dynamic earth

Ocean Acidification

The ocean soaks up carbon dioxide (CO_2) gas from the air. Human activities are adding more CO_2 to our atmosphere, so more is going into the oceans and making it more acidic. This will make life very difficult for some ocean creatures with hard skeletons such as cold-water corals. You can find out more about the effects of this by doing some experiments.

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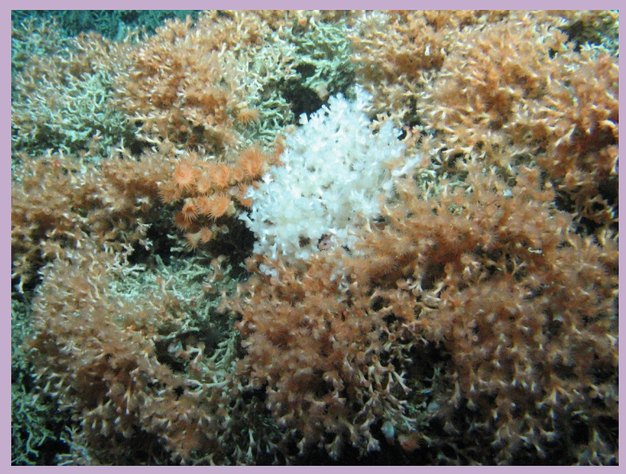
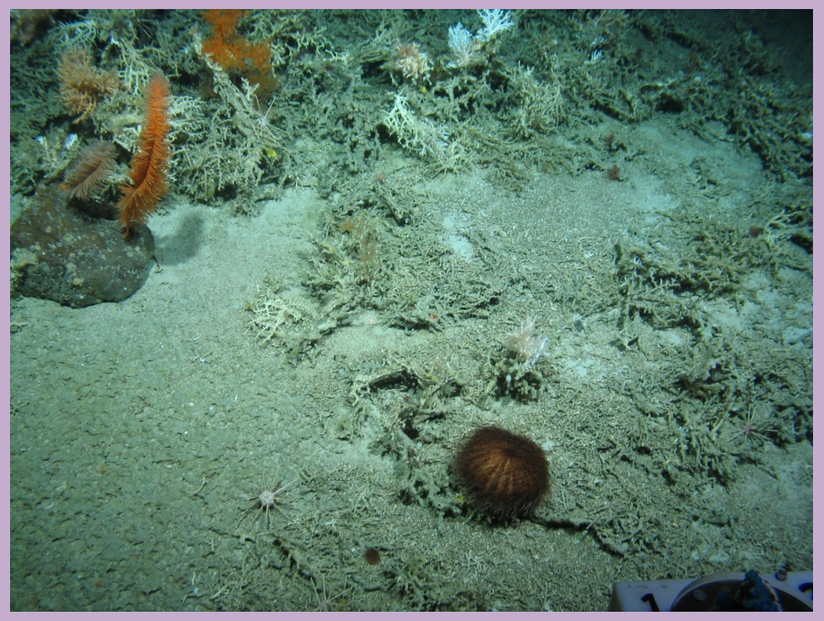


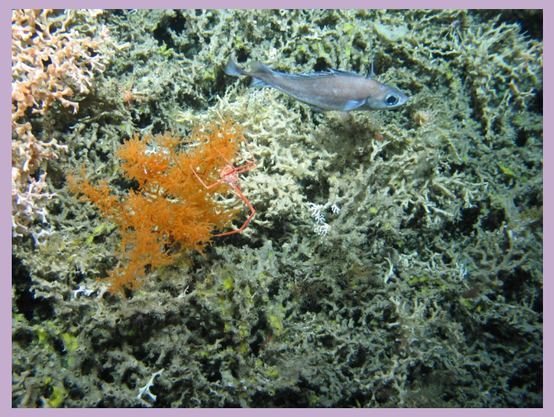
Credit: *Lophelia pertusa* coral, Logachev Mounds, Rockall Bank (Laurence de Clippele) June 2012

Ocean Acidification

As the oceans soak up more carbon dioxide gas from the air, they get slightly more acidic. This will make it harder for creatures with skeletons made of calcium carbonate (chalk) to get the ingredients they need to build their skeletons from the water. This might make them more likely to get ill or mean they grow more slowly.

A lot of creatures make their home in dead coral ‘rubble’ and many reefs are built up on the rubble of previous colonies. In a more acidic ocean, the rubble could be in danger of collapsing, causing many creatures to lose their homes or even damaging the whole reef.





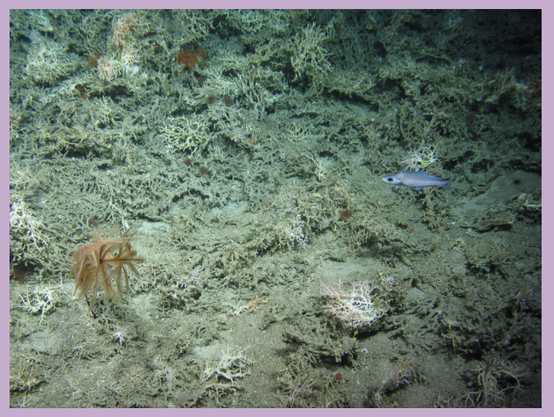


Image Credits: Logachev Mounds, Rockall Bank (Laurence de Clippele) June 2012

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