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Vol. 20 No. 1
Spring 2008
Display until 5/08
\$5.95 USA/Canada



20TH ANNIVERSARY ISSUE



A photograph of an Antarctic landscape. In the foreground, there is a large, jagged ice formation. The middle ground shows a vast expanse of white snow and ice under a cloudy sky. In the background, a sharp, rocky peak rises above the snow. The bottom of the image shows dark, turbulent water with white foam from a boat's wake.


Antarctica

THE GLOBAL WARMING

an SOS for our planet

BY SEBASTIAN COPELAND

Within as little as eighty years from today, 35 percent of the world's species will disappear. Polar bears will be extinct in the North, and many penguin species will disappear in the South . . . and one question remains: What arrogance is borne out of Man which does not see the significance of this profound and irrevocable loss?



SCALE AND LIGHT. That is how I will remember Antarctica. As I review six cumulative weeks' worth of intense shooting, I am awed by the raw power of nature in this surreal environment, where mankind, yet again, is dwarfed by such gigantic proportions. Towering volcanic peaks plunging precipitously into the sea; glaciers nonchalantly and inexorably pouring into the ocean, where chunks of ice the size of city blocks carry their last hurrah as they float away to their inescapable fate. Trapped in frozen air bubbles are hundreds of thousands of years' worth of environmental data.

Despite the broad areas ominously uncovered by ice and the suspiciously eroding rain, one definitely gets the sense that Antarctica holds untold amounts of geological and climatic secrets—a dynamic environment, rich in mammal and sea life, never conquered by humans.



Yet, remotely and systematically, greed and ignorance are spoiling this extraordinary place, as global temperatures threaten the ice so crucial to the climate balance of our planet. In the last sixty years, the poles have warmed up at more than twice the rate of the rest of the world, while the Antarctic Peninsula has warmed by up to five times the global average. I wonder if, in the future, people will even have the privilege of witnessing what I have seen; and what will they think, then, of those generations who waited so long before taking action.

The poles hold 30 percent of the world's water, and Antarctica, 90 percent of its freshwater. Melting ice is projected to raise ocean levels by as much as twenty feet within the next couple of centuries, uprooting 80 percent of the world's population. Within as little as eighty years from today, 35 percent of the world's species will disappear. Polar bears will be extinct in the North, and many penguin species will disappear in the South . . . and one question remains: What arrogance is borne out of Man which does not see the significance of this profound and irrevocable loss?

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What better way to experience great music but to share it? The same is true of images. I am grateful for the chance to share these, and I thank you for the privilege of inviting you into your world. To celebrate this magnificent landscape is also a way for me to remember how fragile and precious it is. This is your home. 🌍

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