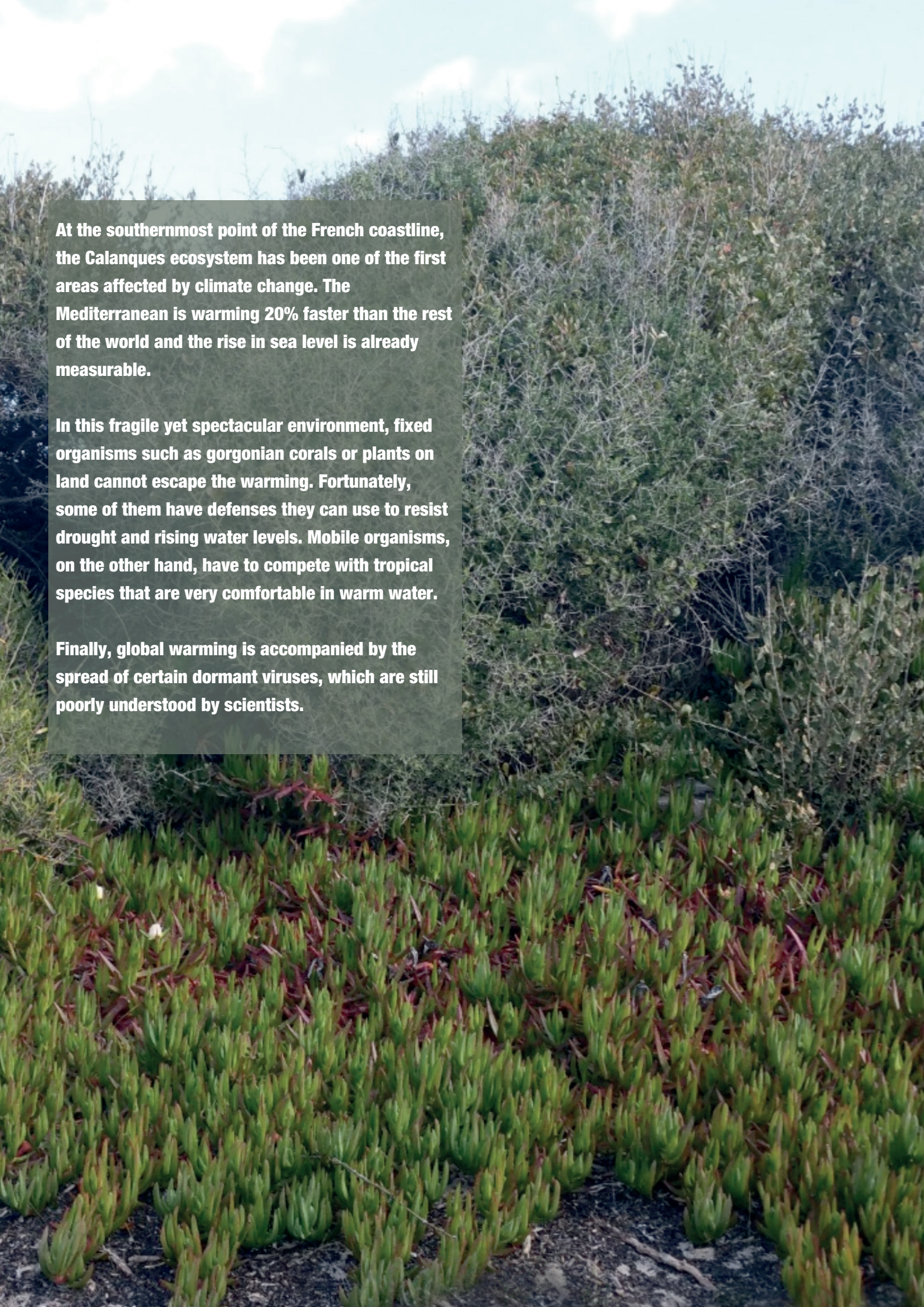


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THE BURNING SEA

MEDITERRANEAN FIGHTING CLIMATE CHANGE

A documentary by Sacha Bollet
Produced by Cicada production



At the southernmost point of the French coastline, the Calanques ecosystem has been one of the first areas affected by climate change. The Mediterranean is warming 20% faster than the rest of the world and the rise in sea level is already measurable.

In this fragile yet spectacular environment, fixed organisms such as gorgonian corals or plants on land cannot escape the warming. Fortunately, some of them have defenses they can use to resist drought and rising water levels. Mobile organisms, on the other hand, have to compete with tropical species that are very comfortable in warm water.

Finally, global warming is accompanied by the spread of certain dormant viruses, which are still poorly understood by scientists.

SUMMARY

At the southernmost point of the French coastline, the Calanques National Park is one of France's most recently created reserves, covering 200 square miles of mostly marine area. This semi-desert environment receives less than 12 inches of rainfall each year. The ground is sometimes reduced to a thin layer of earth, swept by the violent mistral wind. The effects of global warming are beginning to be felt both on land and in the water, impacting the area's singular flora and fauna.

Recently, the sea has been subject to several heatwaves. On land and in the water, native organisms are suffering strong competition from fish or plants from warmer or more arid latitudes. Viruses and bacteria that have lain dormant in the water have been awakened and are proliferating because of the heat.

Under these conditions, some organisms have already been devastated. Others are showing an unexpected ability to adapt... This film will reveal these global warming warriors, within a highly diverse ecosystem that stretches over a width of less than ten miles: from coastal scrubland to sea depths, from shallow coastal sea beds to small islands.





DIRECTOR'S NOTE

NARRATION AND TRANSITIONS

The film begins at the end of a summer storm. The water temperature is 16° Celsius. The coast is whipped by heavy spray. The wind drops and the temperature begins to rise. Scene after scene shows the land and sea heating up: a heat wave sets in.

The film uses narration that will add information to the visuals that can be seen on screen. The voiceover will be used to decode and explain the behavior or interactions of animals or plants and the underlying biological, hormonal or mechanical processes.

At the beginning of the episode, the main structure of the documentary will be presented: crossing the ecosystem from one side to the other in order to meet the very different animals and plants that live there... and survive as best they can in the face of climate change.

This ecosystem was chosen because it represents an "extremity" in which organisms are cornered.

Over a few hundred feet, tiny variations in the environment allow us to tell a dozen surprising animal or plant stories, in connection with global warming.

To move from one to the next, transitions are made fluidly using the movement of an animal to lead the narrative to the next sequence. Links between cause and effect can also take the viewer to discover a new plant or animal by moving through the ecosystem.

PANORAMAS, HYPERLAPSES AND MACRO DETAILS

To explore these ecosystems, we will combine majestic panoramas with macroscopic details. This allows us to show these environments as a whole or seen from the sky and to reveal their physical characteristics. Filmed from the ground or from a drone, timelapse and hyperlapse photography will allow us to show changes of weather on the landscape as well as certain phenomena that are too slow to be perceived by the human eye, like the blooming of flowers, the ripening of a fruit or the movements of a mollusk.

To explain what is special about these environments, we must also look closely at the organisms that inhabit them. Our goal is to show the beauty in the hundreds of tentacles of a sea urchin, or the powdery scales of the Apollo butterfly. By getting up close, we also allow the viewer to better understand the function of certain anatomical details: how the down covering the pasqueflower helps it resist the cold or how the shy Elysium, a small green sea slug, stores chloroplasts in its back for photosynthesis.

TILT-SHIFT LENS

To reinforce this impression of a small, precious world, a few shots using a tilt-shift lens will give a strong identity to the introductory scenes. In wide-angle, this lens has the particularity of creating a "model" effect that miniaturizes the spaces and characters. The viewers become giants, invited to observe this natural setting as they move from one story to another.

MUSICAL SCENERY

An original soundtrack will be composed for the episode using sampled elements of the landscape which will be reworked electronically. Rolling pebbles or lapping waves are just some of the many instruments that will be used to create organic and melodic music.

To make sense of the heat that progressively increases throughout the film, we will try to translate global warming into sound by starting with a rather simple piece of music: a light returning theme, which gradually becomes richer with instruments until it becomes a kind of symphony, a testimony to the upheavals that are highlighted in the documentary.



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