



Please join us for this week's LACIS Lunchtime Lecture...

"Lakes Rising: A Climate Change Mystery in the Caribbean"*

Tuesday, April 26th

12:00-1:00 p.m.

206 Ingraham



**Presented by Jacob Kushner,
Foreign correspondent (UW'10)**

****Please note that this lecture will be followed by an informal roundtable discussion (led by Jacob) on international journalism, non-profit and NGO careers.***

About the presentation: During the past ten years, the surface of two Caribbean lakes rose ten meters. Ten meters straight up. Entire towns sank beneath the water's surface. And nobody knows why.

The Dominican Republic and Haiti, which share the Caribbean island of Hispaniola, have seen natural disasters before—earthquakes, hurricanes, floods. But nothing like this. Experts from the United Nations, a French NGO, a Dominican university, a New York college and others have looked for clues to explain the cause behind the rise of Lake Azuei in Haiti and Lake Enriquillo in the Dominican Republic. Some hypothesize the phenomenon is related to climate change, but the evidence is counterintuitive: Unlike ocean levels, which are rising, lakes across the globe tend to shrink.

While scientists scramble to figure it out, thousands of Dominicans whose farmland sunk beneath the water have little choice but to turn to a more nefarious occupation: charcoal. They're cutting down tens of thousands of trees to produce 50,000 tons of charcoal annually, wreaking havoc on an ecosystem that's already fragile due to the rising water. They transport the charcoal to Haiti under the cover of darkness on small boats across one of the same, rising lakes.

National Geographic and the Pulitzer Center on Crisis Reporting sent journalist Jacob Kushner to investigate the mystery behind the rise of these two lakes. In this presentation, Jacob will argue that it's urgent for journalists to do a far better job of explaining climate change to the general public. And he'll discuss the challenges of doing so when there's so much we still don't know.

Co-Sponsored by the School of Journalism. Free & open to the public. Please contact Sarah Ripp at skripp@wisc.edu with any questions.