



Climate change in Iceland

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The sub-polar maritime climate of Iceland is characterized by relatively large inter-decadal variations. Temperature measurements and climate related proxies show that the 19th century was colder and more variable than the 20th century. Iceland experienced rapid warming in the 1920s and relatively mild conditions prevailed until the 1960s, when colder conditions set in. In recent decades Iceland has again experienced significant warming and early this century the temperatures exceeded those attained during the mid 20th century warm period. The recent warming has been accompanied by significant changes in both physical and biological systems. These include glacier retreat, runoff and coastal changes, increased plant productivity and changes in tree-limits. In the coastal waters the range of fish species is changing reflecting warmer conditions.