

1 **Subsurface North Atlantic warming as a trigger of rapid**
2 **cooling events: evidences from the Early Pleistocene (MIS**
3 **31-19)**

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12

13 **Abstract**

14 Subsurface water column dynamics in the subpolar North Atlantic were reconstructed in order
15 to improve the understanding of the cause of abrupt IRD events during cold periods of the
16 Early Pleistocene. We used paired Mg/Ca- $\delta^{18}\text{O}$ measurements on *Neogloboquadrina*
17 *pachyderma* sinistral, a deep-dwelling () planktonic foraminifera, to estimate the subsurface
18 temperatures and $\delta^{18}\text{O}$ of seawater at Site U1314. Carbon isotopes on benthic and planktonic
19 foraminifera from the same site provide information about the ventilation and water column
20 nutrient gradient. Mg/Ca-based temperatures and $\delta^{18}\text{O}$ of seawater suggest increased
21 temperatures and salinities during ice-rafting, likely due to northward subsurface transport of
22 subtropical waters during periods of weaker Atlantic Meridional Overturning Circulation
23 (AMOC) reduction. Planktonic carbon isotopes support this suggestion, showing coincident
24 increased subsurface ventilation during deposition of ice-rafted detritus (IRD). Subsurface
25 accumulation of warm waters would result in basal warming and break-up of ice-shelves,
26 leading to massive iceberg discharges in the North Atlantic. Release of heat and salt stored at
27 subsurface would help to restart the AMOC. This mechanism is in agreement with modelling
28 and proxy studies that observe a subsurface warming in the North Atlantic in response to
29 AMOC slowdown during the Marine Isotope Stage (MIS) 3.

1

2 **1 Introduction**

3 Rapid climate events in marine and continental sediments, as well as ice-core records are a
4 pervasive feature during the Last Glacial period (Dansgaard et al., 1993; Heinrich, 1988).
5 Millennial-scale oscillations are characterized by abrupt shifts between warm/cold conditions,
6 associated to ice-sheet oscillations, as evidenced by major ice-rafting events recorded in the
7 North Atlantic sediments (Grousset et al., 2001; Heinrich, 1988). The mechanism responsible
8 for these fluctuations is not fully understood. Most accepted hypotheses relate rapid
9 oscillations in the Atlantic Meridional Overturning Circulation (AMOC) to insulating effect
10 of extensive ice-shelves and sea-ice and/or through freshwater perturbations causing changes
11 in the dynamics of the North Atlantic subpolar gyre that controls the meridional heat and
12 salinity transport (Ganopolski and Rahmstorf, 2001; Clark et al., 2001; Hátún et al., 2005; Li et
13 al., 2005).

14 More recently, a number of studies and climate models have proposed that increased iceberg
15 discharge during cold stadial events may have resulted from the destabilization of marine ice-
16 shelves by a basal melting caused, in turn, by enhanced subsurface oceanic warming
17 (Alvarez-Solas et al., 2010; Shaffer et al., 2004; Rasmussen and Thomsen, 2004; Liu et al.,
18 2009; Marcott et al., 2011; Mignot et al., 2007; Moros et al., 2002; Peck et al., 2008; Jonkers et
19 al., 2010b; Ezat et al., 2014; Naafs et al., 2013). This mechanism involves the coupling of the
20 AMOC with ice-sheet dynamics, by an increase of the heat and salt export from low latitudes,
21 warming of subsurface waters that would act as a positive feedback in the ice-shelf collapse.
22 General agreement between model and proxy evidences support this explanation for abrupt
23 climate events such as Heinrich and Dansgaard-Oeschger (D-O) cycles.

24 Application of Mg/Ca paleothermometry to deep-dwelling planktonic foraminiferal species
25 constitutes a potential recorder of subsurface conditions (Kozdon et al., 2009; Simstich et al.,
26 2003; Volkman and Mensch, 2001) to test the feasibility of this hypothesis. Moreover, as
27 foraminiferal $\delta^{18}\text{O}$ is controlled by temperature and $\delta^{18}\text{O}$ of seawater ($\delta^{18}\text{O}_{\text{sw}}$), combining
28 foraminiferal Mg/Ca temperature reconstructions with $\delta^{18}\text{O}$ from the same species and
29 samples allow to reconstruct $\delta^{18}\text{O}_{\text{sw}}$ as a proxy for salinity (Schmidt et al., 2004). However,
30 only few paleoceanographic studies using these proxies have been produced (Jonkers et al.,
31 2010b; Peck et al., 2008; Peck et al., 2006). Therefore, more studies with a similar approach

1 are still required to understand subsurface temperature and circulation changes linked to
2 AMOC reorganizations, especially for time periods out of the Marine Isotope Stage (MIS) 3.

3 Although the paleo-community has extensively studied climate disruptions during most recent
4 time scales, relatively little attention has been devoted to high-frequency climate variability in
5 earlier periods when large Northern Hemisphere (NH) ice-sheets were same size as in the
6 Late Pleistocene. Part of the gap of the study of these rapid climate oscillations in older time
7 scales was due to the absence of high-quality/resolution paleoclimate records. However,
8 during the last years, several studies carried out in International Ocean Drilling Project
9 (IODP) cores have found robust evidences of abrupt climate events, (Bolton et al.,
10 2010;Ferretti et al., 2010;Kleiven et al., 2011;Hernández-Almeida et al., 2012;Bartoli et al.,
11 2006), with similar structure transitions between cold (stadial) and warm (interstadial) phases
12 of the D-O cycles as those found during the Last Glacial period.

13 To further evaluate the relationship between subsurface ocean temperature and ice-sheet
14 instabilities during the Early Pleistocene, we present here a new millennial-scale
15 reconstruction of the temperature and $\delta^{18}\text{O}_{\text{sw}}$ of the subsurface Atlantic inflow using paired
16 Mg/Ca and $\delta^{18}\text{O}$ measurements on the planktonic foraminifera *Neogloboquadrina*
17 *pachyderma* sinistral (sin.) from IODP Site U1314. This is the first Mg/Ca temperature record
18 produced in the subpolar North Atlantic for the Early Pleistocene. Previous paleo-sea surface
19 temperatures (SST) records in the region are derived from planktonic foraminifera-based
20 transfer functions (Hernández-Almeida et al., 2012) or alkenones (McClymont et al., 2008),
21 but none of them give information about the thermocline conditions. The location of this core
22 is at ideal latitude for monitoring changes in ice-sheet mass balance, and Mg/Ca values
23 derived from *N. pachyderma* sin. allow to record changes in the subsurface temperatures
24 (upper thermocline, ~200 meters depth) (Nürnberg, 1995) associated with oscillations in the
25 AMOC. Our data suggest subsurface warming and salinity increases preceding and during the
26 iceberg events, indicating clear evidence of coupling between basal melting and ice-sheet
27 collapse as a mechanism controlling the millennial-scale events in the Early Pleistocene.

28

29 **2 Study site and materials**

30 Records were made using sediments from IODP Site U1314 (56.36°N, 27.88°W, 2820-m
31 depth) from the southern Gardar Drift in the subpolar North Atlantic (Fig. 1A). Sedimentation

1 rates average 9.3 cm/kyr from 1069 to 779 ka, dated by tuning our benthic $\delta^{18}\text{O}$ curve to the
2 benthic isotope stack of Lisiecki and Raymo (2005) (hereinafter referred to as LR04) by using
3 AnalySeries software (Paillard and Yiou, 1996) (See Hernández-Almeida et al., 2012 for
4 further details).

5 Site U1314 lies in the path of an extension of the North Atlantic Current (NAC), the Irminger
6 Current (IC), which splits from the NAC and turns toward the Greenland coast. The core of
7 this relatively warm and salty water mass is distinguishable by its properties vertically down
8 to 700 m depth. As the IC travels westwards it mixes with the colder and fresher waters of the
9 East Greenland Current (EGC), becoming less saline and colder (Malmberg, 1985).

10 Although today the limit of winter sea-ice (Arctic Front) lies north of Site U1314, it is known
11 to have migrated southward during glacials of the Pleistocene bringing much cooler waters
12 and potentially also sea-ice south of 60°N. (Ruddiman, 1977). Today, modern hydrographic
13 conditions at Site U1314 are characterized by seasonal water temperatures ranging between
14 11.7 and 7.7 °C at 10 m depth and 8-7.4 °C at 200 m (Locarnini et al., 2013) with nearly
15 constant salinity of 35.1-35.2 practical salinity units (p.s.u.) (Antonov et al., 2006) (Fig. 1B).

16 Winter convection of the cooled Atlantic surface waters in the Nordic Seas results in the
17 formation of North Atlantic Deep Water (NADW), which flows southward as the Iceland-
18 Scotland Overflow Water (ISOW) (Figure 1a). This water mass flows at Site U1314 depth
19 (Bianchi and McCave, 2000).

20 Subsurface water column conditions were determined through Mg/Ca ratios and stable
21 isotopes measured on deep dwelling planktonic foraminifera *N. pachyderma* sin. This species
22 inhabits and calcifies its shell in the subpolar North Atlantic at the upper thermocline, at ~200
23 m depth, (Kohfeld et al., 1996; Simstich et al., 2003; Nürnberg, 1995; Volkman and Mensch,
24 2001). Therefore we assume that $\delta^{13}\text{C}$ on deep dwelling foraminifera *N. pachyderma* sin.,
25 which inhabits and calcifies at the upper thermocline, provides information on the ventilation
26 rates of the subsurface water mass (Hillaire-Marcel et al., 2011), while Mg/Ca measurements
27 on the same species reflect water temperature changes and combined with $\delta^{18}\text{O}$ provides a
28 record $\delta^{18}\text{O}$ of seawater (sw) of the subsurface ocean (Peck et al., 2006).

29 Around 50-60 well-preserved tests of planktonic foraminifera *N. pachyderma* sin. (>150 μm
30 size fraction, non-encrusted tests) were analysed in 542 samples for Mg/Ca ratio following
31 Pena et al. (2005) procedure which includes the reductive cleaning step. Dissolved samples

1 were analysed on a Perkin Elmer Elan 6000 Inductively Coupled Plasma Mass Spec-
2 trometer (ICP-MS) at the Scientific and Technological Centers of the University of Barcelona (CCiT-
3 UB). External reproducibility for Mg/Ca ratio is estimated at 1.8% (2σ) based in the analysis
4 of high-purity gravimetrically prepared standard solution (1.629 mmol/mol) measured
5 routinely every four samples. Elemental ratios of Mn/Ca and Al/Ca ratios were analysed in
6 parallel as quality controls for clay and Mn-rich mineral content. The recorded low values
7 (Mn/Ca<0.5 mmol/mol; Al/Ca<0.15 mmol/mol) and their low correlation with the Mg/Ca
8 ratios ($R^2=0.2$ and 0.004 respectively) indicate that the cleaning protocol satisfactorily
9 removed most of the contaminant phases. Final Mg/Ca values were converted into
10 temperatures values according to Elderfield and Ganssen (2000) equation.

11 Stable isotopes (carbon and oxygen) records from benthic and planktonic foraminifera
12 correspond to Hernández-Almeida et al. (2013b;2012;2013a). Analyses were carried out on
13 planktonic foraminifera *N. pachyderma* sin. and on benthic foraminifera *Cibicidoides* spp.
14 (mainly *Cibicidoides wuellerstorfi*) and *Melonis pompilioides* when former was absent. An
15 adjustment factor (-0.11‰ for $\delta^{18}\text{O}$ and $+0.6\text{‰}$ for $\delta^{13}\text{C}$) calculated from replicates along the
16 core was then applied to the *M. pompilioides* isotope values to produce a uniform isotope data
17 set. Oxygen isotope values were then ice-volume corrected by scaling to the sea-level curve of
18 LR04 using an LGM to late Holocene sea-level change of 120 m (Bintanja and van de Wal,
19 2008). Seawater $\delta^{18}\text{O}$ was calculated introducing paired Mg/Ca based temperatures and
20 calcite $\delta^{18}\text{O}$ from *N. pachyderma* sin. in the paleotemperature equation of Shackleton
21 (1974). It has been widely demonstrated that planktonic species do not always precipitate
22 calcite in equilibrium. Based on the $\delta^{18}\text{O}$ measurements on seawater and *N. pachyderma* sin.
23 tests from the Icelandic continental shelf, Smith et al. (2005) observed a $\delta^{18}\text{O}$ disequilibrium
24 offset of 0.25‰ . Others authors have also observed a disequilibrium offset in the oxygen
25 isotope composition of *N. pachyderma* sin. of $\sim 0.6\text{‰}$ associated with post-gametogenic
26 processes and thermal stratification of the water column in the Nordic Seas (Nyland et al.,
27 2006). However, Jonkers et al. (2010a) did not find any offset in sediment trap samples from
28 the Irminger Sea. Taking into account that samples used in this study are very close to Site
29 U1314, we did not apply any correction factor to our calculated $\delta^{18}\text{O}_{\text{sw}}$. Contradicting studies
30 indicate that this issue is not well constrained, with a need for further studies. Due to the
31 uncertainties in *N. pachyderma* sin. vital effect and low SST during the Mid-Pleistocene
32 Transition that may overestimate the $\delta^{18}\text{O}_{\text{sw}}$ values, we suggest caution when interpreting in
33 absolute terms.

1

2 **3 Results**

3 Mg/Ca ranges between 0.7-1.25 mmol* mol^{-1} and Mg/Ca derived paleotemperatures range
4 between 1.9 and 12.3°C (Fig. 2). The Mg/Ca and $\delta^{18}\text{O}_{\text{sw}}$ records show different patterns after
5 and before MIS 25. From MIS 31 to MIS 25, the amplitude of the glacial-to-interglacial (G-
6 IG) changes is low; temperatures and $\delta^{18}\text{O}_{\text{sw}}$ are stable, only punctuated by frequent
7 millennial-scale oscillations, with temperature decreases of $\sim 3^\circ\text{C}$ and $\delta^{18}\text{O}_{\text{sw}}$ increases up to 1
8 ‰. Since MIS 25, amplitude of hydrographic changes was larger, with $\delta^{18}\text{O}_{\text{sw}}$ increased by
9 ~ 1 -0.5‰, and temperature reaching maxima up to 12°C during MIS 25 and 21.. During this
10 interval, there is also a pervasive suborbital variability, especially during glacial onset and
11 during MIS 21. Ice-rafting episodes are characterised by relatively warm and saltier
12 subsurface waters at the Gardar Drift. Rapid temperature and $\delta^{18}\text{O}_{\text{sw}}$ increases are observed
13 before the IRD deposition, e.g. at 1060, 995, 924, 880 ka, or shortly after the iceberg
14 discharge started (Fig. 3). There are exceptions, and some events do not show this pattern,
15 like at ~ 832 and 828 ka, subsurface warming is not observed, but there is increase in $\delta^{18}\text{O}_{\text{sw}}$
16 (Table 1).

17 The most important feature of the difference between benthic and planktonic $\delta^{13}\text{C}$ ($\Delta\delta^{13}\text{C}$) are
18 the abrupt decreases of ~ 1 ‰ during IRD events, when values are around 0‰. During warmer
19 periods, $\Delta\delta^{13}\text{C}$ ranges between +1-1.4‰ (Fig. 4).

20

21 **4 Discussion**

22 Paleotemperature estimates based on Mg/Ca of *N. pachyderma* sin. at Site U1314 indicate
23 that many of the IRD events were characterised by an abrupt subsurface warming (Fig. 2).
24 The magnitude of this warming is not always the same across the studied interval, ranging
25 between 2.5-8°C. The $\delta^{18}\text{O}_{\text{sw}}$ shows repeatedly higher values, indicating saltier waters during
26 IRD deposition. Although these changes in temperature and salinity were simultaneous to the
27 IRD events, in some cases (e.g. at 995 ka), subsurface waters started to warm up and to
28 become saltier even before the ice-rafting. The positive excursions of the $\delta^{13}\text{C}$ signal from *N.*
29 *pachyderma* sin. during these events were interpreted to indicate increasing subsurface
30 ventilation in the North Atlantic (Hernández-Almeida et al., 2013b) (Fig. 2). Similar
31 conditions of better ventilation at intermediate depths during IRD deposition are also evident

1 from benthic $\delta^{13}\text{C}$ in Site 982 on the Rockall Plateau (Venz et al., 1999), which was suggested
2 to be related to changes in the production of GNAIW (Fig. 2). Strong coupling between the
3 Mg/Ca temperatures and $\delta^{18}\text{O}_{\text{sw}}$ fluctuations and subsurface circulation may reflect a change
4 in the AMOC.

5 The accumulation of subsurface warming during ice-rafting events would correspond with a
6 rapid development of the thermocline that stabilizes the water column and via intense basal
7 melting and thinning of marine ice-shelves provokes a large-scale instability of the ice-sheets
8 and retreat of the grounding line. With destruction of ice-shelves, ice streams may surge,
9 leading to increased iceberg production. The ice-sheets located in regions with relatively mild
10 conditions and high precipitation rates, such as Scandinavia and Iceland, are indeed very
11 sensitive to millennial climate variability, and then respond quickly to warmer conditions
12 producing iceberg discharges (Marshall and Koutnik, 2006). The difference between benthic
13 and planktonic $\delta^{13}\text{C}$ ($\Delta\delta^{13}\text{C}$), used to indicate the nutrient gradient between subsurface and
14 bottom water (Charles et al., 2010), gives additional information about the ventilation of
15 subsurface and deep waters. The short-term periods of low $\Delta\delta^{13}\text{C}$ values ($\sim 0\%$) during IRD
16 discharges suggest water column vertical mixing and formation of Glacial North Atlantic
17 Intermediate Water (GNAIW) south of the Arctic Front.

18 After iceberg calving decreased, sudden release of heat accumulated at subsurface, broke the
19 upper stratification (Mignot et al., 2007). Inflowing warm and salty Atlantic waters are again
20 in contact with the surface ocean, and there is an efficient release of heat to the atmosphere,
21 resulting in an intensified AMOC characterized by deeper and stronger deep-water circulation
22 (Schmidt et al., 2006; Liu et al., 2009). Onset of deep convection in the Nordic Seas and
23 NADW production led to a shutdown of GNAIW production (Venz et al., 1999). The nutrient
24 gradient profile shows rapid increases up to 1.4‰ reflecting the establishment of a strong
25 nutricline between deep and subsurface waters (Fig. 4). The switch to deep convection and a
26 strong AMOC overshooting caused a decrease in subsurface temperatures and $\delta^{18}\text{O}_{\text{sw}}$,
27 suggesting the return toward a ‘normal water column’ state.

28 Although the mechanism that characterizes the subsurface climate instabilities involves higher
29 Mg/Ca temperatures, planktonic $\delta^{13}\text{C}$ and $\delta^{18}\text{O}_{\text{sw}}$, some of the events are missing some of
30 these features. At ~ 832 and 828 ka, IRD events are not accompanied clear by subsurface
31 warming, while changes in $\delta^{13}\text{C}$ and $\delta^{18}\text{O}_{\text{sw}}$ are evident (Table 1). This could imply that more
32 active subsurface depth ventilation was due to by brine rejection during the wintertime sea-ice

1 production, as occurs in high-latitude seas (Aagaard and Carmack, 1989;Horikawa et al.,
2 2010). However, this alternate mechanism to explain the eventual higher density of
3 subsurface waters in absence of warmer waters is speculative, and more robust evidences of
4 brine rejection during sea-ice formation are needed.We are still uncertain about the driving
5 mechanism that drives northward transport of warm and salty subsurface waters during
6 episodes of weak AMOC. We suggest that analogous mechanisms involving ice-shelf and
7 sea-ice expansion in the NH that are invoked to explain D-O cycles during the Last Glacial
8 period (Petersen et al., 2013), operated also during the Early Pleistocene. Growing ice-shelves
9 in the subpolar North Atlantic during the onset of glaciations would change land surface
10 albedos producing a reduction of air sea temperature (Broccoli and Manabe, 1987). This
11 cooling would increase the extent and thickness of sea-ice, resulting in a higher insulation of
12 the surface ocean (Li et al., 2005;Kaspi et al., 2004), causing convection shutdown in the high
13 latitude North Atlantic and reduced NADW formation. A weakened subpolar gyre circulation
14 would supply less cold and fresh water to the Atlantic inflow, making it saltier (Thornalley et
15 al., 2009;Hátún et al., 2005). Warm and salty waters accumulating at the subsurface would be
16 eventually transported poleward as there is still convection but at intermediate depths, and
17 finally causes a temperature inversion and salt inflow in the North Atlantic (Shaffer et al.,
18 2004). Alternatively, abrupt slowdown of the AMOC may respond to different mechanisms
19 including internal oscillation regulated via atmospheric CO₂ concentration and Southern
20 Ocean wind intensifications (Banderas et al., 2012;Alvarez-Solas et al., 2011).

21 Several modelling and paleoclimate studies also show intermediate or subsurface warming in
22 the North Atlantic during IRD events as a response to AMOC reorganizations (Liu et al.,
23 2009;Mignot et al., 2007;Brady and Otto-Bliesner, 2011), accompanied by a southward shift
24 in the convection cell from the Nordic Seas to the subpolar North Atlantic (Brady and Otto-
25 Bliesner, 2011;Venz et al., 1999;Voelker et al., 2010;Oppo and Lehman, 1993). This scenario
26 characterized by a temperature inversion, would represent an analogous situation to modern
27 conditions in Arctic Ocean. In this region, Atlantic waters flowing via the West Spitsbergen
28 Current cause an Atlantic-derived temperature and salinity maximum at 200-500 m water
29 depth, under the permanent sea-ice cover (Bauch et al., 1997).

30 Temperature sensitive proxies from other North Atlantic sites display similar features that are
31 interpreted as subsurface warming conditions prior to ice-rafting events and deglaciations
32 during the Last Glacial period and the Holocene. Risebrobakken et al. (2011) documented

1 intensified subsurface warming in the Nordic Seas using planktonic foraminifera faunas as a
2 response to a reduced strength of the AMOC through the deglaciation and the early Holocene.
3 Mg/Ca derived temperatures from *N. pachyderma* sin. in two cores from the Northeast
4 Atlantic also support the inferred warming during Heinrich events. These records show upper
5 ocean stratification and high subsurface temperatures initiated during ice-rafting events
6 (Jonkers et al., 2010b; Peck et al., 2008). Jonkers et al. (2010b) explained the low planktonic
7 $\delta^{13}\text{C}$ values of *N. pachyderma* during these events as a result of reduced ventilation of
8 subsurface waters due to the insulating effect of a meltwater lens and/or a sea-ice layer. Our
9 high planktonic $\delta^{13}\text{C}$ values during these rapid cooling events, however, indicate that more
10 intense subsurface ventilation and/or nutrient depleted subtropical waters were exported to the
11 subpolar North Atlantic, which is supported by the similarity with the intermediate water $\delta^{13}\text{C}$
12 signal from Site 982 (Venz et al., 1999) (Fig.2). We argue that such disagreement between
13 planktonic $\delta^{13}\text{C}$ profiles could be explained by the southward shift of the Polar Front as far as
14 42°N during cold periods of the Late Pleistocene (Ruddiman and McIntyre, 1981a; Eynaud et
15 al., 2009), limiting the fraction of nutrient depleted subtropical waters exported northward
16 (Mix and Fairbanks, 1985) compared to the Early Pleistocene.

17 Similar warm conditions during Heinrich events and stadials are also evident from benthic
18 faunas and Mg/Ca ratios in benthic foraminifera from the Nordic Seas, indicating that
19 warming was probably extended to intermediate depths (below 1000 meters) by downward
20 diffusion of subtropical ocean heat during times of slow North Atlantic overturning
21 (Rasmussen and Thomsen, 2004; Marcott et al., 2011; Ezat et al., 2014). These results are in
22 agreement with subsurface warming events at the subtropics during Heinrich 1 (Schmidt et
23 al., 2012). All of these observations suggest that subsurface warming was a basin-wide
24 phenomenon during periods of reduced AMOC in MIS3. To better evaluate this scenario for
25 the Early Pleistocene, more subsurface marine records situated in key regions from the North
26 Atlantic are required. The proposed scenario is in agreement with modelling studies that
27 reveal basal melting of the ice-shelf and periodic pulses of iceberg discharge as a response to
28 strong reduction of the AMOC (Mignot et al., 2007; Shaffer et al., 2004; Alvarez-Solas et al.,
29 2010; Manabe and Stouffer, 1997).

30 Finally, from the similarity of the paleoclimatic records with the model simulations and
31 modern observations, we argue that observed increased subsurface ocean warming could play

1 a leading role in the massive break-up of ice-shelves in the Antarctic Ocean (Vaughan and
2 Doake, 1996;Rignot and Jacobs, 2002;MacAyeal et al., 2003).

3

4 **5 Conclusions**

5 The Mg/Ca derived paleotemperature and $\delta^{18}\text{O}_{\text{sw}}$ oscillations prior and during IRD discharges
6 at Site U1314 across the Early Pleistocene (MIS 31-19) are related to changes in subsurface
7 circulation. The mechanism operating during episodes of rapid-climate cooling consists in a
8 reduction in the AMOC during periods of extensive ice-shelves and sea-ice in the subpolar
9 North Atlantic. Deep water convection sites shifted south of the Polar Front and production of
10 GNAIW would increase at the expenses of NADW. Poleward transport of warm and salty
11 subsurface subtropical waters during these episodes would thin and destabilize ice-shelves
12 creating pulses of ice-rafted debris. Salt and heat accumulated at the subsurface would be
13 suddenly released when the ice-sheet collapsed, resulting in an intensified AMOC. Analogous
14 mechanisms based on subsurface warming as a trigger for millennial-scale climate variability
15 were proposed for Heinrich events or D-O cycles recorded during Late Glacial period
16 (Alvarez-Solas et al., 2010;Shaffer et al., 2004), reflecting that rapid switches of the AMOC
17 also occurred before the establishment of the 100-kyr climate cycles of the Late Pleistocene.

18

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26

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9

10 **FIGURE CAPTIONS**

11

12 Table 1. Summary of the changes in Mg/Ca, $\delta^{18}\text{O}_{\text{sw}}$ and planktonic $\delta^{13}\text{C}$ during the IRD
13 events.

14 Figure 1. (a) Location of IODP Site U1314. Modern surface (red), and deep circulation (blue)
15 in the North Atlantic: East Greenland Current (EGC), North Atlantic Current (NAC),
16 Irminger Current (IC), Iceland Scotland Overflow Water (ISOW), North Atlantic Deep Water
17 (NADW). (b) Plots of temperature ($^{\circ}\text{C}$) (red) and salinity (p.s.u.) (blue) versus depth obtained
18 from the *World Ocean Atlas 2013* (Locarnini et al., 2013; Zweng et al., 2013). Map generated
19 with Ocean Data View v.3.4.3. software (Schlitzer, 2008).

20

21 Figure 2. Data for IODP Site U1314 spanning marine isotope stages (MIS) 31-19 vs. age.
22 From top to bottom: (a) benthic (Hernández-Almeida et al., 2013a) and (b) planktonic $\delta^{18}\text{O}$
23 (Hernández-Almeida et al., 2012); (c) benthic $\delta^{13}\text{C}$ (Hernández-Almeida et al., 2013a); (d)
24 planktonic $\delta^{13}\text{C}$ (red) (Hernández-Almeida et al., 2013b) vs. benthic $\delta^{13}\text{C}$ from Site 982 (blue)
25 (Venz et al., 1999); (e) $\delta^{18}\text{O}_{\text{sw}}$ reconstruction from paired Mg/Ca- $\delta^{18}\text{O}$ measurements on the
26 planktonic foraminifera *Neogloboquadrina pachyderma* (sin.); (f) derived Mg/Ca-
27 paleotemperature calculated using exponential temperature equation of Elderfield and
28 Ganssen (2000). (g) IRD/g (Hernández-Almeida et al., 2012). Red vertical bars indicate IRD
29 discharge associated with subsurface warming.

30

1 Figure 3. Comparison between Mg/Ca-paleotemperature, $\delta^{18}\text{O}_{\text{sw}}$, planktonic $\delta^{13}\text{C}$ and IRD/g
2 for Site U1314 during specific intervals.

3 Figure 4. Data for IODP Site U1314 spanning marine isotope stages (MIS) 31-19 vs. age. (a)
4 $\Delta\delta^{13}\text{C}_{\text{b-p}}$ (b-benthic, p-planktonic) (i.e. *C. wuellerstorfi*/*M. pompilioides*-*N. pachyderma* sin.);
5 (b) IRD/g (Hernández-Almeida et al., 2012).

6

7

IRD Event	Warming Mg/Ca (°C)	Salinity $\delta^{18}\text{O}_{\text{sw}}$ (‰)	Ventilation $\delta^{13}\text{C}_{\text{plank}}$ (‰)
MIS 30 (~1052 ka)	6.57	1.77	0.36
MIS 29 (~1033 ka)	3.3	0.35	0.42
MIS 29 (~1020 ka)	0.92	1.38	0.78
MIS 28 (~1012 ka)	1.8	0.68	0.36
MIS 28 (~1004 ka)	6.22	1.23	0.54
MIS 27 (~995 ka)	2.32	1.88	1.2
MIS 27 (~984 ka)	3.33	1.02	0.32
MIS 27 (~970 ka)	3.8	1.56	0.32
MIS 26 (~961 ka)	2.52	1.15	0.02
MIS 24 (~931 ka)	3.1	0.97	0.48
MIS 24 (~924 ka)	5.0	1.79	0.41
MIS 23 (~910 ka)	2.92	1.12	0.51
MIS 22 (~888 ka)	2.7	1.48	0.02
MIS 22 (~870 ka)	6.3	2.05	0.52
MIS 21 (~842 ka)	6.4	1.66	0.51
MIS 21 (~830 ka)	0.08	0.97	0.46
MIS 21 (~828 ka)	0.72	0.8	0.33
MIS 21 (~815 ka)	3	0.8	0.22
MIS 21 (~805 ka)	1.5	1.17	0.36







