Oceanic forcing of Holocene ice-sheet retreat in the Amundsen Sea Embayment, West Antarctica

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Abstract

Glaciological and oceanographic observations coupled with numerical models indicate that warm Circumpolar Deep Water (CDW) upwelling onto the West Antarctic continental shelf causes melting of the undersides of floating ice shelves. Because the ice shelves are buttressing glaciers feeding into them, their destabilisation through ocean-induced melting is the predominant driver of current ice loss in Antarctica. Here we present the first data-based reconstruction of Holocene (11,700 years ago to present) variability in CDW inflow to the Amundsen Sea sector, the most vulnerable part of the West Antarctic Ice Sheet. The chemical composition of calcareous foraminifer shells and assemblages of benthic foraminifera in marine sediments indicate that enhanced CDW upwelling, controlled by the latitudinal position of the Southern Hemisphere westerly winds, forced deglaciation of the Amundsen Sea sector both during the early Holocene (11,700 to 7,500 years ago), when an ice-shelf collapse may have caused rapid ice-sheet thinning further upstream, and since the 1940s. These results increase confidence in the predictive capability of current ice-sheet models.

Today ice discharge from glaciers flowing into the Amundsen Sea Embayment (ASE) (Fig. 1) is the main contributor to the negative mass balance of the West Antarctic ice Sheet (WAIS) and global sea-level rise from Antarctica[1]. Rapid thinning, flow acceleration, and grounding-line retreat affecting ice streams and ice shelves in this region have increased since the early 1970s and contributed to global sea-level rise by, on average, ~0.23±0.02 mm/yr between 1992 and 2013[1-3]. Recent modelling suggests that current ice loss of the Thwaites Glacier (Fig. 1), which rests on a bed that is well below sea level and slopes down into the interior of the ASE hinterland, will result in a (partial) WAIS collapse from as early as the 23rd century, thereby raising global sea level over centuries and millennia at rates ≥1 mm/yr (ref.4). A similar study predicts that neighbouring Pine Island Glacier, which drains together with Thwaites Glacier into Pine Island Bay (PIB) in the eastern ASE (Fig. 1), will contribute ~3.5-10 mm to eustatic sea-level rise over the next two decades alone[1]. Depending on the future extent of atmospheric and oceanic warming, and the dominant processes of ice loss, Antarctica may contribute as much as 1 metre to global sea-level rise by the end of this century[6].

Ocean-driven melting of the undersides of floating ice shelves buttressing the glaciers draining into the ASE has been identified as the main process responsible for the current mass loss. This melting is caused primarily by upwelling of relatively warm Circumpolar Deep Water (CDW) onto the continental shelf[7-12]. Inter-annual to inter-decadal changes in CDW upwelling onto the ASE shelf have been attributed to buoyancy changes[9] and regional climate variability[10]. The latter is assumed to be controlled by latitudinal shifts in the Southern Hemisphere westerly winds (SHWW)[11], possibly in response to the Southern Annular Mode[12] and teleconnections to climate in the tropical Pacific[13].

While West Antarctic ice cores provide high-resolution archives of atmospheric changes through the last glacial period to today[14], satellite observations and *in situ* measurements of glaciologic[2,8] and oceanographic changes[7,10] are restricted to the last ~30-40 years[4,15]. Until now, no data constrain CDW upwelling onto the ASE shelf prior to this time, and its role in driving centennial to millennial retreat of WAIS remains unclear. This information, however, is crucial for verifying the reliability of the current generation of ice-sheet models which force WAIS deglaciation following the Last Glacial Maximum (LGM; 19-23 kyr BP) predominantly by ocean-induced melting[16,17] and predict that this process will also drive future Antarctic ice loss in response to global warming[18,19], at least during its initial phase[6]. Until now, simulations of ocean forcing have predominantly relied on estimates of deep-water temperatures derived from global climate models that are constrained by far-field oceanic records from outside the Southern Ocean and its complex circulation system[6,16-18].

Foraminifer shell chemistry and ocean circulation

Here we present the first direct evidence for variations in CDW heat supply onto the ASE shelf during the last 10.4 kyr. We measured the magnesium/calcium (Mg/Ca) ratio of calcareous shells of the epifaunal to shallow infaunal benthic foraminifer species *Angulogerina angulosa* (Methods) in core PS75/160 recovered just offshore from Pine Island Glacier[21] (Fig. 1). The Mg/Ca data are used as a proxy for bottom-water temperature[20] and thus inflow of CDW onto the ASE shelf (Methods, see details in Supplementary Information). The low resolution Mg/Ca record of core PS75/160 is supported by a high-resolution stable carbon isotope ($\delta^{13}C$) data set obtained from calcareous shells of *A. angulosa* and the planktic foraminifer species *Neogloboquadrina pachyderma* sin. from the same site and from site PS75/167, which is located just offshore from Thwaites Glacier (Fig. 1). We utilize the benthic $\delta^{13}C$ ratio as a proxy for the $\delta^{13}C$ composition of the dissolved inorganic carbon ($\delta^{13}C_{DIC}$) of the ambient seawater and thus, as a tracer for its source water mass. We also measured $\delta^{13}C$ isotopes on *A. angulosa* in modern sediments from site PS75/215 in PIB and on *N. pachyderma* sin. in recent sediments from site PS69/251 on the outer ASE shelf[21,22] (Fig. 1).

Foraminiferal $\delta^{13}C$ records from marine sediments are influenced by water-mass circulation in addition to vital effects, biological productivity, air-sea exchange of carbon, or a combination of these factors[23]. We corrected the $\delta^{13}C$ data for species-inherent vital effects as follows: The $\delta^{13}C$ signal of *A. angulosa* is known to be on average 0.44-0.60‰ lower than the $\delta^{13}C_{DIC}$ of ambient seawater, but this offset varies regionally[24]. Mackensen[25] analysed the $\delta^{13}C$ composition of the epibenthic foraminifer genus *Cibicidoides* spp., a reliable recorder of bottom water $\delta^{13}C_{DIC}$, in core-top sediments from site PS2544 on the outer ASE shelf (Fig. 1). The measured $\delta^{13}C$ value of +0.63‰ overlaps with the $\delta^{13}C_{DIC}$ range of ~0.3 to 0.6‰ reported for CDW[26,27] when the analytical errors for $\delta^{13}C$ measurements of seawater (±0.1‰) and foraminiferal calcite (±0.06‰) are taken into account[25]. In contrast, we measured a $\delta^{13}C$ ratio of -0.22‰ on *A. angulosa* from modern sediments at site PS75/215. Because both core sites are currently bathed by CDW[7-11], we applied an offset correction of +0.85‰ to our benthic $\delta^{13}C$ data. Previous studies on *N. pachyderma* sin. shells from south of the Antarctic Polar Front[28] and south of 70°S[29], respectively, found a $\delta^{13}C$ offset of -1.0‰ between the shells and the ambient surface waters. Accordingly, we corrected our planktic $\delta^{13}C$ data by adding +1.0‰.

To evaluate the influence of past changes in biological productivity on the foraminiferal $\delta^{13}C$ down-core record, we measured barium/titanium (Ba/Ti) ratios of cores PS75/160 and PS75/167 (Fig. 2, Extended Data Fig. 5) as the most reliable palaeoproductivity proxy in Antarctic continental margin sediments[30]. Furthermore, we examined the benthic foraminifer

assemblages in sediments of core PS75/160 for evidence of environmental changes, especially whether an ice shelf covered PIB from ~12.3-11.2 kyr BP onwards[31,32]. Ice-shelf cover would have reduced the foraminiferal $\delta^{13}C$ values by restricting air-sea gas exchange[25,28]. Cosmogenic isotope surface exposure dates obtained from erratic boulders in the Hudson Mountains near Pine Island Glacier (Fig. 1) suggest that such an ice shelf had buttressed grounded ice upstream from PIB and that its thinning or collapse between 8.3 and 7.5 ka triggered rapid ice-stream thinning by >100 m (ref. 32).

Age constraints on cores PS75/160 and PS75/167 are based on previously published[21,22] and newly calibrated AMS ^{14}C dates on calcareous microfossils (Extended Data Table 1). The recent chronology for core PS69/251, whose modern surface age has been confirmed by core-top AMS ^{14}C dating[21], is constrained by a lead isotope (^{210}Pb) down-core profile (Extended Data Figs. 2-4, Extended Data Table 2). Core PS75/160, which spans the time period from ~9.2 to 1.2 kyr BP (Fig. 2a), was retrieved from a local depression in PIB at a water depth of just 337 m. The relatively shallow location of this core explains the abundant occurrence of calcareous microfossils, but another consequence is that the lowermost part of the core, older than ~8.2 kyr BP, is affected by iceberg or ice-shelf keel ploughing[21]. We overcome this issue by splicing the $\delta^{13}C$ data from core PS75/160 with those from nearby core PS75/167, which span 10.4 to 8.2 kyr BP (Fig. 2b; Extended Data Fig. 1). Core PS75/167 does not contain calcareous microfossils in sediments younger than ~8.2 kyr BP. In the following we refer to the spliced record as the “PIB record”.

The benthic Mg/Ca ratios in core PS75/160 imply higher bottom-water temperatures before 7.5 kyr BP, indicating that warm CDW flooded PIB during the early Holocene (11.7-7.5 kyr BP) and that this inflow was reduced during the middle Holocene (7.5-4.0 kyr BP) to late Holocene (4.0-0 kyr BP) (Fig. 3c; Extended Data Fig. 6). Intensified early Holocene CDW inflow is corroborated by both the benthic and the planktic foraminiferal $\delta^{13}C$ ratios of the PIB record which increase from relatively low values between ~10.4 and 9.0 kyr BP to higher values that are maintained from 7.0 kyr BP until at least 1.2 kyr BP (Figs. 2, 3a,b). The benthic $\delta^{13}C$ ratios recorded during the early Holocene match the $\delta^{13}C_{DIC}$ range of pure CDW. The planktic $\delta^{13}C$ ratios during this time interval reflect the lower range of $\delta^{13}C_{DIC}$ values typical for modern Antarctic Surface Water (AASW)[33] which in the ASE usually forms a 200-300 m thick surface layer[7,10]. This observation suggests that the reduced $\delta^{13}C$ ratios of *N. pachyderma* sin., which calcifies within this AASW layer[29], are caused by effective admixture of unmodified CDW into AASW.

Reduced ^{12}C export to the seabed in PIB caused by a decrease in plankton productivity can be ruled out as the reason for the benthic foraminifer $\delta^{13}C$ shift towards heavier values centred at 7.5 kyr BP because this would have resulted in lighter planktic foraminifer $\delta^{13}C$ values, i.e. opposite to what is observed. In addition, the Ba/Ti ratios and foraminifer concentrations in core PS75/160 indicate that biological production probably increased rather than decreased after ~7.5 kyr BP (Fig. 2, Extended Data Fig. 5). An onset or intensification of air-sea gas exchange between the atmosphere and surface waters in PIB at 7.5 kyr BP might have resulted from a reduction in ice-shelf coverage. The ice-shelf break-up would be consistent with the productivity increase after 7.5 kyr BP because phytoplankton production on the Antarctic continental margin is mainly controlled by the availability of light[30]. Such a scenario is in agreement with several early Holocene benthic $\delta^{13}C$ values in the PIB record that are even more $\delta^{13}C$-depleted than pure CDW as well as a few planktic $\delta^{13}C$ values that are lower than $\delta^{13}C_{DIC}$ of AASW (Figs. 2, 3a,b). This observed $\delta^{13}C$-depletion could be explained by advection of nearly pure CDW combined with reduced air-sea carbon exchange caused by ice-shelf cover of PIB during the early Holocene (cf. refs. 31, 32).

Environmental implications from foraminifer assemblages

The benthic foraminifer assemblage in core PS75/160 shows a distinct change at ~7.5 kyr BP, when an assemblage dominated by *Nonionella bradii* and *Globocassidulina* species (*G. subglobosa*, *G. biora*) is replaced by an assemblage dominated by various *Angulogerina* species, especially *A. angulosa* (Methods), and when both total foraminifer concentration and arenaceous benthic foraminifer abundance increase (Fig. 2a, Extended Data Fig. 7). While both *Globocassidulina* species and *Angulogerina* species have been found in modern[34,35] and Holocene sub-ice shelf settings[36-39], an assemblage dominated by *Angulogerina* observed on the eastern Antarctic Peninsula shelf has been attributed to an ice-shelf edge setting[34]. Also *Nonionella* spp. has been reported from modern[34,35] and Holocene sub-ice shelf sediments[36,39] but its dominance in benthic foraminifer assemblages is frequently related to high biological productivity[40]. Given that neither the benthic $\delta^{13}C$ values nor the Ba/Ti ratios indicate higher productivity during the early Holocene (Figs. 2, 3a), we interpret the *Globocassidulina* and *Nonionella* dominated assemblage to indicate ice-shelf presence. Our interpretation is consistent with the dominance of *Nonionella* species and *Globocassidulina* species in benthic foraminifer assemblages of early to late Holocene sediments from the part of the eastern Antarctic Peninsula shelf which had been permanently ice-shelf covered from 11.5 kyr BP until AD 2002 (refs. 36, 41).

We suggest that PIB remained covered by an extensive ice shelf from at least ~9.2 until ~7.5 kyr BP. This conclusion agrees with the high proportion of a distinct non-encrusted shell morphotype of *N. pachyderma* sin. in the early Holocene sediments of core PS75/160 (Fig. 2a), which is indicative of specimens of a 'neanic' (i.e. adolescent) to adult life stage[42] (Extended Data Fig. 8). In contrast, the middle and late Holocene sediments in core PS75/160 are dominated by an encrusted shell morphotype that is typical for a terminal life stage[42] (Extended Data Fig. 8). We explain the dominance of the adolescent and adult shells by foraminifer reproduction in seasonal open water offshore from the ice shelf covering PIB, the subsequent advection of these foraminifera under the ice shelf by ocean currents, and their demise in this inhospitable environment for zooplankton, i.e. before they could reach the terminal life stage. A contributing factor for the observed down-core change in the abundance of the two morphotypes of *N. pachyderma* sin. may be a deepening of the pycnocline. Under ice shelves the pycnocline lies deeper than in open water[7,10] and is overlain by a cool mixed layer, in which non-encrusted morphotypes are concentrated[42]. Given the modern water depth of 337 m at site PS75/160 and taking into account the 30-10 m lower global sea level[43] and the predicted ~50 m of seafloor depression in response to glacial loading of the PIB hinterland between 10 and 7.5 kyr BP[44], the thickness of this early Holocene ice shelf cannot have exceeded ~410-430 m, which is comparable to the modern thicknesses of Thwaites Glacier Ice Shelf, Ronne Ice Shelf (West Antarctica) and Amery Ice Shelf (East Antarctica) near their calving fronts[8,45].

Ice-shelf cover of PIB during the early Holocene would have contributed to the low benthic and planktic $\delta^{13}C$ values recorded during that time. However, bottom-water temperatures under ice shelves are lower than in seasonal open-marine settings[10,45], whereas the benthic Mg/Ca data from PIB imply that these temperatures were higher in the proposed early Holocene sub-ice shelf environment than in the middle to late Holocene open-marine setting. Consequently, enhanced CDW supply onto the ASE shelf must have been the dominant factor influencing the early Holocene $\delta^{13}C$ record from PIB, even if ice-shelf cover contributed to low benthic and planktic $\delta^{13}C$ values. The most plausible scenario for explaining the simultaneous change in both the foraminiferal $\delta^{13}C$ composition and the bottom-water temperature around ~7.5 kyr BP is the reduction of CDW inflow. We conclude that compared to the present-day CDW advection onto the ASE shelf, which can be evaluated from the modern benthic and planktic $\delta^{13}C$ ratios, CDW inflow was stronger from 10.4 to 8.0 kyr BP, while it was weaker from 7.5 to 1.2 kyr BP (Figs. 2, 3a,b).

Drivers of ice-sheet change

The early Holocene intensification of CDW heat supply can be attributed to a southerly position of the SHWW belt between 12.0 and 8.0 kyr BP[46] (Fig. 3g,h). The northward shift of the westerlies from 8.0 to 6.0 kyr BP[46] is likely to have reduced CDW inflow as documented in the PIB record (Fig. 3g,h). Thus, our findings expand on the conclusion from modern observational and modelling studies that the SHWW exert a major control on CDW advection onto the ASE shelf[7,10,11,15]. The role of buoyancy forcing[9], however, remains unclear from our data. Early Holocene CDW advection may have been intensified along the entire Pacific margin of West Antarctica and thus may also explain the higher sea-surface temperatures observed on the western Antarctic Peninsula shelf during that time[40,47] (Fig. 3e).

Grounded ice in PIB had retreated to within 110 km of its modern grounding line by 11.2 kyr BP[21,22]. Our conclusion of intensified CDW upwelling onto the ASE shelf from 10.4 to 7.5 kyr BP and probably since 12.0 kyr BP, when the SHWW already had a southerly position[46], suggests that, in accordance with results from ice-sheet modeling[16-19], ocean thermal forcing was the main driver of post-LGM WAIS retreat. In contrast, air temperatures in West Antarctica[14] were still relatively low and post-glacial eustatic sea level had risen by not more than ~60 metres above its LGM low stand of 120 metres[43,50] when PIB was already free of grounded ice, indicating that atmospheric and sea-level forcing played only a subordinate role for post-LGM WAIS deglaciation (Fig. 3d,f). Sustained high CDW heat supply and accompanying oceanic melting might have destabilised any extensive ice shelf remaining in PIB until 7.5 kyr BP so that afterwards minor atmospheric warming in West Antarctica combined with continued global sea-level rise were sufficient to trigger its disintegration (Fig. 3d-f).

The modern benthic and planktic $\delta^{13}C$ ratios indicate that CDW inflow onto the ASE shelf must have increased at some time within the last millennium (Fig. 3a,b). The planktic $\delta^{13}C$ down-core record available from site PS69/251 on the outer ASE shelf, dating back to AD 1888±37 according to its ^{210}Pb chronology, reveals that this intensification took place between AD 1947±9 and AD 1963±9 (Fig. 4a). The increased CDW advection can be attributed to a strengthening and/or poleward shift of the SHWW, which is evident from proxy data in West Antarctic ice cores[48,49] (Fig. 4b,c). Our finding is also in line with the hypothesis that sea-surface temperature warming in the central tropical Pacific Ocean during the 1940s, associated with a very large El Ninõ event from AD 1939 to 1942, initiated the current period of CDW inflow onto the ASE shelf and the resulting mass loss in this sector of the WAIS[12]. This ice loss was not evident until the 1970s, when the first satellite observational data from the ASE sector became available[2].

Importance

Our study extends the observational record of CDW inflow onto the ASE shelf further back in time through a period of significant ice-sheet change and it suggests early Holocene ice-shelf coverage in PIB. Most significantly, it provides the first empirical evidence for the dominant role of ocean forcing in driving past and recent WAIS deglaciation and the suggested control of CDW upwelling onto the ASE shelf by the SHWW. This information is crucial for validating assumptions in numerical models[6,18,19] and will help to make model-based predictions of future global sea-level rise from Antarctic ice-sheet melting more robust.

Online content Methods, along with any additional Extended Data display items and Source Data, are available in the online version of the paper; references unique to these sections appear only in the online paper.

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Supplementary Information is available in the online version of the paper.

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Author contributions CDH conceived the idea for the study and together with JAS, GK and RDL wrote the manuscript. GK, CDH and KG collected the PS69 sediment core and together with JAS, PEJ and JPK the PS75 cores. CDH, JAS, SJR and RDL developed the ^{14}C age models for the PS75 cores. TJA conducted the ^{210}Pb measurements on the PS69 core and provided its age model. GK, CDH, JAS, JPK and PEJ undertook the sedimentological analyses. DH measured stable isotopes on the foraminifer shells, while MG and HE analysed the trace metals. CJP, SK and MW analysed the foraminifer assemblages. All co-authors commented on the manuscript and provided input to its final version.

Author Information The data are available from the PANGAEA data base (PANGAEA doi in preparation) and Extended Data Table 1. Reprints and permissions information is available at www.nature.com/reprints. The authors declare no competing financial interests. Readers are welcome to comment on the online version of the paper. Correspondence and requests for materials should be addressed to CDH (hilc@bas.ac.uk).

Figures:

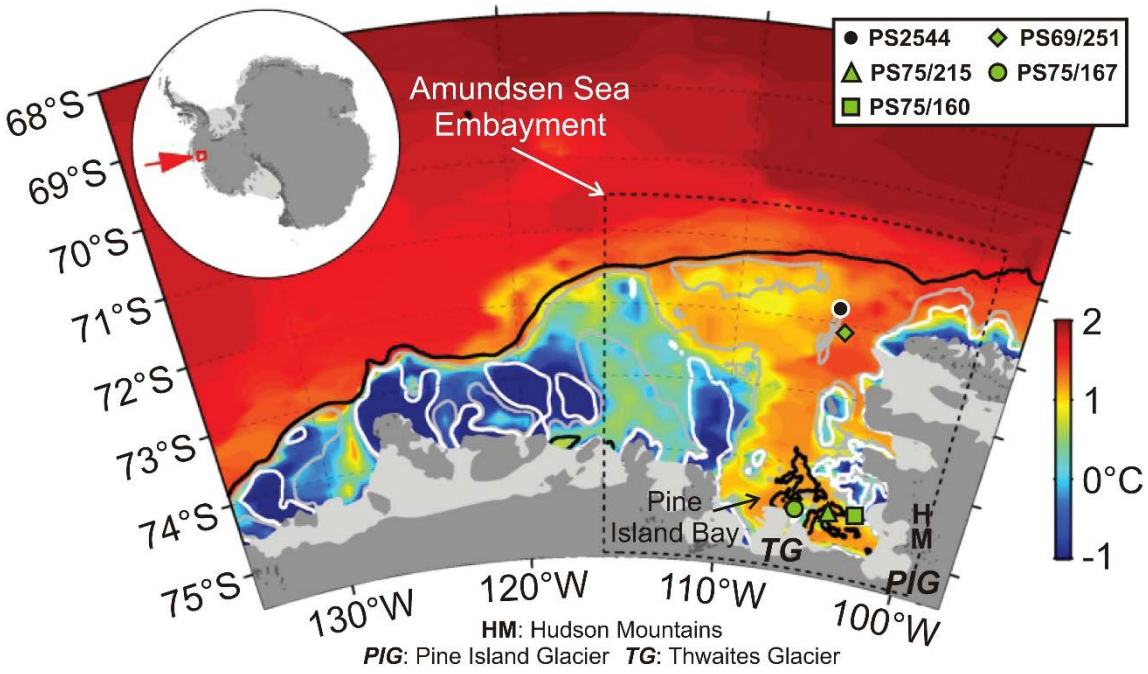


Fig. 1: Map of modern bottom-water temperatures in the southern Amundsen Sea showing geographical locations and core sites (modified from Dutrieux et al.[10]). Green symbols indicate locations of cores analysed in this study, while the black symbol marks the site of a seafloor surface sample investigated for benthic foraminifer $\delta^{13}C$ on *Cibicidoides* spp. by Mackensen[25]. Thick black, gray and white contours indicate seabed elevations of -1000 m, -500 m and -400 m, respectively (for a detailed bathymetric map of inner Pine Island Bay see Fig. 6 in Larter et al.[22]).

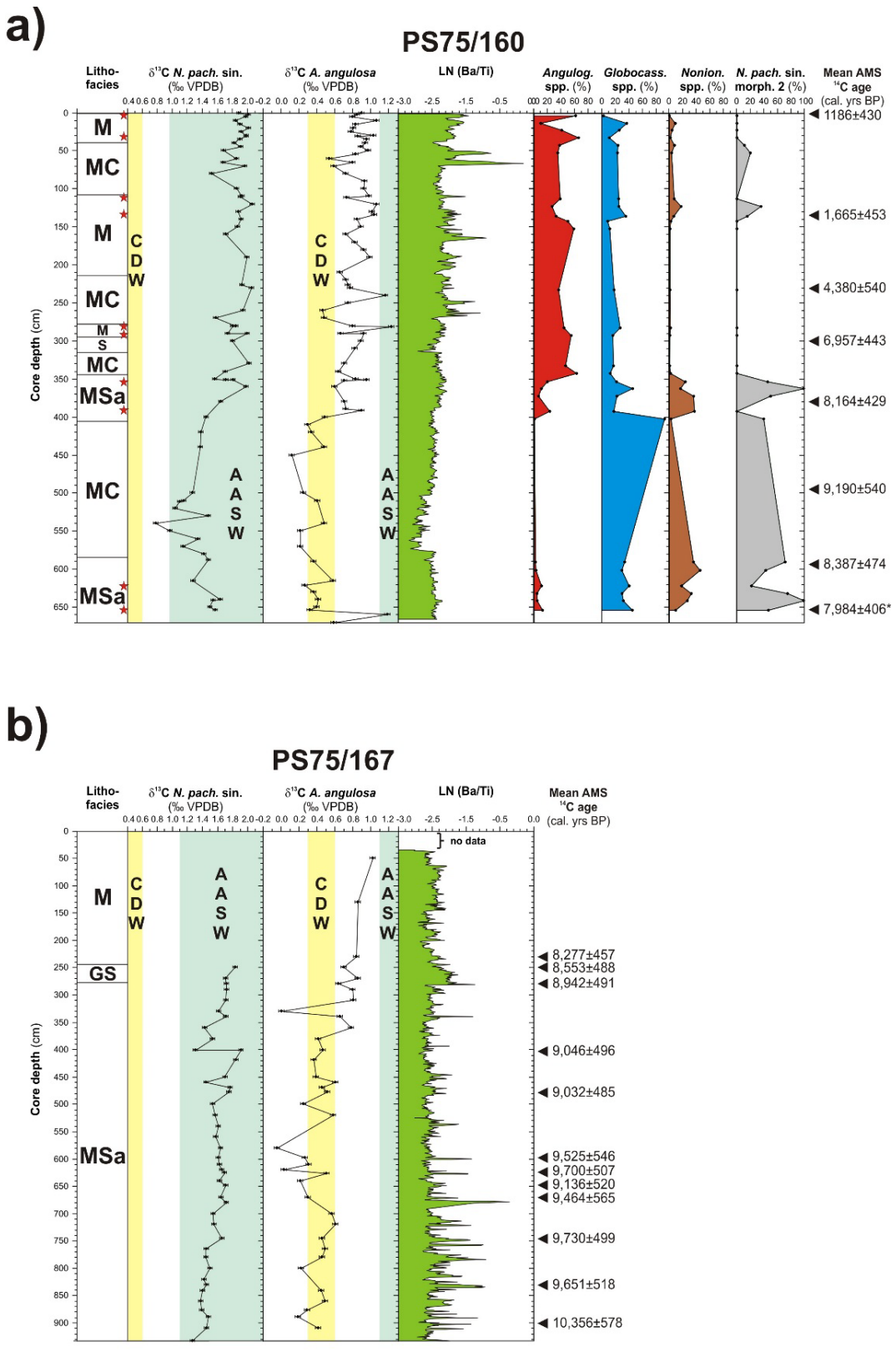
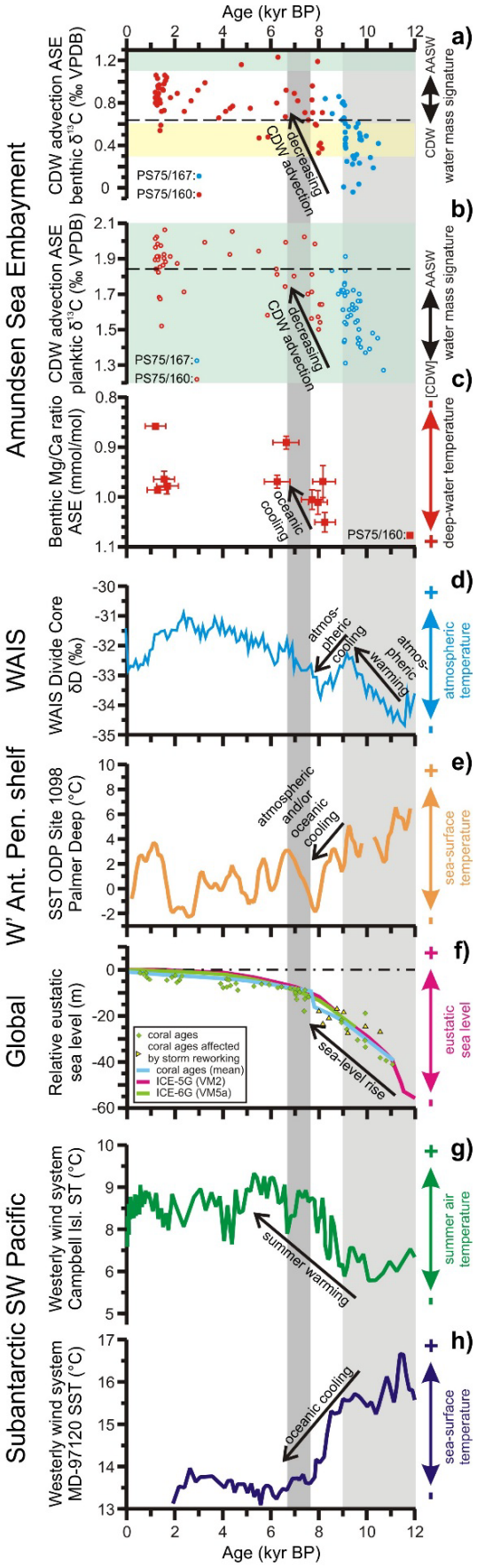


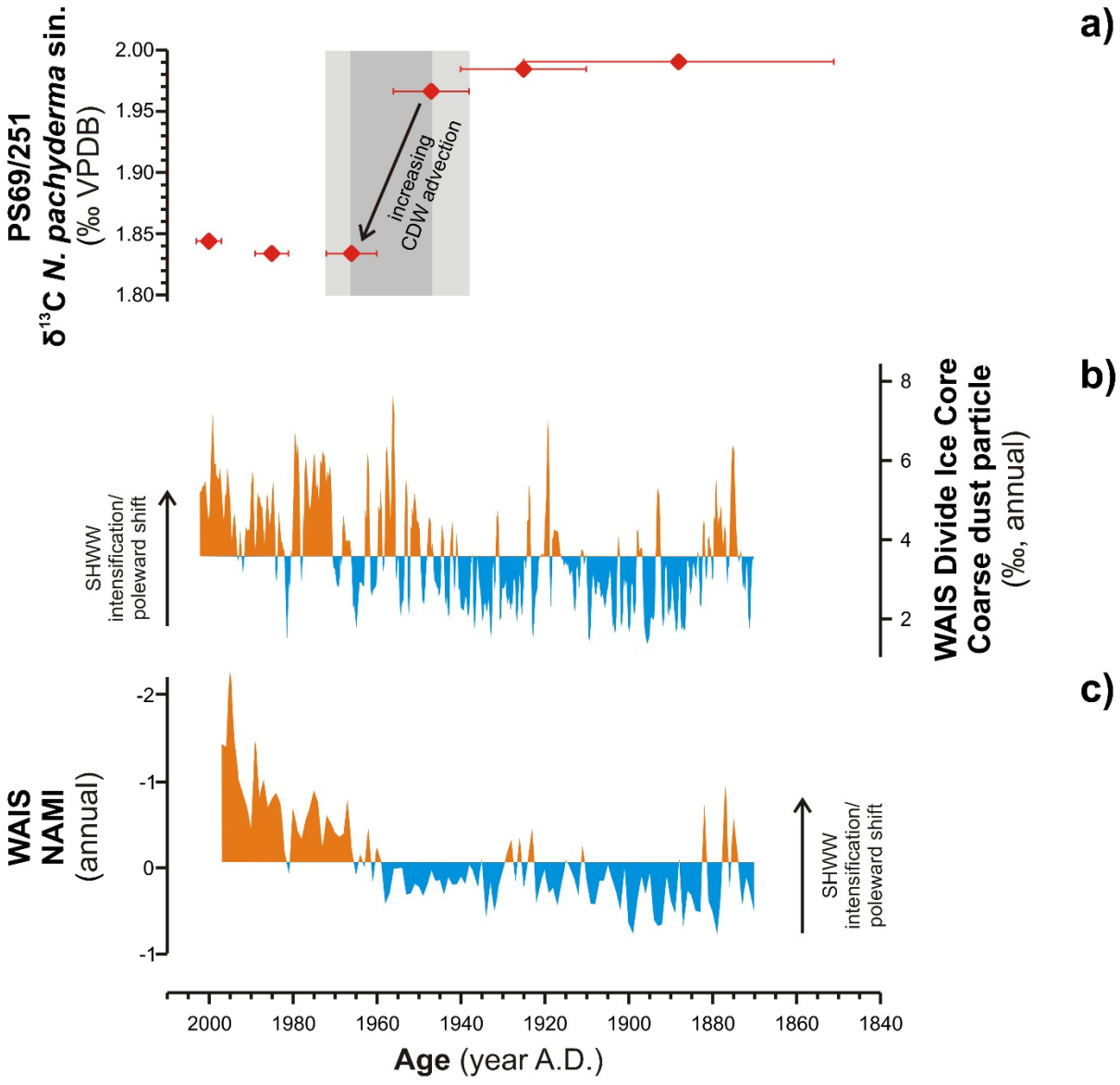
Fig. 2: Down-core variability of lithological facies, stable carbon isotope ($\delta^{13}C$) composition of foraminifer shells, biological productivity and benthic foraminifer assemblages (core PS75/160 only) alongside mean radiocarbon dates for Holocene marine sediment cores PS75/160 (Fig. 2a) and PS75/167 (Fig. 2b) from Pine Island Bay (PIB).

Lithofacies is from Hillenbrand et al.[21] (M: bioturbated mud; MC: deformed, sheared pebble-sized muddy to sandy soft sediment clasts randomly orientated in muddy matrix; MSa: mud interstratified with sandy layers; S: slightly bioturbated sand; GS: massive sandy gravel). AMS ^{14}C dates were recalibrated for this study (Extended Data Table 1). Asterisk at lowermost age from core PS75/160 indicates average of replicate dates from the same sample horizon. Facies MC at site PS75/160 probably results from seafloor scouring by iceberg or ice-shelf keels[21] but AMS ^{14}C dates indicate reworking only for depth below 405 cm. δ^{13}C composition of planktic (*Neogloboquadrina pachyderma* sinistral) and benthic (*Angulogerina angulosa*) foraminifera and log-normalised Ba/Ti peak area ratios are shown for both cores.. The yellow shaded areas highlight the range of $\delta^{13}C_{DIC}$ values typical for Circumpolar Deep Water (CDW)[26,27], while the blue-green shaded areas indicate the $\delta^{13}C_{DIC}$ range typical for Antarctic Surface Water (AASW)[33]. Abundances of the three main benthic foraminifera groups (*Angulogerina* spp., *Globocassisulina* spp., *Nonionella* spp.) among all benthic foraminifera and of morphotype 2 tests among all planktic foraminifera tests of *Neogloboquadrina pachyderma* sin. (Extended Data Fig. 8) are displayed for core PS75/160. Red asterisks in lithofacies column of core PS75/160 indicate horizons sampled for Mg/Ca analyses on *Angulogerina angulosa*.


Amundsen Sea Embayment
WAIS
W' Ant. Pen. shelf
Global
Subantarctic SW Pacific
Age (kyr BP)
CDW advection ASE benthic δ13C (‰ VPDB)
CDW advection ASE planktic δ13C (‰ VPDB)
Benthic Mg/Ca ratio ASE (mmol/mol)
WAIS Divide Core δD (‰)
SST ODP Site 1098 Palmer Deep (°C)
Relative eustatic sea level (m)
Westerly wind system Campbell Isl. ST (°C)
Westerly wind system MD-97120 SST (°C)
PS75/167:
PS75/160:
decreasing CDW advection
oceanic cooling
atmos-pheric cooling
atmos-pheric warming
atmospheric and/or oceanic cooling
sea-level rise
summer warming
coral ages
coral ages affected by storm reworking
coral ages (mean)
ICE-5G (VM2)
ICE-6G (VM5a)
AASW
CDW
water mass signature
[CDW]
deep-water temperature
atmospheric temperature
sea-surface temperature
eustatic sea level
summer air temperature
a)
b)
c)
d)
e)
f)
g)
h)

453

Fig. 3: Variability of Circumpolar Deep Water advection onto the Amundsen Sea Embayment shelf since 12 cal. ka BP in comparison to potential forcing mechanisms of ice-sheet change in West Antarctica. Panels **(a)**, **(b)** and **(c)**: Proxies for CDW advection into PIB. $\delta^{13}C$ composition of **(a)** benthic (*A. angulosa*) and **(b)** planktic foraminifera (*N. pachyderma* sin.) in the spliced PS75/160 and PS75/167 record, with $\delta^{13}C$ values of modern benthic (PS75/215) and planktic (PS69/251) foraminifera indicated by the black dashed lines and $\delta^{13}C_{DIC}$ ranges typical for CDW and AASW highlighted by the yellow shaded and blue-green shaded areas, respectively; **(c)** Mg/Ca ratios of benthic foraminifera (*A. angulosa*) as a semi-quantitative proxy for bottom-water temperatures at site PS75/160 (Mg/Ca data corrected for diagenetic coating of shells using Mg/Mn =0.15 mol/mol, see Extended Data Fig. 6 for details; ages for Mg/Ca data points calculated by linear interpolation between maximum and minimum calibrated dates of neighbouring AMS ^{14}C samples given in Extended Data Table 1). Panel **(d)**: Deuterium (δD) isotope ratio in the WAIS Divide Ice Core from central West Antarctica[14] as proxy for air temperature forcing. Panel **(e)**: Sea water surface temperature (SST) from ODP Site 1098 in Palmer Deep, western Antarctic Peninsula shelf, as proxy for combined atmospheric and/or oceanic forcing[47]. Panel **(f)**: Global sea-level curves[43,50] as proxies for sea-level forcing. Panels **(g)** and **(h)**: Atmosphere-ocean temperature gradient in the Sub-Antarctic SW Pacific as a proxy for the position of the Southern Hemisphere westerly winds (SHWW)[46] (increase of temperature gradient indicates its N-ward shift). **(g)** surface air temperature (ST) on Campbell Island, **(h)** SST at core site MD-97120, SW of New Zealand. Light gray shaded area indicates timing of grounded WAIS retreat from the inner ASE shelf[21,22], dark gray shaded area highlights that the timing of a major decrease in CDW advection onto the ASE shelf coincided with a N-ward shift of the SHWW.



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480 **Fig. 4: Variability of Circumpolar Deep Water advection onto the Amundsen Sea**
481 **Embayment shelf and Southern Hemisphere westerly winds during the last 150 years.**
482 Panel **(a)**: $\delta^{13}C$ composition of planktic foraminifer shells in core PS69/251 from the outer ASE
483 shelf versus age (derived from ^{210}Pb-dating). Error bars of the data points indicate the
484 uncertainty of the ^{210}Pb ages with the light and dark gray shaded areas illustrating the possible
485 timing and the most likely timing, respectively, of an increased admixture of CDW into AASW
486 as indicated by the planktic $\delta^{13}C$ values. Panel **(b)**: Annual coarse dust particle percentage
487 (defined as the number of particles mL^{-1} [4.5–15]/[1–15] µm diametre ×100) in the WAIS
488 Divide Ice Core (*48*). Panel **(c):** Proxy for "northerly air mass incursions" (NAMI) into West
489 Antarctica, based on stacked non-sea-salt Ca^{2+} concentration data from 10 ice cores (*49*). The
490 orange/blue delineation for the curves in panels **(b)** and **(c)** is the mean of that record over the

491 time interval shown. The ice core proxies indicate that intensification and/or poleward shift of
492 the SHWW coincided with increased CDW advection onto the ASE shelf.

Supplementary Online Information

Oceanic forcing of Holocene ice-sheet retreat in the Amundsen Sea Embayment, West Antarctica

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Content:

Methods

Core material. Gravity cores PS75/160-1 and PS75/167-1 and giant box core PS75/215-1 were recovered on RV *Polarstern* expedition ANT-XXVI/3 in 2010 (ref. 51), while giant box core PS69/251-1 was retrieved during RV *Polarstern* expedition ANT-XXIII/4 in 2006 (ref. 52) (Extended Data Table 1). For metadata, detailed core descriptions and X-radiographs of the cores, see Hillenbrand et al.[21], Larter et al.[22], Smith et al.[53] and doi.pangaea.de/10.1594/PANGAEA.751493.

Core processing, sedimentological analyses and chronologies. Methodologies of core processing and sedimentological analyses were reported by Hillenbrand et al.[21], Larter et al.[22] and Smith et al.[53]. Analytical techniques for AMS ^{14}C dating and calibrated AMS ^{14}C ages were also previously published[21,22,53] (see also doi.pangaea.de/10.1594/ PANGAEA.751493) but for this study we re-calibrated all conventional AMS ^{14}C dates from cores PS75/160-1 and PS75/167-1 (Extended Data Table 1). Because mixed calcareous (micro-)fossils, which are known to show variable ^{14}C vital effects[41], had been radiocarbon-dated from cores PS75/160-1 and PS75/167-1, we used a marine reservoir age with a relatively large error ($R+\Delta R=$ 1,100±200 years) for their calibration[21]. In contrast, Larter et al.[22] and Smith et al.[53] applied a uniform marine reservoir age with a much smaller error ($R+\Delta R=$ 1,300±70 years) to their calibration. Calibration was conducted using the CALIB 7.1 calibration programme[54] using the MARINE13 (100%) calibration curve[55].

All reported and calibrated AMS ^{14}C dates for core PS75/167-1 increase down-core or overlap within error but no ^{14}C dates are available above 230 cm depth (Fig. 2b; Extended Data Table 1). The ^{14}C dates for core PS75/160-1 show an age reversal below ~400 cm core depth (Fig. 2a; Extended Data Table 1). A thick unit of a distinct lithofacies (facies MC: deformed, sheared pebble-sized muddy to sandy soft sediment clasts randomly orientated in muddy matrix) occurs at this depth (Fig. 2a) suggesting that this lower part of core PS75/160-1 was affected by post-depositional turbation of the seafloor sediments by iceberg or ice-shelf keels[21]. Rather than ignoring the three trace metal (i.e. Mg/Ca) data and the benthic foraminifer assemblage data obtained from samples taken below this depth, we assigned for those samples ages by linear interpolation between maximum and minimum calibrated AMS ^{14}C dates of neighbouring age-depth fix points. This approach leaves some uncertainty in the absolute ages for the corresponding samples but an early Holocene age for the lower part of core PS75/160-1 is documented by the available AMS ^{14}C dates (Fig. 2a; Extended Data Table 1). We spliced the

stable carbon isotope ($\delta^{13}C$) records of cores PS75/160-1 and PS75/167-1 at 8.2 kyr BP (Extended Data Fig. 1) and used exclusively $\delta^{13}C$ data from below 230 cm depth in core PS75/167-1 for the time interval >8.2 kyr BP and from above 380 cm depth in core PS75/160-1 for the time span <8.2 kyr BP (Fig. 3a,b).

Radiocarbon dating of planktic foraminifera (*Neogloboquadrina pachyderma* sinistral) from undisturbed seafloor surface sediment retrieved in giant box core PS69/251-1 provided an uncorrected AMS ^{14}C age of 1,144±37 years[21,53] and thus the youngest ^{14}C date obtained from modern surface sediments from the continental shelf in the Amundsen and Bellingshausen seas[22] (Extended Data Table 1). As calcareous (micro-)fossil material was insufficient for AMS ^{14}C dating in samples taken from below the surface, lead-210 (^{210}Pb) and caesium-137 (^{137}Cs) dating were applied to core PS69/251-1 for establishing ages of down-core samples. The ^{210}Pb and ^{137}Cs activities were measured on 1 cm thick sediment slices by gamma-spectrometry using Canberra ultra-low-background Ge-detectors at the Gamma Dating Centre, Department of Geosciences and Natural Resource Management, University of Copenhagen. ^{210}Pb was measured from its gamma-peak at 46.5 keV, ^{226}Ra from the granddaughter ^{214}Pb (peaks at 295 and 352keV) and ^{137}Cs from its peak at 661 keV. The core showed surface contents of unsupported ^{210}Pb of ~115 Bq kg^{-1} with a tendency for exponential decline with depth in the upper 6 cm (Extended Data Fig. 2). Below ~6 cm core depth the activity was at the detection limit or lower. The calculated flux of unsupported ^{210}Pb is 100 Bq m^{-2} yr^{-1} which is in reasonable agreement with the expected flux from atmospheric deposition[56]. The content of ^{137}Cs was generally very low (Extended Data Fig. 2). Constant Rate of Supply (CRS) modelling was applied on the profile using a modified method[56] where the activity below 5.5 cm was calculated on the basis of a regression (Extended Data Fig. 3). The dating results are given in Extended Data Table 2 and Extended Data Figure 4.

X-ray fluorescence scanning. Semi-quantitative uncalibrated major and trace element composition of cores PS75/160-1 and PS75/167-1 were analysed at the Alfred Wegener Institute (Bremerhaven) using an Avaatech XRF core scanner[57]. We applied XRF core scanning predominantly for the determination of the barium/titanium (Ba/Ti) peak-area ratio (hereafter referred to as the Ba/Ti ratio), which is a proxy for biogenic barium (Ba_{bio}). Ba_{bio} is considered to be the most reliable palaeoproductivity proxy in Antarctic continental margin sediments and Southern Ocean sediments south of the Antarctic Polar Front[30,58-60]. Following Weltje and Tjallingi[61] we plotted the log-normalised [Ln(Ba/Ti)] peak-area ratios in Figures 2 and Extended Data Figure 5. In order to assess down-core changes in the input of barium that is

incorporated in the terrigenous heavy mineral barite we also calculated the log-normalised barium/zirconium (Ba/Zr) peak-area ratios, with Zr being a proxy for the terrigenous heavy mineral zircon (Extended Data Fig. 5).

Stable carbon and oxygen isotope analyses. Stable carbon ($\delta^{13}C$) and oxygen ($\delta^{18}O$) isotope analyses were performed on the planktic foraminifer species *Neogloboquadrina pachyderma* sinistral (12-24 shells; morphotype 1) and the epibenthic to shallow infaunal foraminifer *Angulogerina angulosa* (= *Trifarina angulosa)* (5-20 shells) (Extended Data Figs. 5, 7). The $\delta^{13}C$ and $\delta^{18}O$ isotopes were measured on 104 planktic and 112 benthic foraminifer samples from cores PS75/160-1 and PS75/167-1, one benthic foraminifer sample from site PS75/215-1 and seven planktic foraminifer samples from core PS69/251-1. The shells were picked from the wet sieved 63-2000 μm sediment size fraction and analysed at the Godwin Laboratory for Palaeoclimate Research at the Department of Earth Sciences, University of Cambridge (UK). Foraminifer shells were first crushed and soaked in a solution of 3% H_2O_2 for 30 minutes, then acetone was added and the sample ultrasonicated for 10 seconds before the liquid was decanted. Samples were then dried at 50°C overnight. Vials were sealed with septa and screw caps and analysed using a Micromass Multicarb sample preparation system attached to a VG SIRA Mass Spectrometer. Each run of 30 samples was accompanied by ten reference carbonates and two control samples. Results are reported with reference to the international standard Vienna Pee Dee Belemnite (VPDB) and analytical precision is better than ±0.06‰ for $\delta^{13}C$ and ±0.08‰ for $\delta^{18}O$. In this study, we only used the $\delta^{13}C$ data of *A. angulosa* and *N. pachyderma* sin. The $\delta^{13}C$ data of *A. angulosa* and *N. pachyderma* sin. were corrected for vital effects by adding +0.85‰ (cf. ref. 24) and +1.0‰ (refs. 28, 29), respectively.

Trace metal analyses. Ten samples from core PS75/160-1 contained sufficient calcareous benthic foraminifer shells of *A. angulosa* (200-300 μg) and ten samples from this core contained sufficient planktic foraminifer shells of *N. pachyderma* sin. (300-500 μg) for trace metal analyses. Samples were only taken from horizons with a lithofacies that does not indicate signs of reworking (i.e. no samples were taken from facies MC; Fig. 2a).
Cleaning of the shells followed the procedure described in Barker et al.[62]. Element ratios were determined by ICP–OES[63] and ICP-MS[64]. Long-term instrumental precision of element ratio data, determined by replicate analyses of a standard solution containing magnesium/calcium (Mg/Ca)= 1.3 mmol/mol, was ±0.46%. Accuracy of Mg/Ca determinations was confirmed by inter-laboratory studies of foraminifer and carbonate reference materials[65,66].

Iron/calcium (Fe/Ca) and manganese/calcium (Mn/Ca) were measured to monitor cleaning efficiency and diagenetic effects. The *N. pachyderma* sin. samples contained high Fe/Ca and Mn/Ca (up to 0.40 and 2.48 mmol/mol respectively) with strong positive correlation between Mg/Ca, Fe/Ca (r^2= 0.93) and Mn/Ca (r^2= 0.94), reflecting diagenetic coating of the shells[67] not removed by the cleaning procedure. Therefore, the Mg/Ca data on *N. pachyderma* sin. are not interpreted. The *A. angulosa* samples contained much lower Fe/Ca and Mn/Ca (maximum 0.14 and 0.64 mmol/mol, respectively) with no correlation observed between Mg/Ca and Fe/Ca (r^2= 0.02) and a smaller (but still significant) correlation between Mg/Ca and Mn/Ca (r^2= 0.56). In order to evaluate the impact of any diagenetic Mg contribution on the Mg/Ca data, we applied a correction to the measured Mg/Ca of *A. angulosa* (Fig. 3c, Extended Data Fig. 6a), assuming Mg/Mn of a diagenetic coating is 0.15±0.05 mol/mol, reflecting average composition of Mn nodules and ferromanganese crusts[68,69], especially of those from the South Pacific and Pacific sector of the Southern Ocean[70-72]. The adjusted Mg/Ca ratios show the same (although less pronounced) down-core trend as the non-adjusted Mg/Ca data, with higher Mg/Ca ratios found before 7.5 kyr BP (Extended Data Fig. 6a,b). Also use of other Mg/Mn ratios for diagenetic coatings[69] still indicates that the early to middle Holocene decrease in our Mg/Ca data is a robust feature (Extended Data Fig. 6b).

Boron/Calcium (B/Ca) was analysed on all. *A. angulosa* and *N. pachyderma* sin. samples aiming to exclude an influence of alkalinity on the Mg/Ca records[73,74]. Neither the benthic nor the planktic foraminiferal data show a correlation between Mg/Ca and B/Ca. However, B/Ca values measured on the *A. angulosa* shells were very low, in the range 7.1 to 13.0 µmol/mol, and probably influenced by the laboratory blanks. Consequently, the B/Ca data are not interpreted.

The Mg/Ca composition of calcareous foraminifer shells is frequently used as a quantitative proxy for seawater temperature[20,75] but can also be controlled by the carbonate ion concentration ($[CO_3^{2-}]$) in the ambient seawater[73,76]. Consequently, higher Mg/Ca ratios as observed in core PS75/160-1 during the early Holocene (Fig. 3c, Extended Data Fig. 6a) indicate an increase in either the temperatures and/or the $[CO_3^{2-}]$ of the deep-water mass flooding Pine Island Bay (PIB) during that time. The influence of the latter can be evaluated by measuring the B/Ca ratio of the foraminifer shells[73,76,77], which, however, provided only inconclusive results for our samples from core PS75/160-1 (see above). The pre-industrial $[CO_3^{2-}]$ in Antarctic Surface Water (AASW) was 120 µmol/kg[ref.29], whereas Circumpolar Deep Water (CDW) is characterised by a uniform, relatively low $[CO_3^{2-}]$ of 84±5 µmol/kg throughout the Southern Ocean, including its Pacific sector and the region south of the Antarctic Polar

Front[78]. If the elevated benthic foraminiferal Mg/Ca ratios in PIB recorded during the early Holocene were caused by the presence of an AASW-like water mass that comprised the entire water column, the corresponding benthic foraminiferal $\delta^{13}C$ ratios can be expected to resemble $\delta^{13}C_{DIC}$ values typical for AASW. In contrast, our early Holocene benthic foraminiferal $\delta^{13}C$ data from cores PS75/160-1 and PS75/167-1 are lower and typical for CDW (Fig. 3b, Extended Data Fig. 5) and thus not consistent with a scenario that deep water present on the shelf of the Amundsen Sea Embayment (ASE) during that time was derived from AASW with the benthic Mg/Ca data reflecting its higher $[CO_3^{2-}]$.

Deep-water warming on the ASE shelf could have resulted either from intensified CDW upwelling or CDW warming. CDW warming would have resulted from a higher influx of North Atlantic Deep Water (NADW), which is the source water mass for CDW, into the Southern Ocean. NADW is injected into the clockwise flowing Antarctic Circumpolar Current in the Atlantic sector of the Southern Ocean, mixes with recirculated deep waters from the Indian and Pacific oceans, and, most importantly, acts as the "heat source" for CDW[79]. The $[CO_3^{2-}]$ of NADW is ~125 µmol/kg compared to only 84±5 µmol/kg in CDW[78]. Thus, intensified NADW influx into the Southern Ocean during the early Holocene, which is supported by marine sedimentary records from the Atlantic sector[80], would have raised both the temperature and the $[CO_3^{2-}]$ in deep water flooding the ASE shelf, consistent with our Mg/Ca data from PIB. The $\delta^{13}C_{DIC}$ of NADW is higher than in CDW[81]. Consequently, increased NADW supply would have raised the $\delta^{13}C_{DIC}$ of CDW. This, however, is in conflict with the early Holocene benthic foraminiferal $\delta^{13}C$ data from our PIB cores, which are characterised by low values typical for CDW (Fig. 3b, Extended Data Fig. 5). Consequently, the elevated benthic foraminiferal Mg/Ca ratios recorded in PIB during the early Holocene must reflect deep water warming caused by intensified CDW upwelling.

Analyses of benthic foraminifer assemblages. A total of 38 samples (1 cm thick sediment slices) were taken from core PS75/160-1 for benthic foraminifer analysis[82]. As with the trace metal samples, no samples were taken from the core section with lithofacies MC between ~405 and 485 cm depth. The samples were washed through a 63 µm mesh-size sieve before the coarse residue was dry-sieved over 2 mm. All samples were screened in order to estimate the abundance of foraminifera. 27 samples with a relatively high content of foraminifera were selected for microscopic analysis and then dry-sieved over 125 µm and 250 µm. 23 of the 27 samples contained >300 benthic foraminifer shells in the >125 µm fraction. Samples with significantly more than 300 specimens and/or a large sample volume were split using a

traditional hand-splitter until a suitable aliquot remained. Picked foraminifera were then identified under an optical microscope and by using Scanning Electron Microscope (SEM) images. Classification and identification were carried out in accordance with literature on recent Antarctic foraminifera (for full reference list, see ref. 82).

Throughout core PS75/160-1, abundances of foraminifera are high, with total numbers ranging from 81 to 1511 specimens per sample, and over 14,000 total specimens were identified from all samples[82]. The 27 samples yielded 84 benthic taxa but only one planktic species (*N. pachyderma* sin.). Between 0 and 341.5 cm core depth the abundance of foraminifera per gram of dry sediment (foraminifera/g) is substantially greater than from 352.5 to 653.5 cm core depth, and there is a large range throughout the core (maximum: 306.19 foraminifera/g at 281.5 cm; minimum: 1.85 foraminifera/g at 631.5 cm) (Extended Data Fig. 7). Between 0 and 341.5 cm core depth, the average concentration of 102.58 foraminifera/g far exceeds the average concentration of only 20.81 foraminifera/g between 352.5 and 653.5 cm core depth.

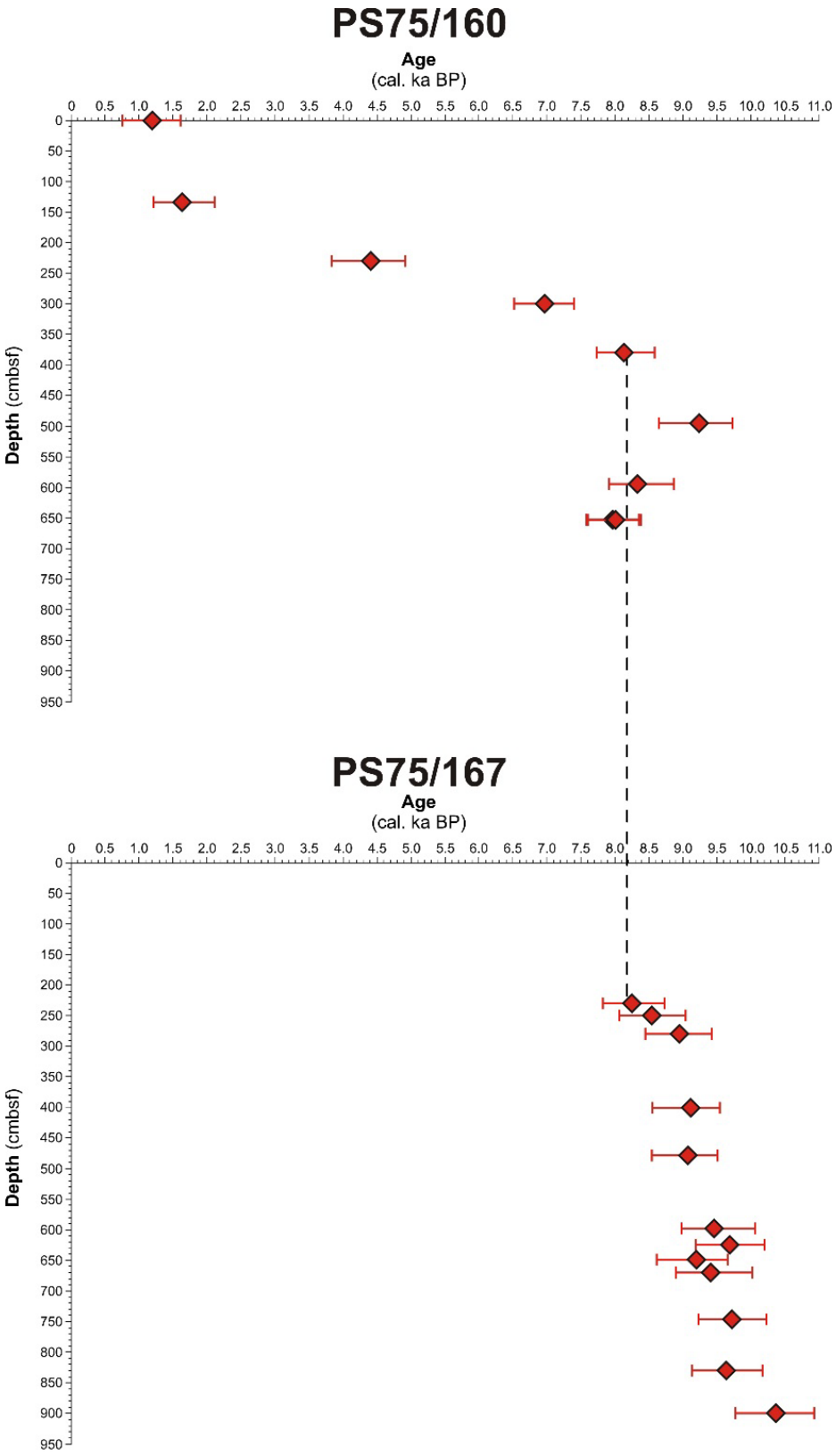
Benthic calcareous species dominate the assemblages throughout the core while the abundance of arenaceous species accounts for a maximum of 30% (depth: 141 cm) (Extended Data Fig. 7). Over two-thirds of samples comprise more than 85% calcareous foraminifera[82]. However, arenaceous foraminifera are more abundant between 0 and 341.5 cm (mean: 15.2%) than between 352.5 and 653.5 cm (mean: 7.0%). *N. pachyderma* sin. is not particularly abundant, contributing a maximum of 5.5% to the total assemblage at 281.5 cm, though it is present in all samples. Preservation of benthic and planktic foraminifer shells was good to moderate throughout the core.

The upper section of core PS75/160-1 from 0 to 341.5 cm depth typically contains high abundances and percentages of the calcareous benthic species *Angulogerina angulosa*, *A.* sp. 1, *Uvigerina* sp. 1, *Globocassidulina subglobosa*, and *G. biora* (Extended Data Fig. 7). Relatively abundant accessory species include *Astrononion echolsi*, *Alabaminella weddellensis* and the arenaceous species *Miliammina arenacea*, *Portatrochammina* sp. 1 and *Labrospira jeffreysii*. We follow previous researchers on benthic foraminifera from the Antarctic continental margin and summarize under '*A. angulosa*' the species *A. angulosa, A. earlandi*, *Trifarina angulosa* and *T. earlandi*[37,83-85], which are morphospecies rather than separate biological species (cf. refs. 86-88). Moreover, molecular genetic data have shown that *Angulogerina*/*Trifarina* is closely related to *Uvigerina peregrina*[88,89], with which it also shares the epifaunal to shallow infaunal habitat[24,83,90].

A major faunal change was observed between 341.5 and 352.5 cm core depth. The section below this depth is characterised by low abundances of *A. angulosa* and *A. pauperata*. This

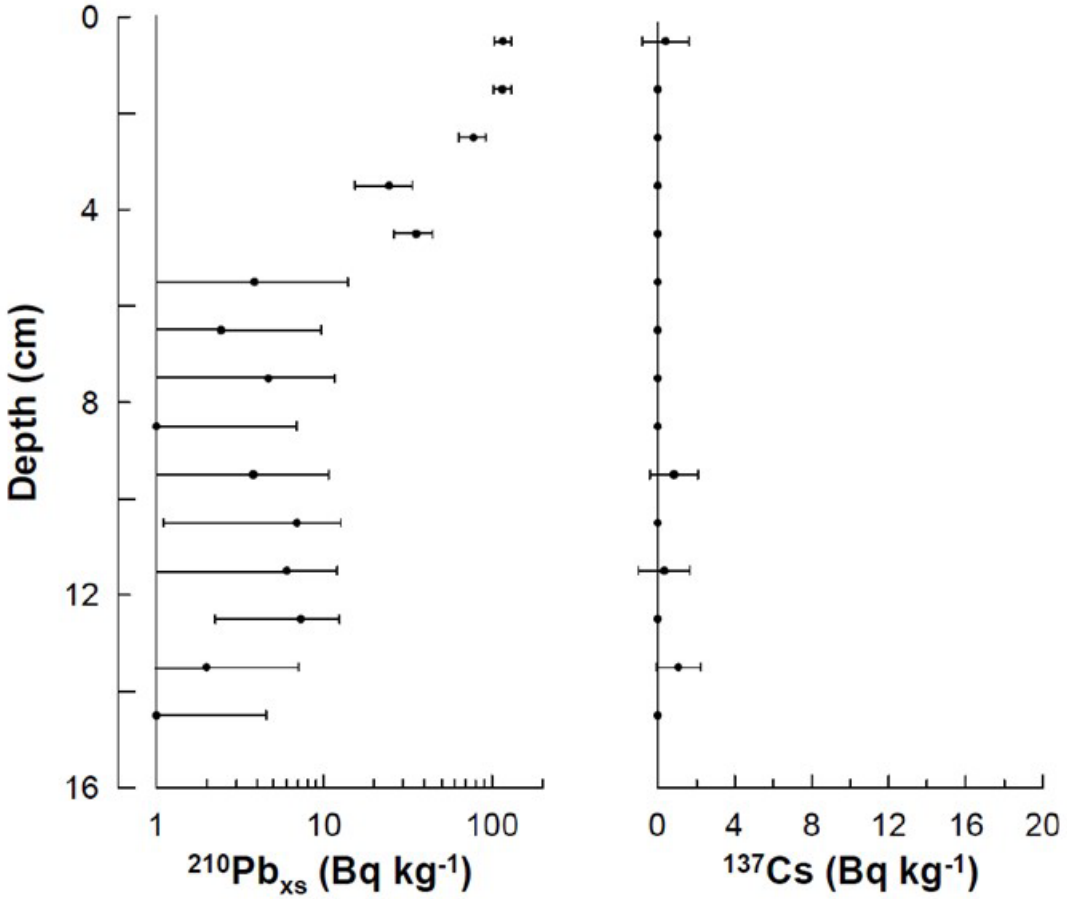
lower core section is dominated by *Nonionella bradii*, *N. iridea*, *G. subglobosa*, and *G. biora* (Extended Data Fig. 7). The subsidiary species include *Ehrenbergina glabra*, *Fursenkoina fusiformis* (calcareous), and *Portatrochammina* sp. 1 (arenaceous). The planktic foraminifera in this lower core section are dominated by *N. pachyderma* sin. type 2, while *N. pachyderma* sin. type 1 dominates the upper section (Extended Data Figs. 7, 8). Principal Component Analysis (PCA), Correspondence Analysis (CA) and Cluster Analysis demonstrate that the pronounced change between the two dominant benthic foraminifera assemblages between 341.5 and 352.5 cm core depth is statistically robust[82].

Extended Data Figures



Extended Data Figure 1: Age-depth plots for cores PS75/160-1 (above) and PS75/167-1 (below). The red diamonds mark the calibrated median AMS ^{14}C ages with the error bars

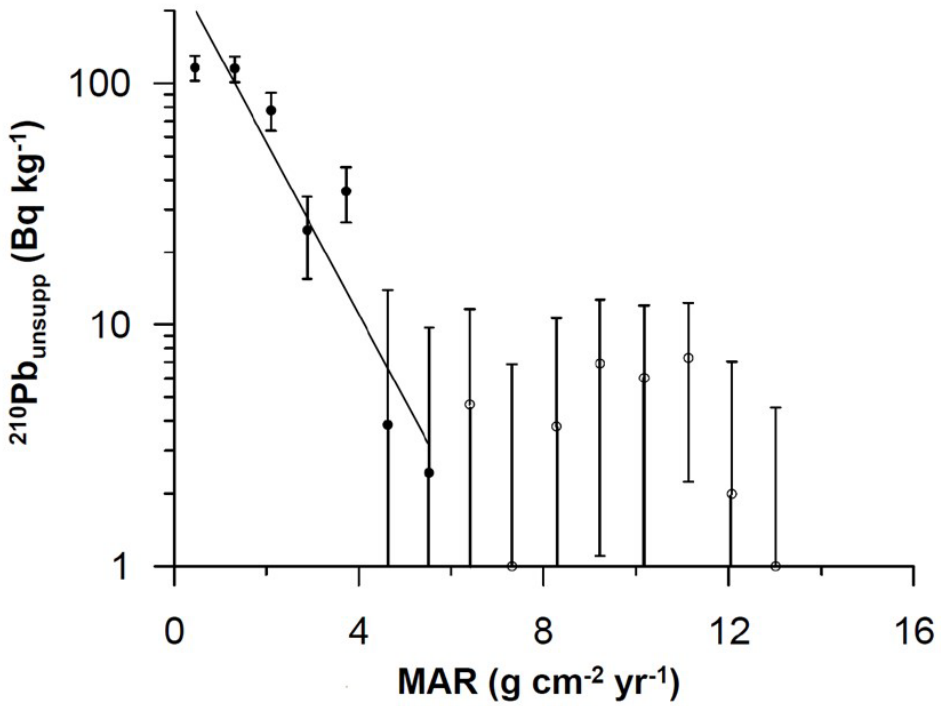
indicating the maximum and minimum ages (Extended Data Table 1). The vertical dashed line shows the age of 8.2 kyr BP where the benthic and planktic $\delta^{13}C$ records of the two cores were spliced in Figure 2a and 2b (i.e. only $\delta^{13}C$ data from below 230 cm depth were used from core PS75/167-1 and only $\delta^{13}C$ data from above 380 cm depth were used from core PS75/160-1).



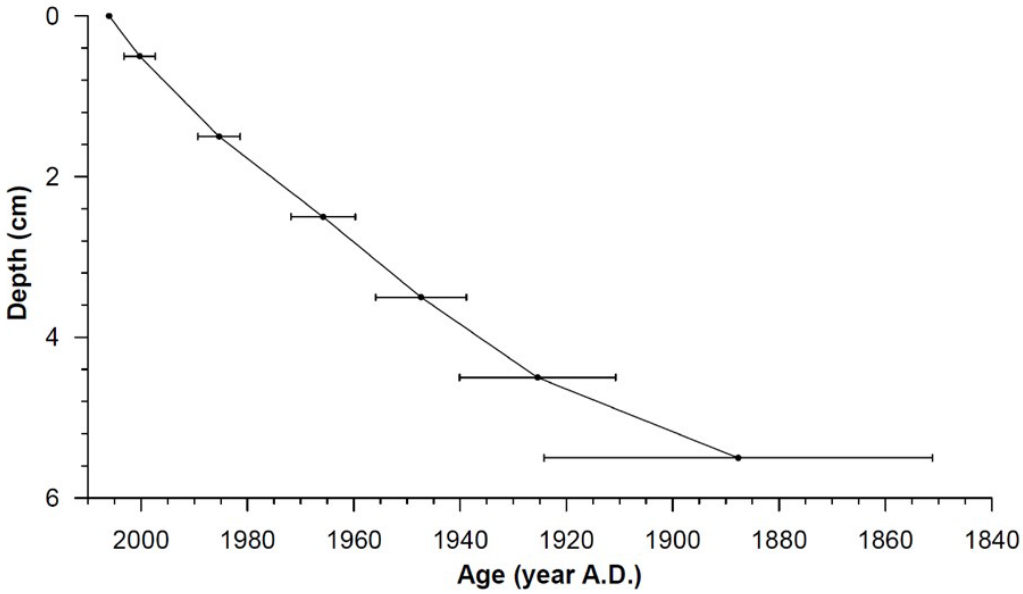
Extended Data Figure 2: Concentrations of radiogenic lead and caesium isotope concentrations versus depth in giant box core PS69/251-1.

Left: Concentration of unsupported ^{210}Pb ($^{210}Pb_{xs}$). Note logarithmic scale. Surface concentration is ~115 Bq kg^{-1}, and an exponential decline of $^{210}Pb_{xs}$ with depth is observed in the upper 6 cm. Activity is at the detection limit or lower below 6 cm depth. The calculated $^{210}Pb_{xs}$ flux is 100 Bq m^{-2} yr^{-1}, which is in reasonable agreement with the expected flux from atmospheric deposition[56]. Error bars denote one standard deviation of $^{210}Pb_{xs}$ concentrations.

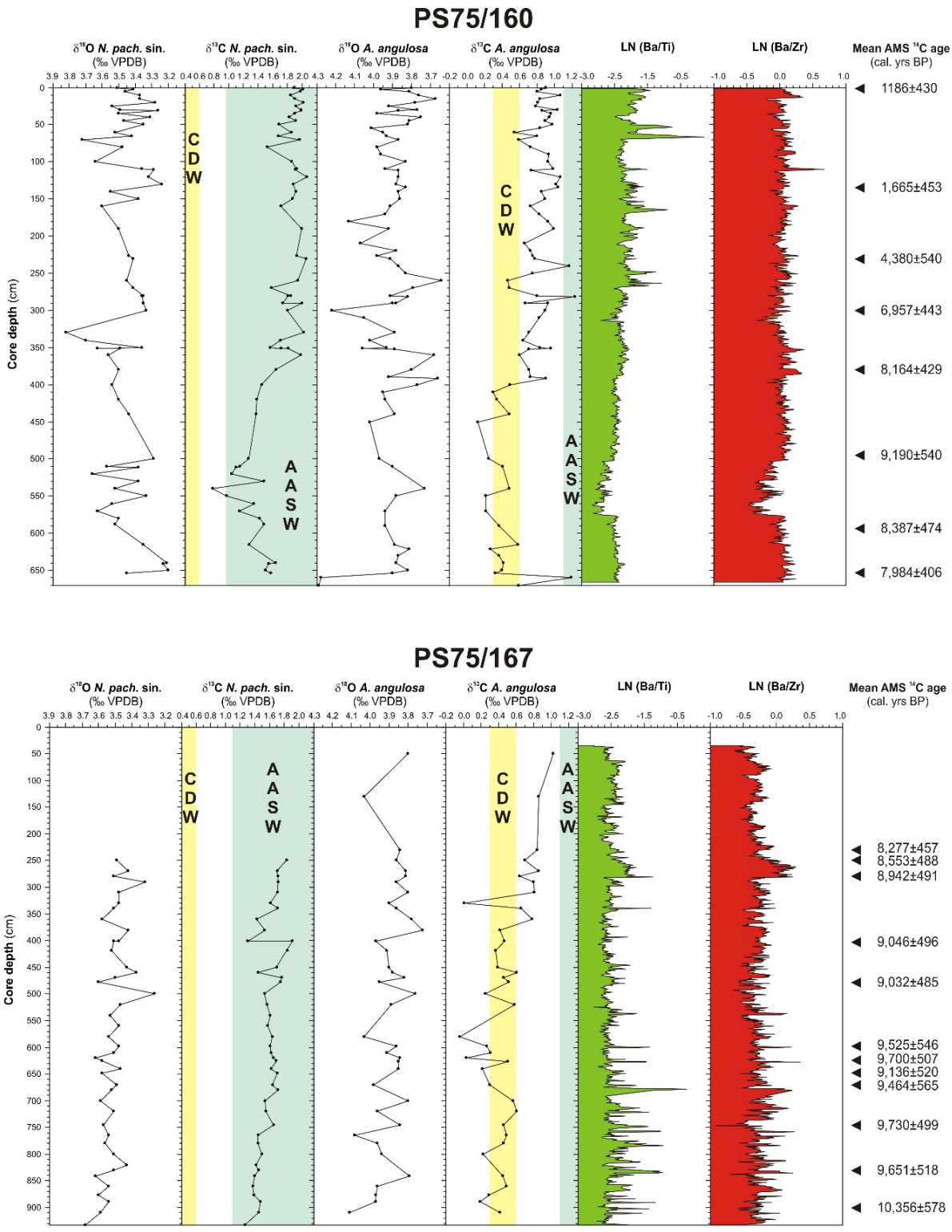
Right: Concentration of ^{137}Cs. Activity is at or below detection limit throughout the core. Error bars denote one standard deviation of ^{137}Cs concentrations.



Extended Data Figure 3: Constant Rate of Supply (CRS) modeling of down-core profile of $^{210}Pb_{xs}$ concentrations in core PS69/251-1 using a modified method[56]. Black straight line marks regression to calculate ^{210}Pb concentration below 6 cm core depth. Open circles highlight samples with $^{210}Pb_{xs}$ concentrations at or below detection limit. Error bars denote one standard deviation of $^{210}Pb_{xs}$ concentrations.

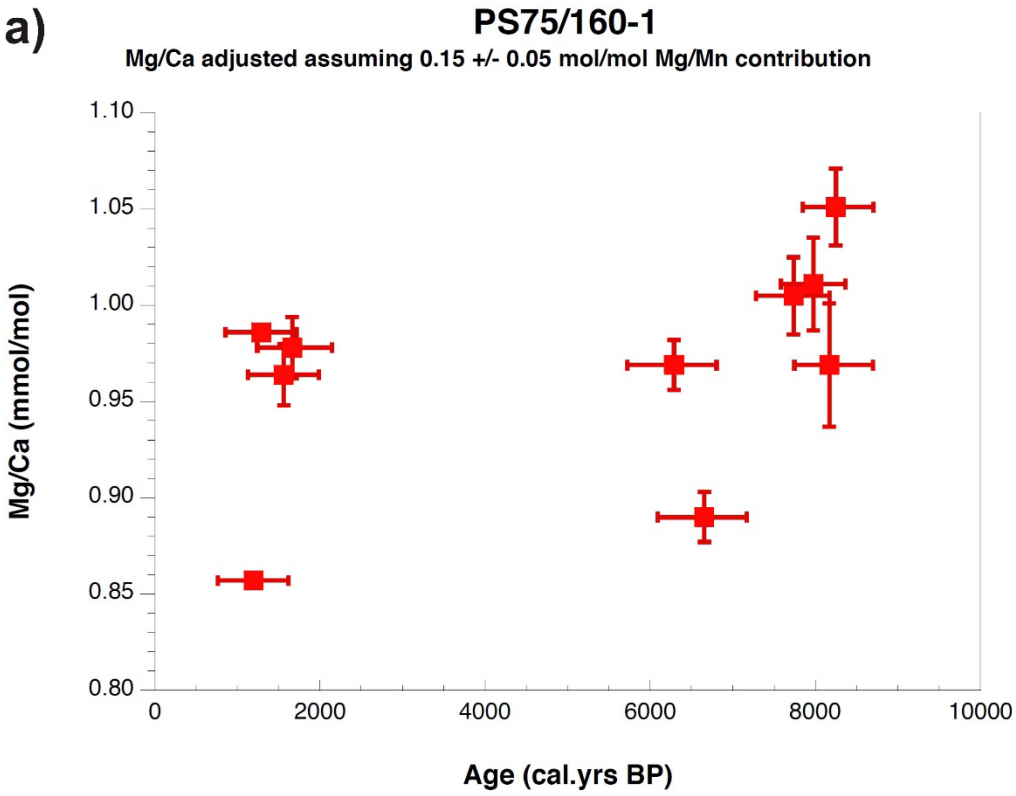


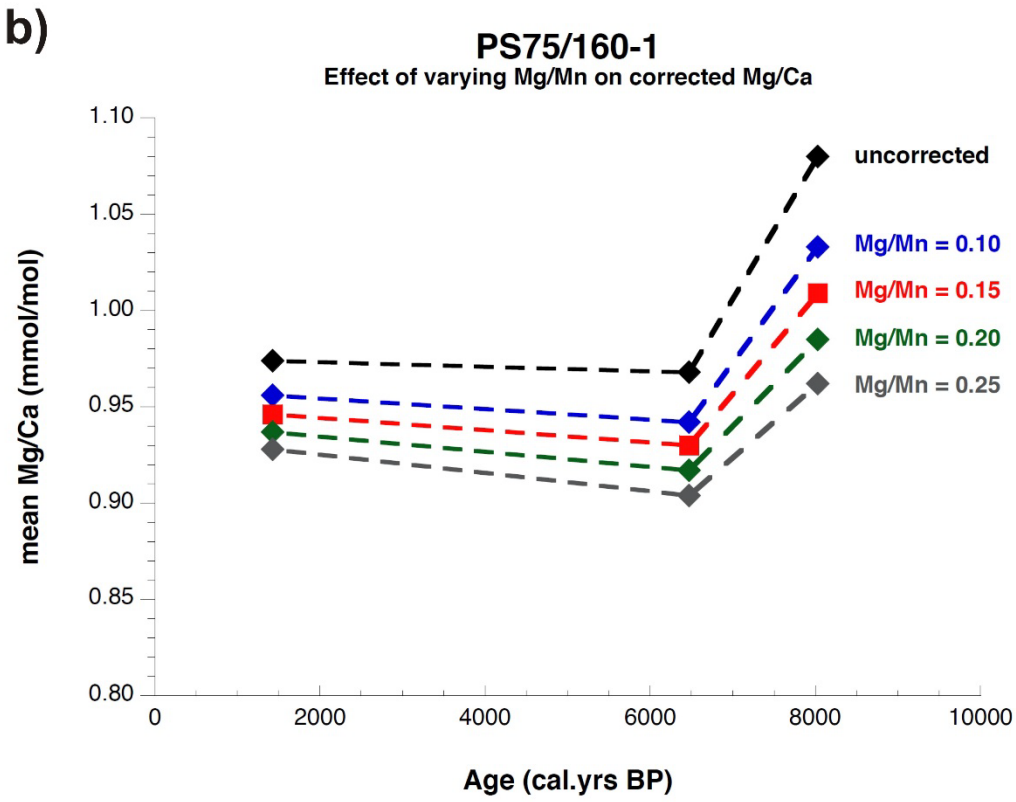
Extended Data Figure 4: Age-depth plot for the upper 5.5 cm of core PS69/251-1 based on CRS modeling of $^{210}Pb_{xs}$ concentrations. Error bars denote one standard deviation of calculated ages.



Extended Data Figure 5: Down-core plots of $\delta^{18}O$ and $\delta^{13}C$ isotope ratios measured on planktic (*Neogloboquadrina pachyderma* sinistral) and benthic foraminifera (*Angulogerina angulosa)*, LN(Ba/Ti), LN(Ba/Zr) and AMS ^{14}C ages of calcareous microfossils[21,22,53] of cores PS75/160-1 (above) and PS75/167-1 (below). The ranges of $\delta^{13}C$ values typical for AASW and CDW are indicated by the blue-green and yellow shaded areas,

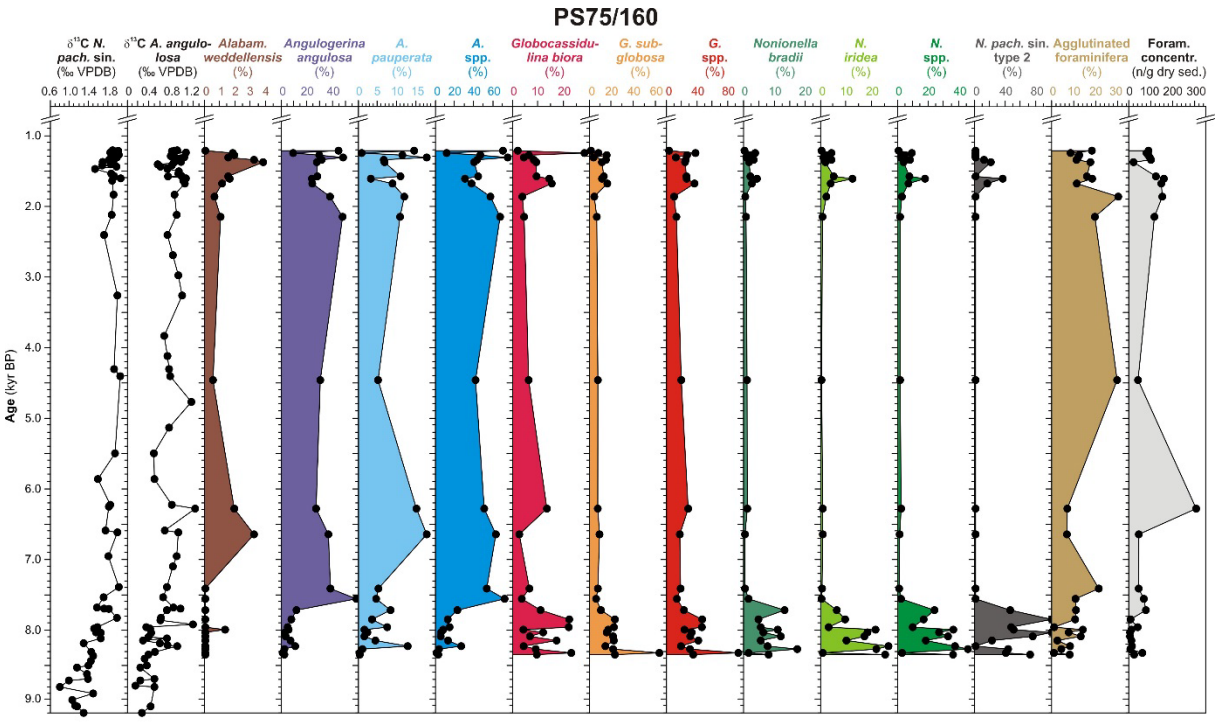
respectively. While prominent peaks in LN(Ba/Ti) below ~220 cm core depth in core PS75/167-1 are significantly higher than the background LN(Ba/Ti) values, the LN(Ba/Zr) peaks are not significantly higher in this core section. This relation suggests that the LN(Ba/Ti) and Ba/Ti peaks are caused by barium input through increased supply of terrigenous heavy minerals (including barite and zircon), which is confirmed by the down-core increase of terrigenous sand layers below ~220 cm core depth (see Fig. 2 in ref. 21).



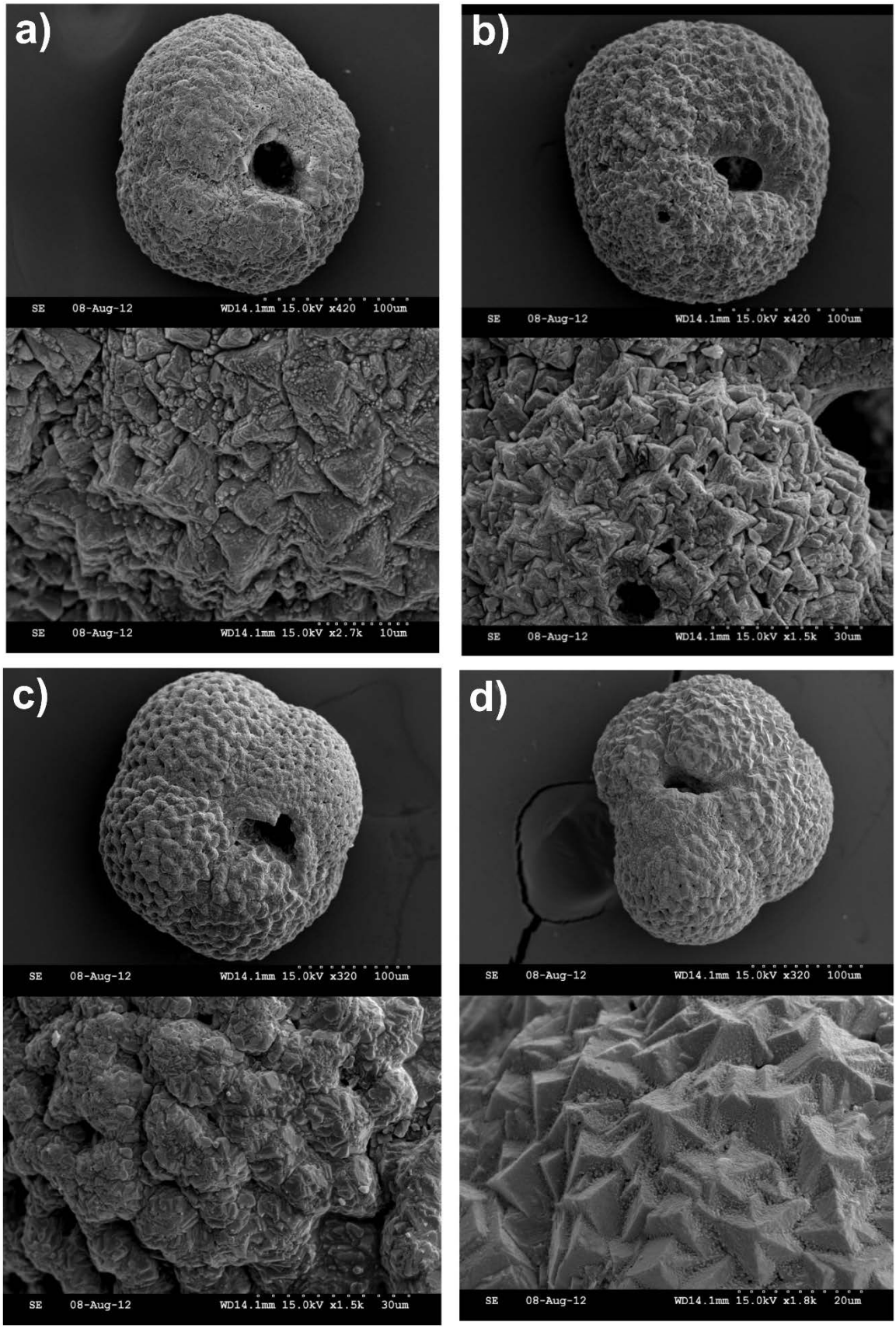


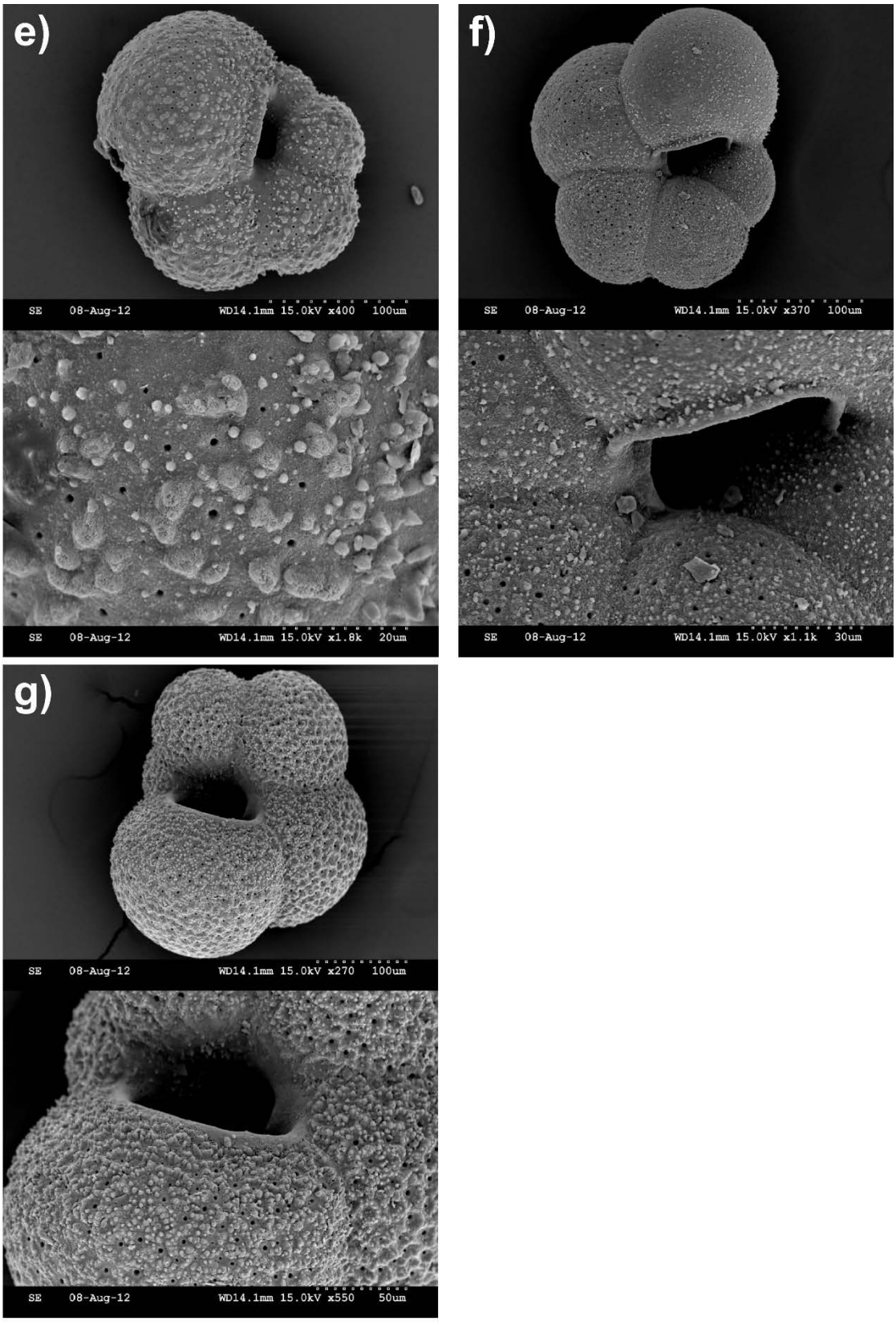
Extended Data Figure 6: Mg/Ca ratios of benthic foraminifer shells (*A. angulosa*) in core PS75/160-1 adjusted for a potential diagenetic Mg contribution by assuming the Mg/Mn ratio of a diagenetic coating is 0.15±0.05 mol/mol (Extended Data Figure 6a), and

displayed as sample groups with ages of 10.0-7.5 kyr BP (4 samples), 7.5-4.0 kyr BP (2 samples) and 4.0-0 kyr BP (4 samples) with no adjustment and adjusted for potential diagenetic Mg contributions and Mg/Mn ratios in diagenetic coatings of 0.10, 0.15, 0.20 and 0.25 (Extended Data Figure 6b; references 68-72). Error bars in Extended Data Figure 6a result from the uncertainty of ±0.05 mol/mol for the Mg/Mn composition of the coating and the range of the calibrated AMS ^{14}C dates of neighbouring sample horizons (Extended Data Table 1), from which the ages for the Mg/Ca samples were calculated.



Extended Data Figure 7: Holocene changes in foraminifer assemblages of core PS75/160-1 from Pine Island Bay. Benthic foraminifer assemblages (only the most abundant and selected benthic taxa are displayed), abundance of *N. pachyderma* sin. type 2 in relation to all foraminifera, abundance of arenaceous benthic foraminifera (in relation to all benthic foraminifera) and total foraminifer concentration (individuals per gram dry sediment). δ^{13}C composition of planktic and benthic foraminifera is also shown. Note major shift in foraminifer abundances and assemblages centred at 7.5 kyr BP. Benthic foraminifer taxa: *Alabaminella weddellensis*, *Angulogerina angulosa*, *Angulogerina pauperata*, *Angulogerina* spp. (= sum of all *Angulogerina* species), *Globocassidulina biora*, *Globocassidulina subglobosa*, *Globocassidulina* spp. (= sum of all *Globocassidulina* species), *Nonionella bradii*, *Nonionella iridea*, *Nonionella* spp. (= sum of all *Nonionella* species).


a)
SE 08-Aug-12 WD14.1mm 15.0kV x420 100um
SE 08-Aug-12 WD14.1mm 15.0kV x2.7k 10um
b)
SE 08-Aug-12 WD14.1mm 15.0kV x420 100um
SE 08-Aug-12 WD14.1mm 15.0kV x1.5k 30um
c)
SE 08-Aug-12 WD14.1mm 15.0kV x320 100um
SE 08-Aug-12 WD14.1mm 15.0kV x1.5k 30um
d)
SE 08-Aug-12 WD14.1mm 15.0kV x320 100um
SE 08-Aug-12 WD14.1mm 15.0kV x1.8k 20um



Extended Data Figure 8: Scanning Electron Microscope (SEM) images of whole shells and detailed shell surfaces of *Neogloboquadrina pachyderma* sin. morphotypes 1 and 2 in core PS75/160-1. Morphotype 1 is encrusted with gametogenic calcite and dominates the upper

section of the core (**Extended Data Fig. 8a-d**), while thin-walled and non-encrusted morphotype 2 (**Extended Data Fig. 8e-g**) dominates the lower section of core PS75/160-1. A scale bar (white dots) is shown in the lower right corner of each photo, and the unit of its length (number) is given in µm. Note the indistinct chambers and gametogenic calcite secreted around the whole shell in morphotype 1, while the individual chambers and porous shells of morphotype 2 are clearly visible, thereby showing beginning encrustation (white calcite around pores) (cf. refs. 42, 91-93). Morphotype 1 usually dominates the lower part of the water column in Antarctic and Arctic waters and is preserved in marine sediments, whereas morphotype 2 is abundant in the upper part of the water column and not preserved in the sediments[42,91-93]. Encrusted morphotype 1 is typical for the terminal life stage of *N. pachyderma* sin., while non-encrusted morphotype 2 is typical for its neanic (i.e. adolescent) to adult stage[42,91-94]. In analogy with the SEM-defined progressive dissolution steps distinguished by Henrich[95], **Extended Data Fig. 8a** and **8b** show shells with intermediate dissolution, **Extended Data Fig. 7c** a shell with initial to intermediate dissolution, **Extended Data Fig. 8d** a shell with initial dissolution and **Extended Data Fig. 8e, 8f** and **8g** well preserved shells.

Extended Data Tables

Core ID	Lati-tude (°S)	Longi-tude (°W)	Water depth (m)	Reco-very (m)	Sample depth (cmbsf)	Laboratory code	Dated mat.	^{14}C age ±error (yr BP)	Max. age (yr BP)	Min. age (yr BP)	Med. age (yr BP)	Mean age (yr BP)
PS2544-1 GBC	71.796	105.191	546	0.21	surface	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
PS69/251-1 GBC	72.069	104.483	573	0.38	surface	SUERC-18942	pF	1144±37	N/A	N/A	[0]	[0]
PS75/215-1 GBC	74.592	104.042	556	0.62	surface	Beta-315966	Bz	1190±30	N/A	N/A	[0]	[0]
PS75/160-1 GC	74.564	102.624	337	6.68	0.5	Beta-284601	bF, S, O	2340±40	1615	756	1190	1186
					133.5	Beta-284602	S	2750±40	2118	1212	1634	1665
					230	Beta-284604	bF, S, O	4990±40	4919	3840	4405	4380
					300	Beta-284681	bF, S	7180±40	7400	6514	6967	6957
					380	Beta-284606	bF, S	8410±40	8592	7735	8137	8164
					490+500	Beta-284607	bF, P, S, O	9320±40	9729	8650	9243	9190
					588+600	Beta-284608	bF, S, O, Bp	8560±40	8861	7913	8331	8387
					652	Beta-284610	S	8200±40	8358	7578	7966	7968
					top of CC	Beta-284600	Bp, S, bF	8240±40	8390	7603	8006	7997
PS75/167-1 GC	74.623	105.802	526	9.34	230	Beta-300838	F	8490±40	8734	7820	8254	8277
					250	Beta-300839	F, S	8740±40	9040	8065	8547	8553
					280	Beta-284682	F	9080±50	9432	8451	8949	8942
					401	Beta-284683	F, S, O	9210±50	9541	8550	9113	9046
					478	Beta-300837	F, O, E	9180±40	9516	8547	9077	9032
					598	Beta-300840	F	9490±40	10070	8979	9459	9525
					625.5	Beta-284684	F	9660±50	10206	9193	9690	9700
					649	Beta-300841	F	9280±40	9656	8616	9196	9136
					670	Beta-284685	F	9450±50	10029	8899	9405	9464
					746	Beta-284686	F, S	9690±50	10228	9231	9726	9730
					830	Beta-300842	F	9620±50	10169	9133	9640	9651
					900.5	Beta-284687	F, S	10210±60	10934	9778	10372	10356

Extended Data Table 1: Locations, conventional and calibrated AMS ^{14}C dates on calcareous microfossils from the investigated sediment cores. Coring devices: GBC: giant box core, GC: gravity core. Sample depths are given in centimetres below seafloor (cmbsf; top of CC: sample was taken from top of core catcher, corresponding to 652 cmbsf). All ^{14}C-dates were corrected using an offset (ΔR) of 700±200 years from the global marine reservoir effect (R) of 400 years. The corrected ^{14}C-dates were calibrated with the CALIB Radiocarbon Calibration Program version 7.1html[54] (http://calib.qub.ac.uk/calib/) using the MARINE13 calibration dataset[55]. Uncorrected dates (=^{14}C age) are given in ^{14}C years before present (BP) and maximum, minimum, median and mean dates are given in calibrated years BP. Errors of calibrated dates are given as a 2σ range. Dated calcareous microfossils: bF: benthic foraminifera, Bp: brachiopods, Bz: bryozoans, E: echinoid spines, F: mixed benthic and planktonic foraminifera, O: ostracods, P: pteropods, pF: planktonic foraminifera, S: unspecified calcareous shell fragments.

Depth (cm)	**Age** (yr)	**Age error** (yr)	**Date** (yr AD)	**Mass accumulation rate** (kg m^{-2} yr^{-1})	**Mass accumulation rate error** (kg m^{-2} yr^{-1})
0			2006		
0-1	6	3	2000	0.78	0.10
1-2	21	4	1985	0.57	0.10
2-3	40	6	1966	0.41	0.10
3-4	59	9	1947	0.42	0.16
4-5	81	15	1925	0.38	0.19
5-6	118	37	1888	0.24	0.28

Extended Data Table 2: Chronology of the upper 6 cm of core PS69/251-1 based on CRS-modeling of $^{210}Pb_{xs}$ concentrations.

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