

Capturing the unseen: A last word before the dive

Semi-finalist

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Image location: Isla Natividad, Baja California, Mexico



Image Description

This image captures a fisherman from a small Mexican fishing community seconds before diving deep into the cold ocean to complete his catch. His prayers seek protection and swift bounty as the ocean changes. Unlike the conventional figure of a fisherman on a boat, his livelihood depends on his ability to overcome the challenges of the deep ocean. However, climate change is already threatening the livelihoods of coastal communities, and small fisheries in developing countries are particularly vulnerable.

My research focuses on the multifaceted impact of climate change on the health and well-being of fishing communities. During my journey to Mexico in the summer of 2023, I spent several months unlearning and re-learning about these communities. This moment, in particular, profoundly impacted me as I saw firsthand the immense burden they carry. The community depends on the diver's ability to brave the tides and currents to bring in food and income, and climate change is making this more challenging. I realized that climate challenges have a greater impact than expected. Through my research, I aim to raise the unseen, the local voices and work towards a sustainable future for all.

Image Creation

This photo was taken as part of a community-based research project conducted in Mexico. Data collection included a photography elicitation approach and in-depth, open-ended interviews with fishers and community members. As part of the photo-elicitation approach, I followed participants in their daily routines to learn about their livelihoods and the risks of climate change. This photo was taken during a fisherman's regular working day. I was standing on the boat's stern, giving space to the fishers. While this moment was unexpected, it provided a striking and beautiful documentary photo. The image was taken using an APC-S camera with a 70-200 mm lens at 80 mm. I used this lens to isolate the subject from the environment to show this private and profound moment of connection between the fisherman and God. The photo was taken with natural light on a cloudy and windy day.