



Ocean mixing that drives climate found in surprise spot

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Challenges the long-held view that it was in the Labrador Sea

- One of the key drivers of the world's climate is an area in the North Atlantic Ocean, where warmer and colder water mix and swirl.
- When scientists went for their first close look at this critical underwater dynamo, they found they were looking in the wrong place by hundreds of miles.

Before the chaos

- The consequences are not quite yet understood, but eventually it could change forecasts of one of the worst-case global warming scenarios still considered unlikely this century, in which the mixing stops and climate chaos ensues.
- It's called the Atlantic Meridional Overturning Circulation, and scientists describe it as a giant ocean conveyor belt that moves water from Greenland south to beyond the tip of Africa and into the Indian Ocean.
- But then a new international science team measured temperature, saltiness and the speed of ocean currents throughout the North Atlantic to try to better understand the conveyor belt.
- The computer simulations that predict how the climate could change in coming years didn't factor in exactly where the conveyor belt engine is, and now they may be able to.

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