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Fire & Ice

Climate Changes of the Past ...and Future?

Elisabeth and Henry Morss Jr. Colloquium

Tuesday, January 30, 2007 • 4:30–6:30 p.m.

Redfield Auditorium

Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution, Woods Hole, MA

For information, (508) 289-2252

The time was 400,000 years ago, and Earth was just out of one of the worst ice ages in its history. The planetary rhythms were much the same as they are today—the shape of Earth's orbit was nearly circular; the concentration of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere paralleled those of modern times; temperatures may have been warm enough for a section of the West Antarctic ice sheet to collapse and raise sea level. The climate system was quite stable for many years, before plunging into another ice age. But all the while, there was a key difference: no human influences on the environment. By examining ancient sediments and ice, earth scientists are working to figure out what this interval in our geologic past can tell us about our future. Join scientists from four continents as they debate the lessons from a previous warm period in Earth's history.

