A Large Drop in Atmospheric $^{14}C/^{12}C$ and Reduced Melting in the Younger Dryas, Documented with $^{230}Th$ Ages of Corals


Paired carbon-14 ($^{14}C$) and thorium-230 ($^{230}Th$) ages were determined on fossil corals from the Huon Peninsula, Papua New Guinea. The ages were used to calibrate the part of the $^{14}C$ time scale and to estimate rates of sea-level rise during the last deglaciation. An abrupt offset between the $^{14}C$ and $^{230}Th$ ages suggests that the atmospheric $^{14}C/^{12}C$ ratio dropped by 15 percent during the latter part of and after the Younger Dryas (YD). This prominent drop coincides with greatly reduced rates of sea-level rise. Reduction of melting because of cooler conditions during the YD may have caused an increase in the rate of ocean ventilation, which caused the atmospheric $^{14}C/^{12}C$ ratio to fall. The record of sea-level rise also shows that globally averaged rates of melting were relatively high at the beginning of the YD. Thus, these measurements satisfy one of the conditions required by the hypothesis that the diversion of meltwater from the Mississippi to the St. Lawrence River triggered the YD event.

Carbon-14 dating requires prior knowledge of secular variations in the atmospheric $^{14}C/^{12}C$ ratio (1). This ratio changes in response to shifts in the intensity of the solar or terrestrial magnetic fields, which modulate incoming cosmic rays responsible for atmospheric $^{14}C$ production. Changes in the atmospheric $^{14}C/^{12}C$ ratio may also result from redistribution of carbon of different isotopic compositions among various carbon reservoirs. Detailed records of atmospheric $^{14}C/^{12}C$ have been obtained for the last 11,000 years from measurements of carbon in wood, where annual tree rings provide an independent chronology for the establishment of variations in the atmospheric $^{14}C/^{12}C$ ratio (2-4). However, extension of the record to earlier times has been hindered by lack of an appropriate absolute chronometer.

As early as 1965, Kaufman and Broecker (5) used $^{230}Th$ dating of carbonates for absolute time control in $^{14}C$ calibration. The early measurements constrained the past atmospheric $^{14}C/^{12}C$ ratio, but detailed records were not possible because alpha-counting measurements of $^{234}U$ and $^{238}Th$ were not sufficiently precise. In recent years, the development of thermal ionization mass spectrometric (TIMS) methods for the measurement of $^{234}U$ (6) and $^{230}Th$ (7) resulted in large increases in analytical precision and sensitivity. By the application of TIMS measurements to fossil corals, Edwards and colleagues (7) obtained $^{230}Th$ ages that were more precise than $^{14}C$ ages. This breakthrough made it possible to calibrate the $^{14}C$ chronometer with combined $^{230}Th$ age determinations and $^{14}C/^{12}C$ analyses. Fairbanks (8) recovered the first sequence of appropriate age for the extension of the atmospheric $^{14}C/^{12}C$ record by underwater drilling off the coast of Barbados. This sequence showed large offsets between $^{14}C$ and $^{230}Th$ ages (9), which suggests that the atmospheric $^{14}C/^{12}C$ ratio was high about 20,000 years ago. The subsequent drop in the atmospheric $^{14}C/^{12}C$ ratio was originally attributed to an increase in the terrestrial magnetic-field strength. However, Suvi and co-workers (10) have raised questions about the Barbados data because this record disagrees with $^{14}C/^{12}C$ records from some varved lake sediments.

The same Barbados corals show a record of sea-level rise during the last deglaciation (8). Their depth and age relationships suggest that the rate was characterized by two meltwater pulses separated by a period of reduced melting (PRM). The timing of the PRM has implications for the cause of the Younger Dryas (YD), an interval of time during deglaciation when the climate in northern Europe returned to near-glacial conditions. However, Broecker (11) has questioned the record because the inferred meltwater pulses occurred at core breaks.

In this report, we present a new coral record derived from a single drill core from the Huon Peninsula, Papua New Guinea. This record has similarities to the Barbados record but also important differences, which have implications regarding the calibration of the $^{14}C$ time scale, the cause of a large decrease in the atmospheric $^{14}C/^{12}C$
ratio, the rate of sea-level rise during deglaciation, and the cause of the YD. Most of the New Guinea samples are from a drill site 5 km southeast of the village of Sialum (12). The top of the core is 6 m above sea level, and the base is 46 m below sea level. When this record is corrected for tectonic uplift (13), the core represents material that grew while sea level was rising from 71 to 8 m below the present sea level. Several common shallow-water coral genera, mostly *Porites* sp., were analyzed. Additional, previously reported $^{14}$C ages showed that the core ranges in age from 7,000 to 11,000 $^{14}$C years old (12, 14).

For small samples, $^{14}$C/$^{12}$C ratios were measured by accelerator mass spectrometry at the University of Arizona (15–18). Samples larger than 20 g were analyzed by high-precision, conventional-gas proportional counting of acetylene gas at Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution (18, 19). A key aspect of the procedure in both laboratories is the addition of a selective dissolution step, which removes potential contamination. Diagenetic processes can add significant amounts of carbon with high $^{14}$C/$^{12}$C ratios to corals (17, 20, 21), but selective dissolution techniques can remove such natural contaminants (17). Selective dissolution was not used in the original Barbados $^{14}$C calibration (9) but was applied later (22). The $^{14}$C/$^{12}$C values for selectively dissolved samples from the latter data set are generally lower than the original ones (21), which suggests that the latter data are more reliable. Consequently further reference to the Barbados $^{14}$C data in this report is restricted to the selectively dissolved samples in (22).

We were also concerned about potential inaccuracies in $^{230}$Th ages. Corals with ages that are known independently, from annual

Table 1. Data for U, Th, and C isotopes; $^{14}$C and $^{230}$Th ages. The last significant figures of the 2e errors are in parentheses. The $^{14}$C analyses were made at Arizona except those labeled w, which were made at Woods Hole.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sample*</th>
<th>$^{208}$U</th>
<th>$^{238}$Th</th>
<th>$^{234}$U measured</th>
<th>$^{238}$U initial</th>
<th>$^{230}$Th</th>
<th>$^{230}$Th age (years B.P.)</th>
<th>$^{14}$C age$^+$</th>
<th>$\Delta^{14}$C (per mil)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HOB-EE-5</td>
<td>2.66</td>
<td>68 (2)</td>
<td>149 (1.4)</td>
<td>149.8 (1.5)</td>
<td>0.01938 (9)</td>
<td>1808 (9)</td>
<td>1920 (100)</td>
<td>192 (11)</td>
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<tr>
<td>KAI-EE-1</td>
<td>2.647</td>
<td>62 (1)</td>
<td>149.7 (1.3)</td>
<td>150.4 (1.3)</td>
<td>0.01908 (8)</td>
<td>1778 (9)</td>
<td>1850 (40)*</td>
<td>15 (5)</td>
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<tr>
<td>KAI-BB-3</td>
<td>2.707</td>
<td>74 (2)</td>
<td>148.8 (1.2)</td>
<td>149.8 (1.2)</td>
<td>0.02500 (10)</td>
<td>2350 (11)</td>
<td>2490 (110)</td>
<td>25 (23)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KAI-BB-3</td>
<td>2.411</td>
<td>115 (4)</td>
<td>145.3 (1.1)</td>
<td>146.8 (1.2)</td>
<td>0.07837 (26)</td>
<td>7656 (26)</td>
<td>7230 (60)</td>
<td>26 (10)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HOB-EO-3</td>
<td>2.302</td>
<td>48 (6)</td>
<td>146.1 (1.1)</td>
<td>150.3 (1.1)</td>
<td>0.09992 (42)</td>
<td>9680 (44)</td>
<td>9340 (110)</td>
<td>15 (15)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KAI-BB-3</td>
<td>2.455</td>
<td>35 (9)</td>
<td>146.8 (1.2)</td>
<td>150.1 (1.3)</td>
<td>0.10086 (26)</td>
<td>9591 (25)</td>
<td>8860 (120)</td>
<td>103 (17)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>2.663</td>
<td>745 (12)</td>
<td>147 (1.1)</td>
<td>151.3 (1.2)</td>
<td>0.06509 (69)</td>
<td>8363 (71)</td>
<td>7850 (140)</td>
<td>74 (20)</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.875</td>
<td>290 (9)</td>
<td>147.6 (2.2)</td>
<td>151.3 (2.2)</td>
<td>0.08936 (40)</td>
<td>8760 (51)</td>
<td>7750 (270)</td>
<td>100 (65)</td>
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<td>3.372</td>
<td>178 (11)</td>
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<td>149.5 (1.2)</td>
<td>0.09776 (69)</td>
<td>9642 (72)</td>
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<td>0.10690 (73)</td>
<td>10400 (73)</td>
<td>9340 (110)</td>
<td>118 (19)</td>
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<td>0.11035 (50)</td>
<td>10955 (54)</td>
<td>9790 (120)</td>
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<td>106 (2)</td>
<td>144.4 (1.3)</td>
<td>148.9 (1.4)</td>
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<td>10912 (27)</td>
<td>10960 (60)</td>
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<td>149.9 (1.3)</td>
<td>0.11122 (53)</td>
<td>11054 (67)</td>
<td>9960 (90)</td>
<td>97 (14)</td>
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<td>2.848</td>
<td>544 (7)</td>
<td>146.2 (1.7)</td>
<td>151.3 (1.7)</td>
<td>0.12120 (64)</td>
<td>12040 (70)</td>
<td>10430 (140)</td>
<td>178 (20)</td>
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<td>3.262</td>
<td>86 (10)</td>
<td>144.5 (1.4)</td>
<td>149.6 (1.4)</td>
<td>0.12169 (53)</td>
<td>12155 (66)</td>
<td>10410 (120)</td>
<td>190 (18)</td>
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<td>3.389</td>
<td>316 (7)</td>
<td>145.5 (0.9)</td>
<td>150.7 (0.9)</td>
<td>0.12346 (39)</td>
<td>12332 (39)</td>
<td>10200 (130)</td>
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<td>3.457</td>
<td>94 (4)</td>
<td>145.0 (1.6)</td>
<td>150.4 (1.6)</td>
<td>0.12790 (30)</td>
<td>12818 (27)</td>
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<td>4.58</td>
<td>316 (8)</td>
<td>146.9 (1.2)</td>
<td>152.3 (1.2)</td>
<td>0.12838 (63)</td>
<td>12837 (68)</td>
<td>10970 (140)</td>
<td>248 (19)</td>
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growth bands and 14C dating, demonstrate that 230Th ages are accurate for carefully selected samples younger than 8000 years old (7, 9). However, some corals older than several tens of thousands of years have initial 234U/238U ratios greater than modern marine values. Thus, exchange of uranium may have occurred after skeletal growth (7, 23, 24). To increase sensitivity in detecting uranium of diagenetic origin, we modified (25) procedures (6, 7) to increase further the precision with which the 234U/238U ratio can be measured. Measurements were made at the University of Minnesota on a Finnigan MAT 262 RPQ thermal ionization mass spectrometer. Eight measurements of 234U/238U in New Brunswick Laboratories (NBL) Standard Reference Material 112a (26) gave a mean 234U/238U value of 52.854 ± 0.006 × 10^-6, which corresponds to a 234U/238U value (27) of -34.1 ± 1.2 per mil, where the error is the external error (2σ of the population of the eight measurements). The external and counting-statistics errors are similar, indicating that the only significant source of imprecision is from counting statistics. The 234U/238U value agrees with earlier determinations (6, 28); however, precisions are higher, which is important for the detection of samples that may have exchanged small amounts of uranium (Fig. 1).

Initial 234U/238U values (27) for two young Huon Peninsula corals collected from surface exposures (HOB-EE-5 and KAI-EE-1 in Table 1) agree with the value for a young (132 ± 3 years) sample from Barbados (24). The agreement of the initial values from different oceans suggests that spatial variations in the 234U/238U ratio of open-ocean surface seawater are not resolvable. The mean of 149.7 ± 1.5 per mil (2σ) for the two Huon Peninsula samples and one Barbados sample gives a precise 234U/238U value for surface seawater. Initial 234U/238U values of all other samples (Fig. 1 and Table 1) are indistinguishable, at a precision of ±1 per mil, from this value. Thus, the data show no evidence for diagenetic exchange of uranium. The initial 234U/238U values show that the marine 234U/238U ratio varied by no more than 2 per mil in the last 13,000 years. This interval is just the period over which one would expect possible glacial-interglacial shifts in uranium isotopic composition of the sort that were recently documented for the 87Sr/86Sr ratio (29). Because none were observed, any shifts must have been smaller than 2 per mil.

The difference between the 14C/12C ratio of the atmosphere and that of the surface seawater (the reservoir effect) near the drill site was established by analysis of a surface sample (HOB-EE-5b in Table 1). The Δ14C value (30, 31) at the time the coral grew was calculated from the measured 14C/12C ratio and the 230Th age. The difference between the known atmospheric 14C/12C ratio (2, 32) at the time of growth and the initial value for the coral is 49.4 ± 6.6 (2σ) per mil, equivalent to a difference in radiocarbon age of 407 ± 52 years. This value is consistent with previous estimates for the Huon Peninsula reservoir effect (12) as well as the estimate from KAI-EE-1, another coral that grew within the period for which the atmospheric 14C/12C ratio is known from dendrochronology (Table 1). This correction has been subtracted from all of our 14C ages.

For drill-core samples, 14C ages range between 6530 ± 110 (2σ) and 10,970 ± 110 years B.P. (14) for coral that grew while the sea level rose from 71 to 8 m below the present sea level (13) (Fig. 2). The ages are similar to those previously reported for different samples from the same core (12). The rise in sea level inferred from our 14C curve is also similar to the value from the Barbados curve (8, 12). However, the Huon curve shows no evidence for slower sea-level rise during and before the YD, as does the Barbados 14C curve. The 230Th ages for core samples range from 8,363 ± 71 to 13,129 ± 84 years B.P. for coral that grew while the sea level rose from 71 to 14 m below its present height (13) (Fig. 2). The ages increase progressively with depth, as do the accurate values, and no genera-related discrepancies in age were noted. For the 14C curve, the 230Th curve shows dramatic evidence for slower sea-level rise between 12,332 ± 39 and 11,045 ± 57 years B.P. (14) (between 10,200 ± 130 and 9,990 ± 90 14C years B.P.). The rate of upward reef growth, and the presumed rate of sea-level rise, decreased from as rapid as 16 m per thousand years before this interval to 2 m per thousand years during the interval and then increased immediately after the interval to rates as high as 28 m per thousand years (Fig. 3). This pattern supports the idea that deglaciation was punctuated by at least one PRM (8, 33). Unlike that of the Barbados curve, the PRM recorded in the Huon Peninsula core was shorter, younger, and characterized by a lower melt rate. The discrepancies may reflect differences in sample density, potential artifacts associated with core breaks, potential downslope movement of corals, or corals that grew at significant but variable depths below sea level. The relatively high melt rate for the PRM recorded at Barbados is in part an artifact because the original Barbados meltwater curve (8) was based on 14C dates. The 14C time scale is now known to be highly compressed at about 10,000 14C years B.P.
years ago (8 and below), which has led to the calculation of artificially high melt rates. Even if the Barbados curve is recalculated with $^{230}$Th dates (Fig. 3), it still gives a relatively high melt rate for the PRM. More refined studies may ultimately resolve these discrepancies. In support of the Huon Peninsula record, the most prominent feature in the sea-level curve is the PRM, which coincides with the most prominent feature in the $^{14}$C/$^{12}$C curve. We defend this relationship as more than coincidental.

Knowledge of the temporal relationship between the PRM and the YD helps to distinguish between hypotheses regarding the cause of the YD. It has been hypothesized that diversion of meltwater from the Mississippi into the St. Lawrence River caused the YD by lowering the salinity of North Atlantic surface water (34). Low-density surface water hindered the convective sinking of North Atlantic Deep Water (NADW). Because NADW sinking is responsible for meridional heat transport to the North Atlantic, a lower rate of NADW formation resulted in cooler conditions during the YD. The Barbados chronology does not support this idea because it implies that the PRM started before and continued throughout the YD (8, 35). A low melt rate that began before the YD would not have allowed formation of the low salinity cap required by the meltwater-diversion hypothesis. In contrast, our data (Figs. 2 and 3) suggest that the rise in sea level slowed after the onset of the YD and increased again several hundred years after its end. This discrepancy between the Barbados and Huon Peninsula data is critical. Because our data indicate high melt rates at the start of the YD, we suggest that meltwater input or diversion is a plausible trigger for the YD. Our data show that the melt rate fell to its lowest value during the YD. Therefore, one must determine another mechanism besides the continued input of low-density meltwater to explain the cool climate toward the end of the YD. The reduced melting after the onset of the YD would appear to be a response to cooling during the YD rather than a phenomenon that is necessarily related to the cause of the YD.

For three of four samples within the range for which $^{14}$C is well calibrated (2, 3), our combined $^{230}$Th and $^{14}$C data agree with the established dendrochronology, consistent with accurate ages and a temporally constant reservoir effect (Table 1 and Figs. 4 and 5). Values for the fourth point (KAI-BB-3) are slightly off the calibration, a discrepancy that we do not understand. Data for all eight samples with ages that lie within the range for which $^{14}$C is calibrated with a floating chronology (4) agree with the calibration, which makes them consistent with accurate ages, a constant reservoir effect, and accurate placement of the floating chronology. For parts of the curve between 13 and 11 thousand years ago (ka), a period for which no dendrochronological calibration is available, the data offer several.
eral inferences. At 13,130 years B.P., $^{14}$C ages are 2,160 years younger than $^{147}$Th ages, corresponding to an atmospheric $^{14}$C of 249 ± 18 per mil (30). At 12,330 years B.P., the offset is about the same, 2,130 years ($^{14}$C of 247 ± 20 per mil). However, by 11,050 years B.P., the offset has diminished to 1,050 years ($^{14}$C of 97 ± 14 per mil), a value similar to that observed for the next several thousand years (2, 3). Over a period of 1,280 years between 12,330 and 11,050 years B.P., radiocarbon ages only diminish by about 210 years. Within error, the Huon Peninsula data from 13 to 11 ka are consistent with the Barbados data (22) (Figs. 4 and 5), which indicates that coral analyses are reproducible from two localities with different diagenetic environments and potentially different reservoir effects. Because of their smaller analytical errors and higher sample density, the Huon Peninsula data suggest that there was a large $^{14}$C decrease (150 ± 24 per mil) within a short time interval (1280 ± 70 years). The decrease and the PRM were synchronous (Fig. 5), suggesting that the decrease was related to global melt rates. The decrease is the most prominent feature in the record of atmospheric $^{14}$C/$^{12}$C variations over the last 20,000 years and represents almost two-thirds of the total lowering of atmospheric $^{14}$C between 19 and 11 ka (Fig. 5) (36).

A change in $^{14}$C production in the upper atmosphere, which changes the average $^{14}$C of the combined atmosphere, ocean, and biosphere, could be caused by a change in either the terrestrial or solar magnetic fields. The latter is difficult to rule out because we have no direct way of obtaining independent records of the solar magnetic field. It is clear, however, that a simple relation among sun, climate, and $^{14}$C, as has been discussed for the Maunder Minimum (37), does not hold for the YD. For most of the last 20,000 years, there appears to have been an anticorrelation between the Earth's magnetic dipole intensity (38, 39) and atmospheric $^{14}$C. Thus, millennial-scale fluctuations in $^{14}$C may have resulted from changes in the intensity of the terrestrial magnetic dipole (2, 3, 9). However, the most prominent decrease in the $^{14}$C record (Fig. 5) does not correspond to a comparably prominent increase in the magnetic record, which suggests that changes in the terrestrial magnetic field did not cause most of the decrease. Furthermore, the large average rate of the atmospheric $^{14}$C decrease (117 ± 20 per mil per thousand years) is about the rate at which the average $^{14}$C of the ocean-atmosphere system would decrease if $^{14}$C production stopped completely. Thus, the rapidity of the decrease implicates a mechanism that does not involve production changes alone.

Because the ocean contains 95% of the exchangeable carbon in the ocean, atmosphere, and biosphere, nonproduction-related changes in atmospheric $^{14}$C are most probably related to changes in the ocean. One manifestation of a perturbation in the carbon cycle is the rise in the atmospheric $^{14}$C concentration during the last deglaciation, which is documented by measurements of $^{14}$C in ice cores (40). Box models indicate that such a rise in $^{14}$C could be accompanied by a decrease in atmospheric $^{14}$C of 25 to 75 per mil (9, 41). Although dating uncertainties preclude detailed correlation with the decrease in $^{14}$C/$^{12}$C that is inferred from the Huon Peninsula corals, the ice-core data show that the change in $^{14}$C may not have been unidirectional during deglaciation and that some of the net glacial-interglacial rise in $^{14}$C concentration could have taken place at about the YD interval. Thus, some but not all of the $^{14}$C decrease may have resulted from ocean-circulation changes associated with an atmospheric $^{14}$C increase.

An increase in the mixing rate of the ocean causes the average $^{14}$C of the ocean to rise and the average $^{14}$C of the combined atmosphere and biosphere to fall. Box models indicate that an increase by a factor of 2 in the ventilation rate produces a decrease in atmospheric $^{14}$C, at steady state, of several tens of per mil (42). Our melt rates (Fig. 3) suggest the presence of a mechanism that changes the ventilation rate. As melt rates decreased during the YD, North Atlantic surface-water salinity increased, causing an increase in NADW production. If global deep-ocean circulation paralleled NADW production, the rate of ocean ventilation increased and atmospheric $^{14}$C decreased. When melt rates increased after the YD, the ventilation rate decreased, arresting the $^{14}$C decrease. The coincidence of reduced glacial melting and the $^{14}$C decrease (Fig. 5) supports this scenario. We suggest that this changing partitioning of $^{14}$C between the atmosphere and the ocean was superimposed on the gradual lowering of average $^{14}$C that was caused by the increasing intensity of the Earth's magnetic dipole strength between 20 and 10 ka (Fig. 5).

Previous studies have reconstructed certain aspects of past oceanic circulation. Combined measurements of $^{14}$C/$^{12}$C in planktonic and benthic foraminifera from the same deep-sea sediment strata (42, 43) indicate that the ventilation rate was lower in the glacial ocean than in today's ocean. The ventilation rate about 10,000 $^{14}$C years ago may have been somewhat higher than the present rate (42). However, more detailed work on the interval between 13 and 11 ka may be required to test whether the $^{14}$C decrease was caused by a change in the ventilation rate. Certainly the possibility of a ventilation-rate change by a factor of 2 or more at about the time of the YD cannot be ruled out. Significant changes in ocean circulation, which largely involved changes in the rate of formation of NADW and lower North Atlantic Deep Water (LNAWD) took place (44-46) before and during the YD. At least some of the changes appear to relate directly to climate in the vicinity of the North Atlantic. In some form and at some rate, formation of NADW continued before and throughout the YD (45, 46). Sarthein and colleagues (46) demonstrated that the rate of NADW formation before the YD was slower than it is now and faster than the present rate at some time during the YD, which is consistent with our inferences from the $^{14}$C record. Although their study did not focus specifically on the YD interval, Duplessy and co-workers (47) showed that ventilation rates for short periods during deglaciation were two to three times higher than present rates. The inferred high rate of NADW formation at the end of the YD appears to conflict with cadmium data (48). However, this difference can be reconciled if NADW was more shallow at the end of the YD than at present height or if the ventilation rate of the ocean is not proportional to the rate of NADW production.

Meltwater input or diversion was a plausible trigger for the YD. During the YD, glacial melting slowed and atmospheric $^{14}$C dropped dramatically, for approximately 1280 years, until several hundred years after the end of the YD. We infer from the abrupt decrease in atmospheric $^{14}$C and its coincidence with slower rates of melting that the ventilation rate of the ocean was higher during this 1280-year interval, which is consistent with rates of NADW formation inferred from other line of evidence (46). There is some uncertainty in the precise temporal relation between this interval and the YD (35) (Fig. 5). With errors taken into consideration, the PRM may have overlapped with the end of the YD by as much as 900 years or as little as 400 years. In either case, despite low globally averaged rates of meltwater input, apparently high rates of NADW formation, and rapid ocean ventilation, the climate in the North Atlantic region remained cool during the late YD. One explanation for this apparent discrepancy includes the possibility (45) that the North Atlantic climate during the YD was controlled not by the global circulation rate or even by the rate of formation of NADW but by the rate of formation of LNAWD. The rate of LNAWD formation, in turn, may have been controlled not by locally averaged rates of melting but by meltwater discharge from the Fennoscandian ice sheet. A second possibility is that NADW
formed and released heat at lower latitudes during the late YD.

REFERENCES AND NOTES


13. We calculated the rate of tectonic uplift at the drilling site by assuming that the last interglacial terrace was at the present sealevel [T.-L. Ku, M. A. Kimmell, W. H. Easton, T. J. O'Neil, Science 183, 955 (1974)]. Because the present elevation of Terrace VII is 243 m and the average age of the last interglacial terrace dates to about 125,000 years ago (7), the uplift rate averaged over the last 125,000 years is 1.9 m per thousand years. The constant uplift rate appears to be valid for the Huon Peninsula [A. L. Bloom and N. Yonemura, Models in Geomorphology, M. J. Woldenberg, Ed. (Allen and Unwin, Winchester, MA, 1985), p. 69]. For the 14C curve in Fig. 4, we used the uplift rate calculated from the Huon Peninsula, which is the 20th age or, if this value was not determined, the calendar age on the basis of the 14C calibration (Fig. 5).

28. The 87Sr/86Sr is the fractional difference between the measured 87Sr/86Sr ratio and the 87Sr/86Sr ratio for secular equilibrium, in parts per thousand. It is equal to

29. The 87Sr/86Sr at secular equilibrium is 0.71024.

30. The 14C age is the year-1 [A. H. Jaffey, K. F. Mathews, Rec. Prog. Phys. 25, 159 (1962)] and equals 1000 years × 14C age 


34. See W. S. Broecker et al., Paleoceanography 3, 1 (1988) and references therein.

35. On the basis of 14C dating of lacustrine and marine sediments, the YD started between 11,200 and 11,500 years B.P. (22-25). This is consistent with the best estimate of 11,000-10,200 and 10,000 years B.P. [N. K. Karpuz and E. Jansen, Paleoceanography 7, 499 (1992) and references therein], although dates as old as 10,000 years ago (K. K. Ruddiman and H. E. Wright, Jr., The Decade of North American Geology, W. F. Ruddiman and H. E. Wright, Jr., Eds. (Geological Society of America, Boulder, CO, 1987), pp. 135-157.]. The resolution of the 14C dating is 350 m per year.

36. The atmospheric 14C value at about 18.7 ka is from analyses of RGF-21-11, RGF-24-04, and RGF-27-5 (22). The age of 18.7 ka is the mean of the 20th ages of the first two samples and the most precise age (analysis 1) of the third sample. The 14C activity is 325 ± 41 per mil is the average of the 14C activity of the two samples and the average of the two 14C values (based on radiocarbon analyses 1 and 2) of the first sample.

37. J. A. Eddy, Science 192, 1159 (1976). The Maun­der Minimum was characterized by a small sun­spot number, a large atmospheric 14C , and a cool climate, all of which are qualitatively consistent with a small solar constant (causing cool climate) and a corresponding small solar magnetic field. Because the YD was characterized by a decreasing 14C and a cool climate, such a simple scenario does not apply to it.


45. S. J. Lehman and D. Kegwich, ibid., p. 757.


Beach cusps are uniformly spaced, arcuate scallops in sediment that form at the shoreward edge of the episodically exposed portion of a beach known as the swash zone. Beach cusps and other regular topographic features in the nearshore, including ripples, megaripples, sand bars, ridges and runnels, sand waves, and swash marks, have attracted investigation owing to their beauty, their effect on sediment transport, and their uniformity in the presence of complex interactions between waves, currents, and sediment. According to a widely accepted hypothesis, the form and spacing of beach cusps reflect a pattern of alongshore standing waves on the beach. An alternative, physically incompatible model ascribes cusp formation to feedback between swash flow and beach morphology. This model has been discounted partially because of the difficulty of understanding how local interactions between fluid and sediment lead to globally uniform patterns.

Using computer simulations, we show that uniform beach cusps can develop by local flow-morphology feedback, examine the implications of this self-organization model, and demonstrate that the predictions of the standing wave and self-organization models are sufficiently similar that current data and observations cannot distinguish unambiguously between them.

Beach cusps form on oceanic and lacustrine beaches and in sediments ranging from fine sand to cobbles. They result from a varying combination of accretion at cusp horns and erosion in the interjacent cusp bays. Cusps are typically spaced 10 cm to 60 m apart. Beach cusp formation is favored under conditions of surging, nonbreaking waves of near-normal incidence on steep (usually coarse-grained) beaches. Swash runs up a beach without cusps as a thinning, often irregular sheet. On a cuspat beach, runup is deflected by horns toward bays and from there flows seaward as runout.

In the self-organization model, incipient topographic depressions in a beach are amplified by attracting and accelerating water flow, thereby enhancing erosion. Dean and Maurmeyer related well-developed beach cusp spacing to the swash excursion, the horizontal distance between the highest and lowest positions of the swash front on a beach, by considering the kinematical trajectory of elastic particles sliding on the surface of a cusp.

In contrast, according to the standing-wave model, the pattern of erosion and deposition of sediment leading to beach cusps originates with the flow patterns of alongshore standing waves, generally taken to be subharmonic edge waves. The standing wave model successfully predicts beach cusp spacing as a function of incident wave frequency and beach slope within about a factor of 2 (compatible with uncertainties in model input parameters). In addition, standing waves induce cusp formation in sand at the swash zone margin on a laboratory concrete beach.

However, because subharmonic edge waves decay strongly within one incident wavelength of the shore, they are difficult to detect. Standing subharmonic edge waves have not been observed unambiguously in conjunction with beach cusp formation.

Our simulation algorithm uses a simplified model of coupled flow, sediment transport, and morphology change. In contrast, earlier models considered wave and fluid flow interactions with a plane wave. We are able to investigate the development of uniform cusps, rather than postulating their uniformity and general form, and to simulate explicitly conditions under which cusps do not form.

Our model treats only the kinematics in gravity of swash flow over a beach, without directly considering the hydrodynamics of swash. This approximation is supported by an inviscid calculation and laboratory measurements on the motion of the swash front (the leading edge of the swash). Flow is simulated by cubical water particles, representing the swash front, that move according to Newton's laws in gravity (the kinematical equations) and are constrained to remain on the surface of the beach. For example, water particles move on parabolas in the swash zone on a plane beach.

In addition to the gravitational force, water particles are repelled from regions of high water particle concentration and are attracted toward regions of low concentration in a simplified approximation to flow caused by pressure gradients induced by the sea surface.

The simulated beach is composed of thin, square slabs of sediment stacked on a rectangular grid of square cells with periodic

Fig. 1. Self-organization and standing wave models. Seaward is down. Bold lines are beach contours. (A) Left) Deflection of swash flow by incipient topographic depression causing further erosion; (right) swash zone circulation in equilibrium with beach cusps. (B) Alignment of beach cusps and sinusoidal variation in the swash front caused by subharmonic edge waves shown at two consecutive swash cycles as broken and solid lines.