Fossil corals reveal climate change during the Earth's last warm period

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Abstract

Around 125,000 years ago Earth was relatively warmer than today All because Earth's orbit permitted greater exposure to incoming solar rays This time period provides an example of how Earth's climate might respond to future warming A recent study used fossil corals to explore past changes within the Tropical Atlantic a region sensitive to shifts in the rain belt that spans the equator Any effect this has on water bodies is captured within the reefs built by corals Oxygen isotopes within seven corals reveal 85 years of seasonal climate change Pairing the coral data with computer simulations showed the rain belt moved farther north bringing more summer rain to the islands of the South Caribbean, such as Bonaire in contrast to the dry weather found in the region today Brocas et al. Last Interglacial Hydroclimate Seasonality Reconstructed From Tropical Atlantic Corals. (2018) Paleoceanography and Paleoclimatology