

Chapter 10, The Future Of The World's Glaciers - Ann Henderson-sellers

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Glaciers are perennial masses of ice, and possibly firn and snow, originating on land by the recrystallization of snow and showing evidence of past or present flow. Glaciers are insensitive but reliable indicators of climatic change. Measurements of glacier mass balance provide information that is independent of weather stations and bathythermographs. However, because the mass balance and the near-surface air temperature are both driven by the radiation and energy balances, the correlation between them is very good and is the basis for most projections of the evolution of glaciers. Observations show that glaciers have been losing mass since the mid-nineteenth century, with a marked acceleration since about 1970. The total mass stored in these glaciers, which is less than 1% of that stored in the ice sheets, was between about 500 and 700 mm of equivalent sea-level rise in the late twentieth century. Projections show that over the twenty-first century a cumulative loss of 90-160 mm of equivalent sea-level rise can be expected with reasonable confidence. However, poorly quantified and poorly understood phenomena, including the delayed response of glacier dynamics to the forcing and losses by frontal ablation (calving and melting at terminuses at sea level), make the probability distribution function asymmetrical. Substantially lesser losses are very improbable, but greater losses cannot be ruled out with the same confidence. Author: Henderson-Sellers, Ann Publisher: Elsevier Science Illustration: N Language: ENG Title: Chapter 10, The Future of the World's Glaciers Pages: 00000 (Encrypted EPUB) On Sale: 2011-12-19 SKU-13/ISBN: 9780124096288 Category: Science : Environmental Science Category: Science : Earth Sciences - Meteorology & Climatology

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