Last night I watched glaciers more than 30,000 years old break open and crash into the ocean – disappearing in mere seconds. In photographer James Balog's new documentary, *Chasing Ice*, he and a small team embark upon a multi-year "Extreme Ice Survey" to document 18 glaciers in remote regions of the world, including Iceland, Greenland and Alaska. The film serves as a visual record of our rapidly changing world and its powerful, violent impact on our most ancient and enduring landscapes.

I was struck by many things in the film. First, the scale of these glaciers is just enormous, yet they are increasingly fragile due to our warming atmosphere. In one memorable scene, a sheet of ice larger than the entire island of Manhattan splits off – a process known as calving – and drifts away, melting into the sea. It is more reminiscent of the sinking Titanic than anything I've ever seen before, yet the titanic would hardly be visible in this sheet of ice; it would be a mere gray speck on the gigantic ice sheet.

Second, this process in not "natural," in the way that we would normally think of melting ice. These enormous, ancient glaciers are vanishing at an extremely rapid pace. Balog documents the retreat of several glaciers each year, and it is pronounced. Literally, a retreating "front" in the climate war we have been waging, silently, for decades. In addition, once the ice begins to thin, it melts at a quicker pace due to massive fractures and rivers of water that carve channels throughout the glacier.

Ice serves as the memory of the world. Ice core data described in the film shows clearly that atmospheric temperature rise and CO2 levels are [unprecedented and off the charts](). The images of retreating ice sheets and glaciers visualize global warming for us in a way that we cannot deny.

Chasing Ice, to me, is a great example of how to make climate change real and visible for people. It's also a terrific story about a man pursuing his passion. Balog wants to be able to tell the next generation,"I was doing everything I knew how to do."