosystem (Do mollusks have brains?) Instead, he makes a compelling case for how the ongoing degradation affects both the local people who rely on a part of the oceans directly and human life as a whole. I highly recommend this book to all concerned world citizens. We are past worrying about what is the

"right" thing to do with respect to the oceans. We need to be concerned about what can be done to prevent a major disruption in the world's economic, climate, and food supply systems.

Ocean's End is one of the most compelling examples of how bad Coastal Zone policy has destroyed vast areas of ocean and shore. It is not too strong a point that human beings in recent history have behaved themselves very, very badly as they looted the seas and dumped their waste and industrial toxins down river or directly into the sea. I am using this book in my International Integrated Coastal Zone Management class as the first assigned textbook. (...)Why? Because I want my graduate students to first see how wonderful the world's oceans and coastal zones are and secondly, how incredibly stupid and short sighted we can be as we mismanage our responsibilities as stewards of these ecosystems. Colin Woodward has done a wonderful job of narrating a gripping, exciting, and infuriating story from the killing of the Black Sea to the plundering of the Newfoundland Grand Banks and all of the other case studies in between. This is a book worth reading and also one that is compellingly interesting and enjoyable. Take it on your next trip or read it and then take my web-based graduate class in International Coastal Management. You'll be ahead of yourself!

Each chapter in this book tells a story illustrating a different crisis, and each gives something new to be outraged over. The stories are well-written, and Ocean's End gives the best summary of global warming that I have read. It is easy to understand (making the reader feel almost intelligent). I would recommend this to everyone, and wish there was a way to get this into high school curricula. My only complaint is the summary. Woodward draws the reader's passions out, but doesn't suggest explicit ways to get involved in the issues. I ended up writing letters to my congressional representatives. Read this book, and start your own letter campaign.

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