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Two local residents wade through flooding caused by high ocean tides in low-lying parts of Majuro Atoll, the capital of the Marshall Islands.
Geography

- Atoll: A ring shaped reef, island, or chain of islands formed of corals
- Exclusive economic zone covers an area of 750,000 square miles
- Archipelago consisting of two parallel island chains
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- aelōñ kein ad – our atolls
- Bwebwenato
- Ethnography
- Navigators
- Matrilineal society
- Aje drum
- English Capt. John Marshall named/mapped aelōñ kein ad in passing
WORLD WAR II

• U.S. forces captured the Marshall Islands from the Japanese in 1944
• After WWII, the U.S. occupied the archipelago (1944 – 1947)
• The UN created the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands and administered by the US (1947 – 1986)
U.S. NUCLEAR TESTING PROGRAM (1946 – 1958)

- Bikini and Enewetak Atolls are chosen by the US to test nuclear weapons
- Forced relocations
- US tested 67 nuclear weapons on Bikini and Enewetak
Castle Bravo (1954) – 1,000x force of bomb dropped on Hiroshima

Atomic Energy Commission doctor examines Yoshi, a Rongelapese boy, after Bravo; (left) the crater left at Bikini Atoll from Bravo, which vaporized 3 islands.
Nuclear Explosion Power Comparison

- Hiroshima, Japan 1945
- Castle Bravo, Marshall Islands 1954
- Tsar Bomb, Russia 1961
- Marshall Islands 1946 - 1958

Kilotons
U.S.-RMI Nuclear Legacy

ECOLOGICAL, BIOLOGICAL PROBLEMS

- Nuclear Waste / Runit Dome
- Prevalence of diabetes, cancer, illnesses with unknown causes
- Tropical Cyclone / Rising Sea Level
CLIMATE CHANGE

- Land elevations are low, with a mean height above sea level at 2 meters
- Severe storms, flooding and drought
- Loss of arable land
- Coastal erosion

Majuro after a storm.
Effects of sea level rise in the islands

Sea levels in the Marshall Islands are rising at a rate of more than three millimeters per year, meaning a potential rise of more than 80 centimeters by the end of this century. A rise of only 62 centimeters would put much of the capital, Majuro, under water.

- 1.5°C
- Most of the islands are less than a 1.6 km wide
- Coral extinction
CULTURAL GENOCIDE

- Profit over Planet
- Glacial melt, rising sea level
- Loss of land = loss of culture