

# Changes in ocean circulation during MIS3 inferred from radiocarbon records

Warren Beck, Doug Donahue, Tiffany McLamarrah, Dana Biddulph.....*University of Arizona, USA*

David Richards, Peter Smart.....*University of Bristol*

Larry Edwards.....*University of Minnesota, USA*

Changes in ocean circulation during MIS3 inferred from radiocarbon records:  
Inferences and implications from the  $^{14}\text{C}$  record

Short background discussion of the modern carbon cycle

The radiocarbon record

- Long record from a stalagmite

Controls on radiocarbon production

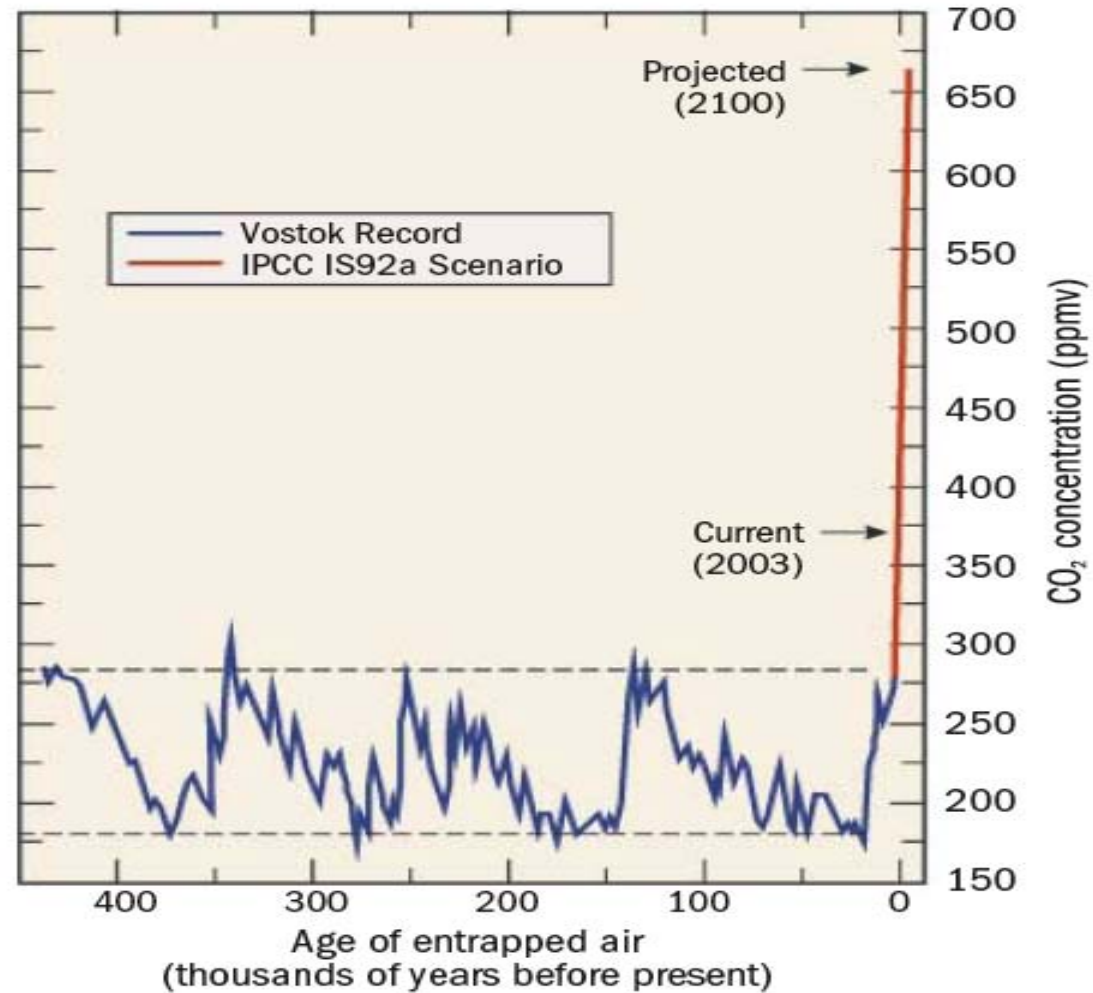
- Galactic cosmic rays

- Solar electromagnetic field

- Geomagnetic field

Partitioning of radiocarbon in the carbon cycle

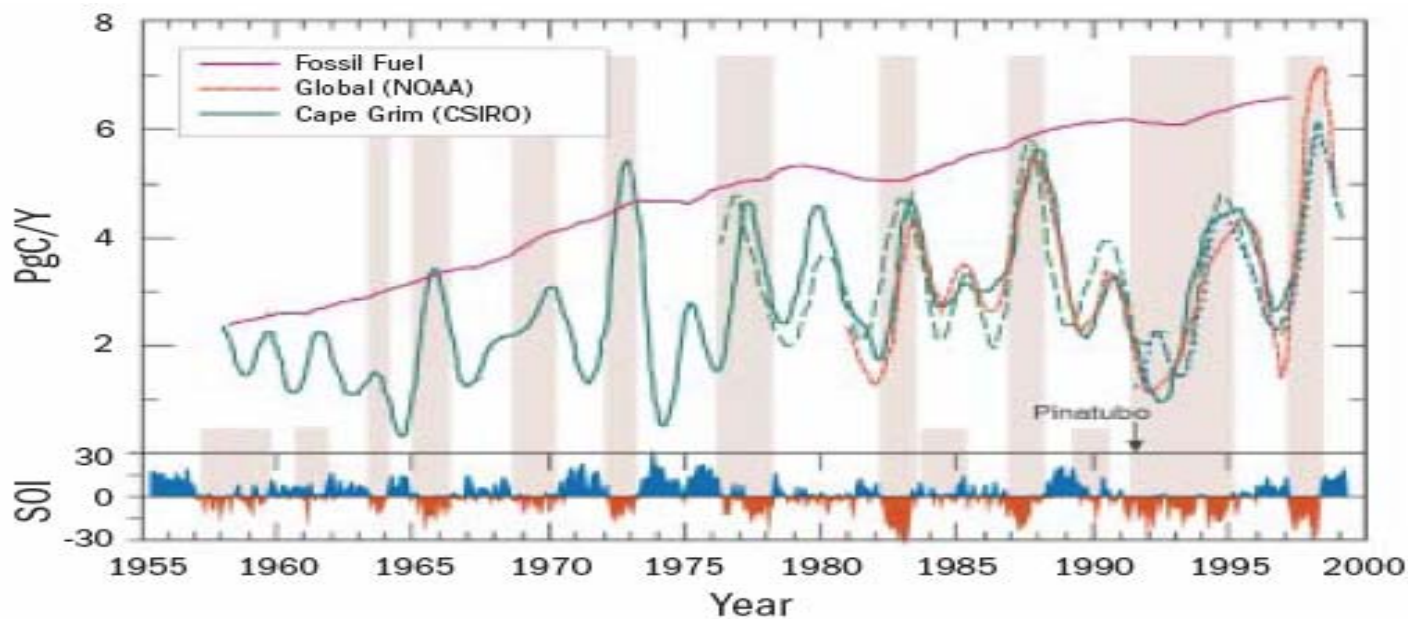
- Dominance of the oceans



**Figure 2**

The Vostok ice core record for atmospheric concentration (Petit et al 1999) and the 'business as usual' prediction used in the IPCC third assessment (IPCC 2001a). The current concentration of atmospheric carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) is also indicated.

From The Global Carbon Project, ESSP Report #1.



**Figure 7**

The CO<sub>2</sub> global growth rate (expressed here as  $10^{15}$  g/yr of carbon accumulating in the atmosphere since the start of direct CO<sub>2</sub> monitoring) is compared to fossil fuel emissions over 4 decades. On average, 55% of the anthropogenic carbon is retained in the atmosphere, but with large interannual variability related to the southern oscillation index (SOI). (The very low growth following the Pinatubo volcanic explosion in 1991 is an exception). All CO<sub>2</sub> data are deseasonalised and smoothed over 650 days. The records collected by SIO/NOAA from Mauna Loa, by NOAA from 50 global sites, or by CSIRO from Cape Grim all closely track the global growth rates (Source: R J Francey, presented at the EC-IGBP-GTOS Terrestrial Carbon Meeting, 22-26 May 2000, Costa da Caparica, Portugal).

**Table 1 Contemporary carbon budgets for the 1980s and 1990s**

	1980s* (Gt C yr <sup>-1</sup> )	1990s* (Gt C yr <sup>-1</sup> )
Emissions (fossil-fuel burning, cement manufacture)	5.4 ± 0.3	6.3 ± 0.4
Atmospheric increase	3.3 ± 0.1	3.2 ± 0.1
Ocean–atmosphere flux	−1.9 ± 0.5	−1.7 ± 0.5
Land–atmosphere flux	−0.2 ± 0.7	−1.4 ± 0.7
Emissions due to land-use change	1.7 (0.6 to 2.5)†	Assume 1.6 ± 0.8‡
Residual terrestrial sink	−1.9 (−3.8 to 0.3)	−2 to −4 (Highly uncertain)

Negative values denote flux from the atmosphere, that is, ocean or land uptake.

\* From ref. 4.

† The range of estimates available to IPCC 2001 (ref. 4).

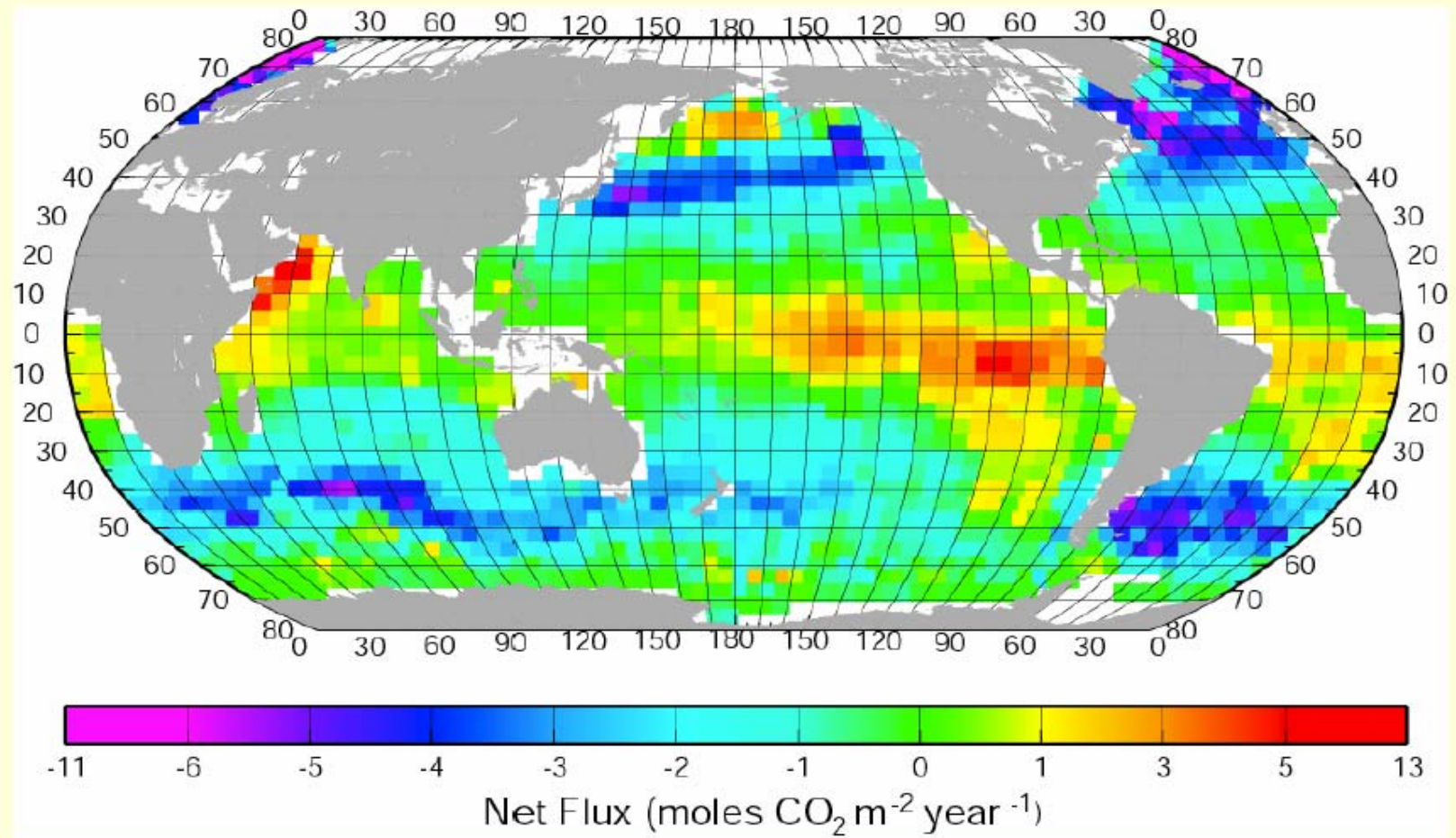
‡ Based on the early 1990s only and not the full decade (ref. 24).

# Methodologies

## Inverse modelling techniques

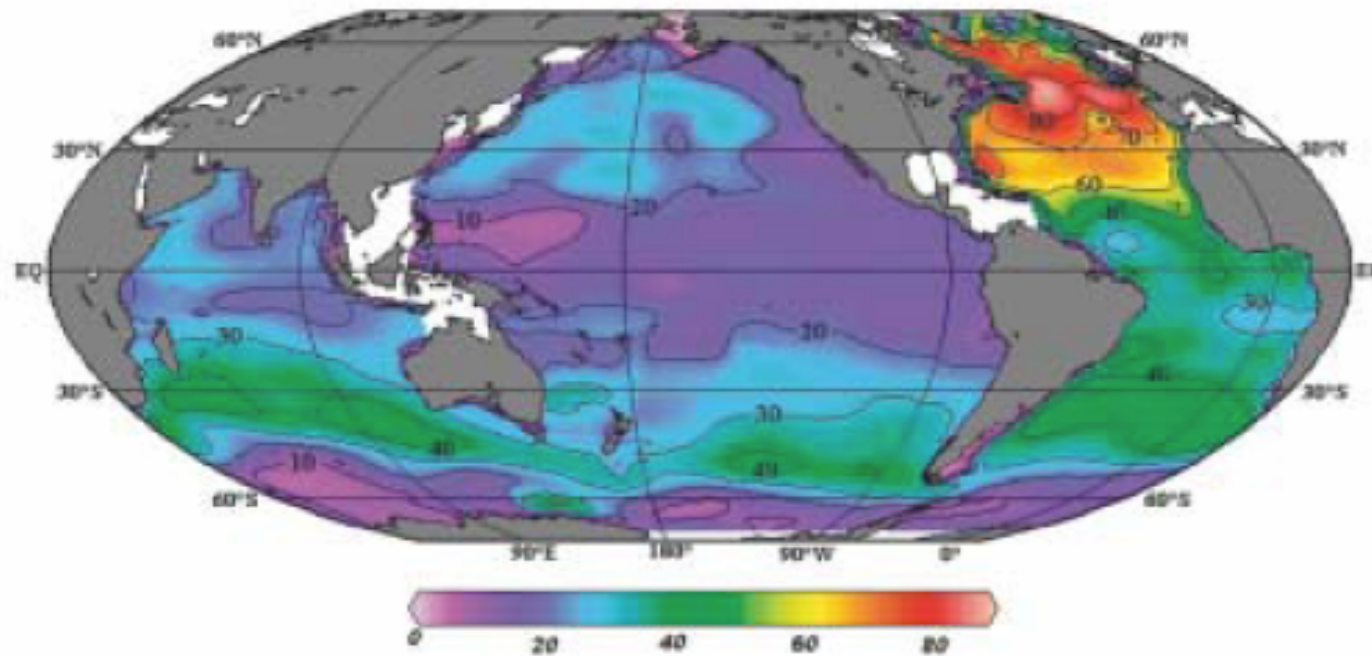
- $\Delta p(\text{CO}_2)$  method
- Inventory approach
- Atmospheric  $\delta^{13}\text{C}$  method
- Atmospheric ( $\text{O}_2/\text{N}_2$ ) Method
- Radiocarbon inventory
  
- Coupled OCGCM

Takahashi et al., 2002 DSR  
(Climatology, non ENSO)



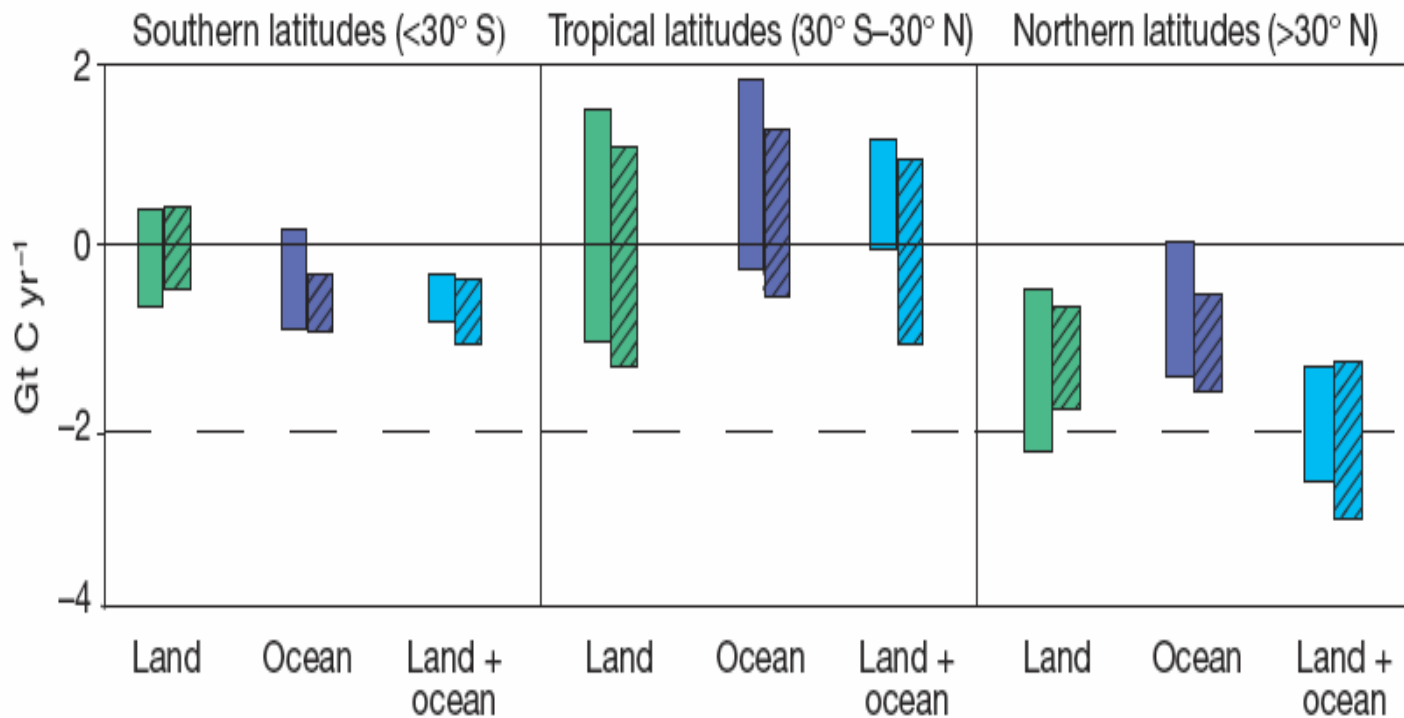


(d) Anthropogenic CO<sub>2</sub> Column Inventory (mol m<sup>-2</sup>)



(Sabine et al., 2003)





**Figure 1** Zonal distribution of terrestrial and oceanic carbon fluxes. These data were deduced from eight inverse models using different techniques and sets of atmospheric observations after accounting for fossil-fuel emissions (not shown)<sup>13</sup>. Results are shown for the 1980s (plain bars) and for 1990–96 (hatched bars). The bars indicate

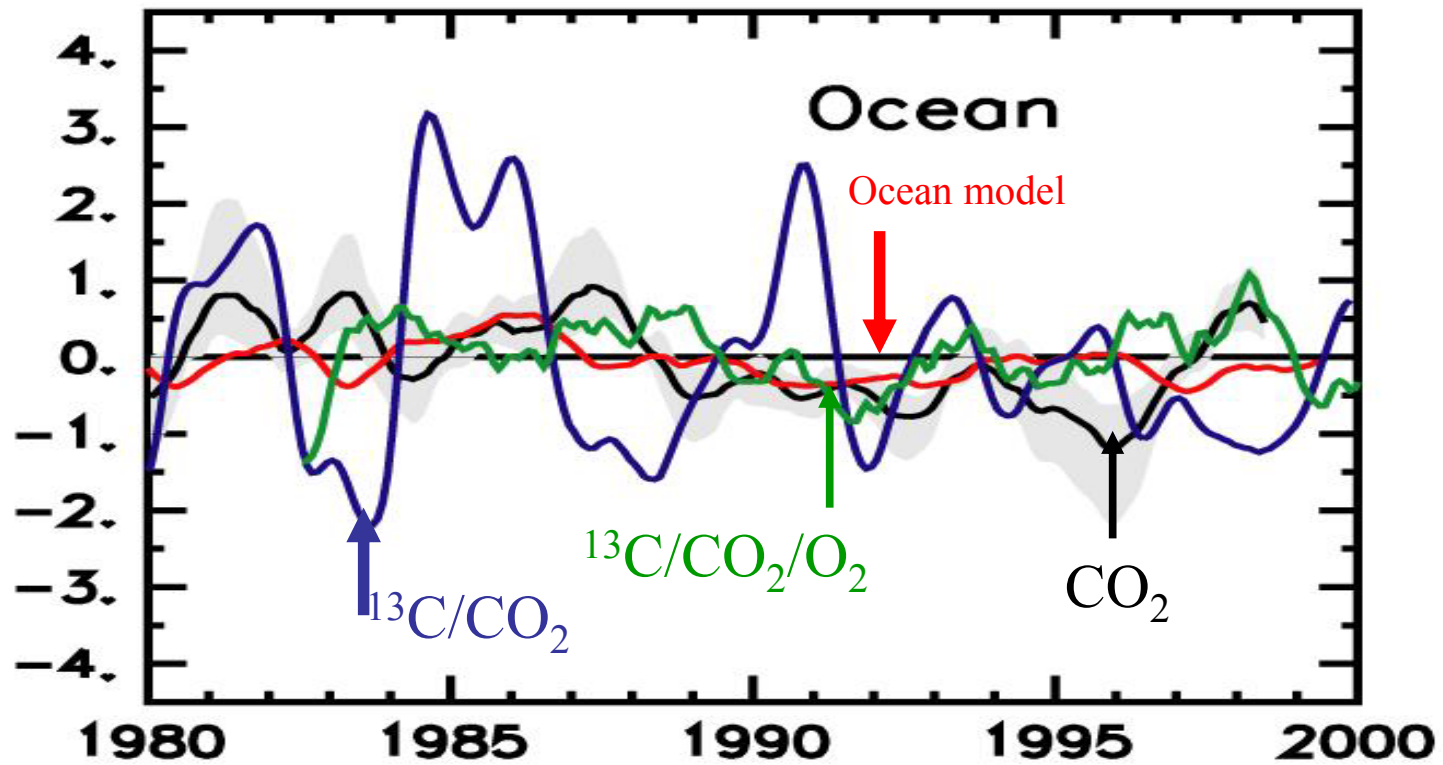
the full range of results from the models. Positive numbers are fluxes to the atmosphere. Note that data and time-intervals are not precisely consistent with those used in other analyses presented in this Progress Article, and so the global totals may differ from those mentioned elsewhere.

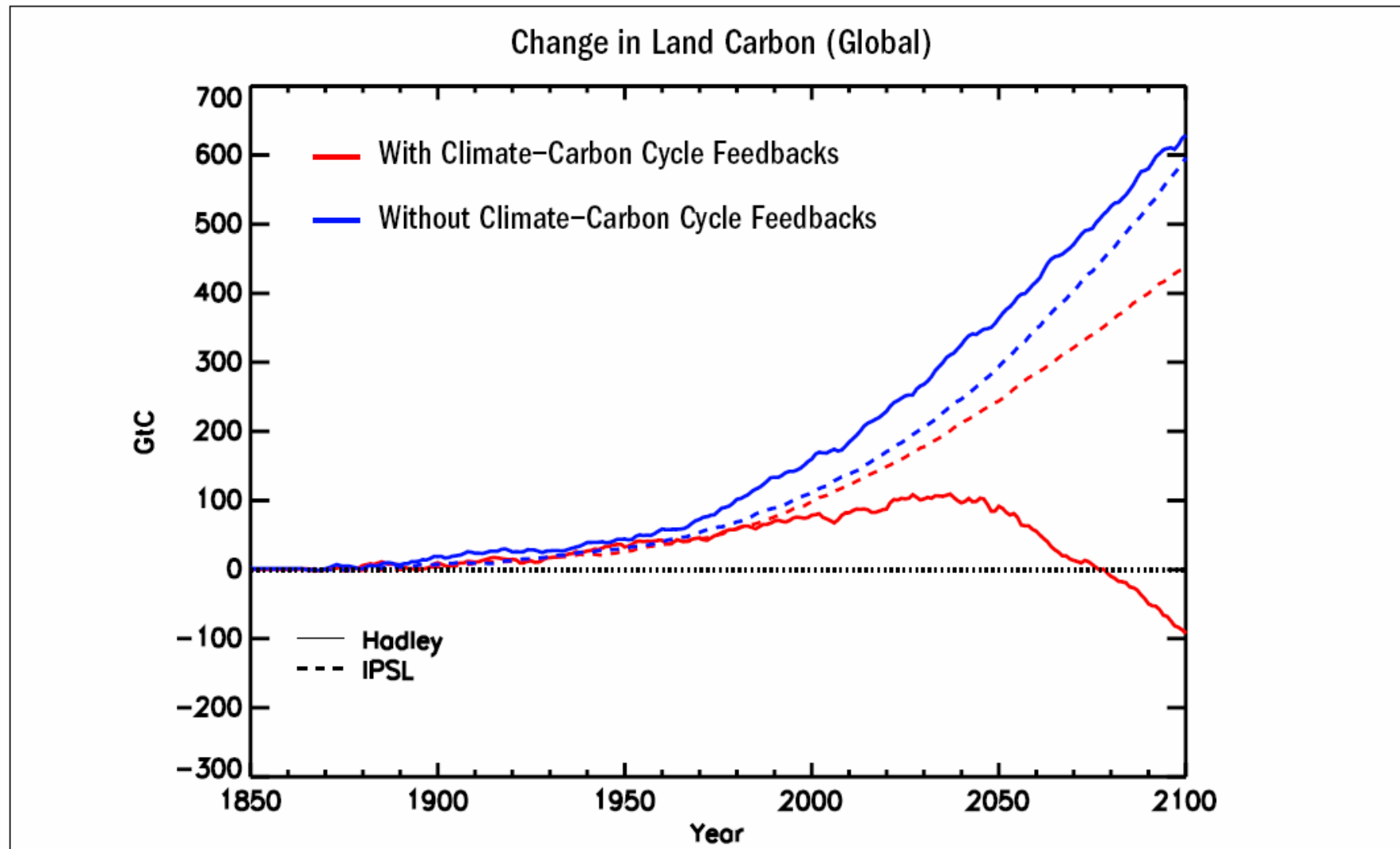
— Le Quere et al. (2000)

— Bousquet et al. (2000)

— Francey et al. 2001

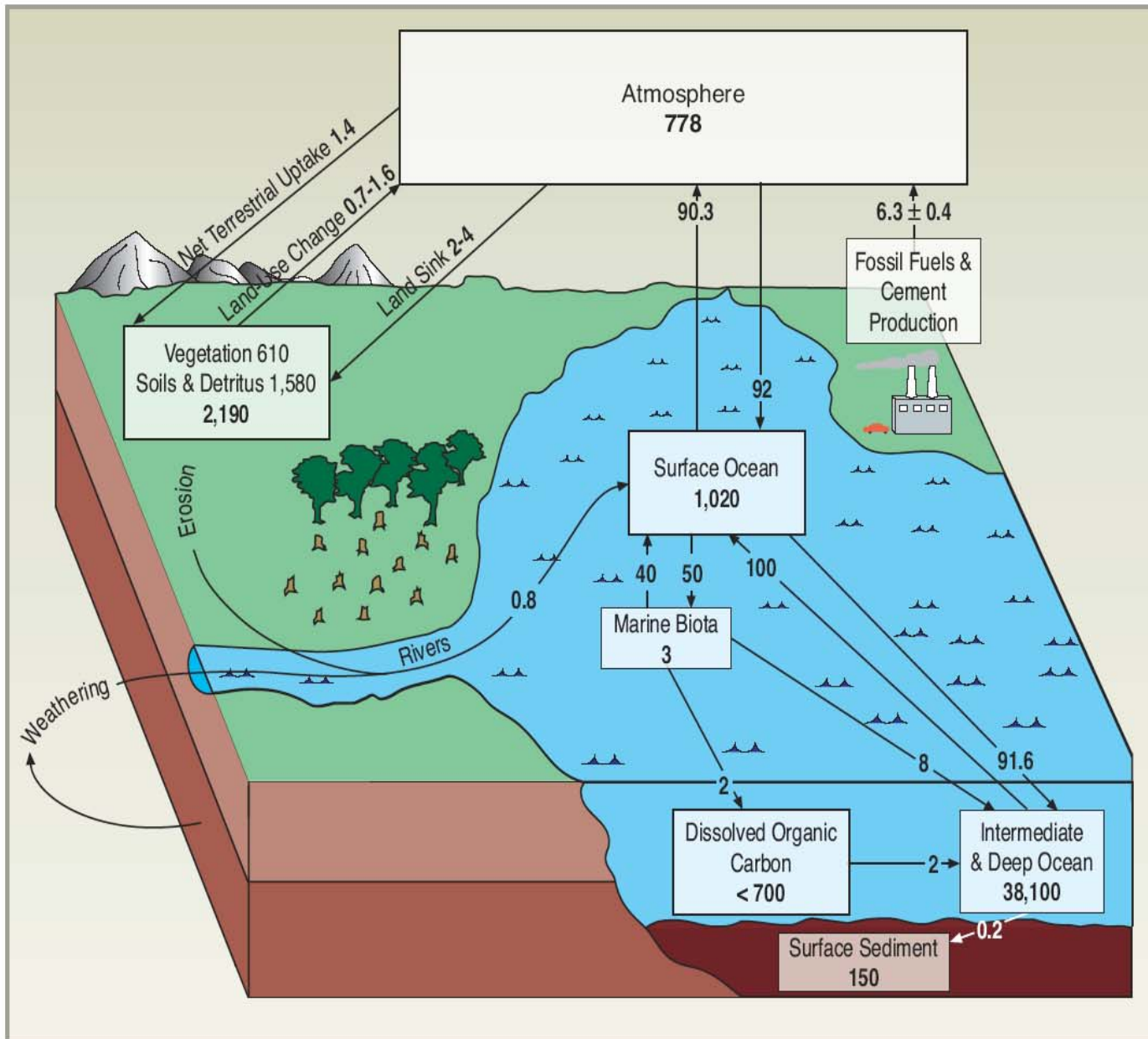
— Keeling et al. 2001a





**Figure 15**

Predicted changes in global land carbon (vegetation plus soils) from two coupled climate-carbon cycle GCMs. Positive represents an increase in land storage. The Hadley Centre results are shown by the continuous lines and the IPSL model results by the dashed lines. Blue lines represent runs without climate change, and the red lines are from the fully coupled runs including climate-carbon cycle feedback (Cox et al 2000).

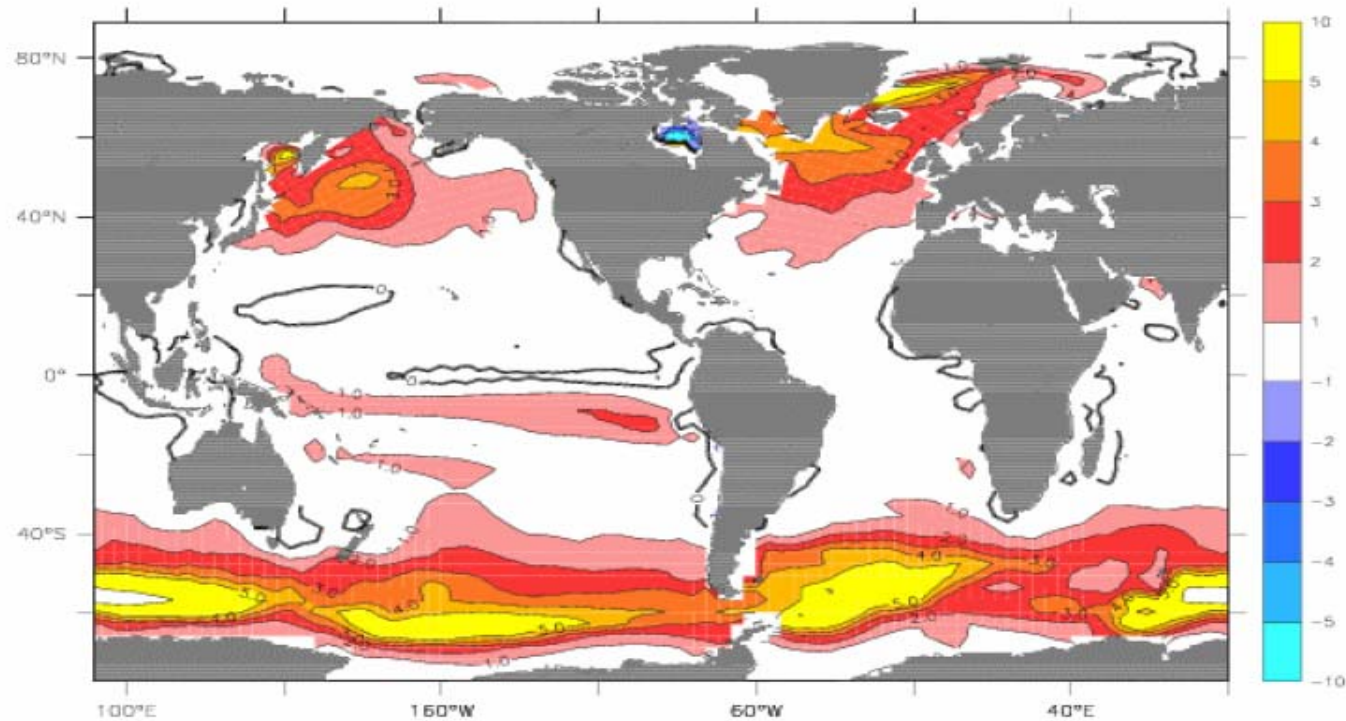


**Figure 7-1:** The global carbon cycle. Carbon is exchanged among the atmosphere, oceans, and land. This cycling of carbon is fundamental to regulating Earth's climate. In this static figure, the components are simplified and average values are presented. Storages [in petagrams carbon (PgC)] and fluxes (in PgC yr<sup>-1</sup>) of carbon for the major components of the Earth's carbon cycle are estimated for the 1990s. For more information, see Annex C.

Futur Long-term variations of air-sea CO<sub>2</sub> flux: a view from a coupled model  
IPSL: OPA-HAMOCC3-LMD-SLAVE-IS92a (L.Bopp)

2090-1990

Diff. Air-Sea Flux in mol m<sup>-2</sup> year<sup>-1</sup>



In the tropics, changes would occur in the eastern EQPAC region; why ?



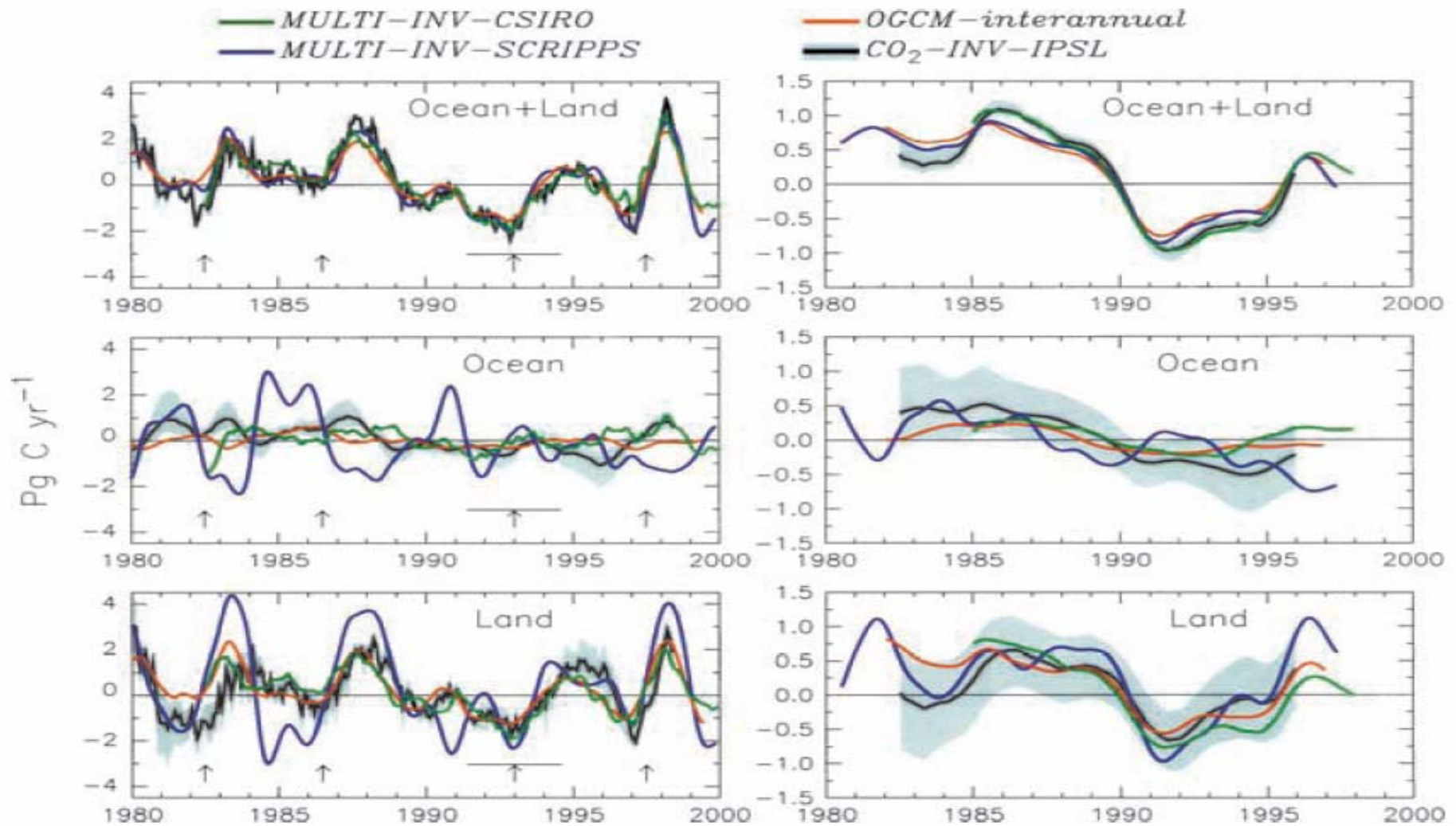
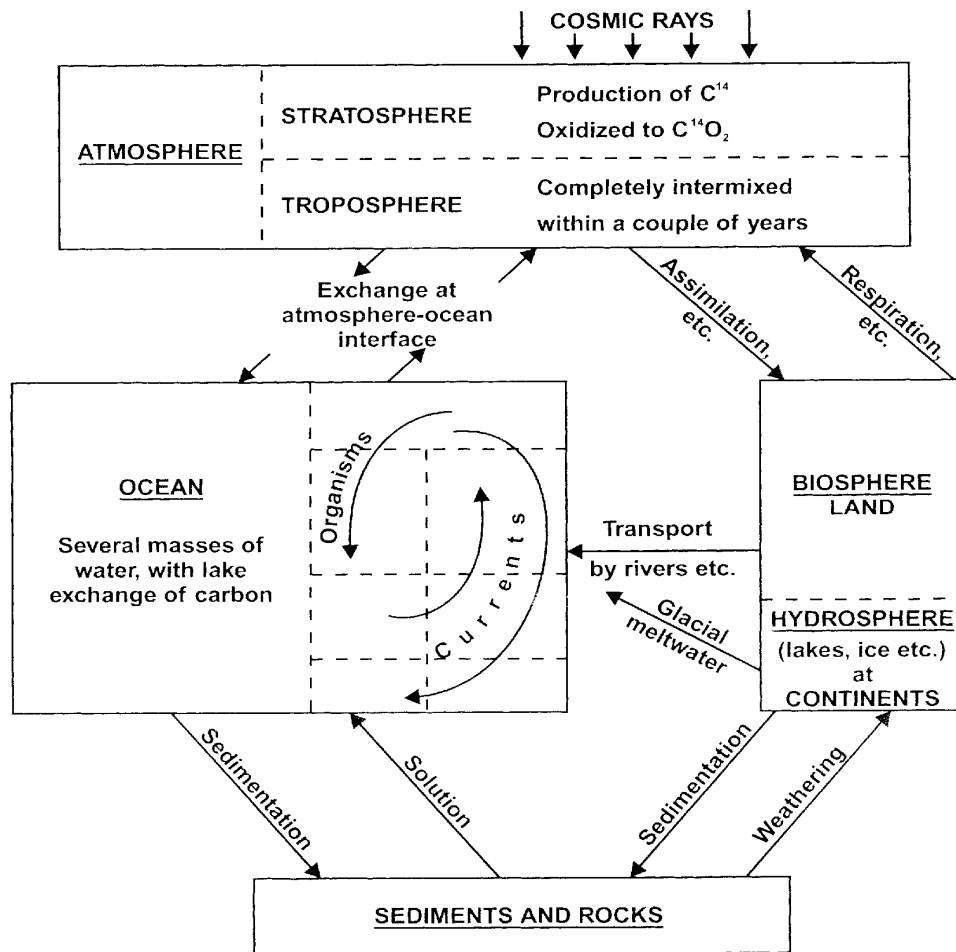


Fig. 2. Variability in ocean and land CO<sub>2</sub> fluxes in Pg C yr<sup>-1</sup>. Positive values indicate a CO<sub>2</sub> flux anomaly from the ocean or land to the atmosphere, negative values a CO<sub>2</sub> flux anomaly from the atmosphere to the ocean or land. The curves are smoothed to remove variability less than 1 yr (left panels) and less than 5 yr (right panels). The mean of 1985–1995 is removed from each curve. Arrows indicate El Niño events. The different methods are described in the text.

From Le Quéré et al, Tellus (2003)



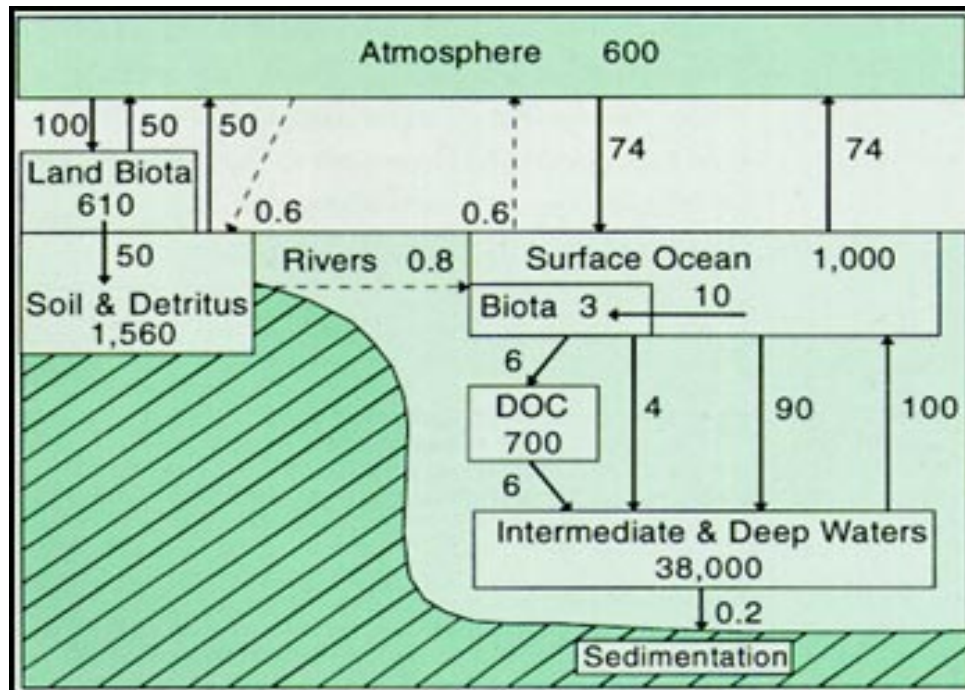
Radiocarbon is a passive tracer that can be used to understand the carbon cycle



## Carbon circulation in nature

[From Bradley (1999), and based on Mangerud (1972)]

# Carbon cycle: reservoir sizes and fluxes (Gt C and Gt C yr<sup>-1</sup>, from Siegenthaler and Sarmiento, 1993)



Atmosphere:  
<sup>14</sup>C short residence times and small reservoir

Deep ocean:  
<sup>14</sup>C long residence times and very large reservoir

By measuring the <sup>14</sup>C abundance we learn something about the residence time and exchange rates of carbon amongst these reservoirs.

How do we obtain records of past  
 $^{14}\text{C}$  abundance?

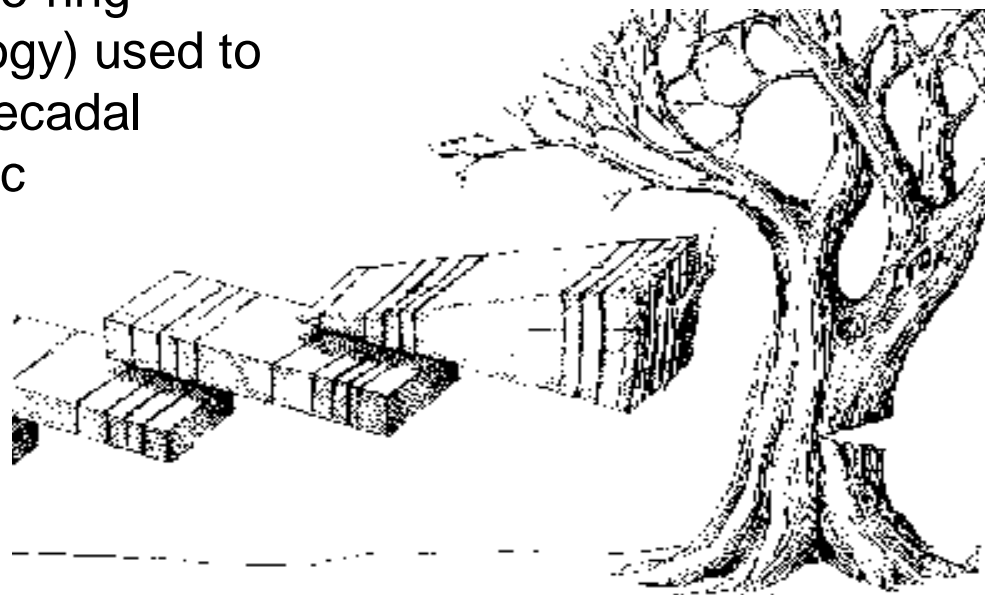
# Radiocarbon records

- Tree rings
- Varved Lake sediments
- Varved Ocean sediments
- Speleothems

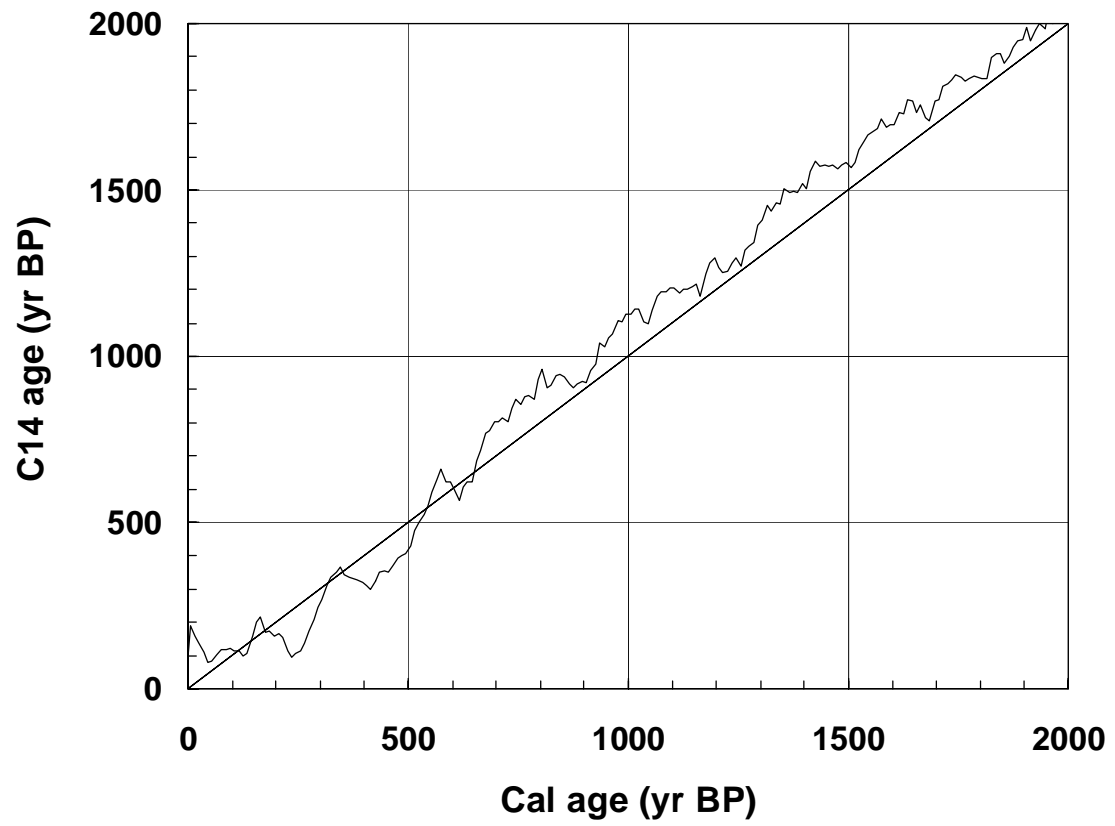
# Tree-ring calibration

Overlapping sequences of tree-ring chronologies (dendrochronology) used to obtain continuous record of decadal estimates of past atmospheric concentration

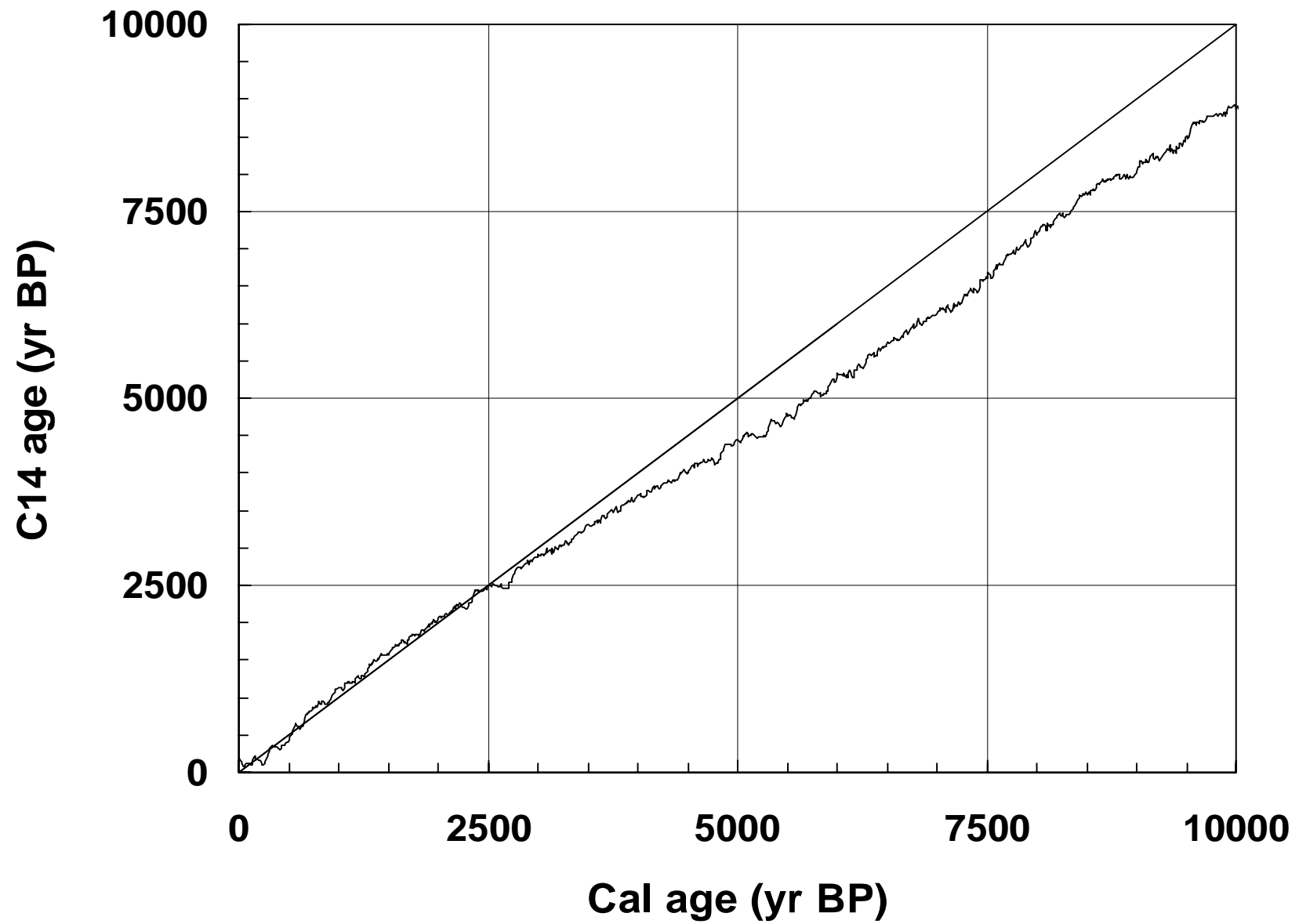
11.85 ka



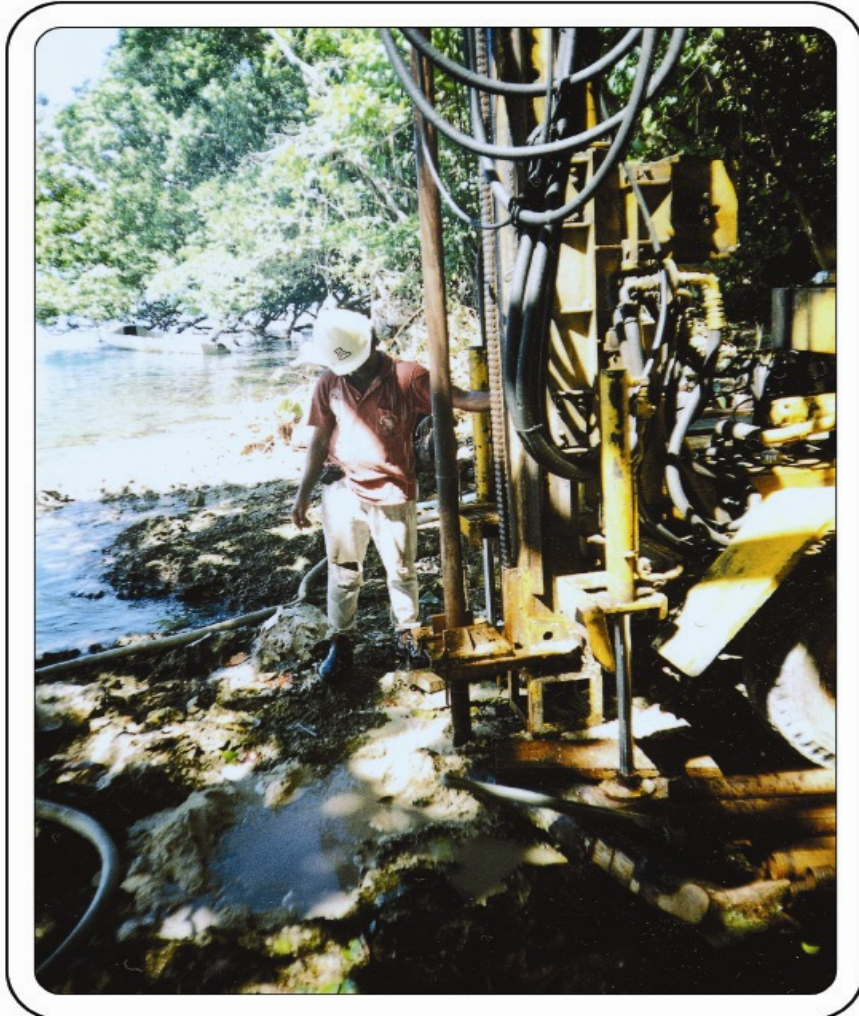
$^{14}\text{C}$  age is compared with calendar age based on tree ring count





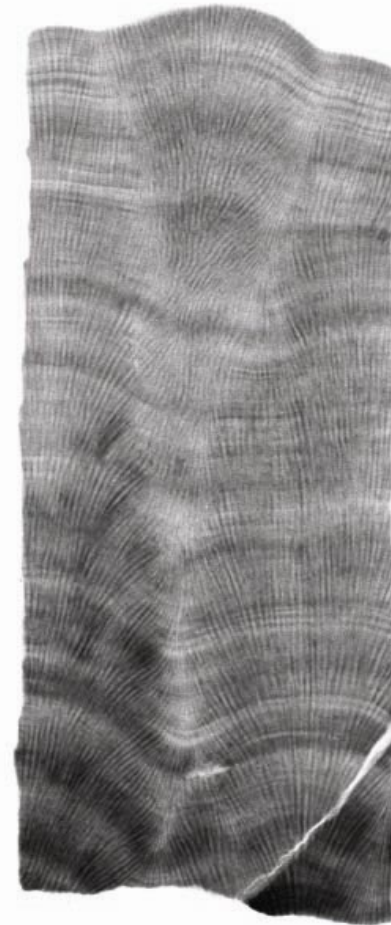


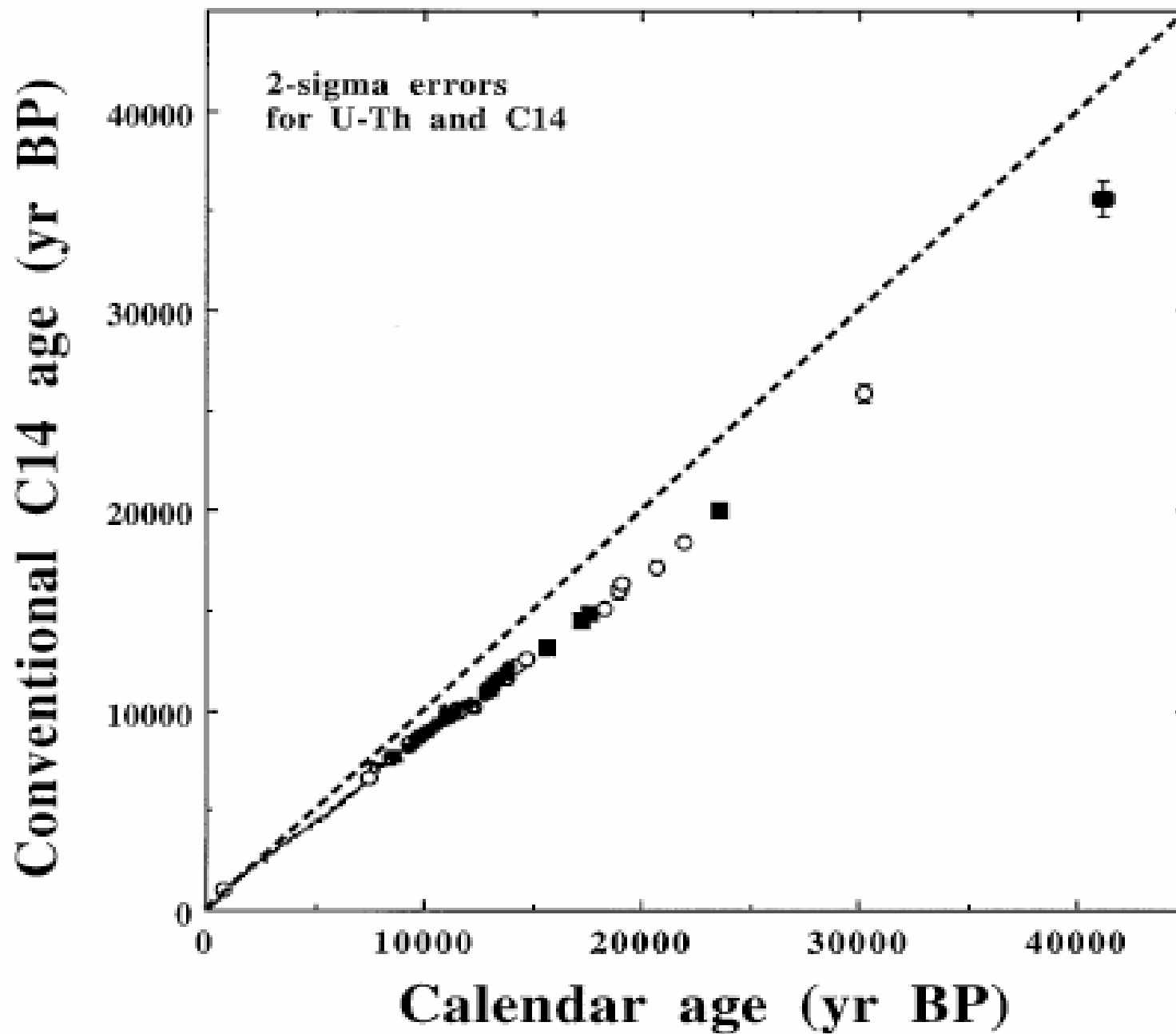
# $\Delta^{14}\text{C}$ from corals



**Sample 94-CB-1  
Marau Sound  
Guadalcanal,  
Solomon Islands**

*Porites*





## Lake sediments

$^{14}\text{C}$  on terrestrial plant particles

Calendar ages from counting varves

(Kitagawa & van der Plicht, 2000)

## Ocean sediments

$^{14}\text{C}$  from planktonic foraminifera

Calendar ages from comparing  $\delta^{18}\text{O}$  (or greyscale)  
with GISP2  $\delta^{18}\text{O}$

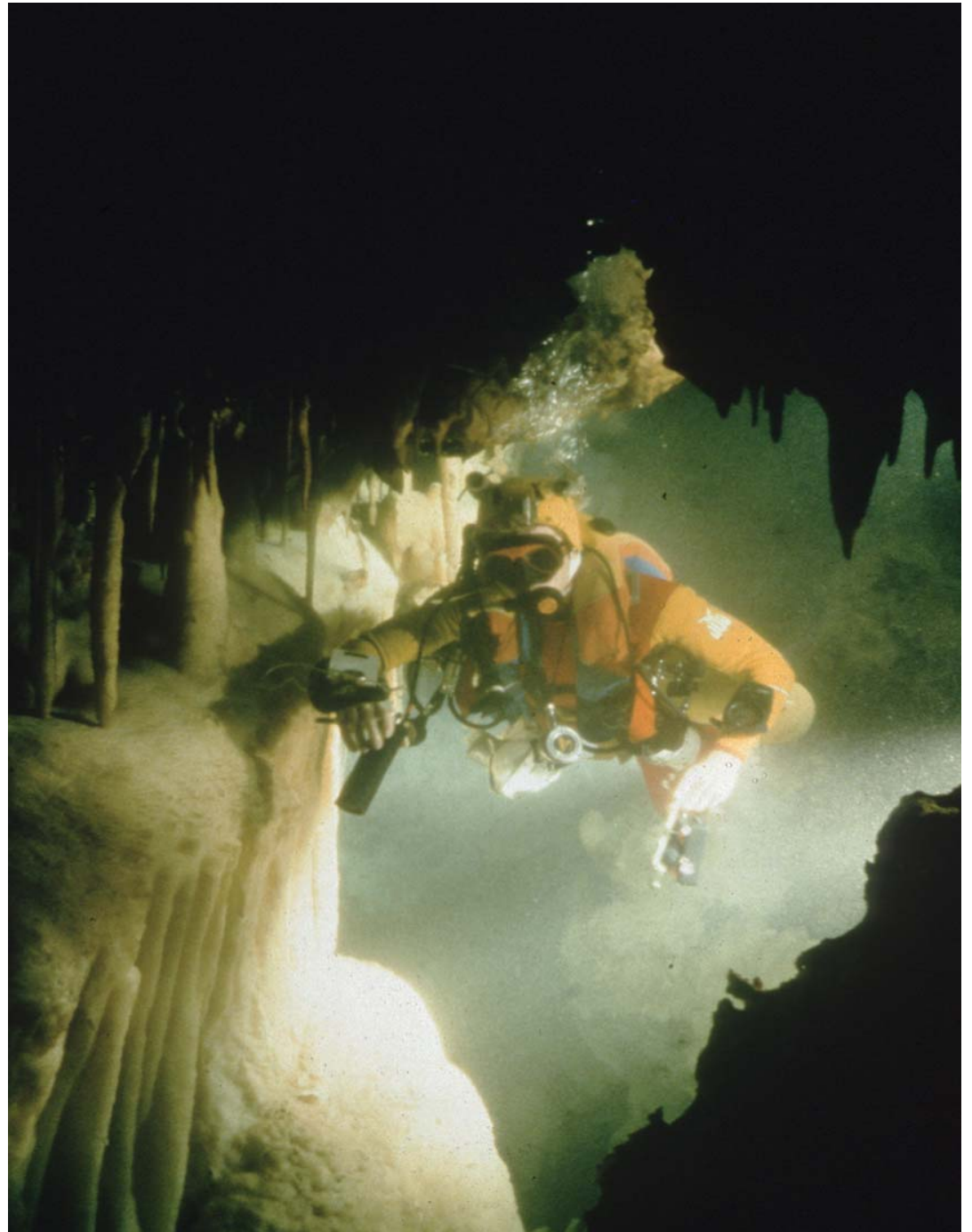
(Voelker et al., 2001; Hughen et al., 1997, 2004)

## Speleothems (stalagmites)

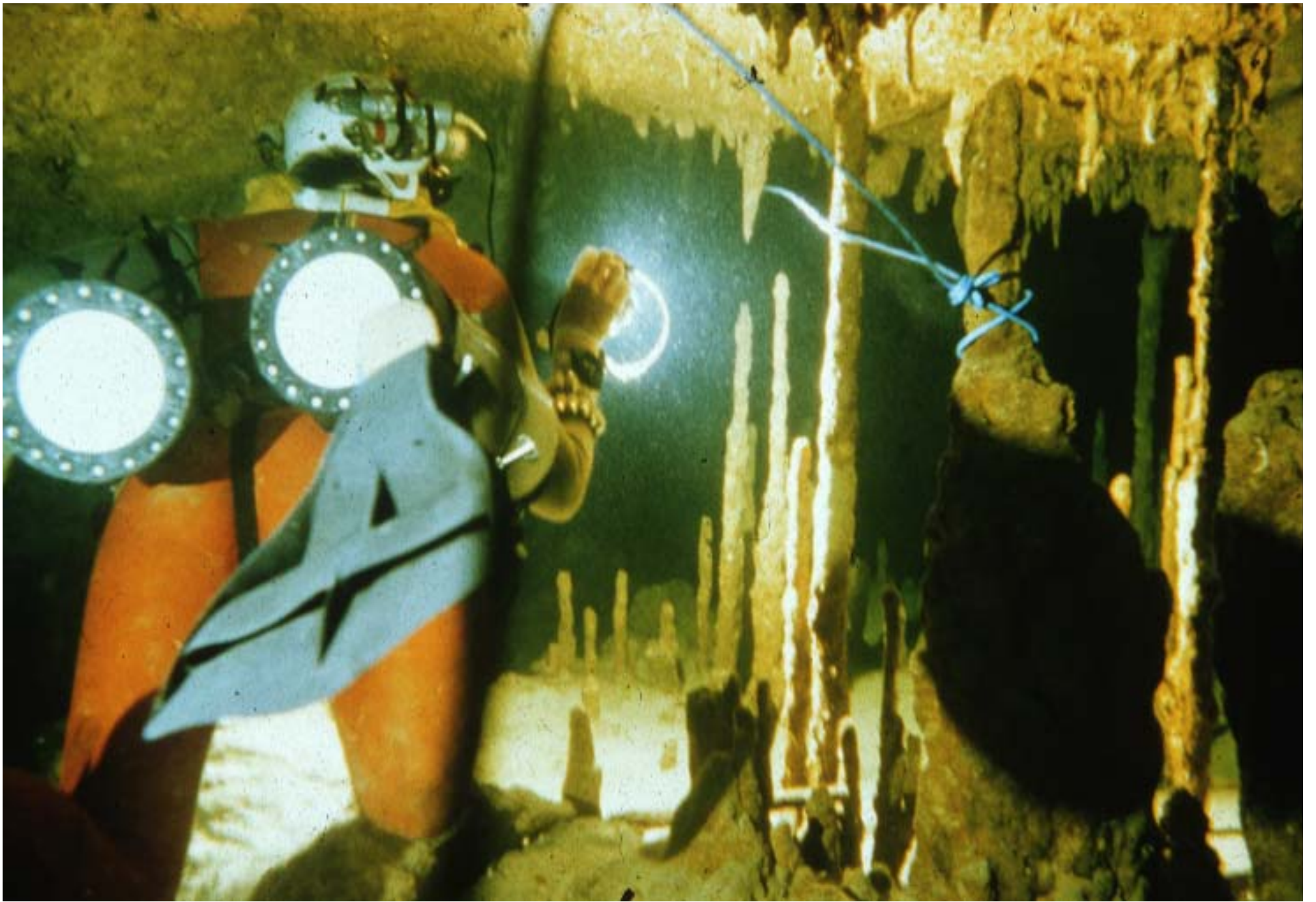
Calendar ages from U/Th ages

Collecting speleothems  
from Grand Bahamas  
caves at 90m bsl, using  
He-rebreather apparatus

Rob Palmer  
Rob Parker

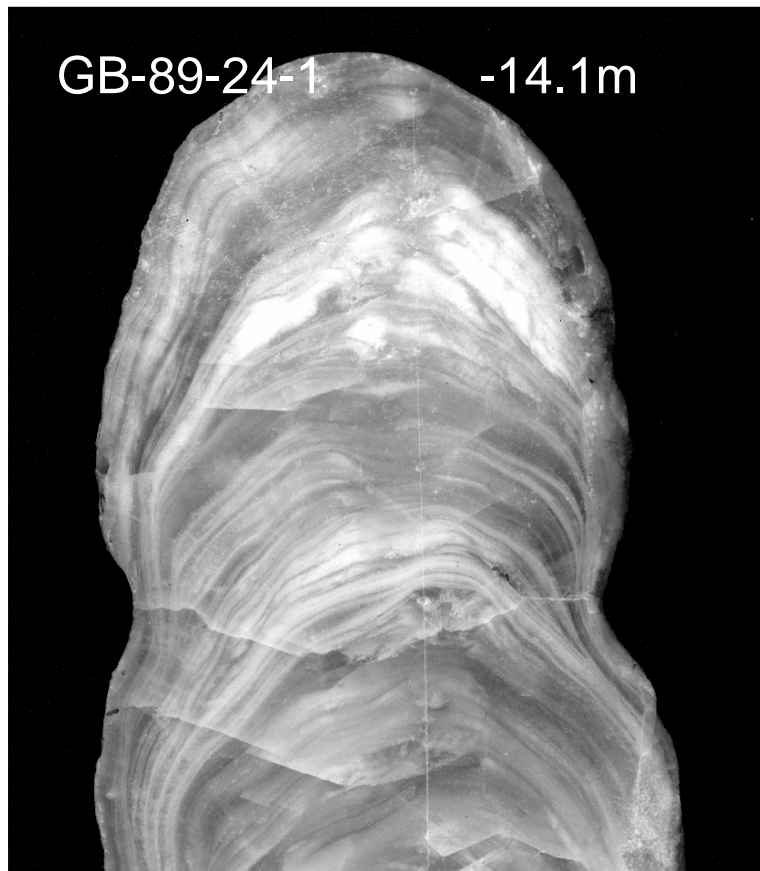




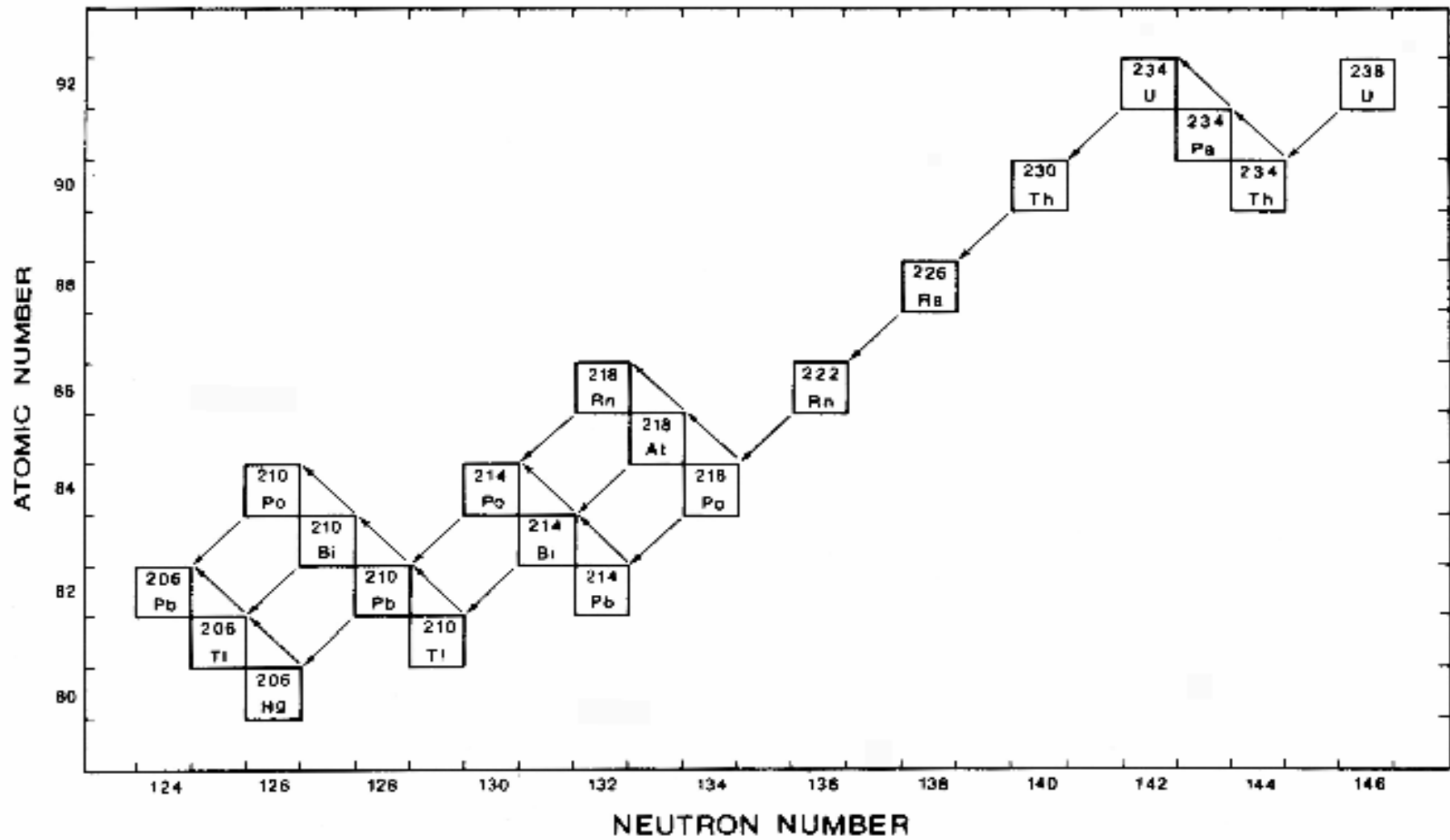




Stalagmite from  
Sagittarius blue  
hole, Grand  
Bahama

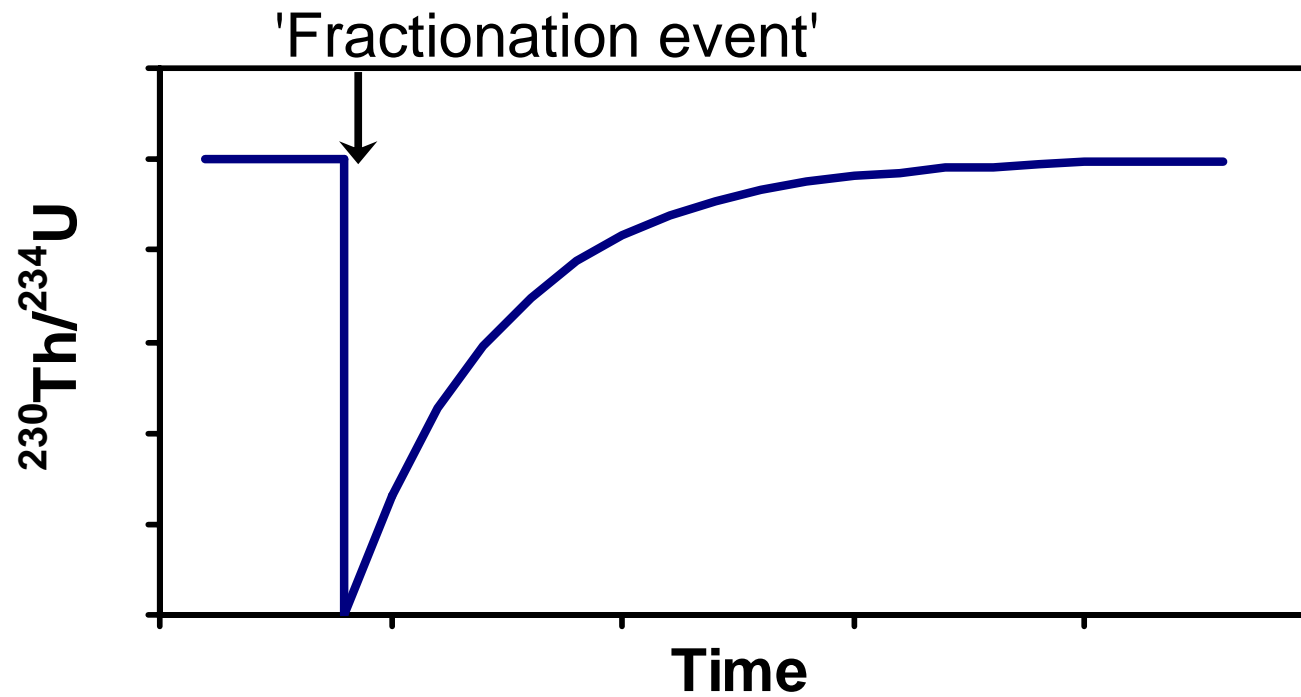


### 3 / THE DECAY SERIES OF URANIUM AND THORIUM



**Figure 18.1** The decay of  $^{238}\text{U}$  to stable  $^{206}\text{Pb}$ .

Uranium-series disequilibrium  
....on dissolution and subsequent precipitation of carbonate  
(eg. coral or speleothem)



(Without derivation):

The new law governing  $^{230}\text{Th}$  activity in the presence of excess  $^{234}\text{U}$  becomes:

$$\left(\frac{^{230}\text{Th}}{^{238}\text{U}}\right)_A = 1 - e^{-\lambda_{230}T} + \left(\frac{\delta^{234}\text{U}(T)}{1000}\right) \left(\frac{\lambda_{230}}{\lambda_{230} - \lambda_{234}}\right) \left(1 - e^{(\lambda_{234} - \lambda_{230})T}\right)$$

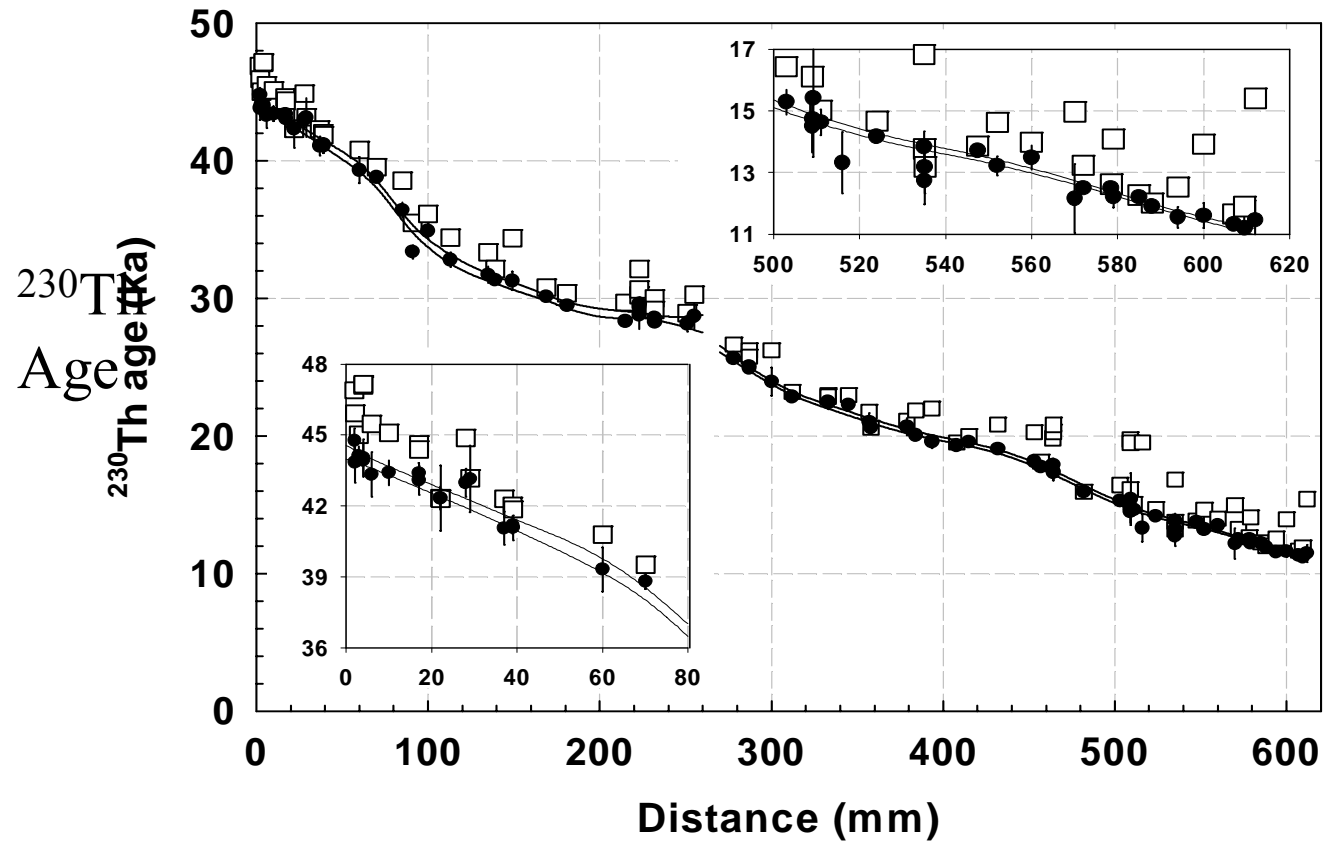
(assuming no initial  $^{230}\text{Th}$ )

Can't solve analytically because T appears in two independent terms

Solve iteratively :

- 1) Pick a T, then compare to measured  $(^{234}\text{U}/^{238}\text{U})_a$
- 2) Repeat until convergence.

# Uranium-series ages along axis of growth



Smooth, curvilinear growth with break in deposition as drip site moved at 28 to 26 ka



Ages corrected for elevated  $^{230}\text{Th}/^{232}\text{Th}$  based on isochrons

bottom



top

# More U/Th approaches:

(1) No initial  $^{230}\text{Th}$  and  $\delta^{234}\text{U} = 0$  (i.e.  $^{234}\text{U}/^{238}\text{U}$  at secular equilibrium)

$$\left(\frac{^{230}\text{Th}}{^{238}\text{U}}\right)_a = 1 - e^{-(\lambda_{230} t)}$$

$$\left(\frac{^{231}\text{Pa}}{^{235}\text{U}}\right)_a = 1 - e^{-(\lambda_{231} t)}$$

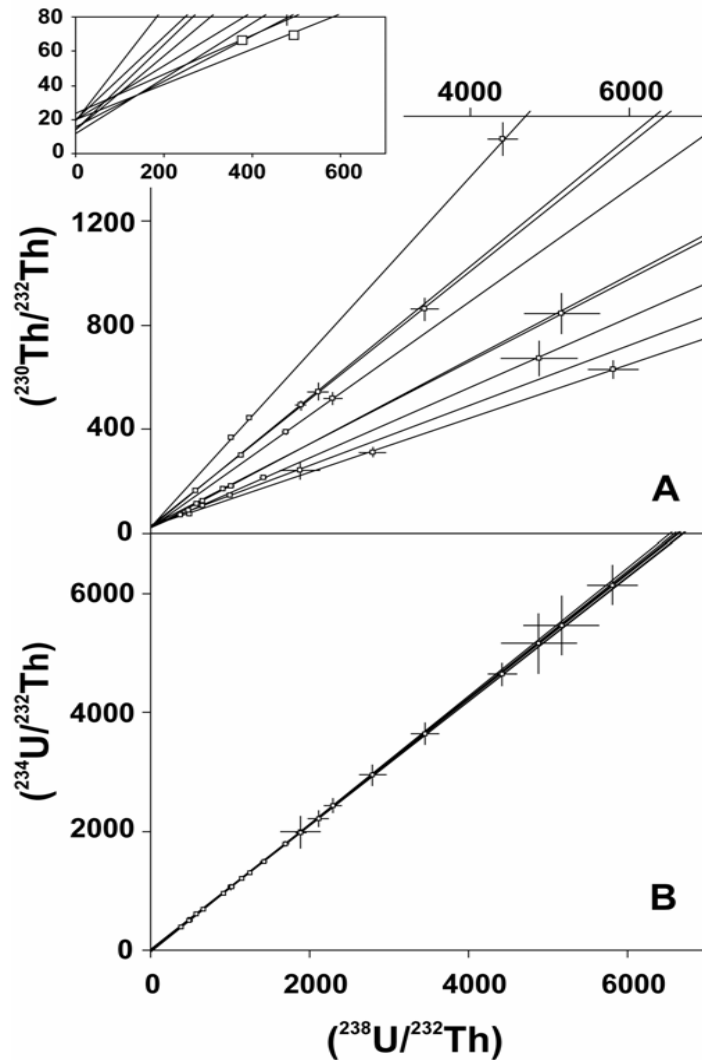
(2) No initial  $^{230}\text{Th}$  and  $\delta^{234}\text{U} \neq 0$

$$\left(\frac{^{230}\text{Th}}{^{238}\text{U}}\right)_A = 1 - e^{-\lambda_{230}T} + \left(\frac{\delta^{234}\text{U}(T)}{1000}\right) \left(\frac{\lambda_{230}}{\lambda_{230} - \lambda_{234}}\right) \left(1 - e^{(\lambda_{234} - \lambda_{230})T}\right)$$

(3) Initial  $^{230}\text{Th}$  present:

$$\left\{ \left[ \frac{^{230}\text{Th}}{^{238}\text{U}} \right] - \left[ \frac{^{232}\text{Th}}{^{238}\text{U}} \right] \left[ \frac{^{230}\text{Th}}{^{232}\text{Th}} \right]_i \left( e^{-\lambda_{230}t} \right) \right\} - 1 =$$

$$-e^{-\lambda_{230}t} + \left(\frac{\delta^{234}\text{U}_m}{1000}\right) \left(\frac{\lambda_{230}}{\lambda_{230} - \lambda_{234}}\right) \left(1 - e^{-(\lambda_{230} - \lambda_{234})t}\right)$$



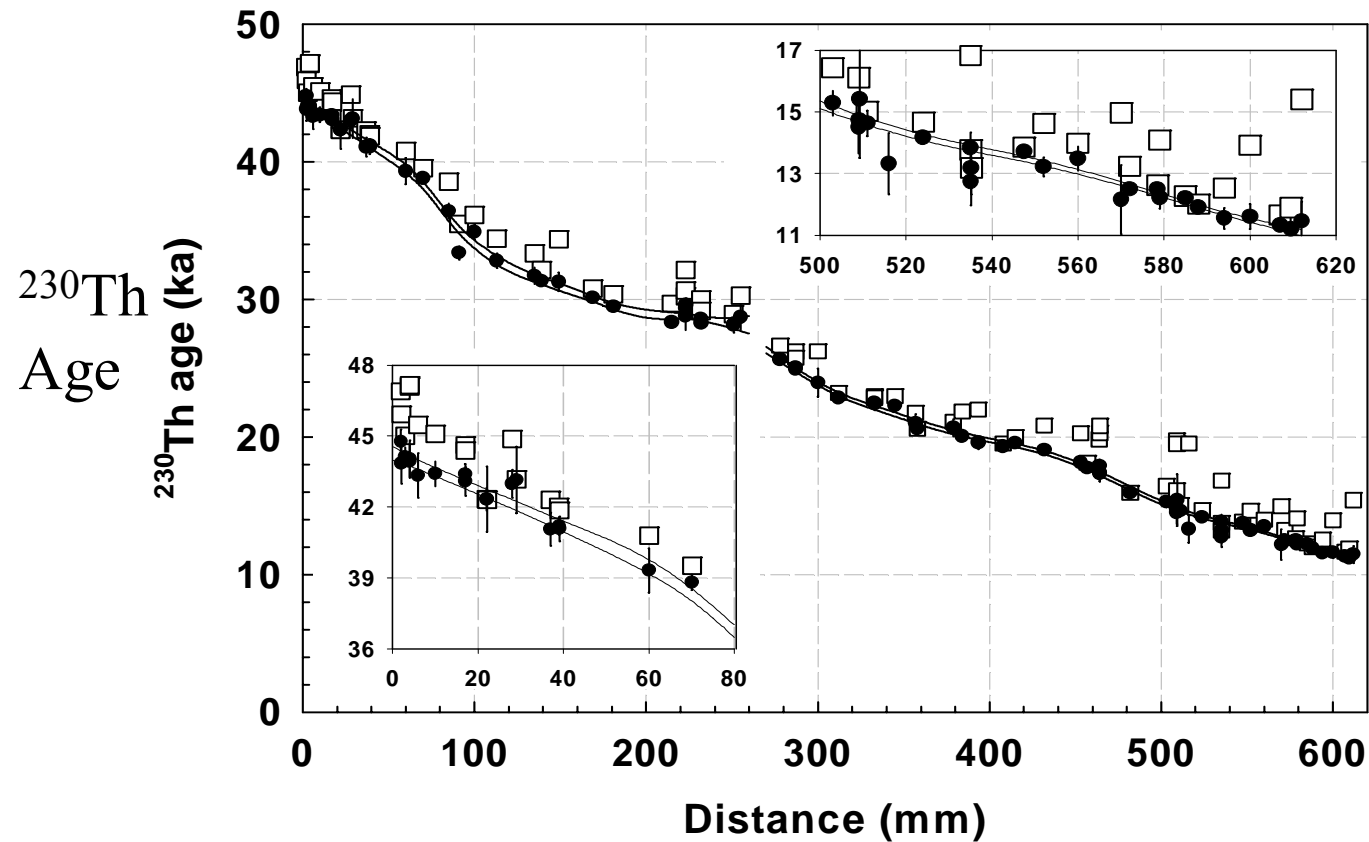
# Isochron diagrams for GB-89-24-1

Intercept with y-axis is  
equivalent to initial  
 $^{230}\text{Th}/^{232}\text{Th}$

Activity ratio = 18.6,

which is much greater  
than Bulk-Earth (0.8)

# Uranium-series ages along axis of growth



Smooth, curvilinear growth with break in deposition as drip site moved at 28 to 26 ka

■ Ages corrected for elevated  $^{230}\text{Th}/^{232}\text{Th}$  based on isochrons

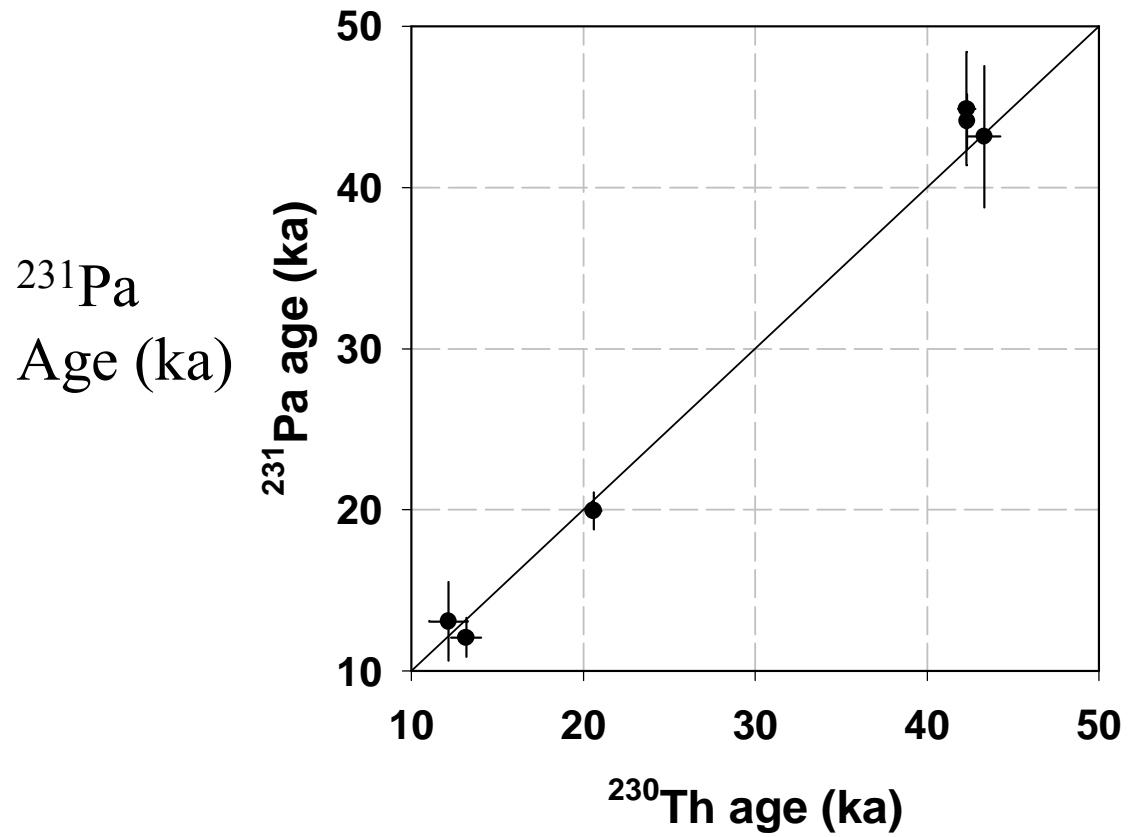
bottom



top



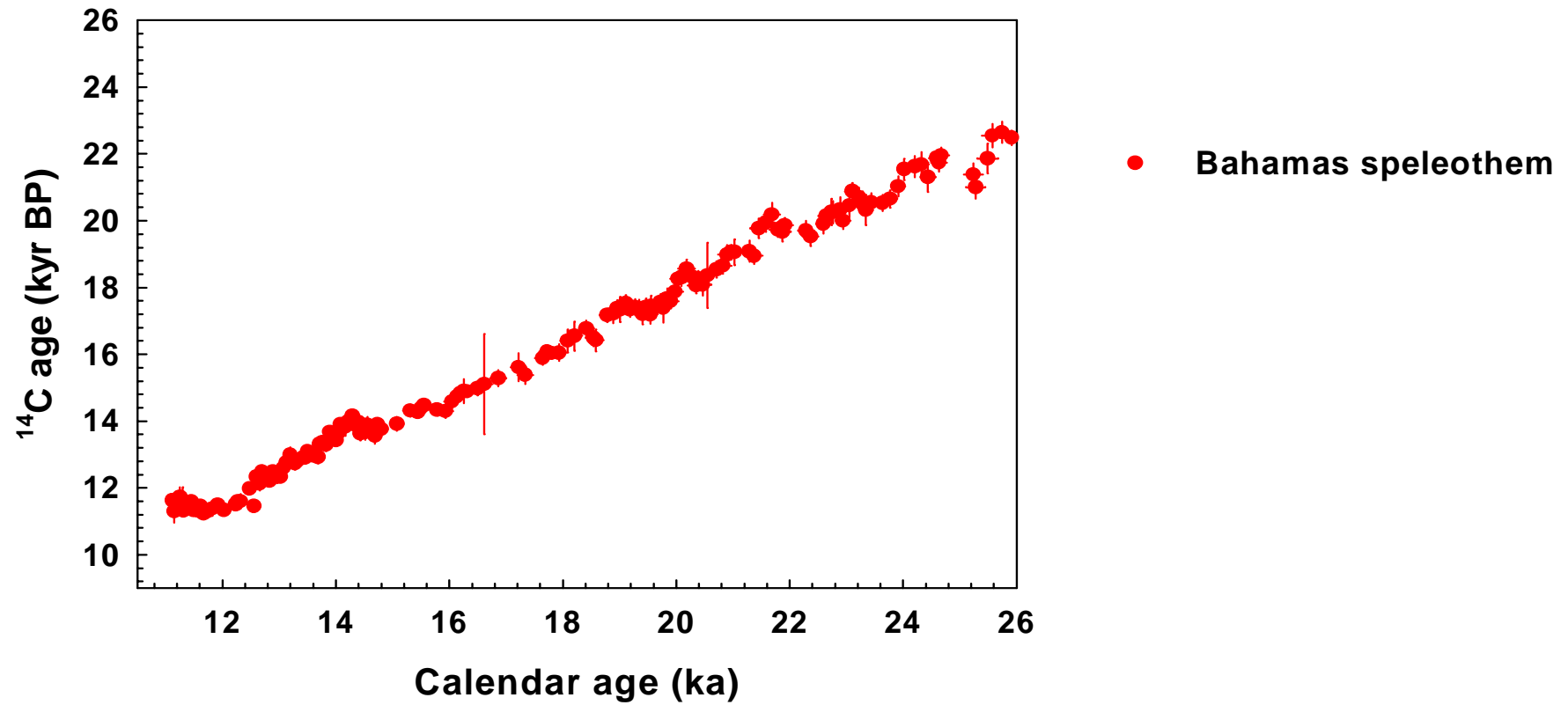
# $^{231}\text{Pa}$ vs $^{230}\text{Th}$ ages



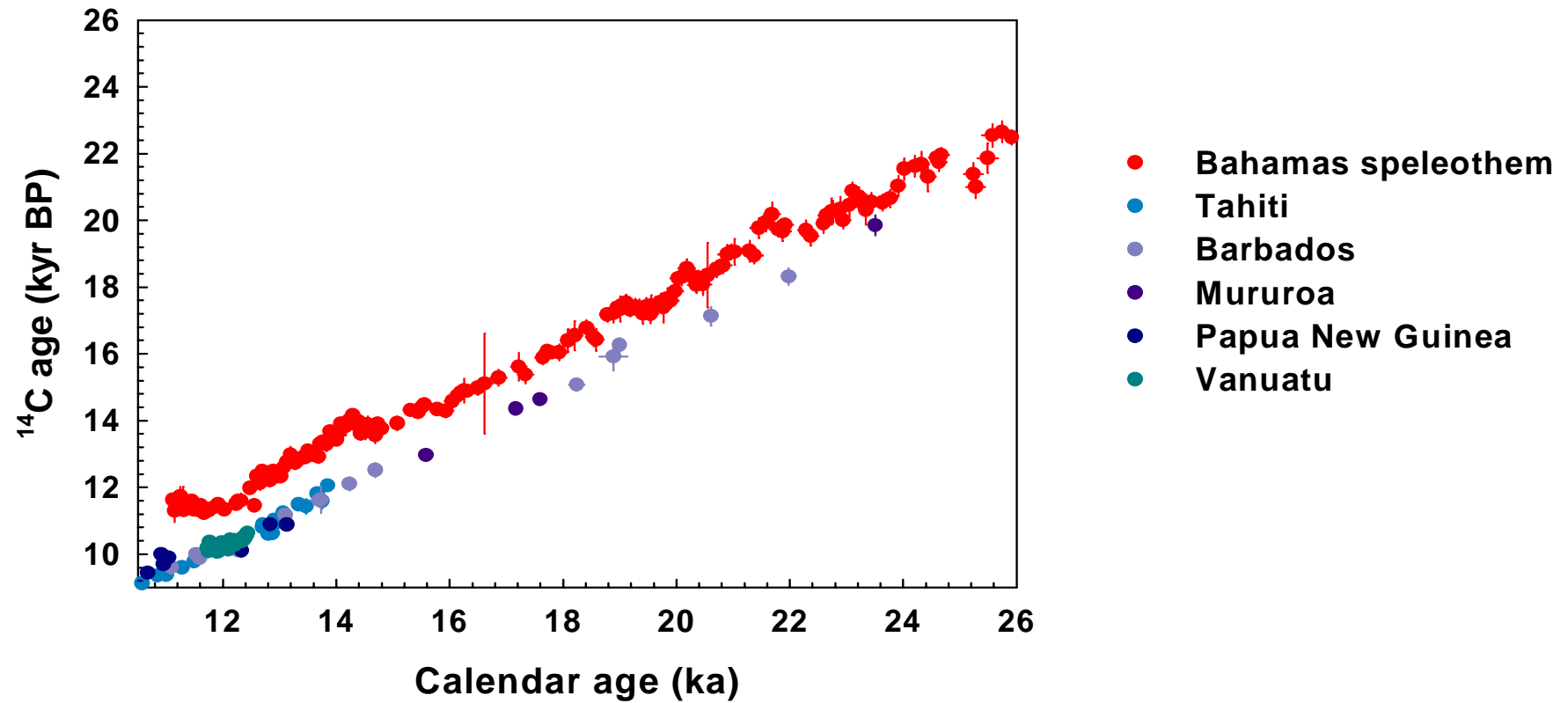
# Arizona - NSF Accelerator Mass Spectrometry Facility



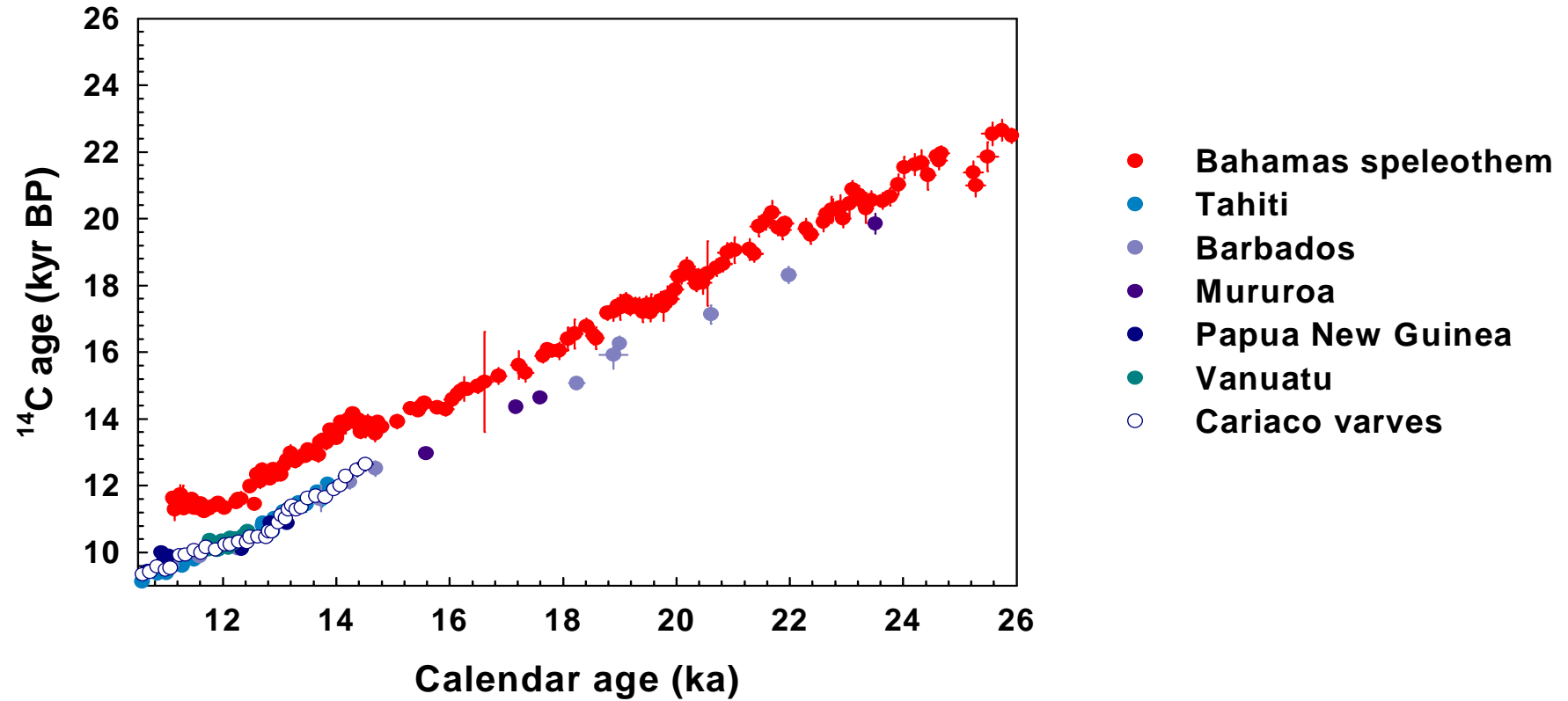
# Radiocarbon age vs $^{230}\text{Th}$ age: 26 to 11 ka



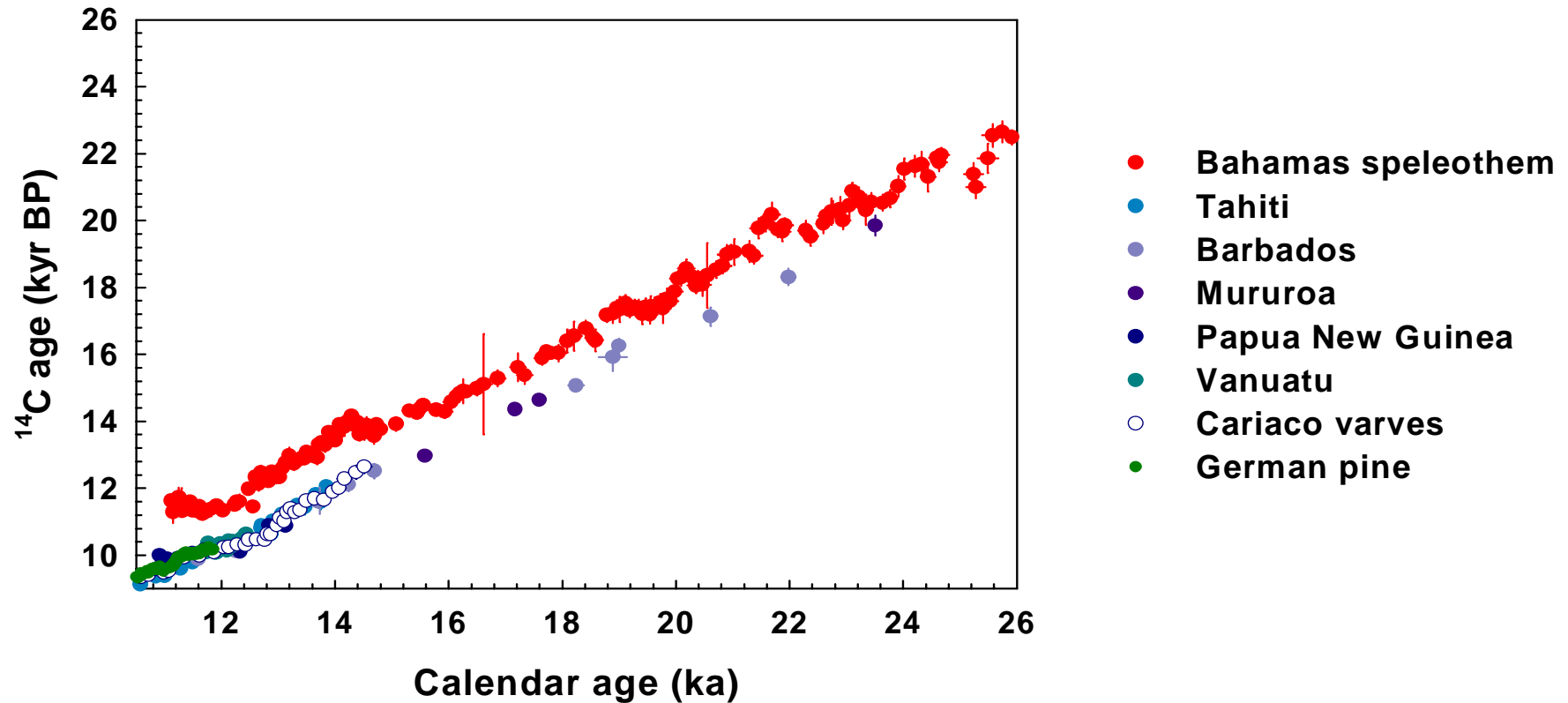
...plus corals from Vanuatu



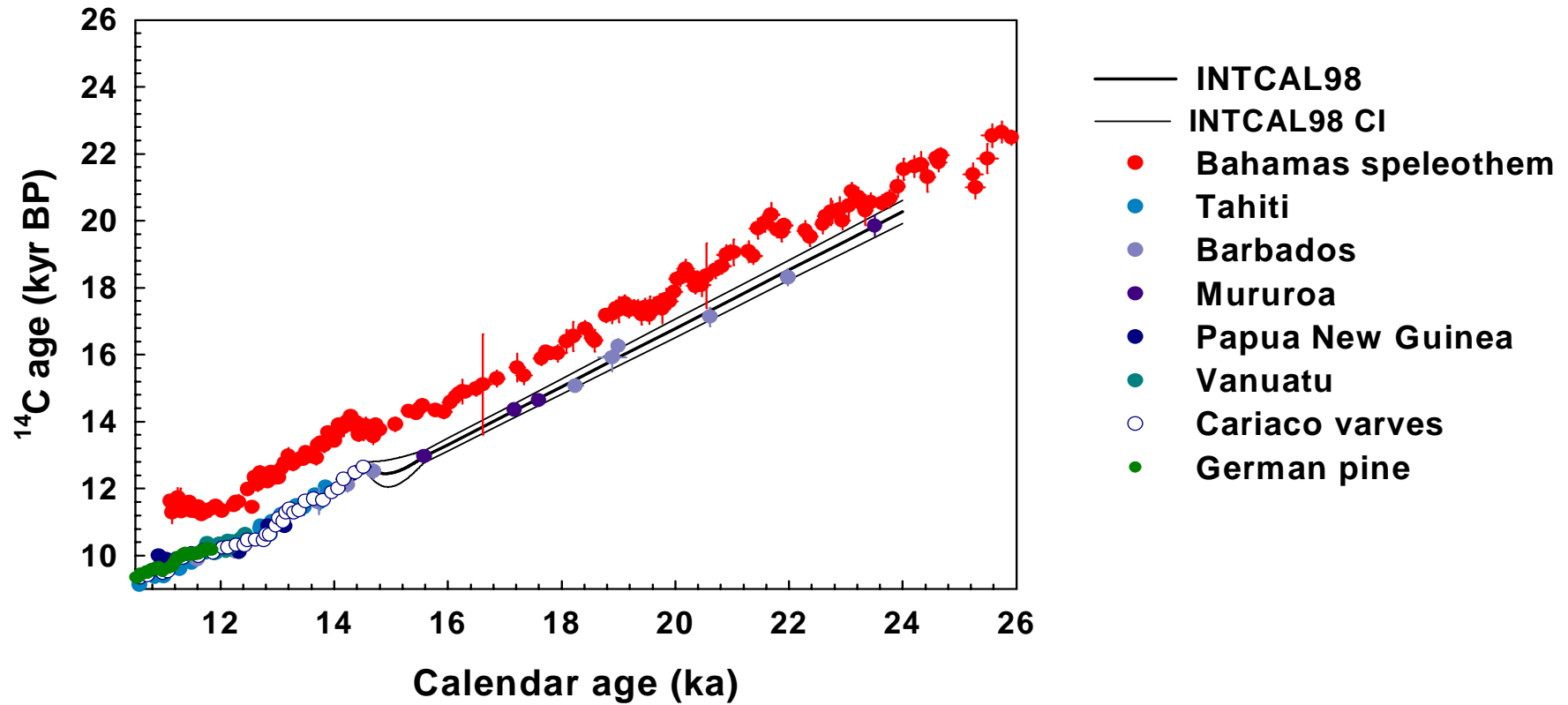
...plus varves from Cariaco



...plus corals from German tree rings

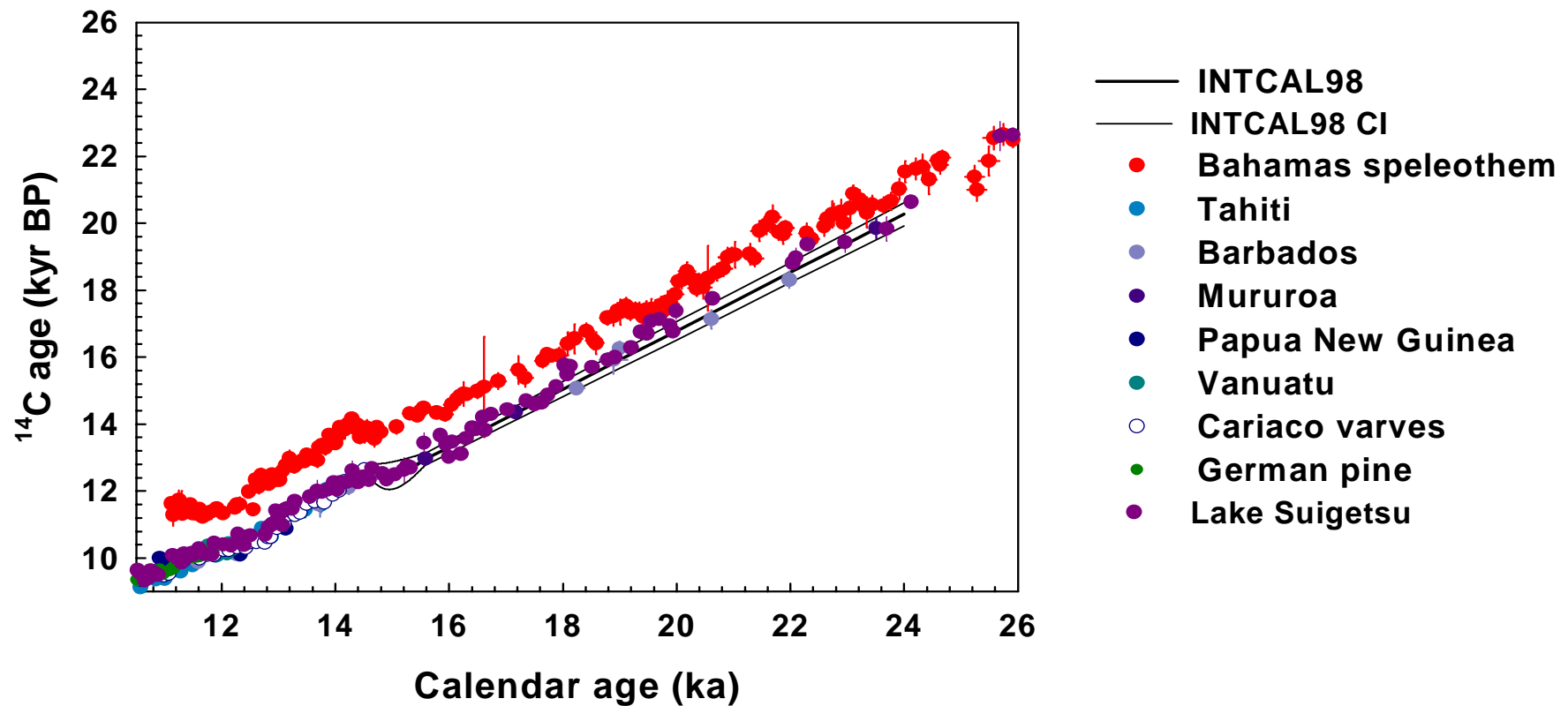


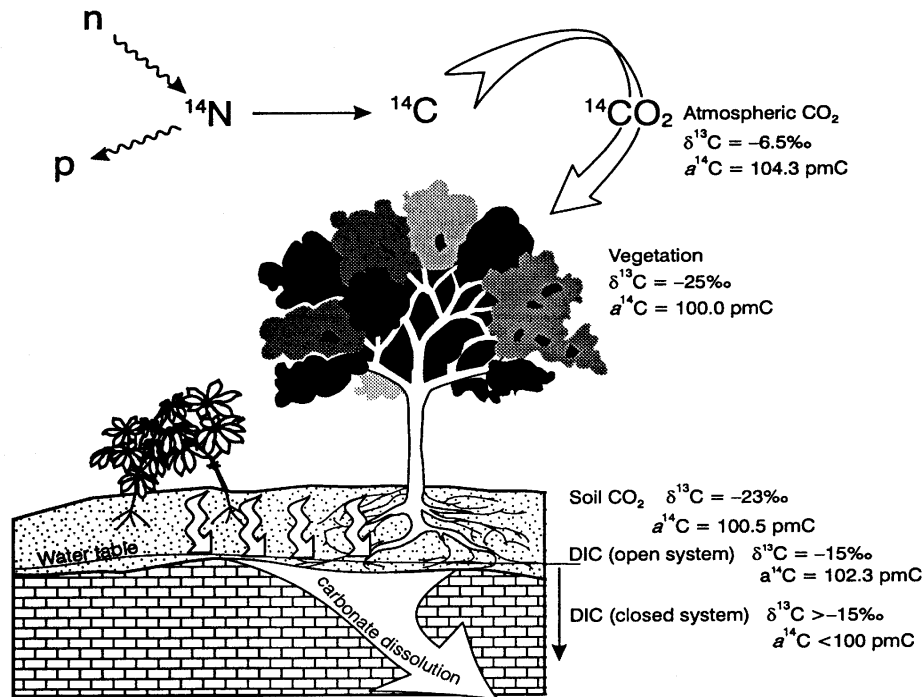
# ...INTCAL98 compilation



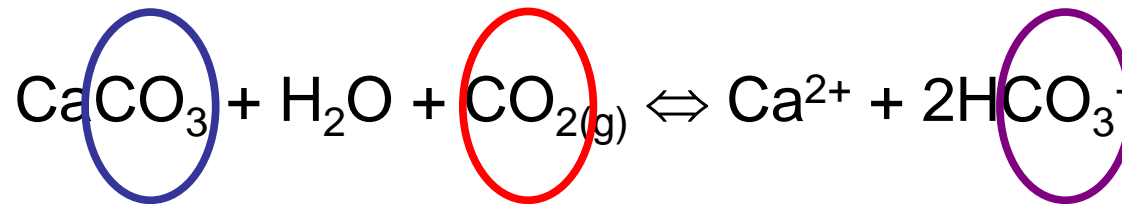


...plus varves from Lake Suigetsu, Japan





## Dead carbon fraction



Host limestone,  
 $^{14}\text{C}$  free or 'dead'

Soil gas,  
atmospheric  $^{14}\text{C}$

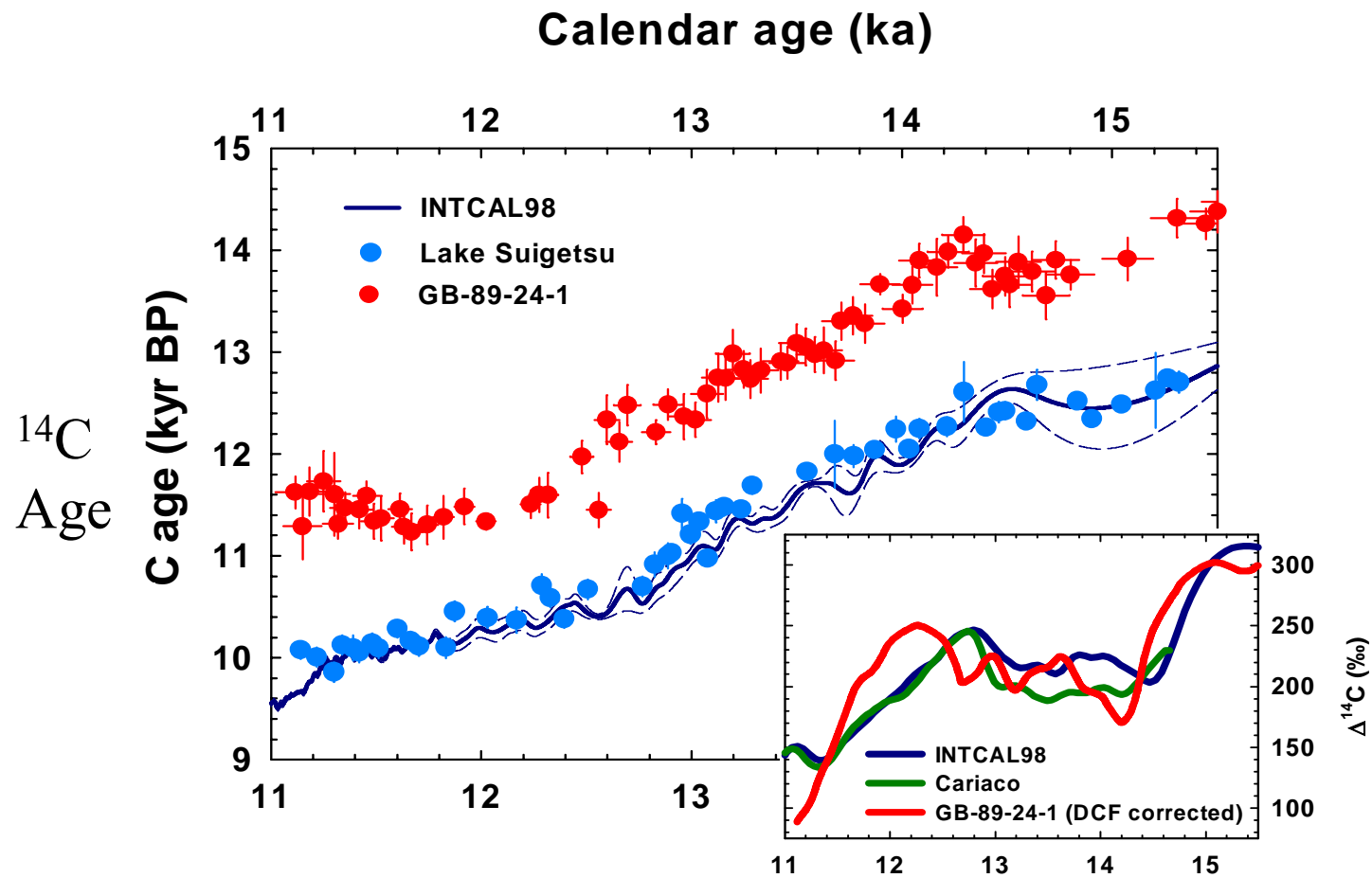
Dissolved  
bicarbonate,  
'combination of two'



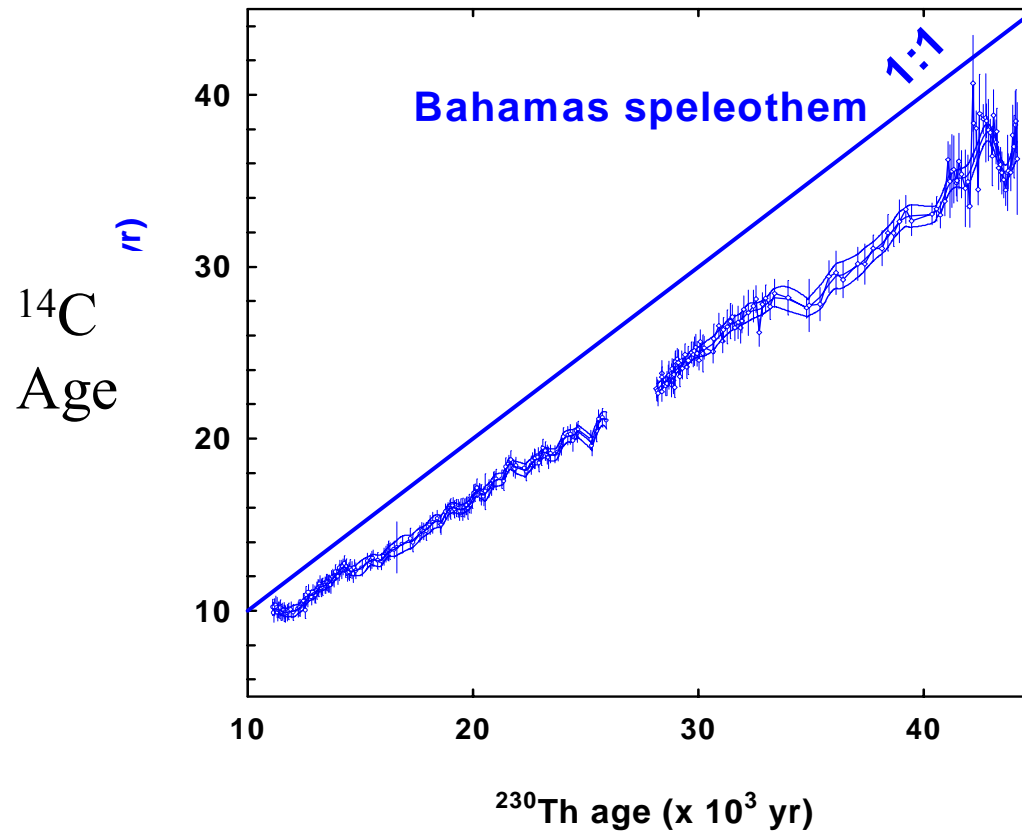
## Collecting drips in Conch Bar Cave, Turks and Caicos

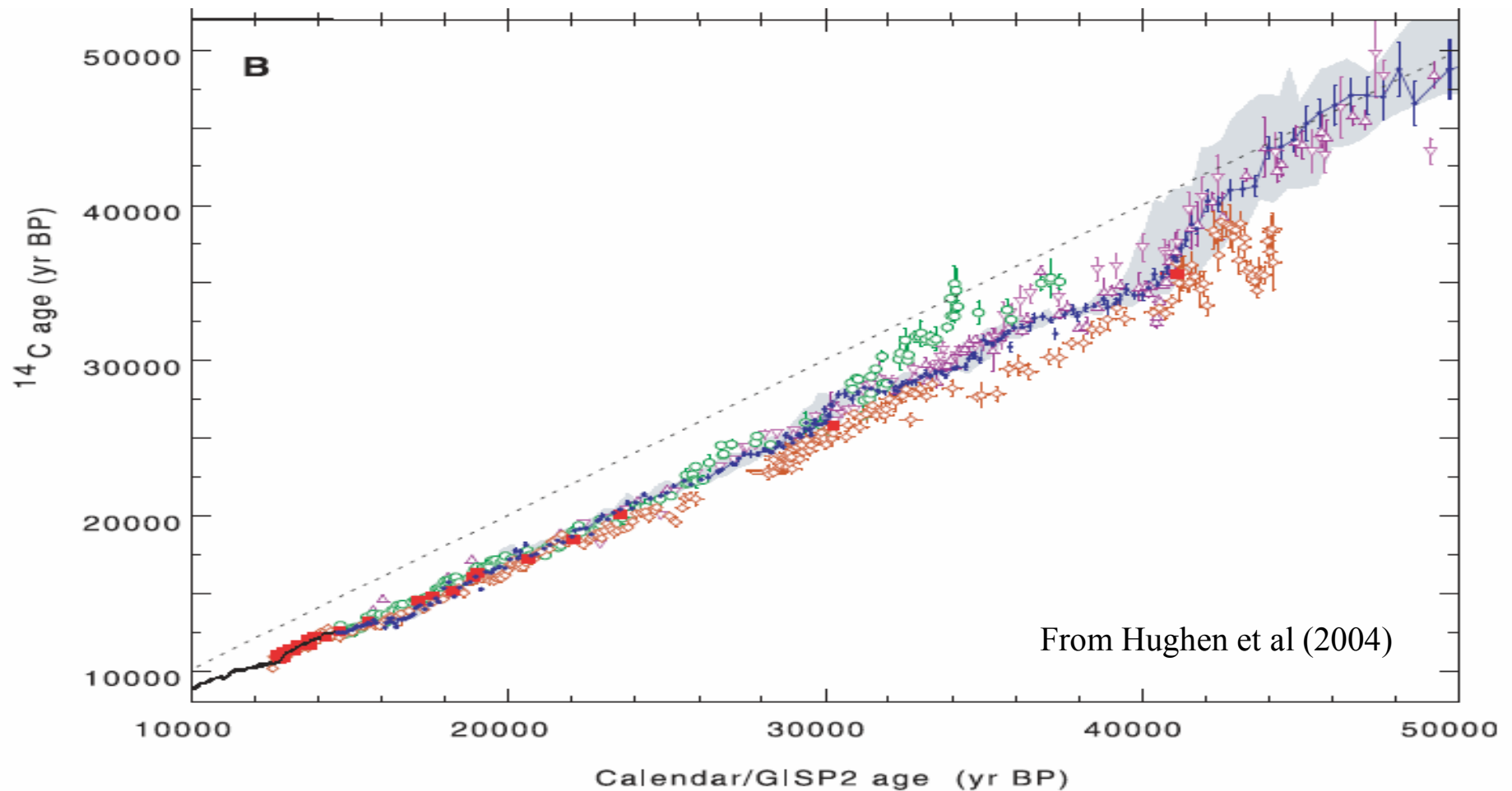
Investigation of modern  
 $^{14}\text{C}$  concentrations in drip  
waters - work in progress

# Constancy of dead carbon fraction



# DCF-corrected ages vs calendar ages: 11 to 45 ka





**Fig. 2.** Radiocarbon calibration data from various sources. **(A)** Calibration data from Cariaco leg 165, holes 1002D and 1002E (blue circles), plotted versus GISP2 calendar age (12) assigned by correlation of detailed paleoclimate records (17) (SOM Text and fig. S2). The thin black line is high-resolution calibration data from Intcal98 tree rings (2, 3) joined at  $\sim 12$  cal. ka B.P. to the Cariaco PL07-58PC varve chronology (13). Red squares are paired  $^{14}\text{C}$ -U/Th dates from corals (5). Replicate measurements, including overlap between 1002D and 1002E, have been averaged. Light gray shading represents the Cariaco calibration curve shifted within limits of calendar age uncertainty. Dashed line shows equal  $^{14}\text{C}$ -calendar ages. Error bars are  $1\sigma$ . **(B)** Cariaco site 1002 data set plotted versus other published  $^{14}\text{C}$  calibration data. Symbols are the same as above, with additional data from Lake Suigetsu varves (6) (open circles), Bahama speleothem U/Th (7) (open diamonds), and North Atlantic cores PS2644 (9) (upside-down triangles) and SO82-5 (10) (triangles) correlated to GISP2. Error bars for all records are  $1\sigma$ .

# $\Delta^{14}\text{C}$ definition

$$\Delta^{14}\text{C} = (F e^{\lambda t} - 1) 1000\text{‰}$$

Where  $\lambda$  is the  $^{14}\text{C}$  decay constant,  
And  $t$  is the time time of sample formation  
Relative to 1950 AD,

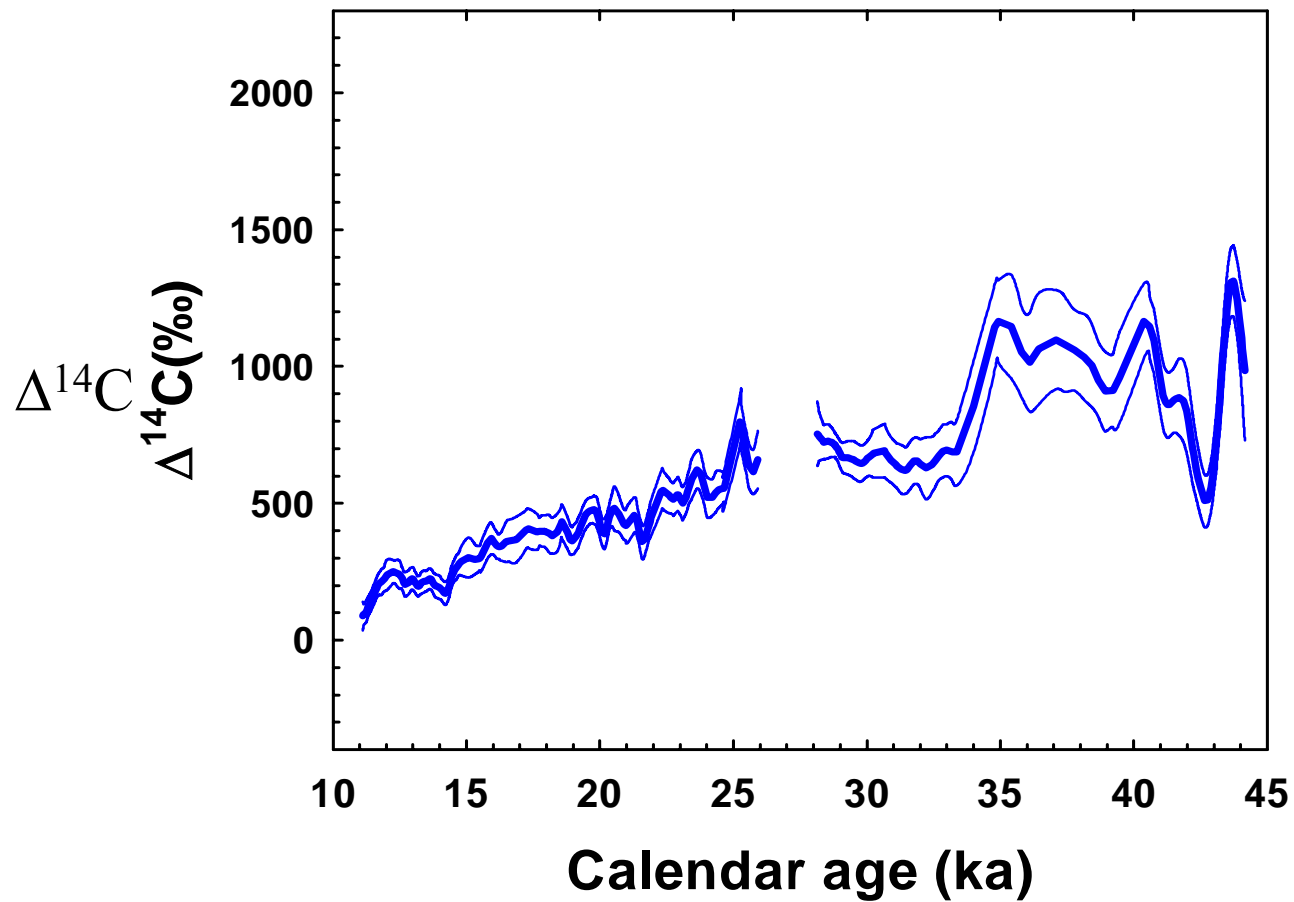
and

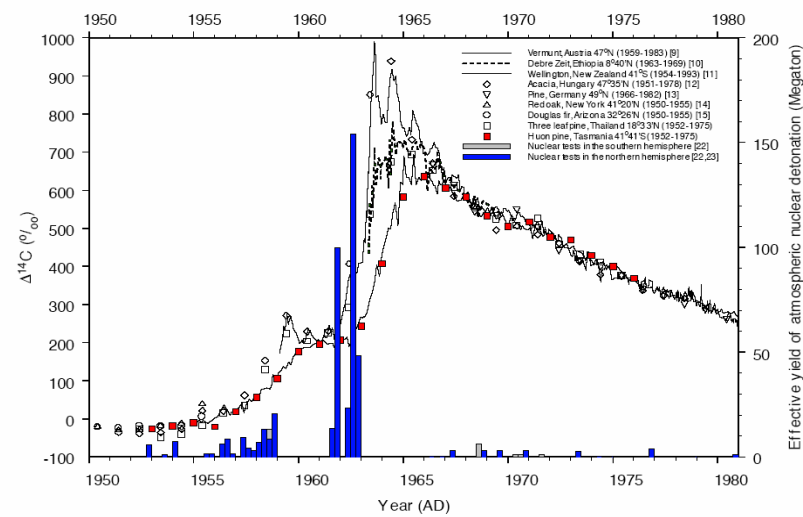
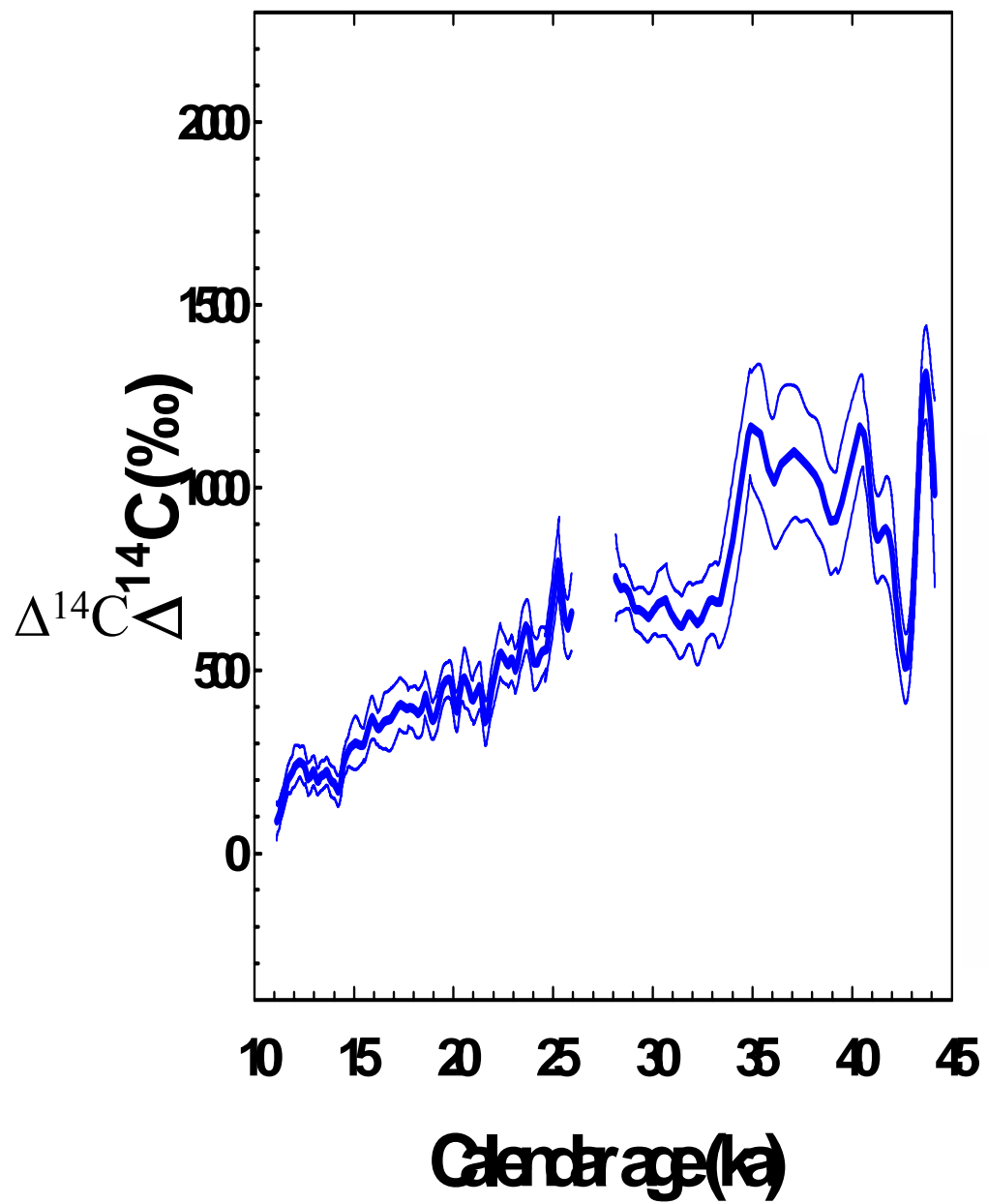
$$F = \text{Fraction Modern} = \frac{(^{14}\text{C}/^{12}\text{C})_s}{(^{14}\text{C}/^{12}\text{C})_{\text{std}}}$$

Thus,  $\Delta^{14}\text{C} = 0\text{‰}$  is the same  $^{14}\text{C}$  concentration as the 1950  
Atmosphere,  $1000\text{‰}$  is twice the  $^{14}\text{C}$  concentration, etc..



# Bahamas speleothem $\Delta^{14}\text{C}$





Why is  $\Delta^{14}\text{C}$  so high during the last glacial age?

- Galactic cosmic ray flux was higher
- Geomagnetic field was lower
- Solar magnetic field was lower
- Ocean/atmosphere  $\text{CO}_2$  exchange rate was significantly slower

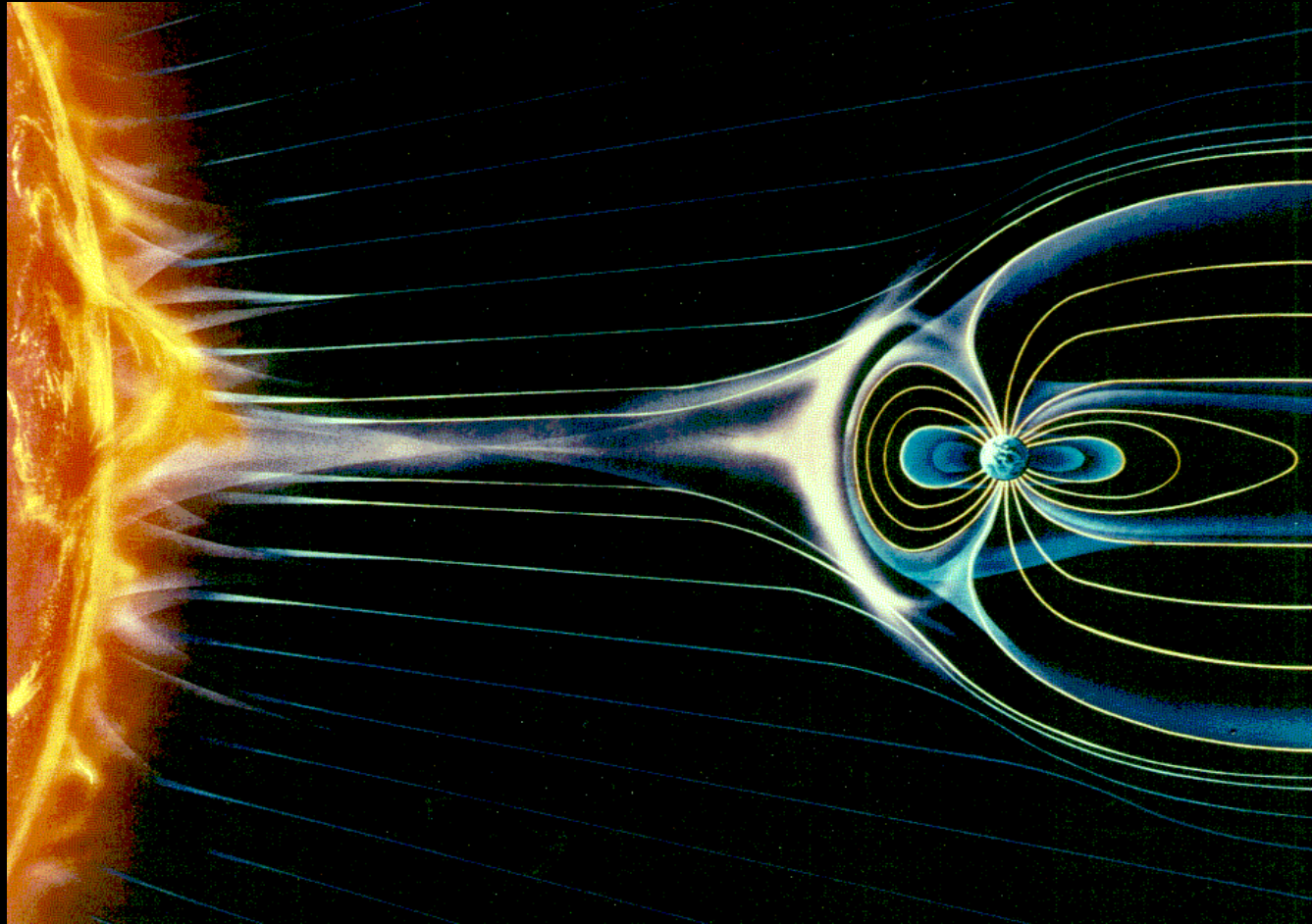
# Galactic Cosmic Rays (GCR)

- $^{14}\text{C}$  is formed in the atmosphere by galactic cosmic rays.
- Galactic cosmic rays are high energy (up to  $10^6$  GeV) particles (usually protons) accelerated by celestial events such as super nova.
- GCR striking our atmosphere shatter their target atoms into free protons and neutrons.
- Free neutrons are gathered by other atoms in the atmosphere to make new nuclides, such as  $^{14}\text{C}$ .

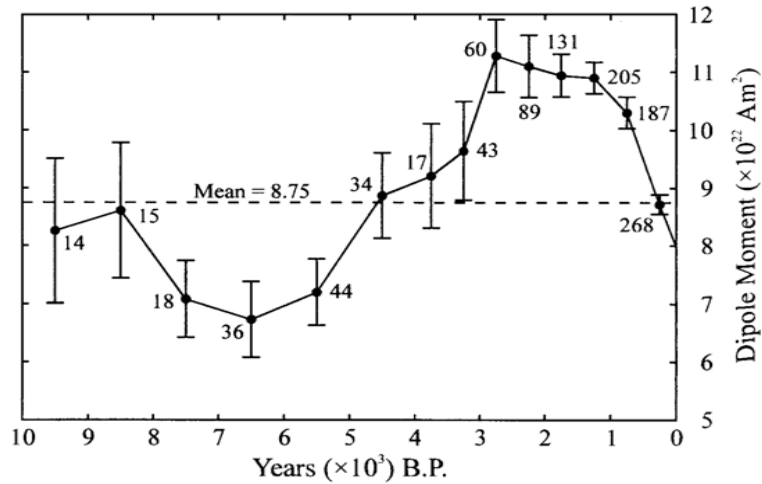
If GCR fluxes have varied in the past, then measurement of different cosmogenic nuclides with various halflives ( $^{14}\text{C}$ ,  $^{10}\text{Be}$ ,  $^{41}\text{Ca}$ ,  $^3\text{He}$ , etc.) measured in unshielded materials (such as meteorites or lunar soils) should have different activities ( $N/\lambda$ ).

Measurements show that all such nuclides have the same activity, thus GCR has Remained constant.

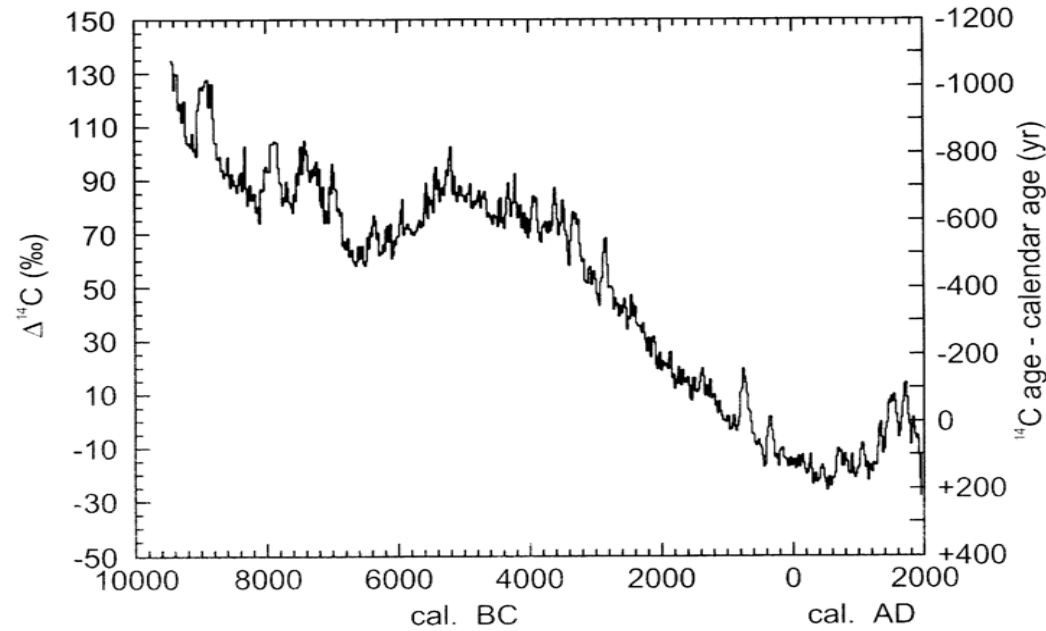
# Earth's magnetosphere



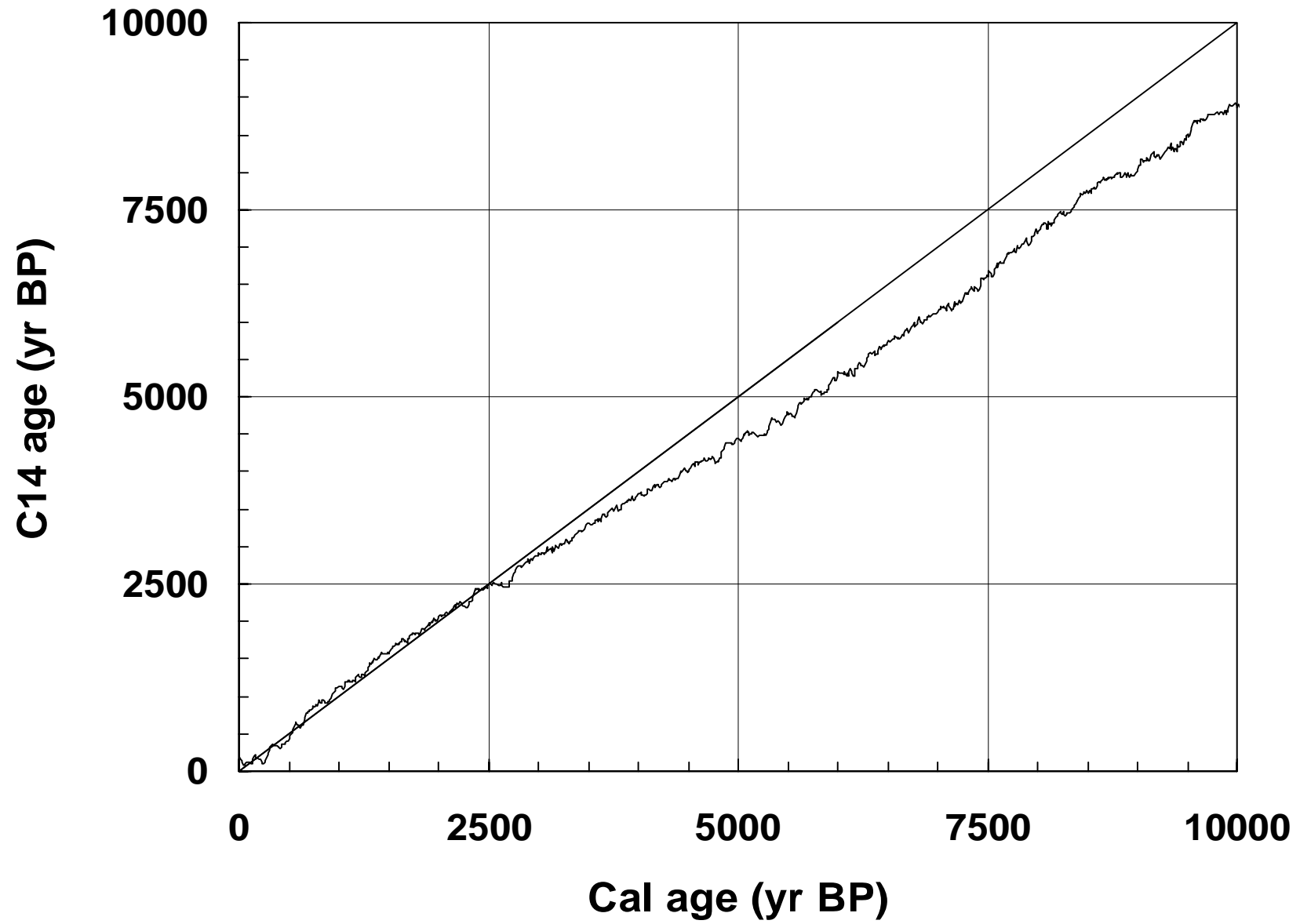
McElhinny and Senanayake (1982)

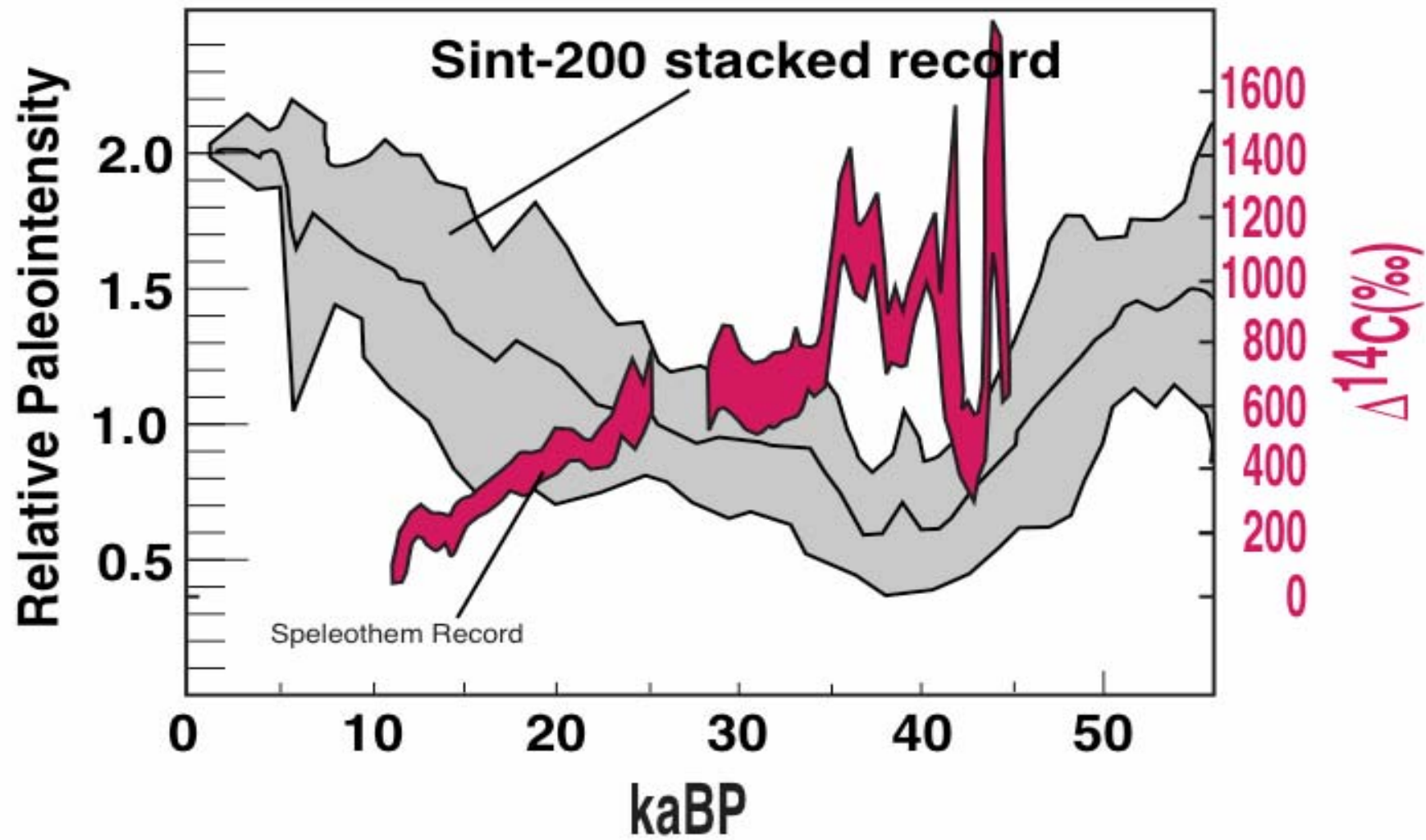


Comparison of  $\Delta^{14}\text{C}$  and dipole moment from 10 ka to present

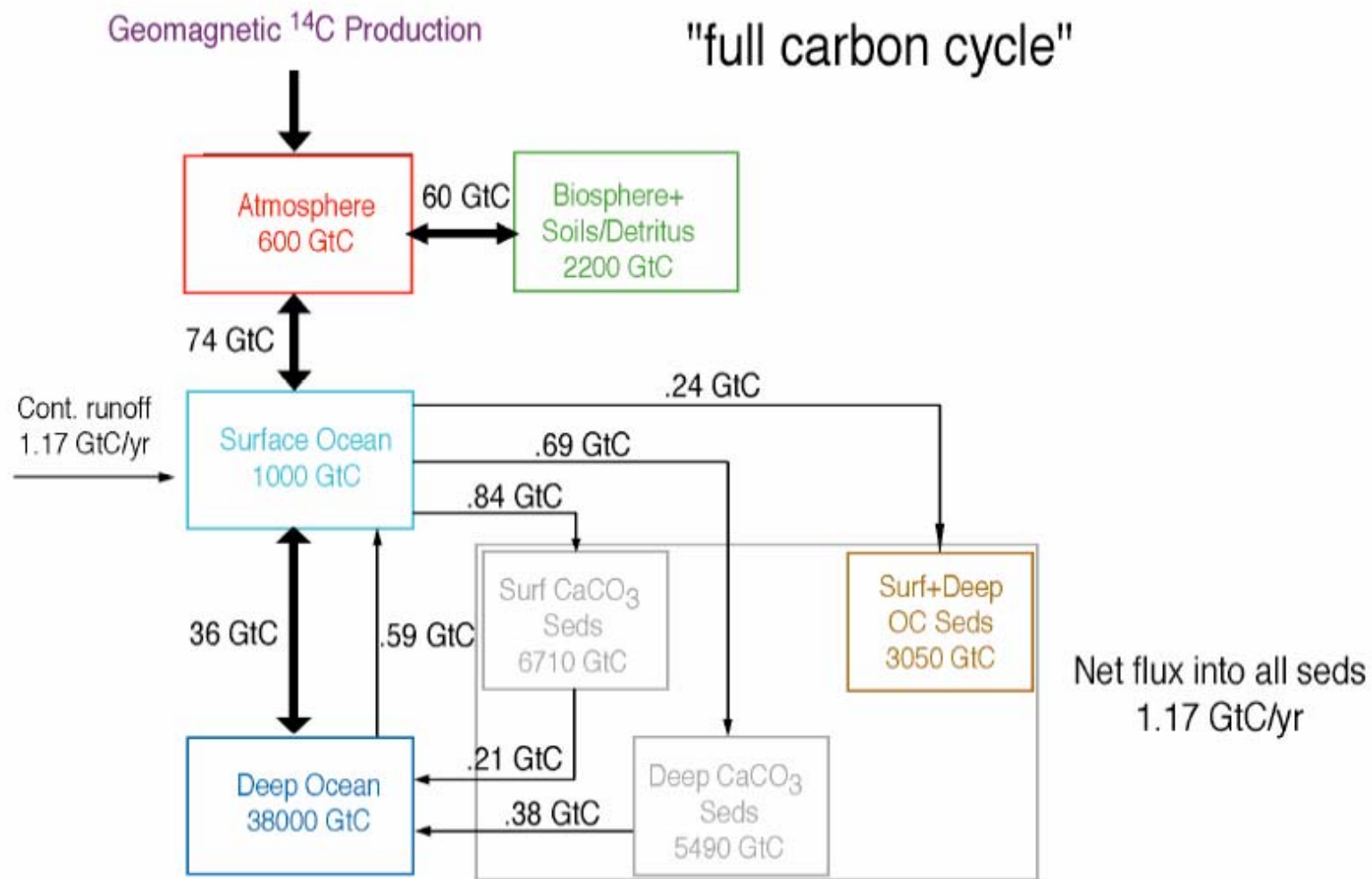


Stuiver and Reimer (1993)





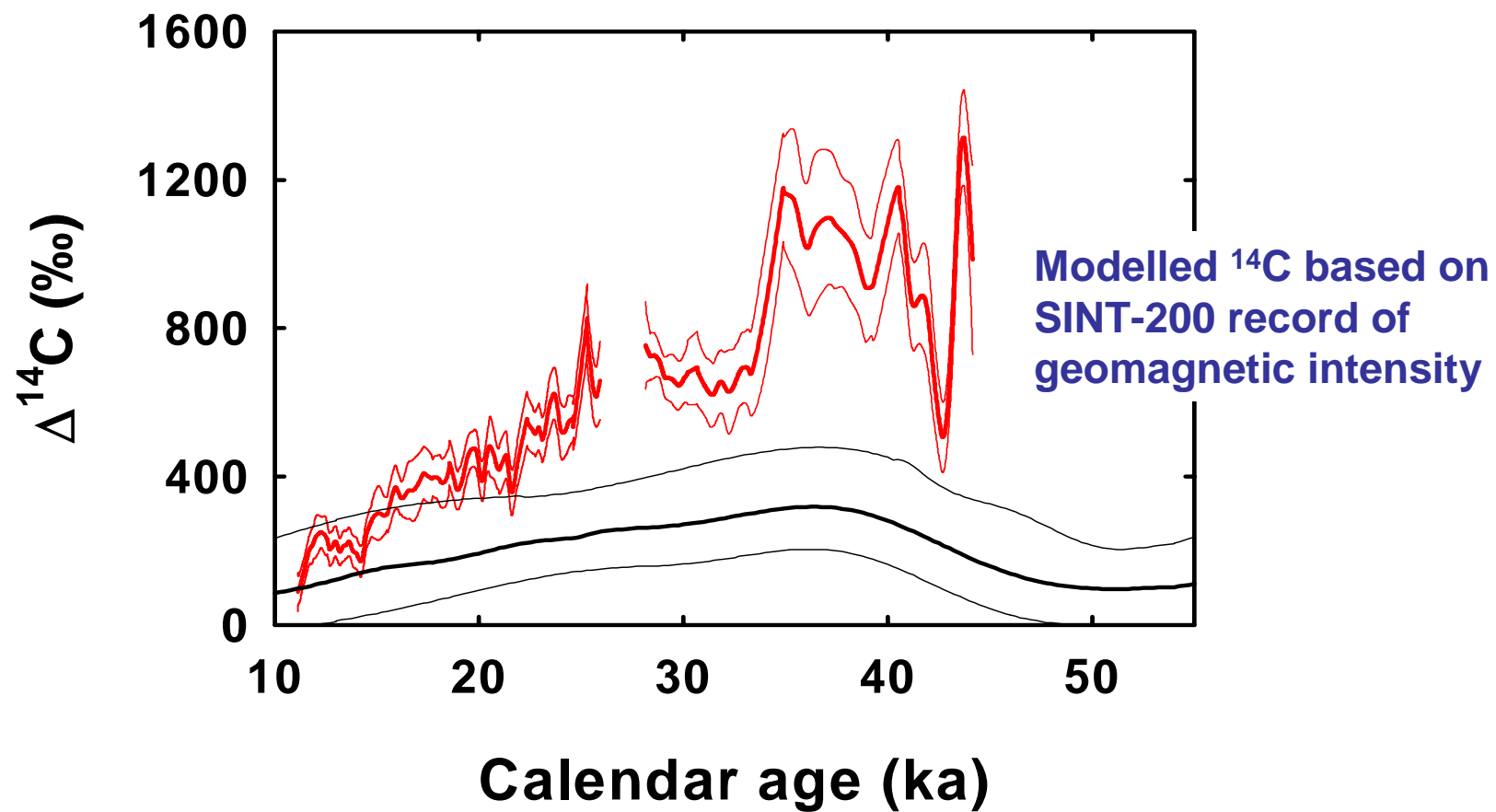




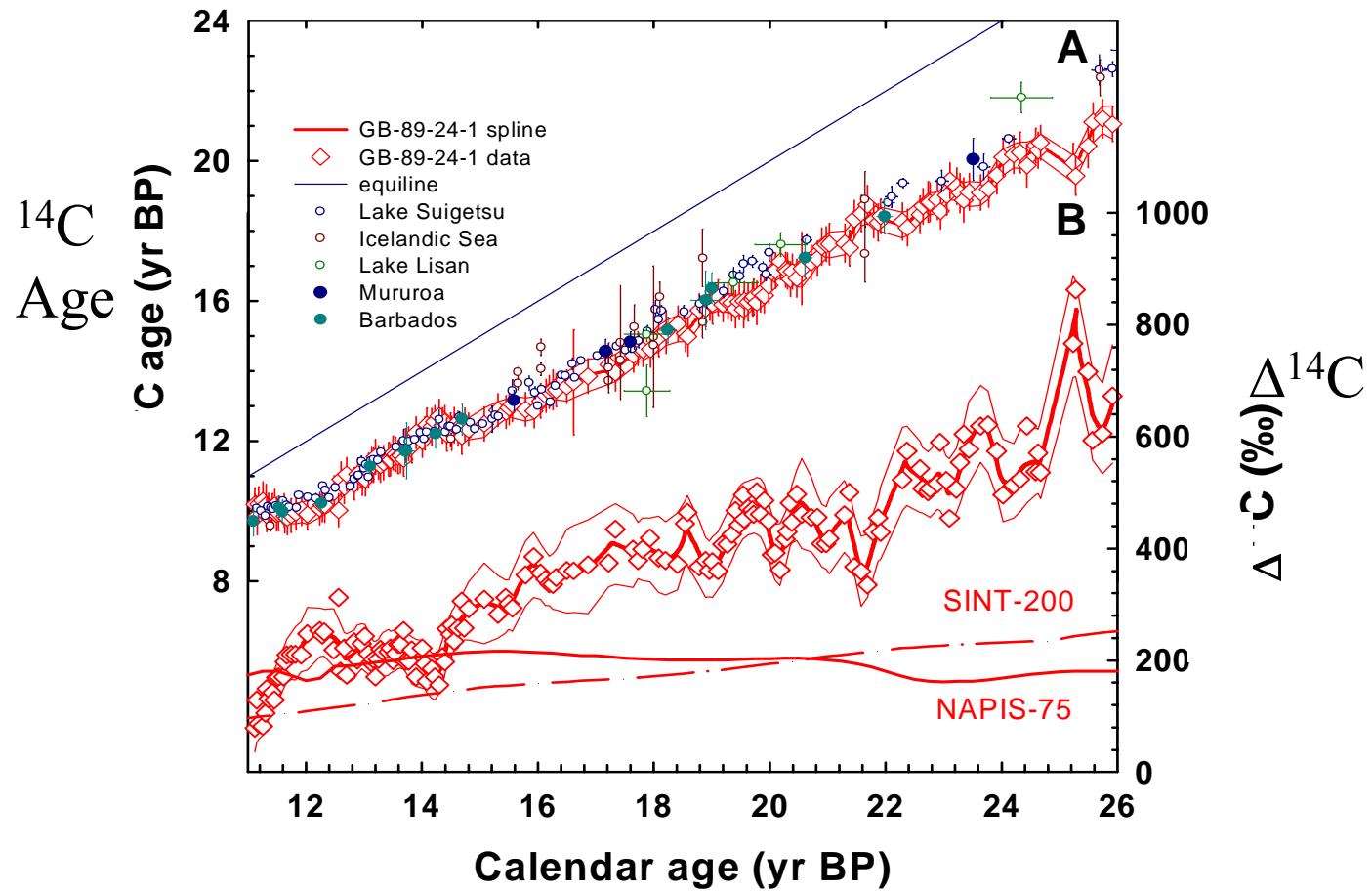
From Hughen et al., 2004



# Model vs data comparison

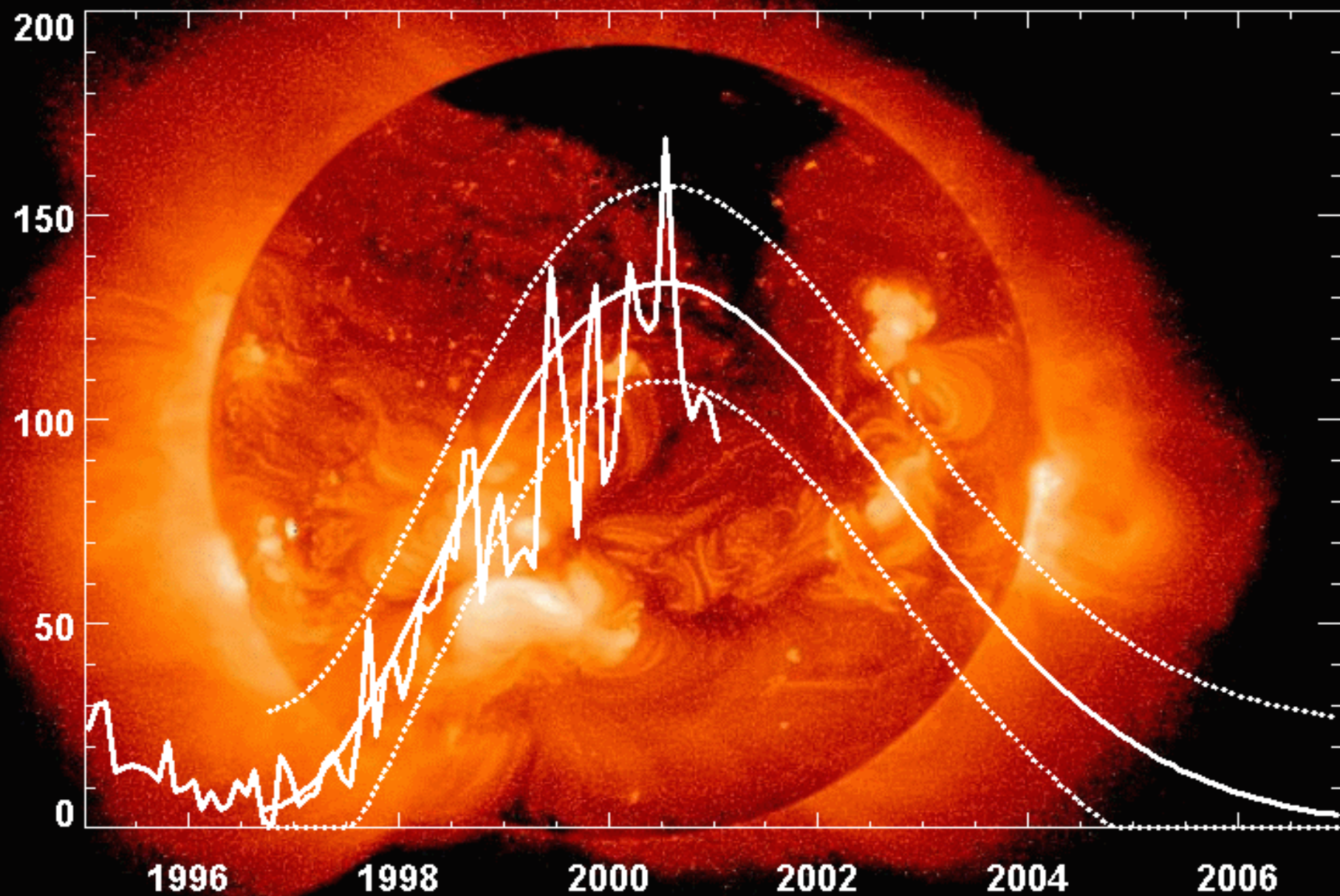


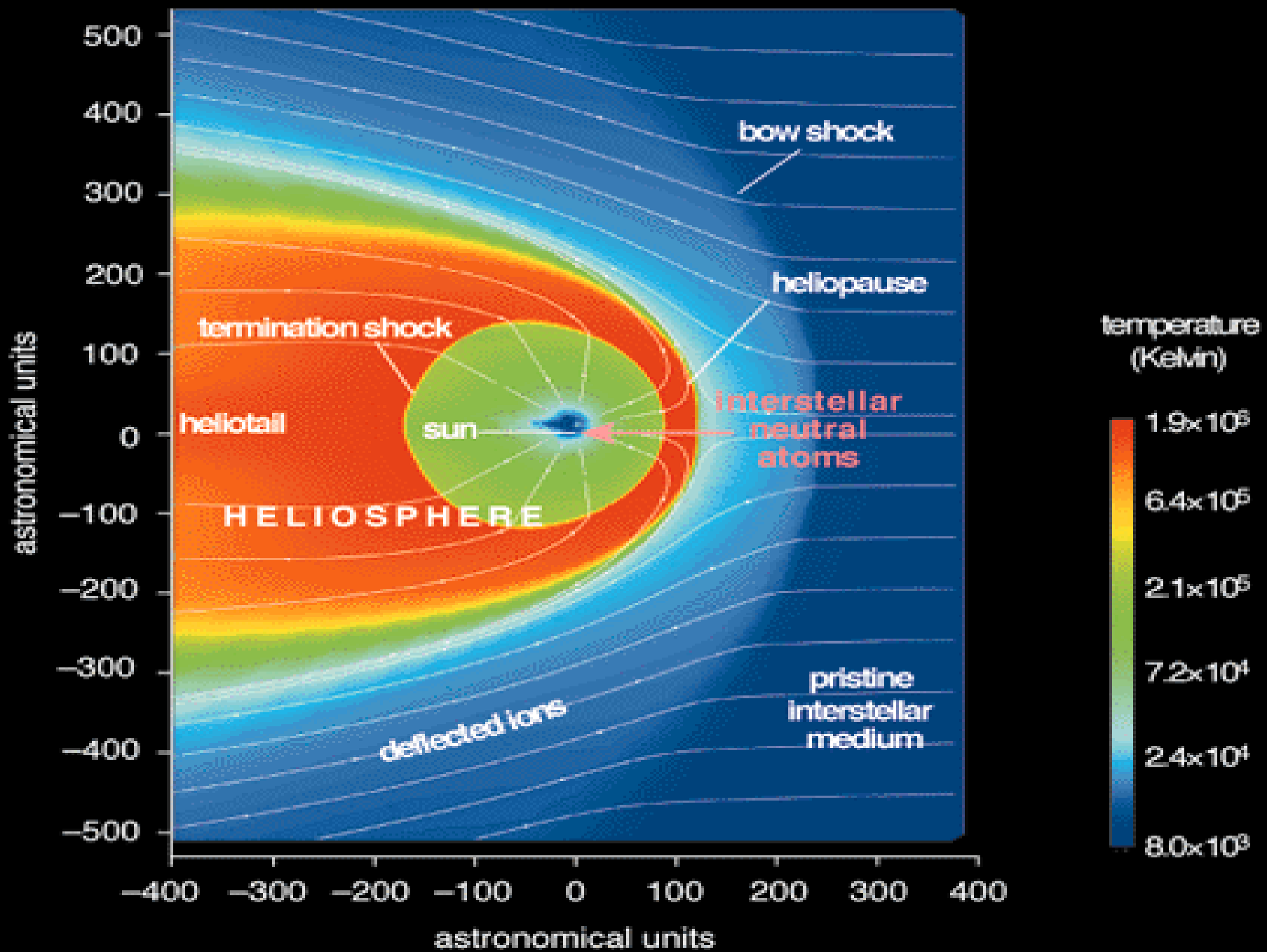
# Radiocarbon during the last glacial maximum and deglaciation

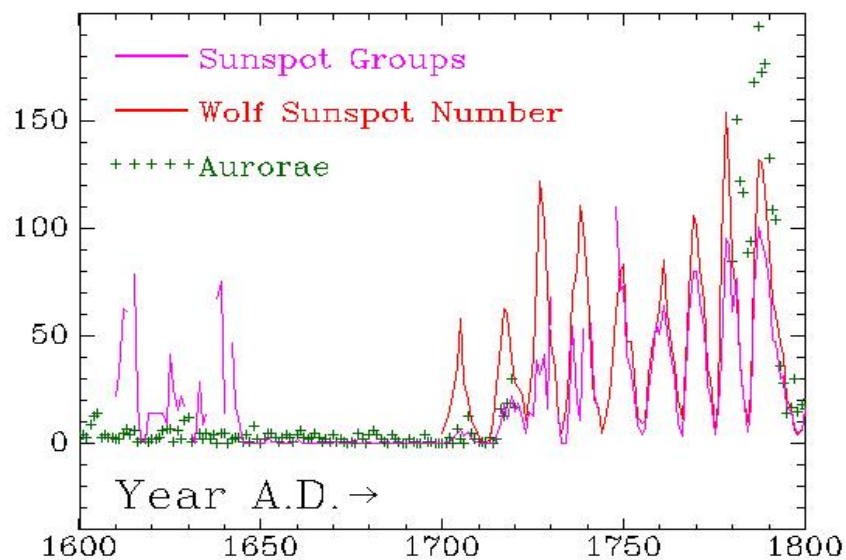
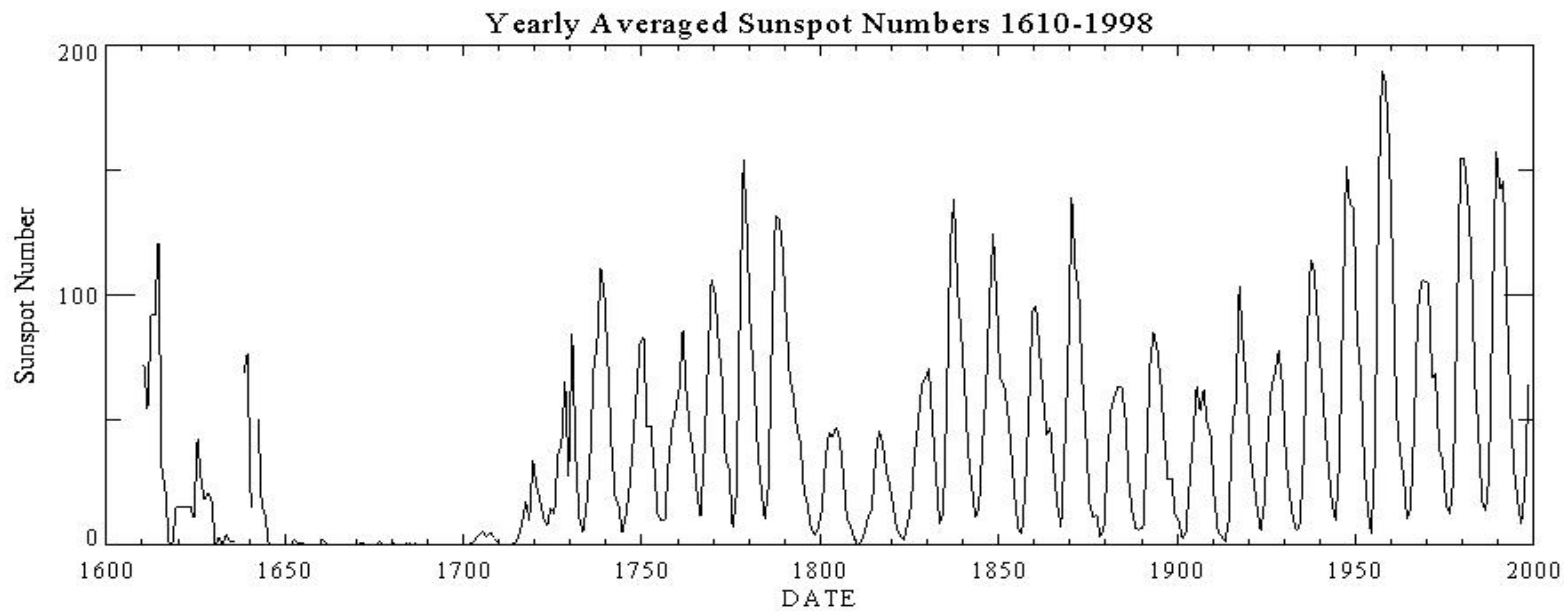




# Cycle 23 Sunspot Number Prediction (February 2001)

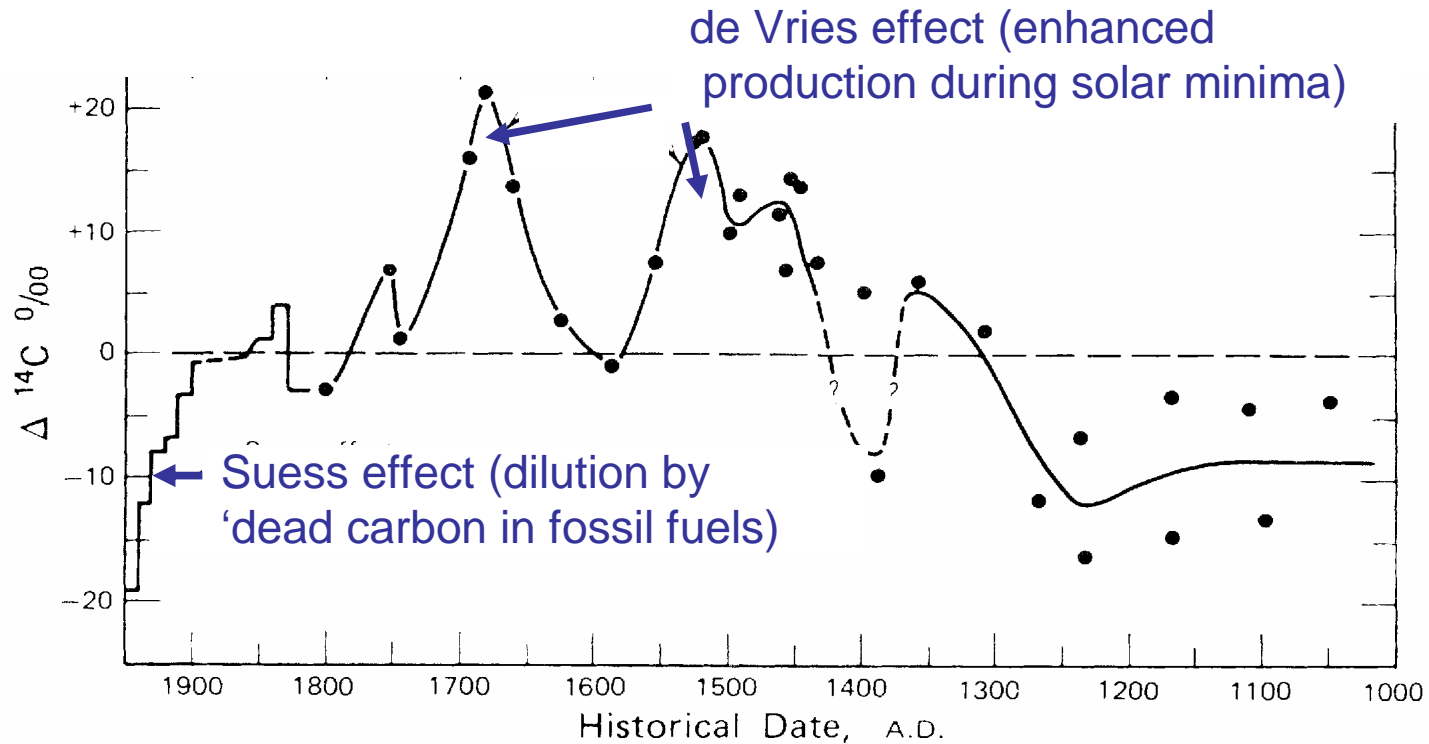






Maunder Minimum: a period when sunspots vanished

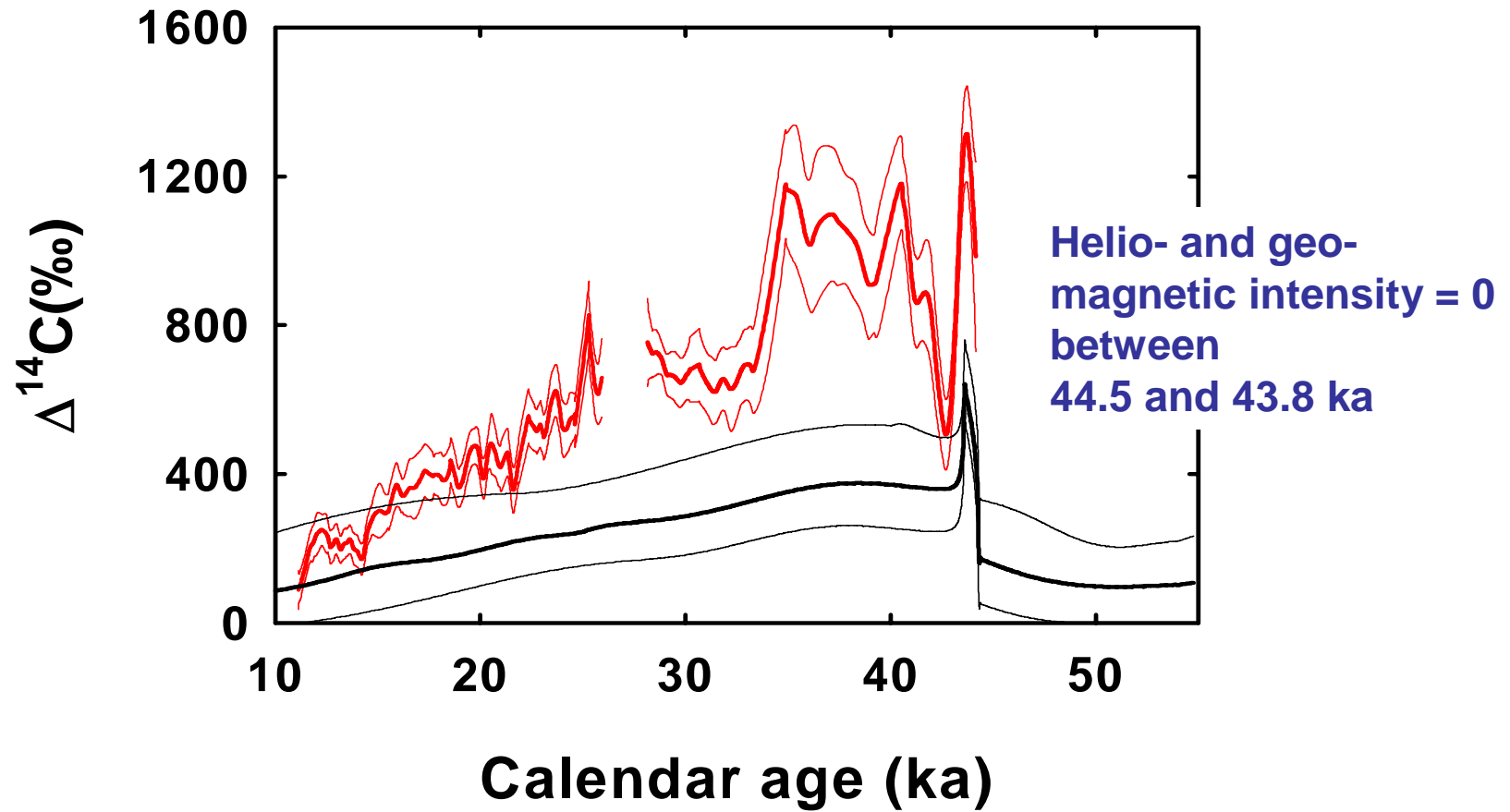
# $\Delta^{14}\text{C}$ for the last millennium



$\Delta^{14}\text{C}$ : relative concentration of  $^{14}\text{C}$  with respect to pre-industrial wood in parts per mil (‰)

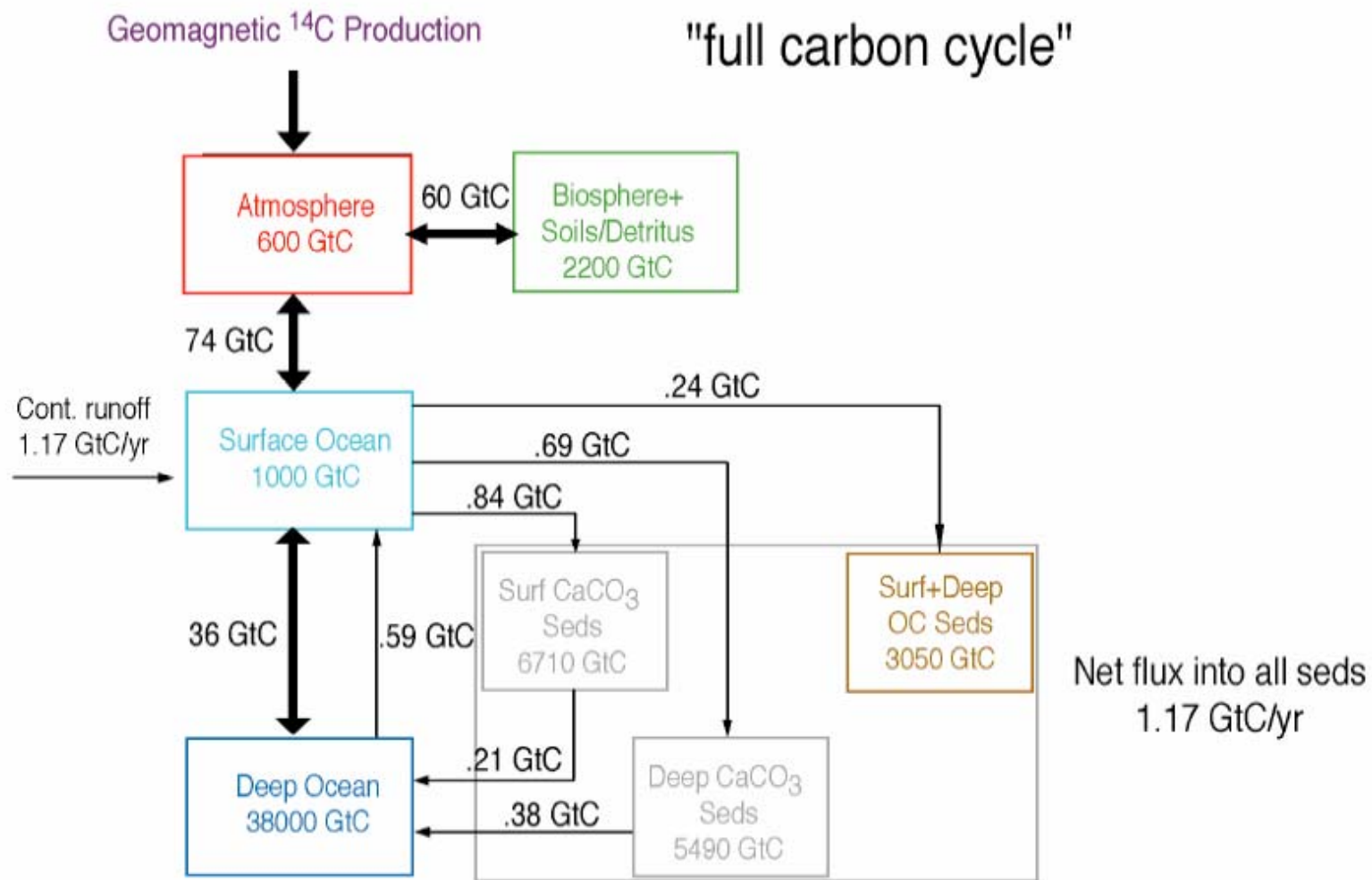


# Model vs data comparison

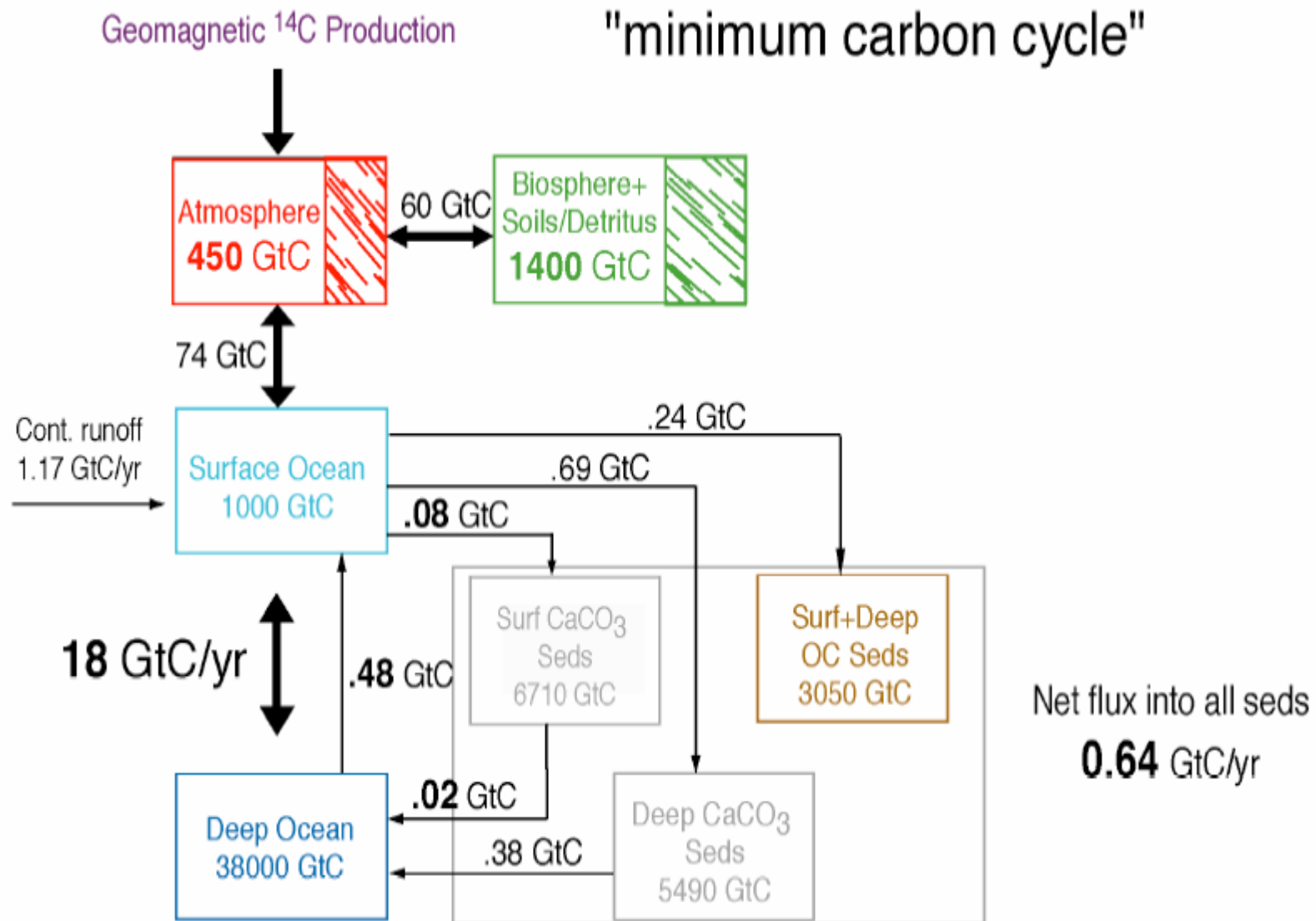


# Why is $\Delta^{14}\text{C}$ so high during the last glacial age?

- Galactic cosmic ray flux was higher
- Geomagnetic field was lower
- Solar magnetic field was lower
- Ocean/atmosphere  $\text{CO}_2$  exchange rate was significantly slower
- Carbon export from the ocean mixed layer was slower.

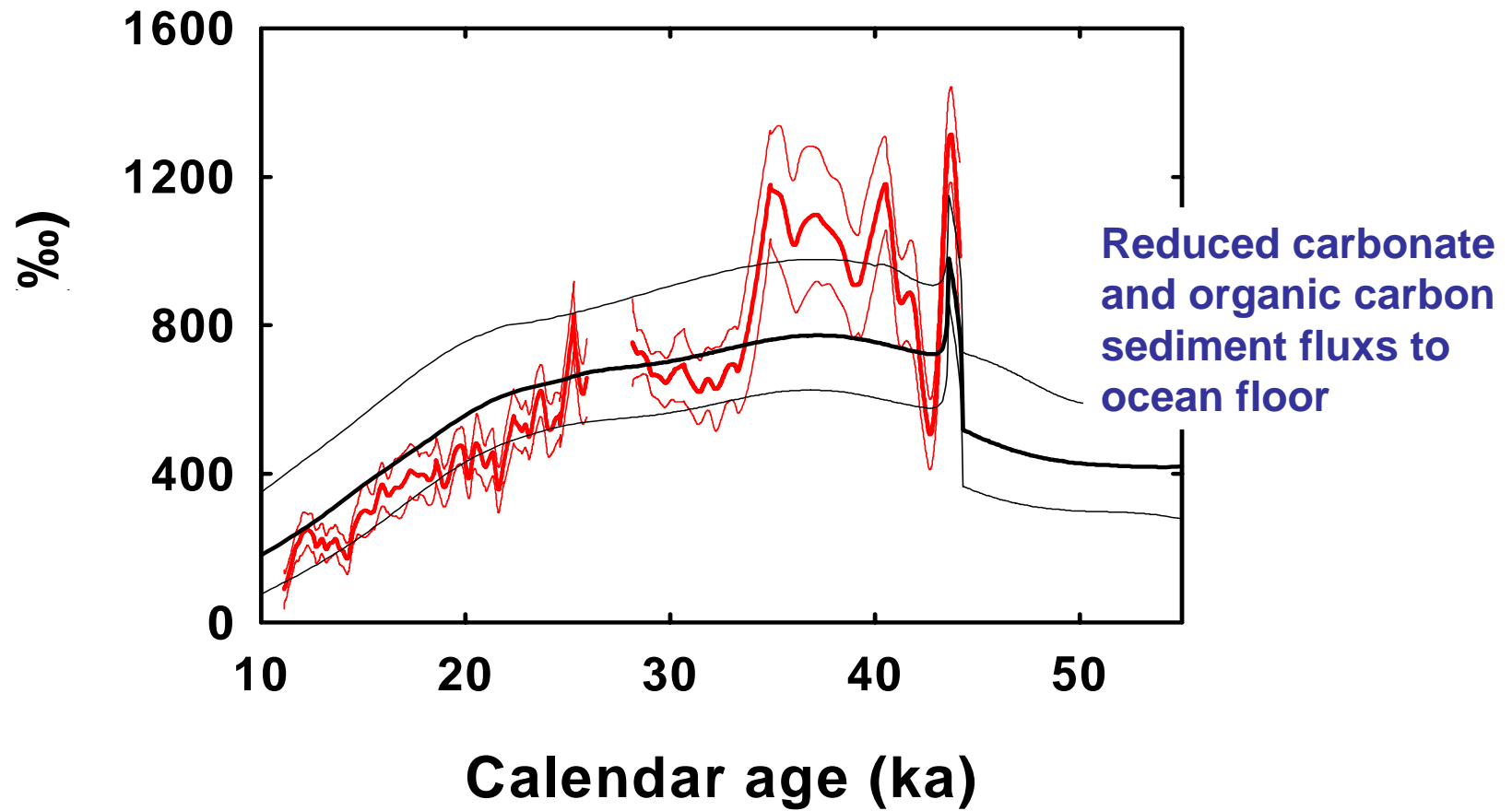


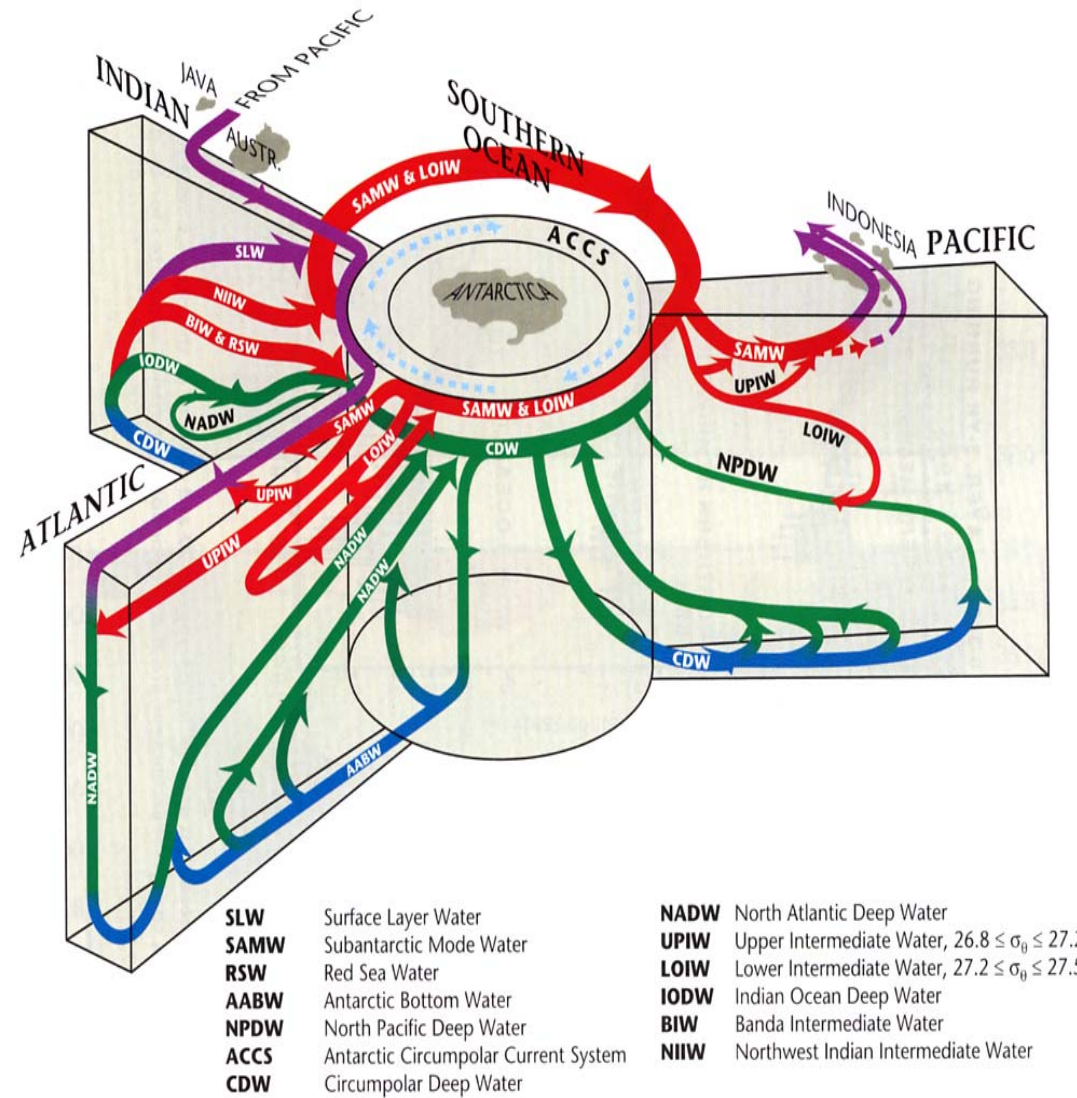
From Hughen et al., 2004



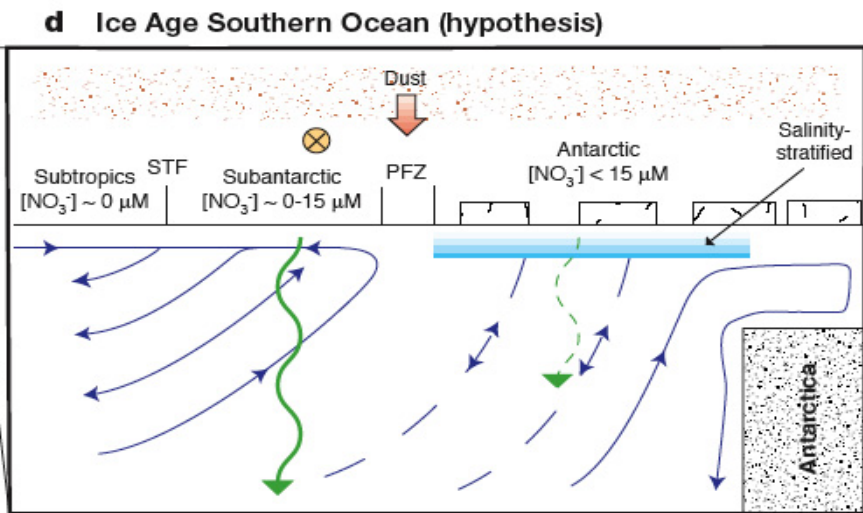
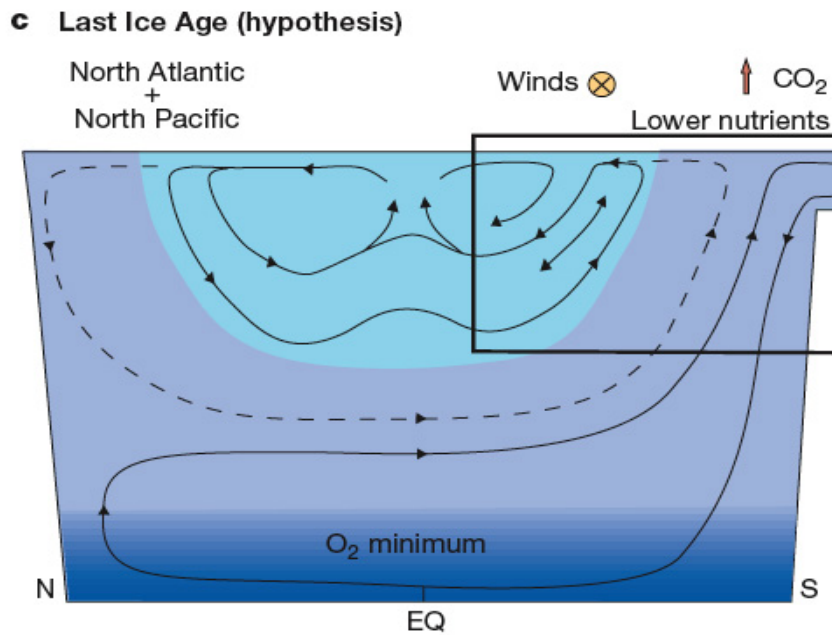
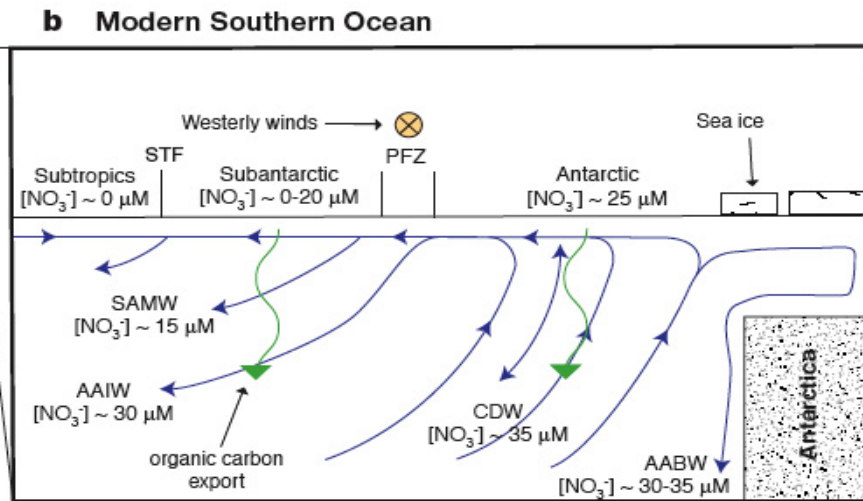
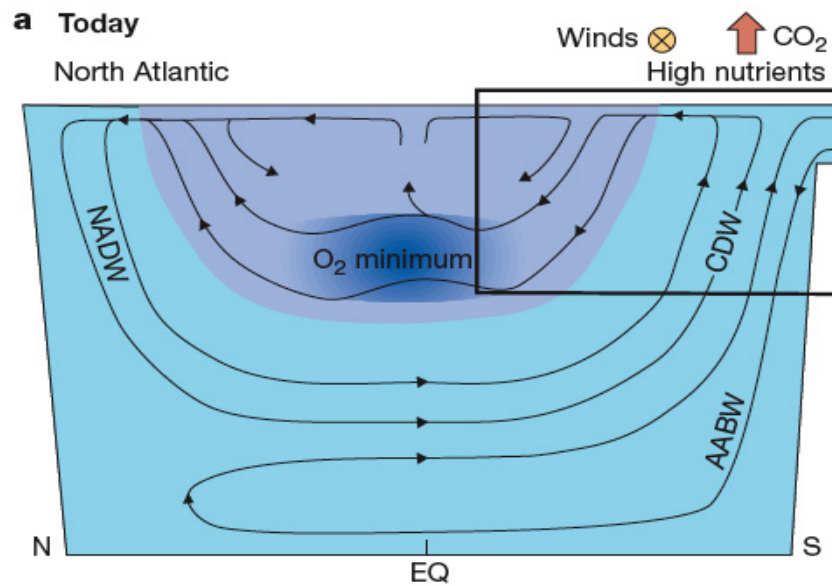
From Hughen et al . (2004)

# Model vs data comparison



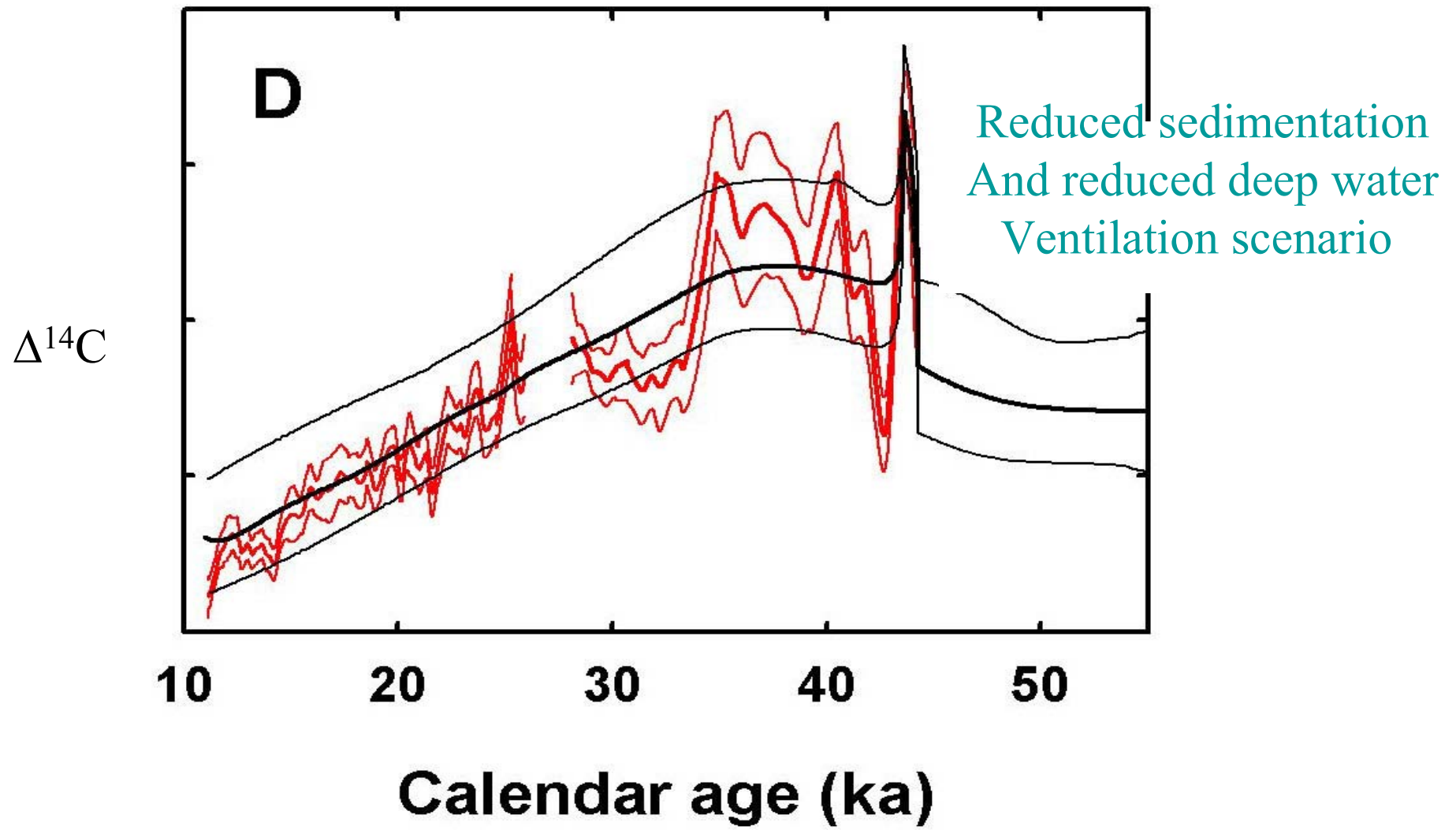


**Plate I.2.7** (see p. 22) A three-dimensional schematic showing the meridional overturning circulation in each of the oceans and the horizontal connections in the Southern Ocean and the Indonesian Throughflow. The surface layer circulations are in purple, intermediate and SAMW are in red, deep in green and near-bottom in blue. From Schmitz (1996b).

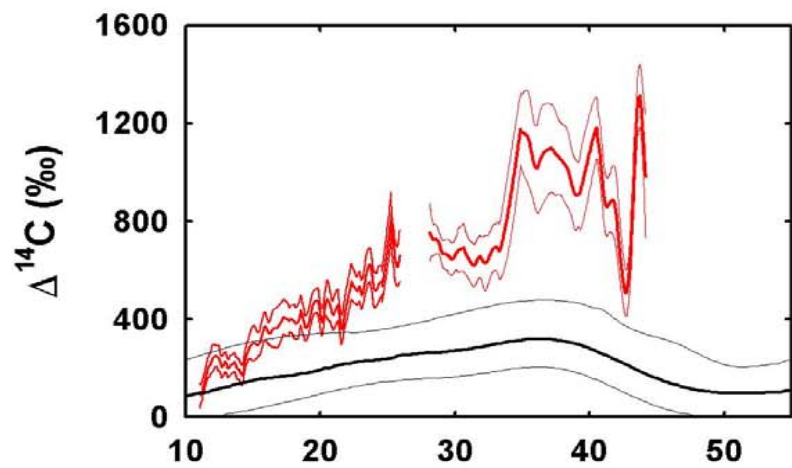


From Sigman & Boyle, 2001.

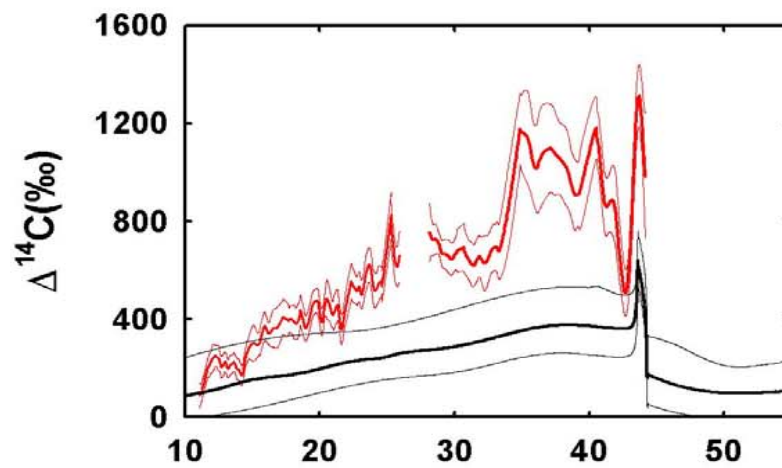




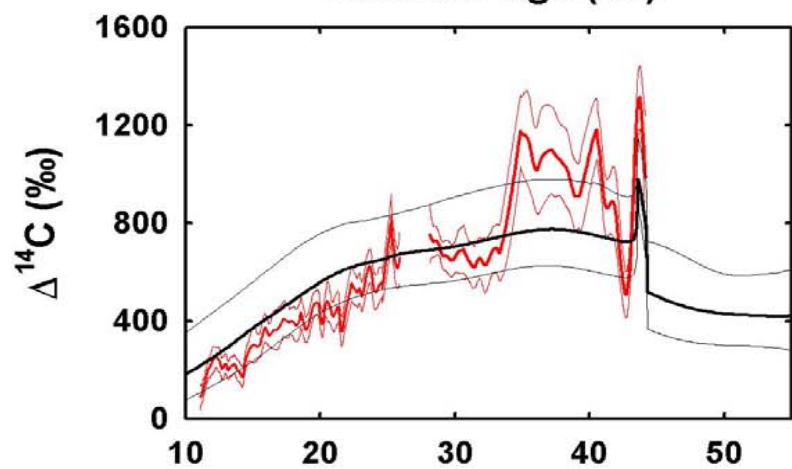




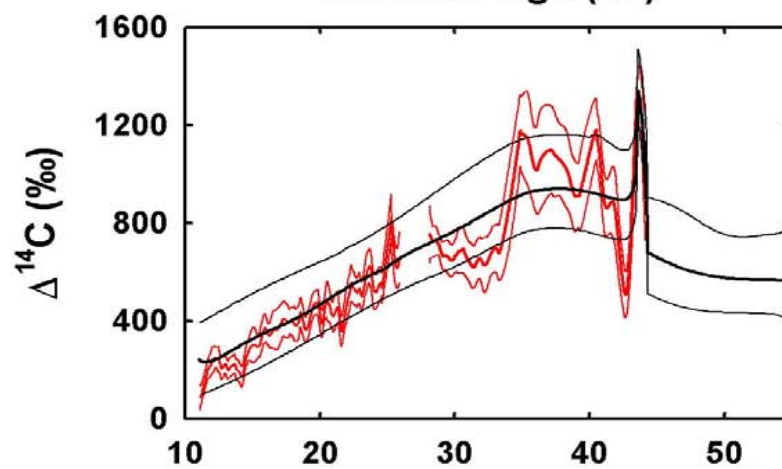
Calendar age (ka)



Calendar age (ka)

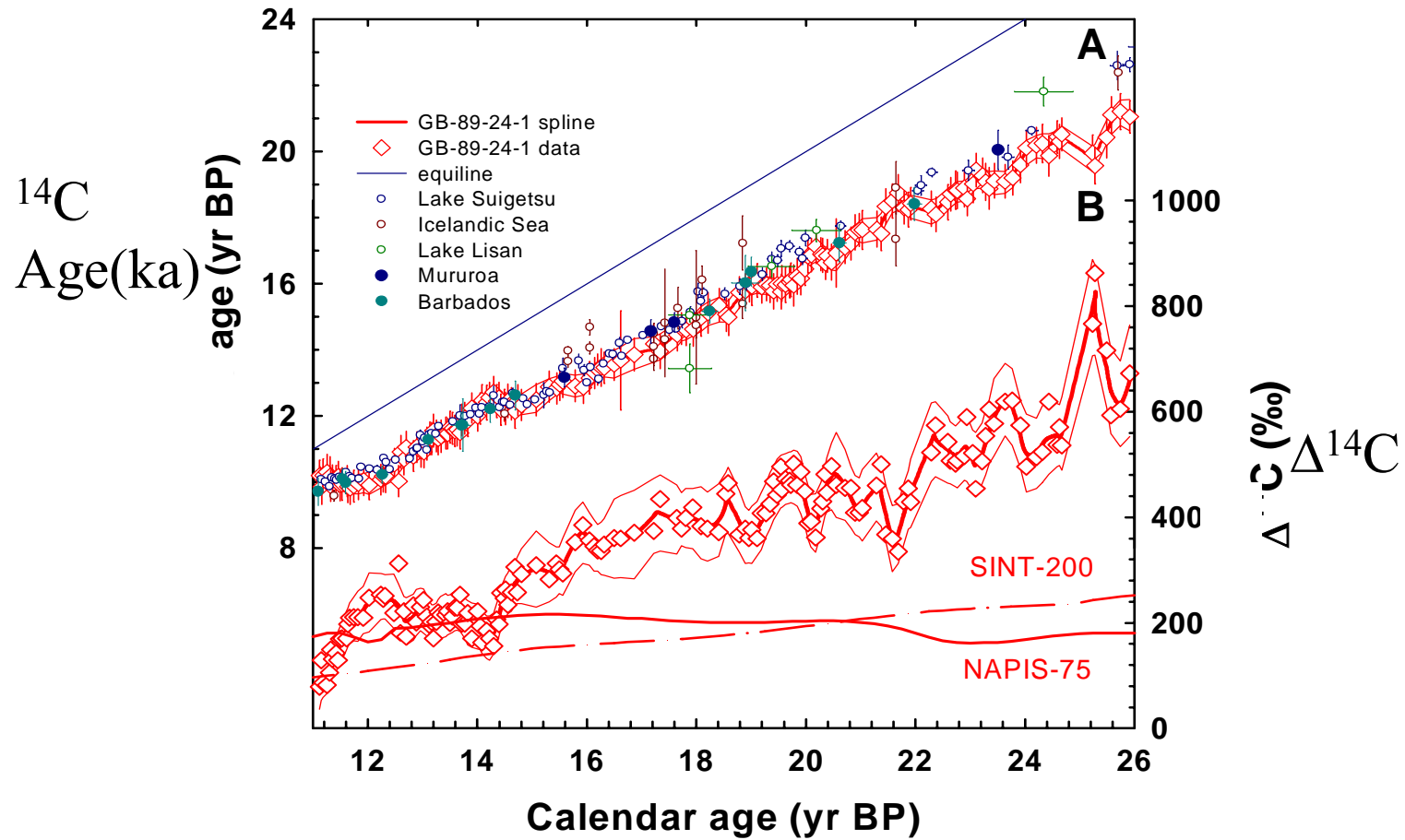


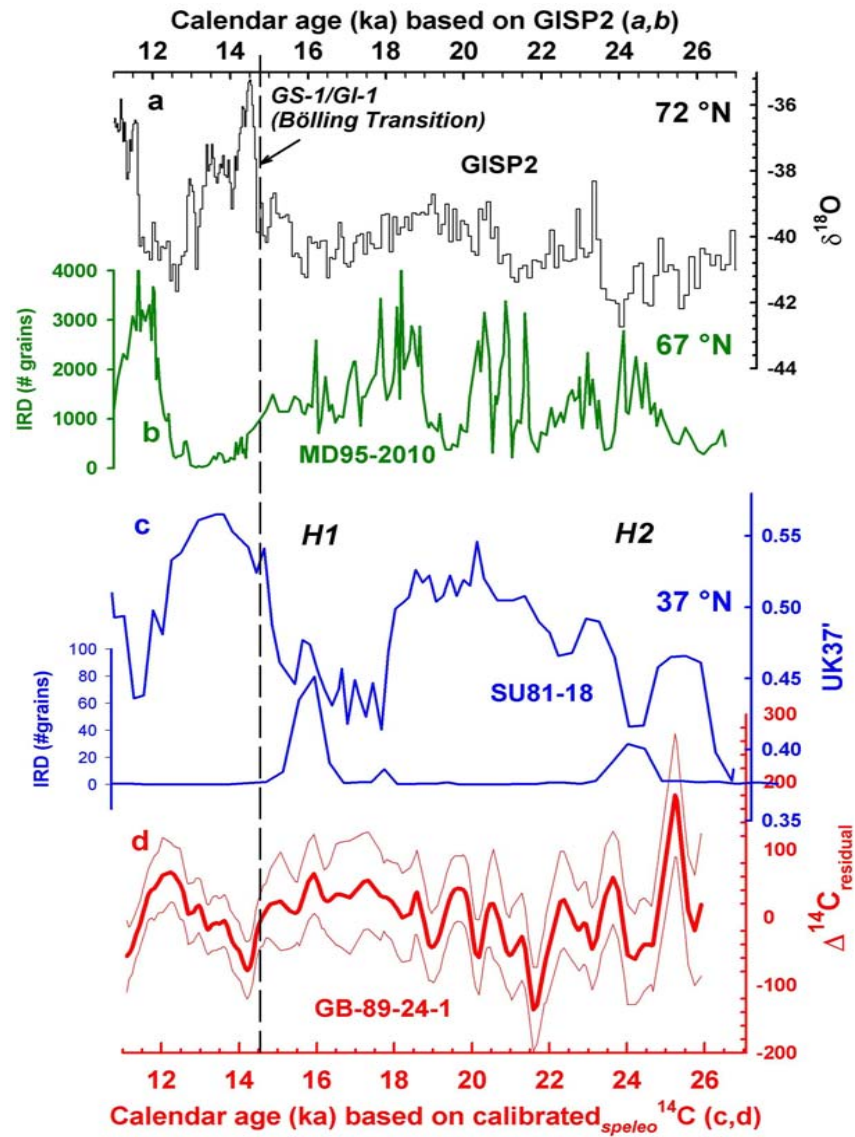
Calendar age (ka)



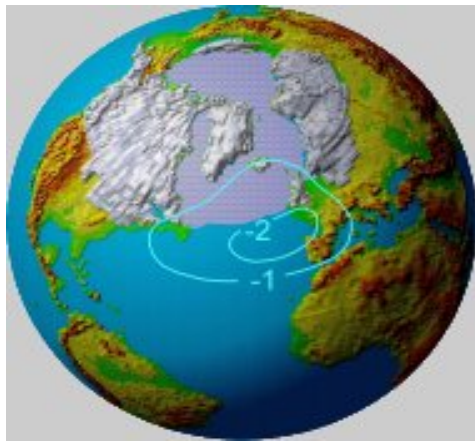
Calendar age (ka)

# Radiocarbon during the last glacial maximum and deglaciation

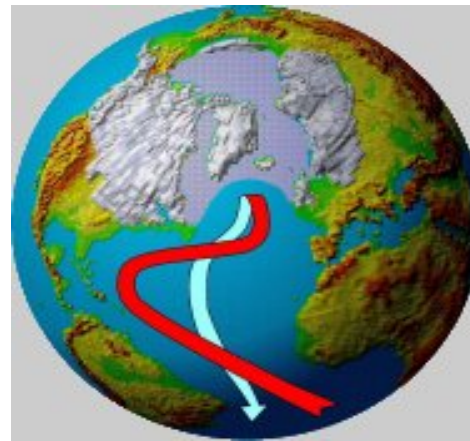




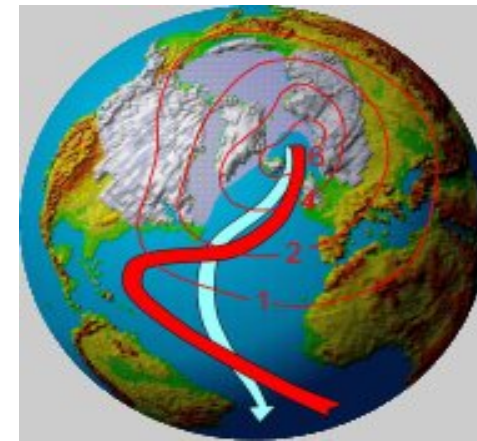
# Different mode of circulation during the last glacial period



**Heinrich event**  
'meltwater cap' halts  
thermohaline  
circulation - colder



**Normal glacial  
mode**  
thermohaline  
circulation active

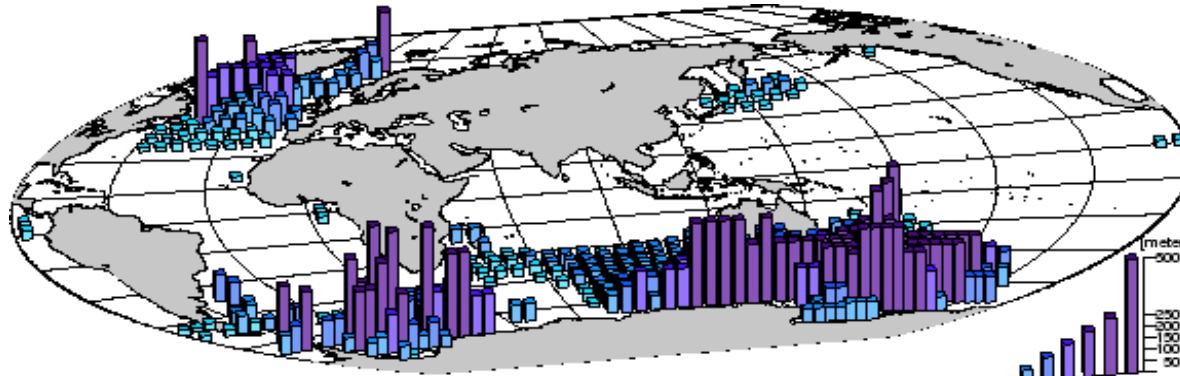


**Dansgaard-Oeschger  
event**  
enhanced convection,  
further north in  
Norwegian Sea, hence  
warmer

Ganopolski, A. and S. Rahmstorf, 2001: Simulation of rapid glacial climate changes in a coupled climate model. *Nature*, **409**, 153-158.

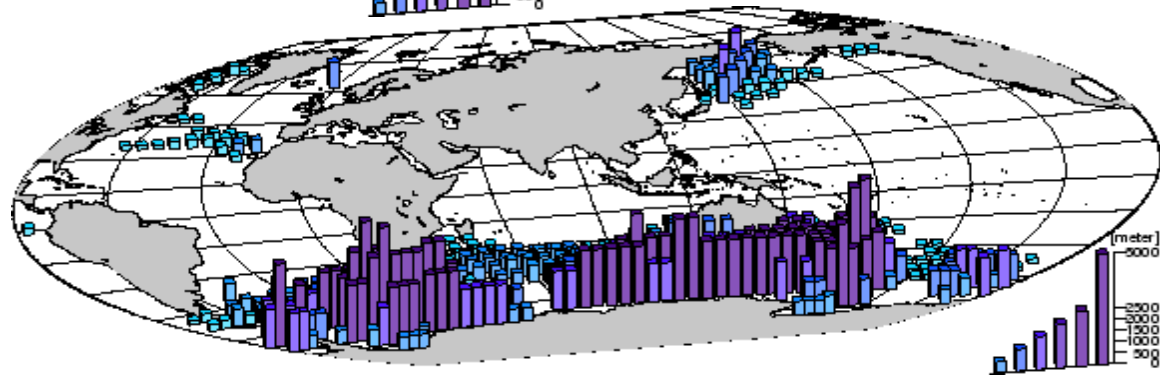
# Modelled ocean convection

Modern/Holocene

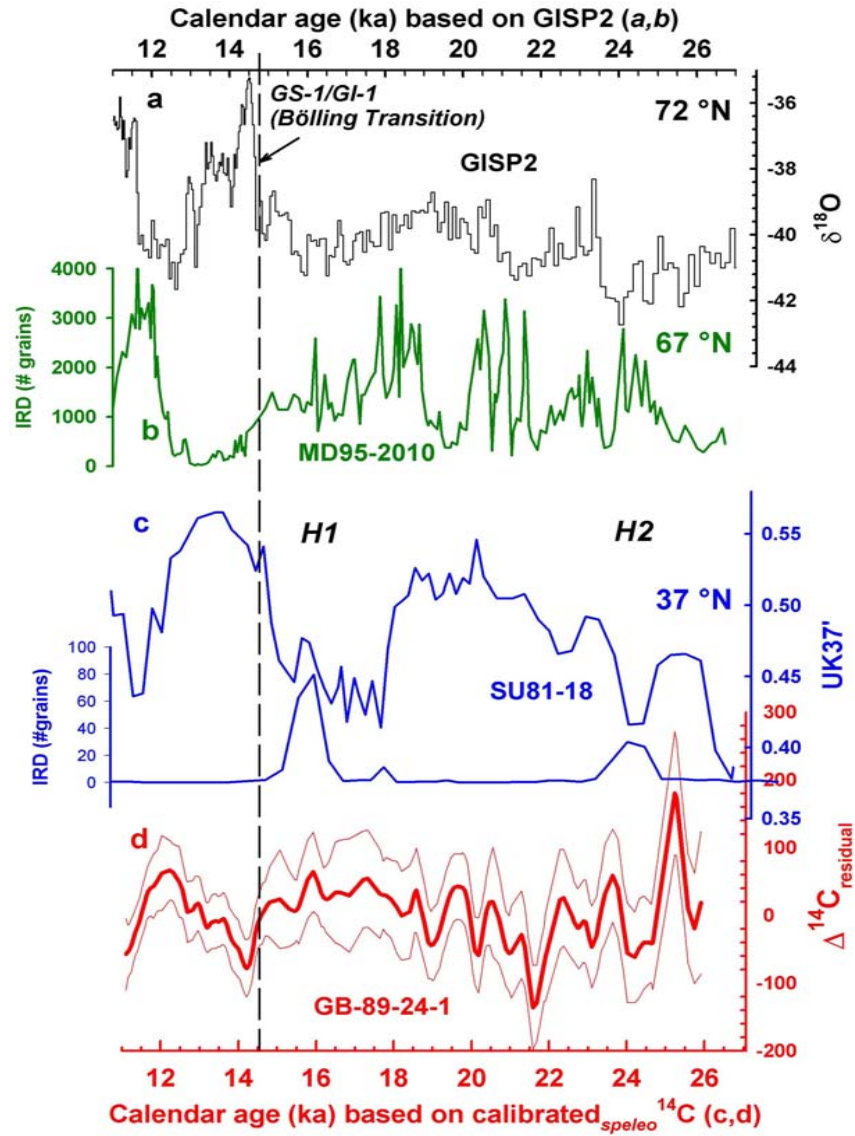


The heights of the bars are equal to the depth of convection.

Meltwater event

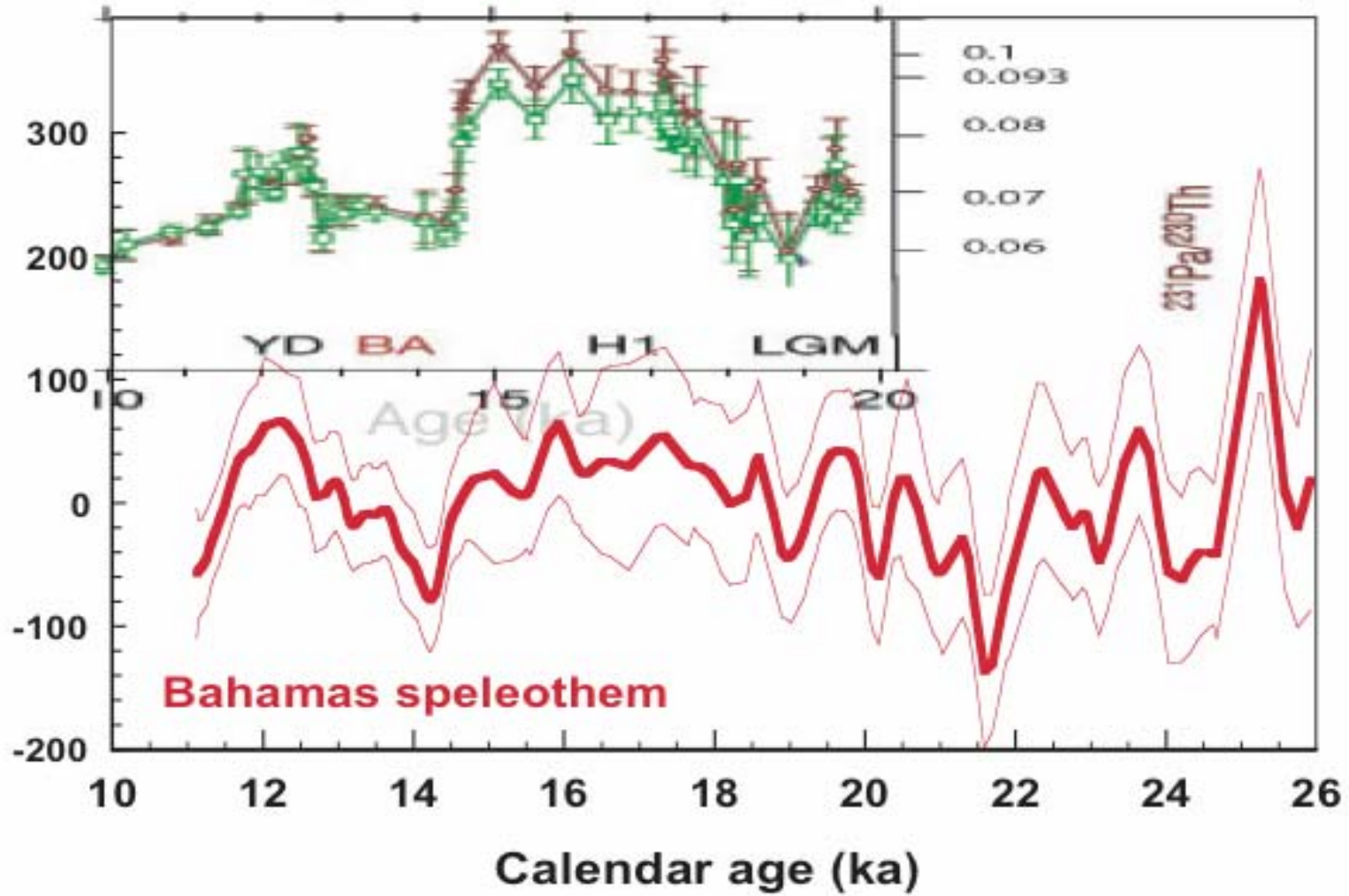


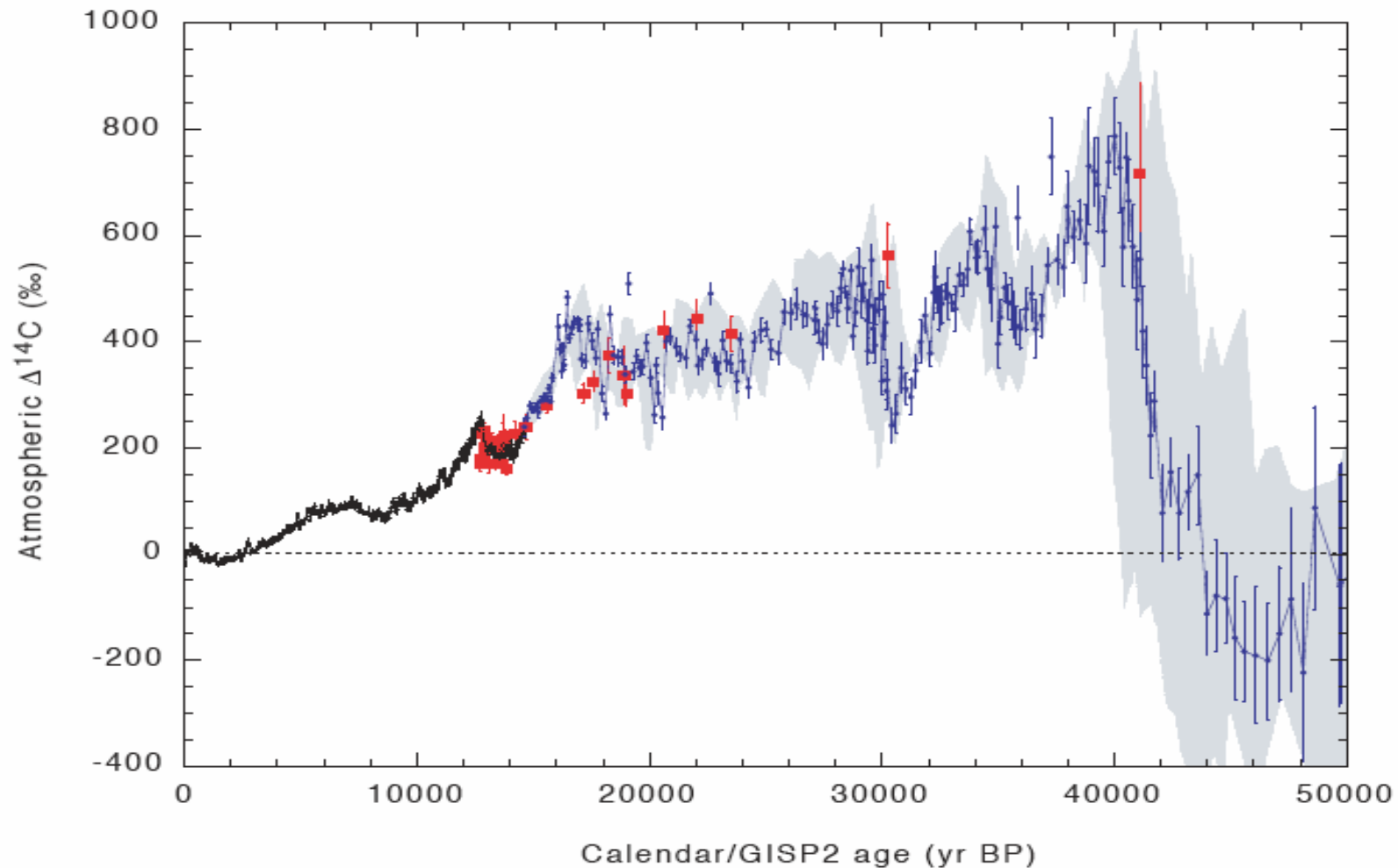
*Numerical study of glacial and meltwater global ocean thermohaline conveyor* by Seidov, D and Haupt, B. J. in *Computerized Modeling of Sedimentary Systems*, Ed. J. Harff, W. Lemke, and K. Stattegger, 1999, ISBN 3-540-64109-2, pages 79-113





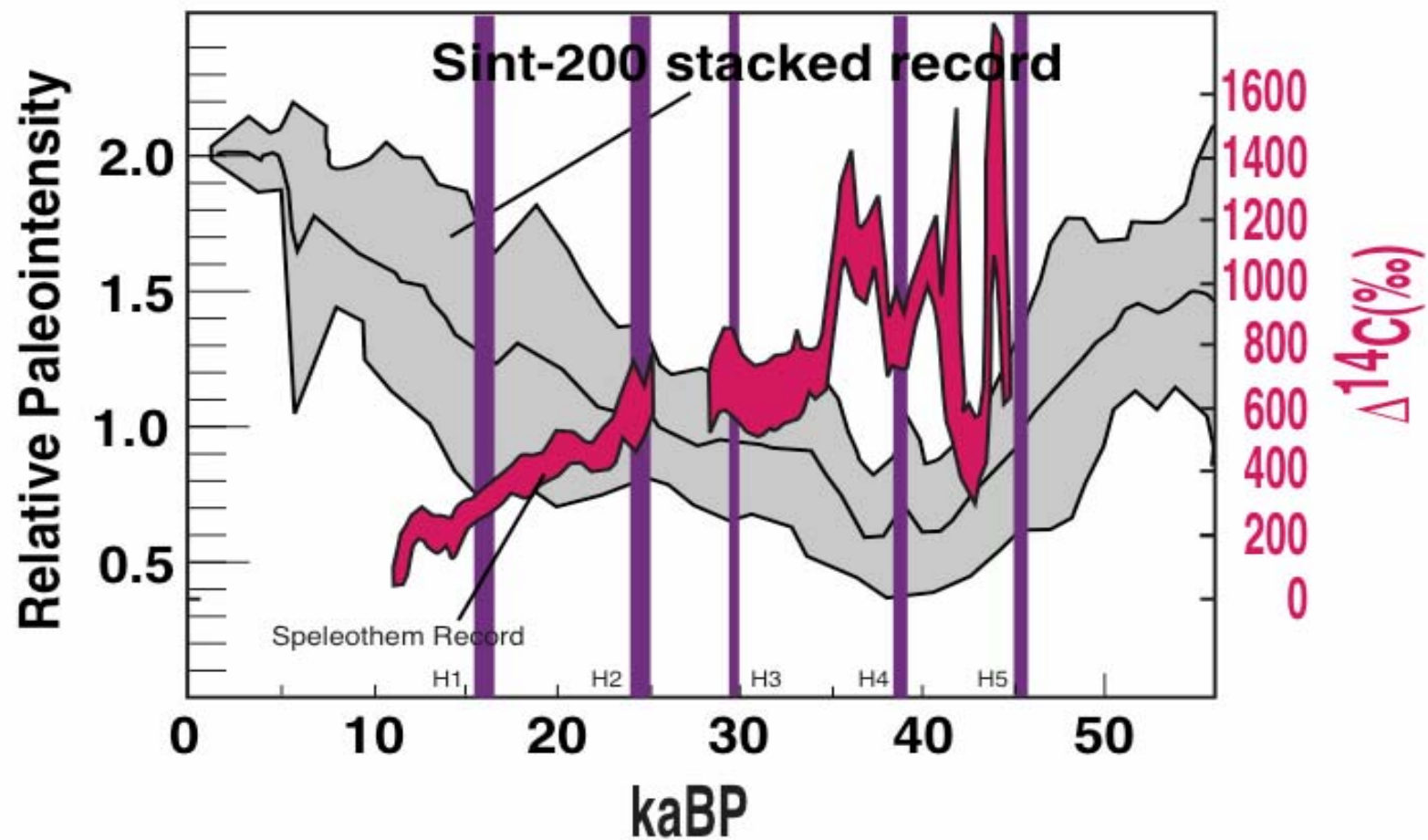
(After McManus et al, 2004)





**Fig. 3.** Atmospheric  $\Delta^{14}\text{C}$  for the past 50 cal. ka B.P. Symbols are the same as those in Fig. 2A. Cariaco error bars represent independent uncertainty in  $\Delta^{14}\text{C}$  due to  $1-\sigma$   $^{14}\text{C}$  age error. Light gray shading shows additional uncertainty in Cariaco  $\Delta^{14}\text{C}$  due to calendar-age error that is not independent from sample to sample, but rather would shift sections of the curve together within the limits of the shading. Dotted line is modern preindustrial atmospheric  $\Delta^{14}\text{C}$ , defined as 0‰. Upper and lower limits were determined by adding and subtracting  $1-\sigma$  errors to the calendar age and recalculating  $\Delta^{14}\text{C}$  with the use of the new calendar ages.





# Conclusions

Atmospheric  $^{14}\text{C}$  rose to very high levels during MIS3  
This was in part due to low geomagnetic field, but  
Carbon cycle box models show that either  
carbon sedimentation rate or ocean overturning rate  
Or both must have been significantly lower ( $\sim 1/3$  lower)  
In order to achieve such high  $\Delta^{14}\text{C}$ .

Smaller fluctuations in the  $^{14}\text{C}$  records appear synchronous  
With Heinrich events, suggesting that shutdown of deep  
Ocean ventilation associated with these events was significant  
And prolonged.