



Each globe shows cumulative ocean warming (in red) for successive decades from 1955 through 2011.

Overheated oceans

The oceans store more than 90% of the warming caused by greenhouse gases. But a new study argues scientists may have underestimated how much heat the upper oceans have actually absorbed over the past 40 years, due to the lack of ocean data in the Southern Hemisphere. The team compared a new analysis of heat content in the region, inferred from satellite data and models, to measurements from buoys and other devices in the water—and found a large inconsistency. Past global estimates of long-term warming could be 25% or more too low, they report this week in *Nature Climate Change*. The findings also suggest the oceans may be considerably more sensitive to greenhouse warming than thought. <http://scim.ag/oceanwarm>