The Hungry Tide

Director Tom Zubrycki
2011, 89 mins.
English and Kiribati, with English subtitles

Screening will be followed by a discussion with Margaret Jolly, ARC Laureate Fellow and professor in Anthropology, Gender, Media and Cultural Studies and Pacific Studies in the School of Culture, History and Language at ANU.

MARIA TIIMON is from the central Pacific nation of Kiribati, but now lives in Sydney, where she works for an NGO raising awareness of Pacific climate change issues to schools and community groups. But her spiritual home remains the small atoll of Beru, where her father, a proud village elder, lives. As rising sea levels and increasing salinity immediately threaten the lives of 105,000 people spread over 33 atolls, Maria struggles to balance the needs of her family back home, with the urgent task of raising awareness of her nation’s plight in the international community. She attends the 2009 Copenhagen Climate Change Conference (COP15), but it again fails to create consensus, or to affirm binding targets for climate action. Kiribati’s president believes a mass relocation may be the only solution, but this demands resources, and more importantly—where could they move to? Meanwhile, Maria’s personal life suddenly draws her, and the filmmaker, back to Kiribati.