

**Interaction of ice sheets and climate during the past 800 000 years**

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# Interaction of ice sheets and climate during the past 800 000 years

L. B. Stap<sup>1</sup>, R. S. W. van de Wal<sup>1</sup>, B. de Boer<sup>1,2</sup>, R. Bintanja<sup>3</sup>, and L. J. Lourens<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Institute for Marine and Atmospheric research Utrecht, Utrecht University, Princetonplein 5, 3584 CC Utrecht, the Netherlands

<sup>2</sup>Department of Earth Sciences, Faculty of Geosciences, Utrecht University, Budapestlaan 4, 3584 CD Utrecht, the Netherlands

<sup>3</sup>Royal Netherlands Meteorological Institute (KNMI), Wilhelminalaan 10, 3732 GK De Bilt, the Netherlands

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Correspondence to: L. B. Stap (l.b.stap@uu.nl)

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## Abstract

During the Cenozoic, land ice and climate have interacted on many different time scales. On long time scales, the effect of land ice on global climate and sea level is mainly set by large ice sheets on North America, Eurasia, Greenland and Antarctica.

The climatic forcing of these ice sheets is largely determined by the meridional temperature profile resulting from radiation and greenhouse gas (GHG) forcing. As response, the ice sheets cause an increase in albedo and surface elevation, which operates as a feedback in the climate system. To quantify the importance of these climate-land ice processes, a zonally-averaged energy balance climate model is coupled to five one-dimensional ice-sheet models, representing the major ice sheets.

In this study, we focus on the transient simulation of the past 800 000 years, where a high-confidence CO<sub>2</sub>-record from ice cores samples is used as input in combination with Milankovitch radiation changes. We obtain simulations of atmospheric temperature, ice volume and sea level, that are in good agreement with recent proxy-data reconstructions. We examine long-term climate-ice sheet interactions by a comparison of simulations with uncoupled and coupled ice sheets. We show that these interactions amplify global temperature anomalies by up to a factor 2.6, and that they increase polar amplification by 94 %. We demonstrate that, on these long time scales, the ice-albedo feedback has a larger and more global influence on the meridional atmospheric temperature profile than the surface-height temperature feedback. Furthermore, we assess the influence of CO<sub>2</sub> and insolation, by performing runs with one or both of these variables held constant. We find that atmospheric temperature is controlled by a complex interaction of CO<sub>2</sub> and insolation, and both variables serve as thresholds for Northern Hemispheric glaciation.

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## 1 Introduction

Earth's climate is characterised by glaciations and deglaciations of the Northern Hemisphere during the past 800 000 years. For this period, the Dome C ice core provides a record of CO<sub>2</sub>, CH<sub>4</sub>, N<sub>2</sub>O and deuterium-based Antarctic temperature (EPICA community members, 2004; Loulergue et al., 2008; Spahni et al., 2005; Jouzel et al., 2007). The Antarctic atmospheric temperature is tightly connected to a reconstruction of sea level over the past five glacial cycles, based on Red Sea bulk sediment analysis (Rohling et al., 2009). Ice coring performed on the Greenland Ice Sheet indicate the local temperature variability (GRIP members, 1993; NGRIP members, 2004; Dahl-Jensen et al., 2013), extending back to the last interglacial. Greenland and Antarctic climate have been shown to correspond closely to each other (EPICA community members, 2006). Additionally, important information arises from deep-sea sediment records of benthic  $\delta^{18}\text{O}$  (Zachos et al., 2008; Lisiecki and Raymo, 2005). These serve as an independent proxy for ice volume only after correction for the also contained deep-sea temperature signal. Köhler et al. (2010) combined data on the radiative forcing of solar insolation, greenhouse gases (GHGs) and model-deduced ice volume, sea ice, vegetation and dust, to identify the importance of these components in governing temperature variability. This hybrid model-data approach has given a comprehensive overview of the importance of the different factors that played a role in the past glacial-interglacial cycles. However, their inferred global cooling between present-day and the Last Glacial Maximum of 6.4–9.6 K was considerably larger than recent proxy-data reconstructed ones of 5.8 K (Schneider von Deimling et al., 2006), 3.0 K (Schmittner et al., 2011) and 4.0 K (Annan and Hargreaves, 2013). Model studies can help in understanding this mismatch, which is possibly explained by background climate-state dependency of water vapour, lapse rate and cloud feedback strengths (Köhler et al., 2010). In addition, climate models offer the possibility of assessing the importance of its components and the interaction between processes by comparing results with those obtained from runs























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Figure 5c shows the deep-sea temperature anomaly, as calculated by the model and as reconstructed from the Mg/Ca ratio of a sediment core (Elderfield et al., 2012). The second vertical layer of the ocean model is assumed to represent the deep ocean. The sediment core was drilled as part of the Ocean Drilling Program (ODP) at 41° S (leg 181, site 1123). Two model records are displayed: the mean deep-sea temperature anomaly of the total ocean (red line), and the zonal average at 42.5° S (blue line). While the model output at 42.5° S corresponds reasonably well with the data (correlation coefficient of 0.59), the amplitude of the anomaly is smaller than observed. The aforementioned stability of the Antarctic ice sheet probably plays a role in this underestimation. Moreover, the zonally-averaged ocean is only a crude representation of the real ocean system, which has three main basins, and where local effects may amplify the deep-ocean response. Also visible in Fig. 5c is that the total ocean anomaly differs from the zonal average at 42.5° S almost solely by a scaling factor (correlation coefficient of 0.91). Deep-ocean temperatures are uniform in signal in the Southern Hemisphere, but amplified in strength at the pole, similar to atmospheric temperatures.

Studies using one-dimensional (De Boer et al., 2010) and three-dimensional (De Boer et al., 2012) ice models, have used scaling factors of 0.15 and 0.20, respectively, to relate deep-sea temperature anomalies to NH atmospheric temperature anomalies with a 3 kyr lag. Based on our model, using a scaling factor of 0.105 achieves the best fit for this relation. On the other hand, we find that a factor 0.2 is justified when the deep-sea of the same area as the atmospheric temperature (40–80° N) is considered, as can be seen in Fig. 5d (cyan and purple lines). Indeed the modeled 40–80° N deep-sea temperature anomalies have an amplitude similar to the model output of De Boer et al. (2010) (brown line). By scaling the global temperature anomalies by a factor 0.2, we obtain results similar to global deep-ocean temperature anomalies (not shown). In conclusion, a 0.2 scaling factor relates local deep-ocean temperature anomalies to local atmospheric temperature anomalies.









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230 ppm CO<sub>2</sub> (Fig. 12; black and blue lines), these ice sheets do not disappear. The importance of transient effects is demonstrated by the low sea level stand of –40 m at PD, when PD insolation is used (Fig. 11; blue line). From the global temperature records of the aforementioned cases with no NH glaciation (Fig. 12; orange line, and Fig. 11; black line), it becomes clear that the effect of CO<sub>2</sub> is more global, than the effect of insolation. Greenhouse gases affect both hemispheres in a similar manner. In contrast, the insolation signal is dominated by precession, which effects are opposite for the two hemispheres. When the NH ice sheets are present, temperature fluctuations are much larger in both the fixed CO<sub>2</sub> and the fixed insolation cases, because of the ice sheet-climate feedbacks. Insolation affects ice volume both indirectly, through temperature in the ZEBM, and directly, through the mass balance in the ISM (Eq. 3). The indirect effect is more important, as fixing only the ISM input has almost no effect (not shown). The reference sea level is correlated more strongly to CO<sub>2</sub> (coefficient of 0.84) than to insolation (coefficient of 0.35). This indicates that CO<sub>2</sub> levels provide the envelope of sea level. Insolation changes have a damping or amplifying effect, as well as being decisive for the timing of glacial inception. In this analysis, insolation and CO<sub>2</sub> are considered as separate forcings, while in reality CO<sub>2</sub> levels are part of the Earth's system response to external forcings (e.g. through the chemical weathering feedback (Walker et al., 1981)).

### 3.6 Discussion

By using an energy balance climate model coupled to a one-dimensional ice-sheet model, we reconstructed global mean sea level and a zonally-averaged air temperature over the past 800 kyr. The sensitivity tests presented in Sect. 3 show that SH temperature is largely dependent on the parameterisation of the ocean overturning. In contrast, NH temperature and sea level are affected less and are more robust. Furthermore, the influence of non-CO<sub>2</sub> GHGs is shown to be very important for the strength of glaciation. They largely determine the amplitude of sea level fall during the whole reconstructed period. However, the reconstructed temporal evolution of temperature and









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In future research, the use of the coupled model will be extended into the Pliocene (5 Myr ago to PD), and the Early to Middle Miocene (23 to 13 Myr ago). During the former period, the Antarctic ice sheet was more variable in size, while the latter period is characterized by glaciations and deglaciations of the Northern Hemisphere. A marine benthic  $\delta^{18}\text{O}$ -isotope model will be incorporated, to allow for an independent comparison with paleo-proxy-records (Lisiecki and Raymo, 2005; Zachos et al., 2008; Cramer et al., 2009).

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**Table 2.** Model parameters for the ISM.

Parameter	Description	EuS	NaIS	GrIS	EAIS	WAIS
$H_{\text{cnt}}$	Height of the center (m)	1400	1400	800	1450	400
$s$	Slope of the initial bed	-0.0000165*	-0.000016*	-0.0014	-0.0010	-0.0011
$N_{\text{grid}}$	Number of grid points	100	100	100	120	100
$\Delta l$	Grid size (km)	25	25	15	20	15
$P_0$	Uncorr. prec. ( $\text{m yr}^{-1}$ )	0.88	1.15	1.34	0.71	1.37
$R_c$	Critical radius (km)	1500	1800	750	2000	700
$C_{\text{abl}}$	Ablation parameter	-51	-41	-48	-30	-5
$\Delta S_{\text{PD}}$	PD ice volume (m.s.l.)	0	0	7	56	7

\* Parabolic profile, value given in  $\text{m}^{-1}$ .[Title Page](#)[Abstract](#)[Introduction](#)[Conclusions](#)[References](#)[Tables](#)[Figures](#)[Back](#)[Close](#)[Full Screen / Esc](#)[Printer-friendly Version](#)[Interactive Discussion](#)

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**Table 3.** Values used for the data transfer from the ZEBCM to the ISM and vice versa. Note that in the ZEBCM, East and West Antarctica are combined to one ice sheet.

Ice Sheet	Area of temperature input for ISM	Location of center in ZEBCM	Value of $C_{vol}$
Eurasian	40–80° N	65° N	0.92
North American	40–80° N	65° N	0.79
Greenland	72.5° N	70° N	1.20
East Antarctica	65–90° S	90° S	0.85
West Antarctica	65–90° S	90° S	0.85

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**Table 4.** Overview of the enhancement of global temperature anomalies induced by coupling the land ice and/or freely calculating sea-ice and snow cover in the ZEBM, relative to the completely fixed run where PD values are prescribed.

Run	land ice	sea ice, snow	Enhancement of $\Delta T_{\text{glob}}$ rel. to fixed (% per $10^6 \text{ km}^3$ of ice)
completely fixed	fixed	fixed	–
slow feedbacks only	coupled	fixed	0.7
fast feedbacks only	fixed	free	2.2
coupled	coupled	free	5.2

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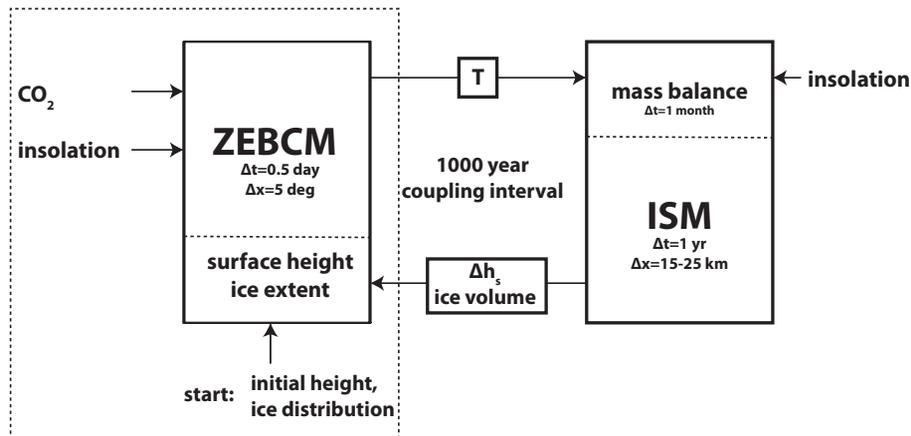
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**Figure 1.** Schematic overview of the coupling between the Zonally averaged Energy Balance Climate Model (ZEBCM) and the Ice Sheet Model (ISM). The novel aspect of this study is marked by a dashed box.

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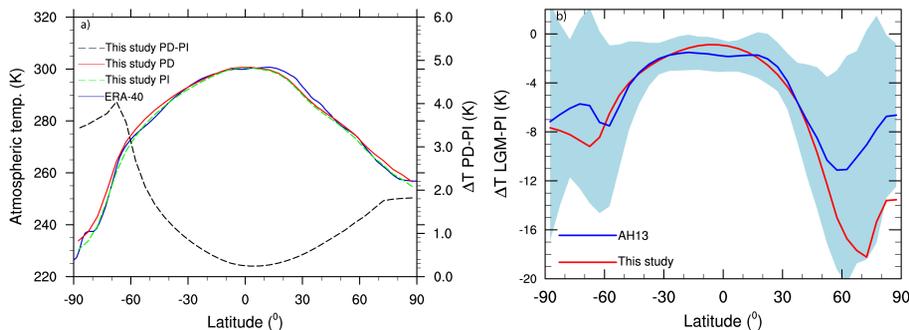
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**Figure 2.** (a) Modeled PI (dashed green) and PD (red) atmospheric meridional temperature distributions and PD ERA-40 reanalysis data (Uppala et al., 2005; blue). (b) Modeled reference LGM-PI atmospheric temperature difference (red), compared to the data reconstruction of Annan and Hargreaves (2013) ([AH13]; blue, with error bars).

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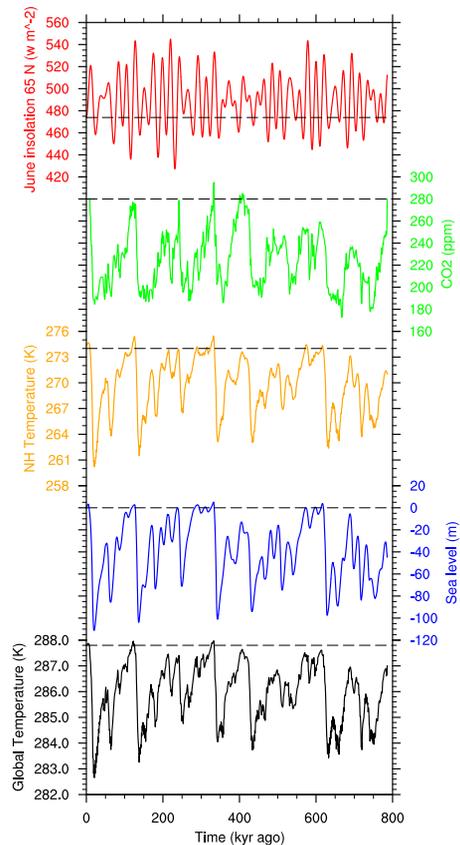
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**Figure 3.** Insolation (Laskar et al., 2004; red) and CO<sub>2</sub> (Jouzel et al., 2007; green) input, and modeled reference NH temperature (orange), sea level relative to PD (blue), and global temperature (black).

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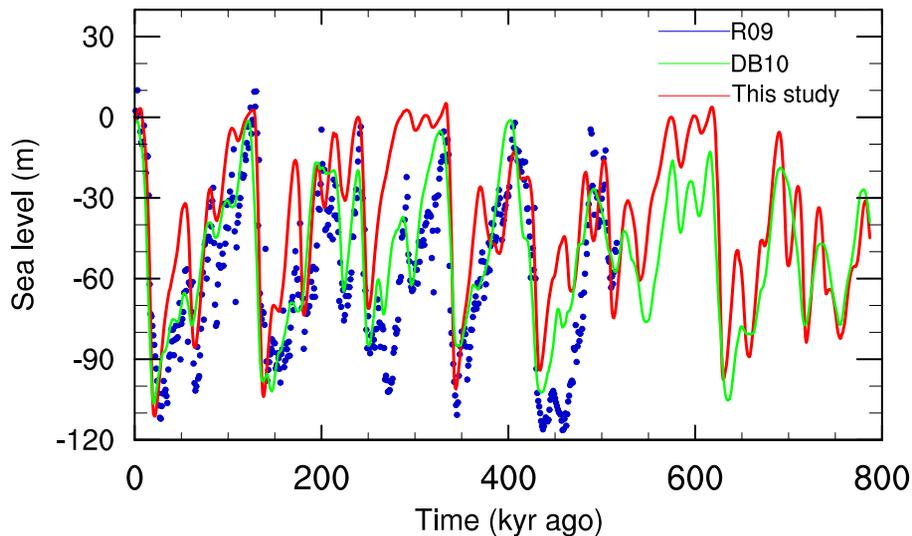
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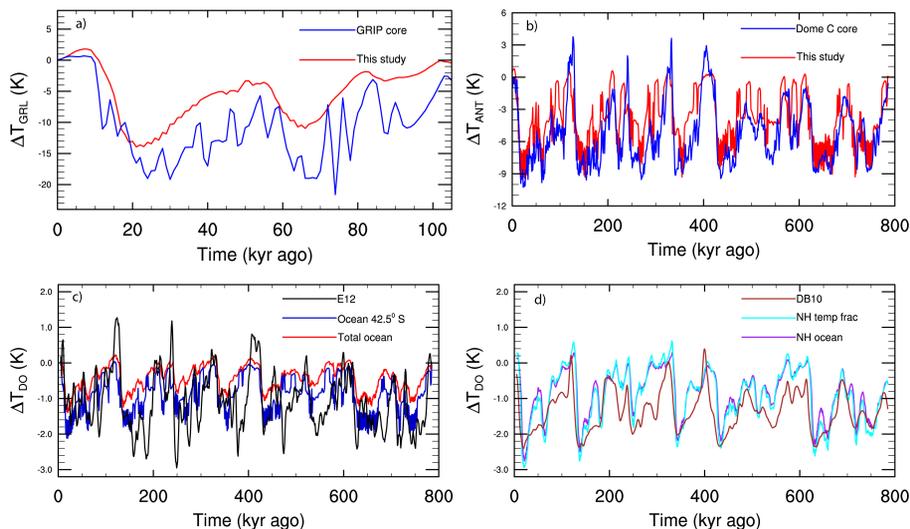


**Figure 4.** Modeled reference sea level relative to PD (red), compared to data from Red Sea sediments (Rohling et al., 2009; blue dots) and model output from De Boer et al. (2010) (green).

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**Figure 5.** (a) Modeled reference Greenland temperature anomaly from PI (red), compared to a data reconstruction from the GRIP core (GRIP members, 1993; blue). (b) Modeled reference Antarctic temperature anomaly from PI (red), compared to a reconstruction based on the deuterium isotope record of the Dome C ice core (Jouzel et al., 2007; blue). (c) Modeled reference deep-ocean temperature anomaly from PI, globally averaged (red), and at 42.5° S (blue), compared to a reconstruction from the Mg/Ca ratio of a sediment core (Elderfield et al., 2012 [E12]; black) drilled at 41° S. (d) Modeled reference NH (40–80° N averaged) deep-ocean temperature anomaly from PI (purple), compared to model output from De Boer et al. (2010) ([DB10]; brown) and the modeled reference NH atmospheric temperature anomaly from PI multiplied by a factor 0.2 (cyan).

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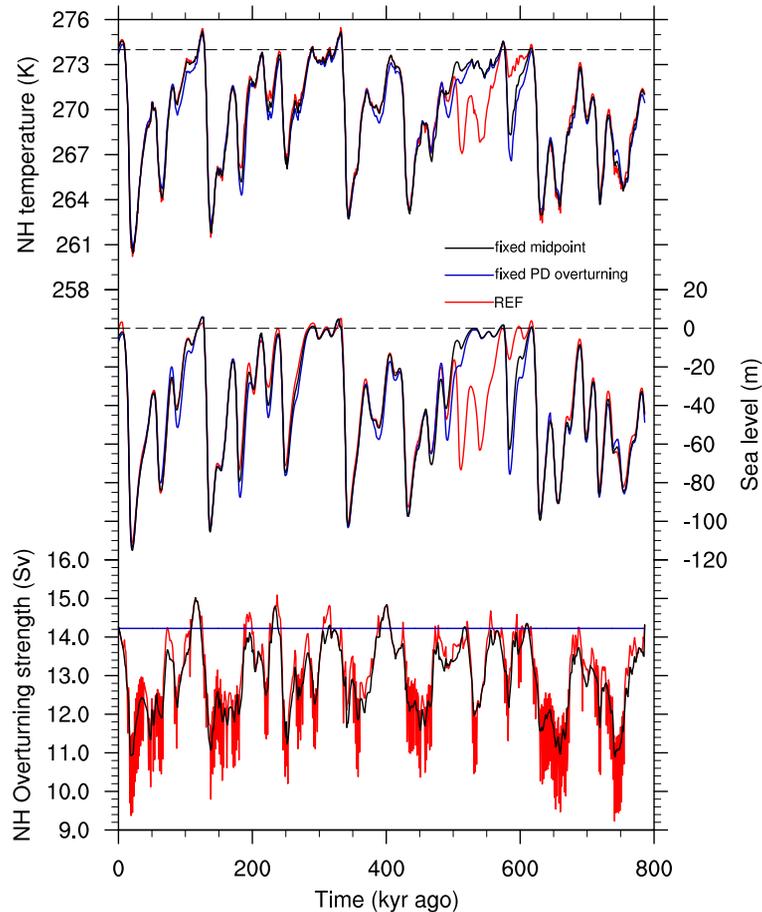
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**Figure 6.** Modeled NH temperature (top), sea level relative to PD (middle), and NH overturning strength (bottom) for the reference run (red), a run with fixed PD overturning (blue) and a run with varying overturning strength, but a fixed midpoint (black).

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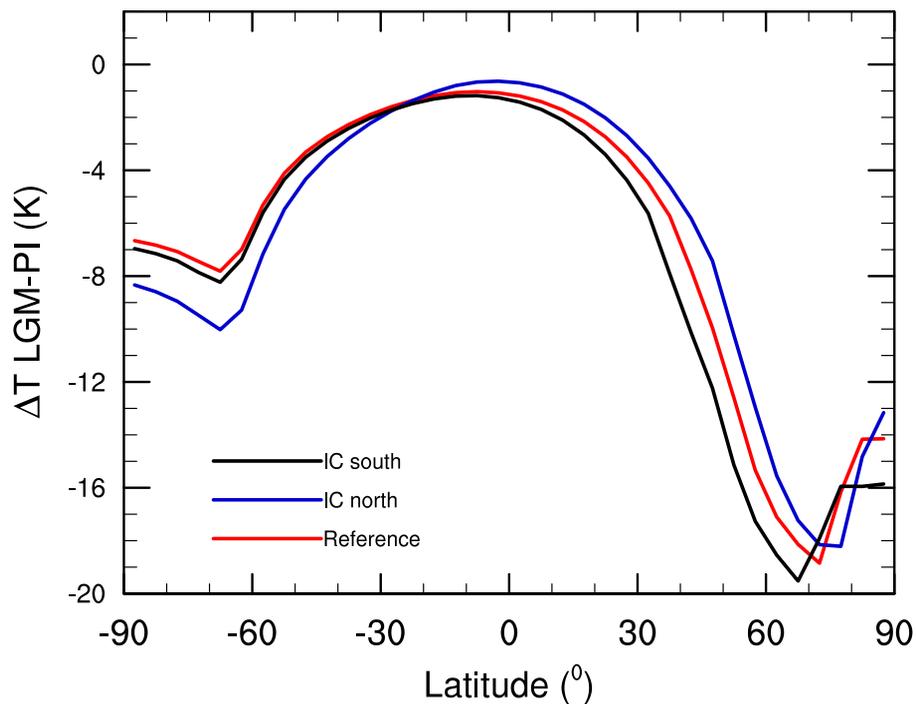
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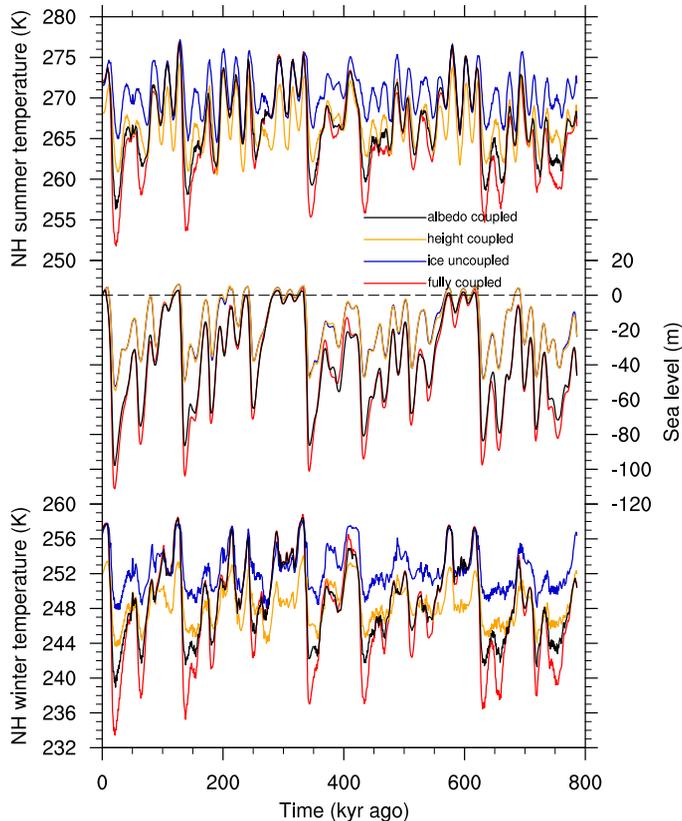
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**Figure 7.** Modeled LGM-PI atmospheric temperature difference, for the reference run (red), a run with the NH ice sheets placed 5° more to the North (blue), and a run with the NH ice sheets placed 5° more to the South (black).

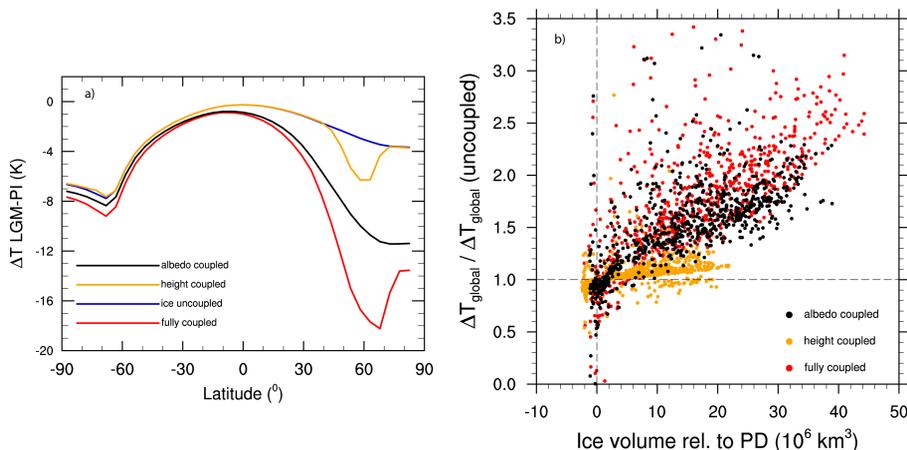
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**Figure 8.** Modeled global temperature (top), sea level relative to PD (middle), and NH temperature (bottom), for the fully-coupled reference run (red), a run with surface height and albedo in the ZEBM prescribed as PD values (ice uncoupled; blue), and runs with only surface-height changes (height coupled; orange), and only ice volume (albedo coupled; black) transferred back to the ZEBM. The missing information on albedo, or surface height, or both, is prescribed as PD values. The temperature data comes from the ZEBM, the sea level data from the ISM.

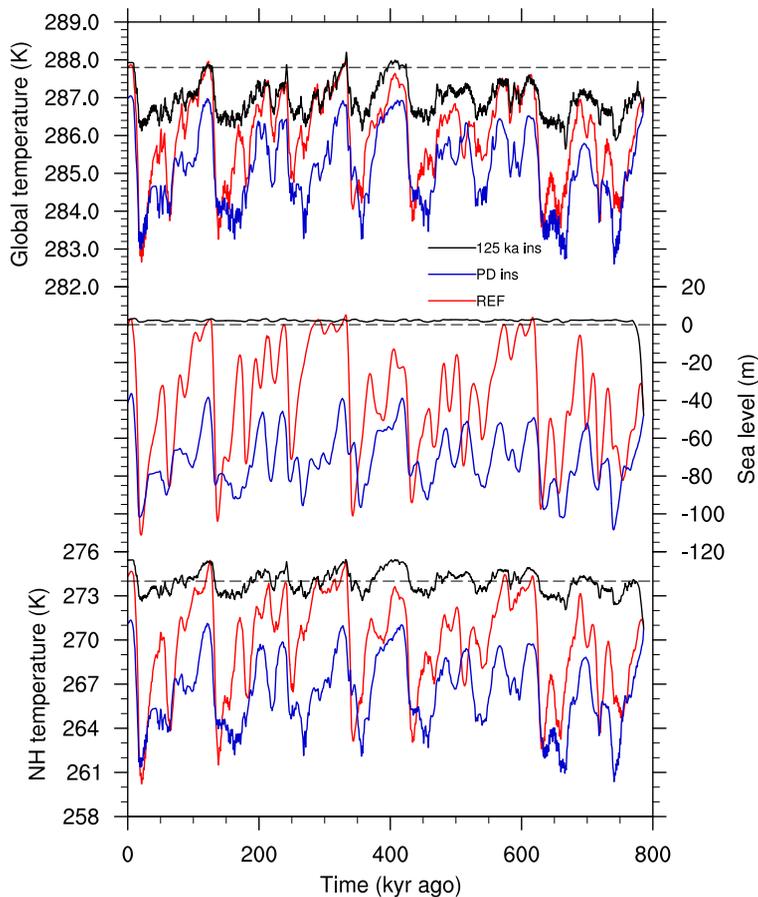
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**Figure 9.** (a) Modeled LGM-PI atmospheric temperature difference, for the same runs as in Fig. 8. (b) Ratio of global temperature anomalies from the fully-coupled reference run (red), the height-coupled run (orange) and the albedo-coupled run (black), to those from the ice-uncoupled run, as a function of ice volume in the (partially) coupled run. The temperature data comes from the ZEBM, the sea level data from the ISM.





**Figure 11.** Modeled global temperature (top), sea level relative to PD (middle), and NH temperature (bottom), for the fully-coupled reference run (red), a run with insolation fixed at PD value (blue) and a run with insolation fixed at the precession maximum of 125 kyr ago value (black).

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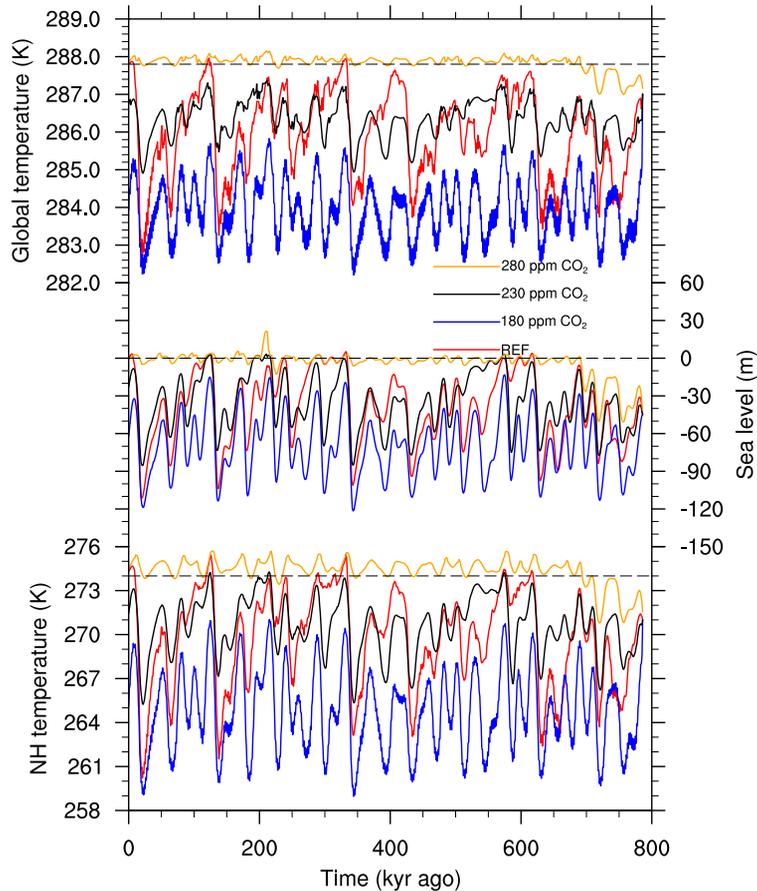
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**Figure 12.** Modeled global temperature (top), sea level relative to PD (middle) and NH temperature (bottom), for the fully-coupled reference run (red), a run with CO<sub>2</sub> fixed at 180 ppm (full glacial value; blue), a run with CO<sub>2</sub> fixed at 230 ppm (intermediate value; black), and CO<sub>2</sub> fixed at 280 ppm (interglacial (PI) value; orange).

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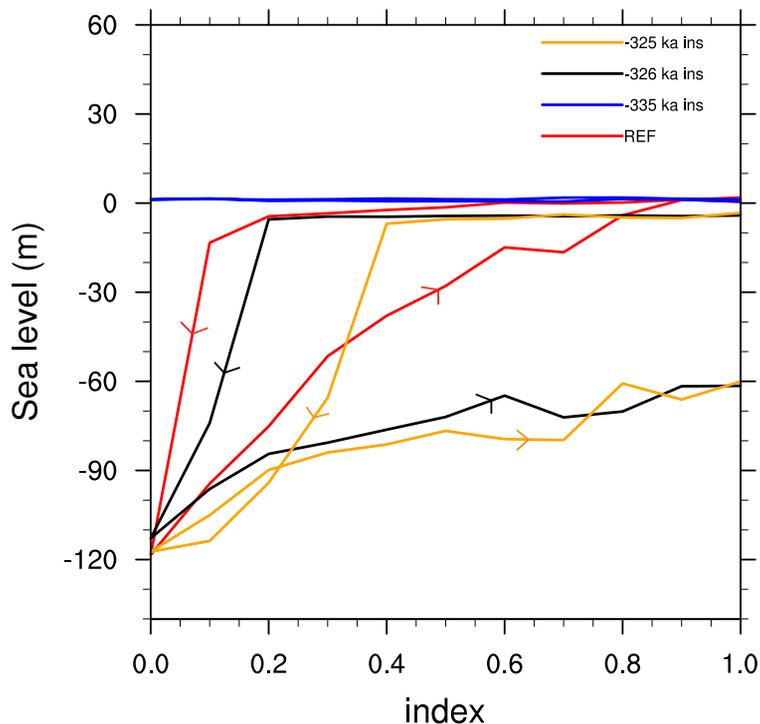
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**Figure 13.** Modeled global sea level in hysteresis tests, where  $\text{CO}_2$  is decreased in steps of 10 ppm per 30 kyr from 280 ppm to 180 ppm and then increased in reversed manner. Insolation is kept at constant level of 335 (high NH summer insolation; blue line), 327 (intermediate; black line) and 325 (low; orange line) kyr ago. In the reference case (REF; red line), it is first decreased in steps of 1 kyr from the high to the low extreme, and then increased back to the initial level, in phase with  $\text{CO}_2$ . An index is assigned to the input values, linearly ranging from favourable (180 ppm  $\text{CO}_2$  (and low NH summer insolation for REF); index 0) to unfavourable (280 ppm  $\text{CO}_2$  (and high NH summer insolation for REF); index 1) for NH glaciation.

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