The Awesome Ocean

Ros Rickaby (<u>rosr@earth.ox.ac.uk</u>) Department of Earth Sciences, University of Oxford





The Awesome Ocean-liquid gold

- The worldwide ocean economy is valued at around \$1.5 trillion per year, equivalent to the seventh largest economy in the world.
- The worldwide ocean economy is set to double by 2030 to \$3 trillion.

Top 10 Blue Economy Trends in 2024





The Oceans- Currently a huge carbon sponge



Year



- The oceans take up emissions at a rate of about 2 GtC/yr so have absorbed 500 Gt from a total 1300 Gt emissions...currently
- 20kyrs ago, when mammoths roamed the planet the oceans stored an additional 900 GtC
- All for free (in the context of C markets)



 The Power of the Plankton Base of ecosystem productivity and 50-80% of global biodiversity
 Plankton are sentinels of change 5-12 PgC/yr



Finkel, Z.V., Beardall, J., Flynn, K.J., Quigg, A., Rees, T.A.V. and Raven, J.A., 2010. Phytoplankton in a changing world: cell size and elemental stoichiometry. *Journal of plankton research*, *32*(1), pp.119-137.

The Oceans- a huge sponge of heat ~ 90% of our global warming



Argo Floats

Daily sea surface temperature for 60°S-60°N

Data: ERA5 1979-2024 • Credit: C3S/ECMWF



The altered Marine Environment

• Elevated CO2 (fertilization)

а

Global mean sea level (mm)

- pH- acidification
- Nutrients-stratification
- Oxygen-deoxygenation
- Temperature (P:R) (bleaching)
- Pollutants (including N2, plastics)
- Seasonal Change (mistimings: light and temperature)





PETM: 55800000yrs ago





- 3000 PgC over 5000 years (0.6 PgC/yr or 2.4 GtCO₂/yr) emissions of CO₂
- 5-8 °C rise of global temperature
- Dissolved CaCO₃ in ocean sediments (acidification),
- Ocean Deoxygenation
- Increased weathering, increased Corg burial
 - Timescale of recovery ~1-200000 years









CARBON DIOXIDE REMOVAL OPTIONS



- Do the kinetics work?
- Can the sequestered C be measured?
- What are the
 - unintended benefits?
 - And consequences?
- What is the carbon/resource footprint of the technique itself?
- Who/What drives the C market?





Ocean Carbon and Tipping Points



Daily Global 5km Satellite Coral Bleaching Heat Stress Alert Area

(Version 3.1, released August 1, 2018)

NOAA Coral Reef Watch Daily 5km Bleaching Alert Area 7-day Maximum (v3.1) 13 Feb 2024





Environment 'Literally off the charts': global coral reef heat stress monitor forced to add new alerts as temperatures rise

Three new levels added by US Coral Reef Watch after 'extreme' unprecedented heat, with highest alert warning of 'near complete mortality'

Graham Readfearn



T tipping points of Photosynthesis versus Respiration (and C sink)



Barton et al., 2020

How close are we to the temperature tipping point of the terrestrial biosphere?

Katharyn A. Duffy^{1,2*}, Christopher R. Schwalm^{2,3}, Vickery L. Arcus⁴, George W. Koch², Liyin L. Liang^{4,5}, Louis A. Schipper⁴



MAD: Move Adapt or Die





Bung the CO₂ back where it came from.....







Data SIO, NOAA, U.S. Navy, NGA, GEBCO © 2011 Europa Technologies © 2011 Google US Dept of State Geographer

0

Eye alt 7567.76 mi 🔘

Google Ocean (real time who is living in each pixel)

GOOGIE Data SIO, NOAA, U.S. Navy, NGA, GEBCO © 2011 Europa Technologies © 2011 Google S Dept of State Geograph Eye alt 7567.76 mi

Other search engines are available....



- To introduce the world to the ocean
- Driver to map the diversity of the ocean comprehensively
- Invaluable data for plankton as monitors of climate and tipping points- the sentinels of the ocean
- Invaluable data for fisheries and macrofaunal conservation
- Baseline and disturbance data for all marine use
- Carbon/Biodiversity credits



A plankton sensor (low cost/low power)

- We monitor the chlorophyll *a* fluorescence signal of living phytoplankton cells, and measure the decay of this signal in response to electrochemically driven oxidative stress



Taken from Barton et al., 2023, Limnology and Oceanography: Methods



Applying a potential to seawater sample does two things:

- H⁺ ions generated, creating acidic conditions = dissolution of CaCO₃
- Oxygen radicals (or reactive oxygen species) are created (e.g. hydroxyl radicals, OH)

= oxidative destruction of Chlorophyll a

Liquid Gold How do we protect the valuable sea.... A huge sponge of our carbon and heat -all done for free The poor ocean accumulates waste- it sits right in the mix We must circularise flows; slow inputs- there is no quick fix

No doubt there is gold in them thar seas, Marine robots, green transport, renewable energies New food, new life, awesome blue opportunities But each of these uses splashes a disruptive bomb Across the network of life and marine carbon And these must be real-time charted, valued and controlled Before we can turn the blue one gold

The value of plankton to the UK

- The UK has stewardship of around 7 665 586 km² of neighbouring sea bed including OTCD
- UK's exclusive economic zone (EEZ) the fifth largest in the world
- 2% of the world's ocean surface (Pro rata component of the Bio Pump admittedly imperfect: 100-240 MtC/yr (£7.4-17.8 billion)
- Biotech resources of the plankton are currently underexplored







What should we do? With all our CO₂? Bung it in the ground or p'rhaps the deep blue? Well

The evolution of algae tells us a thing or two-These biosolar panels split water to make toxic O But life made a cycle - with invention and time-It used oxygen to fly, hunt, mineralize, and climb Just how many things life can do By finding both the cycle and value In all of our waste, CO, andpoo



 Need integration of different methods (and new technologies) to capture biodiversity of the communities, to quantify abundance of different phytoplankton species/functional groups and their impact on flux of carbon

Coral bleaching....but some hope...



FEATURE ARTICLE



Global biogeography of coral recruitment: tropical decline and subtropical increase

N. N. Price^{1,*}, S. Muko², L. Legendre³, R. Steneck⁴, M. J. H. van Oppen^{5,6}, R. Albright^{5,7,18}, P. Ang Jr.⁸, R. C. Carpenter⁹, A. P. Y. Chui⁸, T.-Y. Fan¹⁰, R. D. Gates¹¹, S. Harii¹², H. Kitano¹³, H. Kurihara¹⁴, S. Mitarai¹⁵, J. L. Padilla-Gamiño¹⁶, K. Sakai¹², G. Suzuki¹⁷, P. J. Edmunds⁹

Solitary Islands, Australia Midway, Hawaii USA Flower Garden Banks, Texas USA Mackay Whitsunday, Australia Burdekin, Australia St. John, US Virgin Islands Tahiti, French Polynesia Wet Tropics, Australia

Tropicalisation of the subtropics...

Carbon versus biodiversity?

🔲 Ch

ARTICLE

https://doi.org/10.1038/s43247-022-00625-0

Offshore wind farms are projected to impact primary production and bottom water deoxygenation in the North Sea

OPEN

Ute Daewel ¹^M, Naveed Akhtar ¹, Nils Christiansen¹ & Corinna Schrum^{1,2}

Clean Energy + Carbon Pump + Benthic Biodiversity -





Colbourn et al., 2015



Move, Adapt or Die (MAD)

iv) More than half of cool temperature Euroepan tree genera did not survive glacial cycles starting end Pliocene v) An adaptive mutation of heamoglobin enabled mammoths to tolerate v low Ts at high latitude vi) More than 70& megafauna in the Americas and Australia and 40% in Eurasia underwent extinction (5-10 ka) but climate or human? vii) Plants in N. America migrated northwards between 450 and 2200 km in <10kyrs under a warming of 5oC

i) PETM extinctions benthic forams and polward range shifts in dinos, mammals, reptiles, plants and high community turnover
ii) >4oC cooler EO boundary, extinction many European terrestrial mammals and globally marine invertebrates
iii)Late Mio cooling, thermophilous plants shifted southwards and finally went extinct



Figure I. Future Climate Forcing will Surpass those of the Previous Several Million Years [2]. Abbreviations: Eo, Eccene, Hol, Holocene; Mi, Miccene, Ol, Oligocene, P, Palaeccene, Pli, Pliccene, Ple, Pleistocene.



 CO_2 used for CO_3^{2-} used for calcification photosynthesis (CaCO₃)

CO₂ Fertilisation

nature climate change

Article A constraint on historic growth in global photosynthesis due to rising CO₂







2010

2004

1998

1992

1986 🖁

1980

1974

1968

Evidence for changes in carbon isotopic fractionation by phytoplankton between 1960 and 2010

J. N. Young,^{1,2} J. Bruggeman,¹ R. E. M. Rickaby,¹ J. Erez,³ and M. Conte⁴

Ocean Acidification

Reduced calcification of marine plankton in response to increased atmospheric CO₂

Ulf Riebesell *, Ingrid Zondervan*, Björn Rost*, Philippe D. Tortell†, Richard E. Zeebe*‡ & François M. M. Morel†



Lower calcification.....?

Or higher....?



Phytoplankton Calcification in a High-CO₂ World

M. Debora Iglesias-Rodriguez,¹* Paul R. Halloran,²* Rosalind E. M. Rickaby,² Ian R. Hall,³ Elena Colmenero-Hidalgo,³† John R. Gittins,¹ Darryl R. H. Green,¹ Toby Tyrrell,¹ Samantha J. Gibbs,¹ Peter von Dassow,⁴ Eric Rehm,⁵ E. Virginia Armbrust,⁵ Karin P. Boessenkool³ De'Ath et al., 2009

Declining Coral Calcification on the Great Barrier Reef

Glenn De'ath,* Janice M. Lough, Katharina E. Fabricius



Reversal of ocean acidification enhances net coral reef calcification

b

0

8

6

2

0

_4

Control

Experiment

Change in net calcification (%)

Rebecca Albright¹, Lilian Caldeira¹, Jessica Hosfelt², Lester Kwiatkowski¹, Jana K. Maclaren^{1,3}, Benjamin M. Mason⁴, Yana Nebuchina¹, Aaron Ninokawa², Julia Pongratz^{1,5}, Katharine L. Ricke^{1,6}, Tanya Rivlin^{7,8}, Kenneth Schneider^{1,9}, Marine Sesboüé¹, Kathryn Shamberger^{10,11}, Jacob Silverman¹², Kennedy Wolfe¹³, Kai Zhu^{1,14,15} & Ken Caldeira¹

5

3

2

-1

Upstream

Control

Downstream



Year

Certainly impacts on coral reef calcification

Experiment

Ocean Deoxygenation

During the past 50 years, the area of low oxygen water in the open ocean has increased by 4.5 million km².¹ The world's oceans are now losing approximately 1 gigaton of oxygen each year (Keeling and Garcia 2002).

The Baltic Sea has the largest coastal water hypoxic zone. In 2011 the area of water with dissolved oxygen concentrations <2 mg L⁻¹ was nearly 80,000 km². (Carstensen et al. 2014).



Deoxygenation alters the goods and services delivered by marine ecosystems to humans. Services reduced can include food production through Declining oxygen in the global ocea and aquaculture, climate regulation, nutrient cycling and resilience

and coastal waters

The estimate is for 200 m - a slightly shallower depth than shown on this map.

Denise Breitburg,* Lisa A. Levin, Andreas Oschlies, Marilaure Grégoire,

Observable trends

Table 1 | Oxygen content and change per basin

Basin	Oxygen content (Pmol)	Oxygen change (Tmol per decade)	Change as percentage of global change	Volume as percentage of global ocean volume
Arctic Ocean	4.7±0.2	-73±30	7.6±3.1	1.2
North Atlantic	26.9±0.1	-9±19	0.9±1.9	8.5
Equatorial Atlantic	15.9±0.0	-72±20	7.5±2.1	5.7
South Atlantic	22.4±0.1	-119±27	12.4±2.8	7.8
North Pacific	24.5±0.1	-173±40	18.0±4.2	16.3
Equatorial Pacific	25.5±0.4	-210±125	21.9±13.0	16.3
South Pacific	33.1±0.1	-71±37	7.4±3.9	14.3
Equatorial Indian Ocean	10.7±0.1	-55±49	5.7±5.1	6.6
South Indian Ocean	26.1±0.1	-27±34	2.8±3.5	10.2
Southern Ocean	37.6±0.1	-152±47	15.8±4.9	13.1
Total	227.4±1.1	-961 +429	100	100

Trends that are more significant than two standard errors are marked in light grey. See Extended Data Table 1 for an extended version of this table.





N

Increasing ocean stratification over the past half-century



Climate-driven trends in contemporary ocean productivity

150

100

Michael J. Behrenfeld¹, Robert T. O'Malley¹, David A. Siegel³, Charles R. McClain⁴, Jorge L. Sarmiento⁵, Gene C. Feldman⁴, Allen J. Milligan¹, Paul G. Falkowski⁶, Ricardo M. Letelier² & Emmanuel S. Boss⁷

Marine Heatwaves

LETTERS https://doi.org/10.1038/s41558-019-0412-1

nature climate change



Marine heatwaves threaten global biodiversity and the provision of ecosystem services





gure 6

comparative view of climate change vulnerability from terrestrial to marine ecosystems. Representative species are shown with th ermal safety margins. The thermal safety margin is a relative (not absolute) proxy for the amount of warming an organism can lerate. Lower annual and daily temperature variation in the ocean has left many marine species less evolutionarily conditioned to a th climate warming, which is reflected in narrower safety margins. These vulnerabilities are exacerbated by reduced access to the fuges in the ocean. The numbers at the bottom show the average annual and daily range of temperatures from local monitoring tions, as well as the expected warming by 2100. The examples here are drawn from the east coast of North America, including eather stations and oceanographic buoys in South Carolina. Illustration by N.R. Fuller of Sayo-Art LLC.

Temperature effects at the level of the enzyme/cell



Enzymes reduce the Activation energy of a reaction for biological temperatures and so enhance the rate

Temperature speeds up the rate of the reaction and provides more thermal energy

But enzymes have thermal limits: the rate is catalyzed to an optima until the enzyme loses structure/denatures

Membrane fluidity is also strongly Tdependent

Annual Review of Biophysics The Effects of Temperature on Cellular Physiology

Benjamin D. Knapp¹ and Kerwyn Casey Huang^{1,2,3,4}



Figure 2

Cellular growth rates obey species-specific Arrhenius laws. (a) Growth rates of *Escherichia coli* in rich medium were measured at various temperatures (*left*). An Arrhenius plot [log(growth rate) versus 1/T] reveals a range of temperatures (20–37°C) over which the data are approximately linear, a so-called Arrhenius range (*right*). Temperatures above and below the Arrhenius range produce a heat- and cold-shock response, respectively. Data from Reference 54. (b) Bacterial and eukaryotic species possess Arrhenius ranges (*dotted boxes*)

Coral bleaching....but some hope...



FEATURE ARTICLE



Global biogeography of coral recruitment: tropical decline and subtropical increase

N. N. Price^{1,*}, S. Muko², L. Legendre³, R. Steneck⁴, M. J. H. van Oppen^{5,6}, R. Albright^{5,7,18}, P. Ang Jr.⁸, R. C. Carpenter⁹, A. P. Y. Chui⁸, T.-Y. Fan¹⁰, R. D. Gates¹¹, S. Harii¹², H. Kitano¹³, H. Kurihara¹⁴, S. Mitarai¹⁵, J. L. Padilla-Gamiño¹⁶, K. Sakai¹², G. Suzuki¹⁷, P. J. Edmunds⁹

Solitary Islands, Australia Midway, Hawaii USA Flower Garden Banks, Texas USA Mackay Whitsunday, Australia Burdekin, Australia St. John, US Virgin Islands Tahiti, French Polynesia Wet Tropics, Australia

Tropicalisation of the subtropics...

Climate Change at the level of the organism/ecosystem

- Latitudinal Migration
- Ecosystem Restructure
- Phenological mismatch

Organism Impacts realized through Niches

The response curve for one driver can depend on other drivers (e.g. T and pH)

Impacts of multiple drivers can be additive, synertistic, or ntagonistic ie cumulative effect is equal to, larger than or smaller than the sumof the individual effects

But modelling latitudinal range based on niche alone neglects biotic interactions, evolutionary change and dispersal ability





Drivers (e.g. elevated temperature and lowered pH)

Latitudinal Shifts

- Help species maintain their niche
- But unless other dependent/ant species move concurrently leads to changes in ecosystem structure
- Can run out of thermal room (either poleward, with depth or with altitude)



Poleward expansion of the coccolithophore *Emiliania huxleyi*

AMOS WINTER¹*, JORIINTIE HENDERIKS², LUC BEAUFORT⁶, ROSALIND E. M. RICKABY⁴ AND CHRISTOPHER

Current Biology

Climate Change Drives Poleward Increases and Equatorward Declines in Marine Species

range of species. Our results show that abundance increases have been most prominent where sampling has taken place at the poleward side of species ranges, and abundance declines have been most prominent where sampling has taken place at the equatorward side of species ranges. These data pro-



Phenology mismatch

Climate change: Seasonal shifts causing 'chaos' for UK nature

() 27 December 2023





Changing seasons are affecting the reproductive cycle of animals like red deer

Warm temperatures have prompted some shrubs to come into bloom early, making them susceptible to sudden cold snaps affecting pollinators, and the birds that feed on their seeds (and Ros' pear tree).

The UK's most iconic tree, the oak, could be particularly hard hitCold snaps are getting shorter- often doesn't leave enough time to kill off diseases.

-the oak processionary moth, which has been steadily migrating northwards, whose caterpillars infest oak trees, thrive in these shorter cold spells making the oaks more vulnerable to attack from other parasites,...

Warmer winters also impact heathlands allowing the heather beetle to kill off huge areas of heather. Animals which hibernate, like dormice, are especially threatened. They emerge from their winter sleep earlier and can quickly use up their vital remaining stores of energy.

Greenland Duckling hatching and insect mismatch





Human Interventions: Unintended Consequences

