

Supporting Information for

Early Pleistocene obliquity-scale pCO₂ variability at ~1.5 million years ago

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Contents of this file

Introduction
Figures S1 to S9
Tables S1 to S2

Additional data files

Tables S3 and S4 (xlsx),
data also archived at NOAA (NCEI)

Introduction

The supplemental appendix contains additional supporting information, figures, and tables, in the same order as each is discussed in the main text. These figures provide supporting information for the choice of the $\delta^{11}\text{B}_{\text{sw}}$ value (Figure S1), alkalinity (Figure S2), and the chronology for Site 668B (Figure S3). They provide additional comparisons with previous work (Figures S4, S5), and plots of supplemental data (Figures S6, S7, S8).

Pliocene salinity estimates

In section 2.7, Plio-Pleistocene salinity was estimated from a model of sea level changes and assumed to be constant for samples prior to 3 Ma. An alternative method for estimating salinity is via $\delta^{18}\text{O}_{\text{calcite}}$ and SST estimates [Bemis *et al.*, 1998]. For Site 999A, this alternative relies on planktic $\delta^{18}\text{O}$ measurements [Schmidt *et al.*, 2004] and Mg/Ca-based SST [Schmidt *et al.*, 2004; Martínez-Botí *et al.*, 2015], via the following equations:

$$\delta^{18}\text{O}_{\text{sw}} = (\text{SST} - 16.5)/4.8 + \delta^{18}\text{O}_{\text{calcite}} + 0.27 \text{ [Bemis et al., 1998]}$$

$$\text{Salinity} = (\delta^{18}\text{O}_{\text{sw Caribbean}} + 10.511) / 0.319 \text{ [Steph et al., 2006]}$$

This alternative method results in salinity that is on average within $\pm 0.5\%$ of the method used in the manuscript, but exhibits larger swings in salinity ($>2\%$) that are difficult to reconcile with

the smaller amplitude of sea level change (<25 m) in the Pliocene [*Hansen et al.*, 2013]. In practice, salinity variations have only a small impact on the pH estimate from boron isotopes (salinity $\pm 1\text{‰} = \pm 0.006$ pH units). To account for the glacial-interglacial uncertainty on this estimate, a salinity uncertainty of $\pm 2\text{‰}$ is propagated through the pH and $p\text{CO}_2$ uncertainty calculations.

Model equations

In section 4.3, a simple box model is presented to relate ice volume, temperature, and carbon dioxide levels. This model does not have explicit geography, topography, or circulation; the governing equations are as follows:

$$\begin{aligned}\tau_L \frac{dL}{dt} &= F_I + (aT - L) \\ \tau_C \frac{dC}{dt} &= bT - C \\ \frac{dT}{dt} &= \mu L + F_{\text{CO}_2}(C) + \lambda T - P(T, T_0) + \varepsilon\end{aligned}$$

where, in the first equation, F_I is the forcing of ice sheets and τ_L is a time constant for the ice sheet response. Similarly, in the second equation, b is the carbon cycle sensitivity to temperature and τ_C is the response time. In the third equation, μ is the radiative forcing associated with the ice sheets, λ is the non-Planck feedback and ε is a small source of random noise. For further documentation and discussion of this model, see the supplementary material of *Schmidt et al.* [2017].

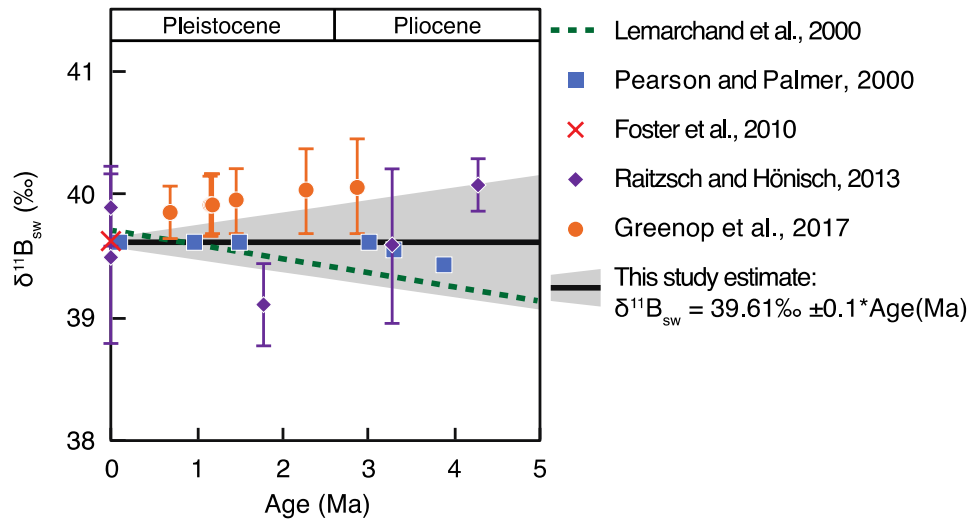


Figure S1. Compilation of $\delta^{11}\text{B}_{\text{sw}}$ estimates from previous work. Seawater $\delta^{11}\text{B}$ has been reconstructed from a model from river inputs [Lemarchand *et al.*, 2000], benthic foraminiferal $\delta^{11}\text{B}$ alongside modeled ocean pH [Raitzsch and Hönisch, 2013], and multi-species foraminiferal $\delta^{11}\text{B}$ measurements in the water column coupled with the water column pH gradient [Pearson and Palmer, 2000; Greenop *et al.*, 2017]. The estimates of Pearson and Palmer [2000] have been offset by +0.51‰ so that modern $\delta^{11}\text{B}_{\text{sw}}$ is equal to 39.61‰ [Foster *et al.*, 2010]. The $\delta^{11}\text{B}_{\text{sw}}$ value used in this study is the solid line (constant at the modern value) with uncertainty increasing with time ($\pm 0.1\text{‰/Myr}$), which is depicted by the gray band.

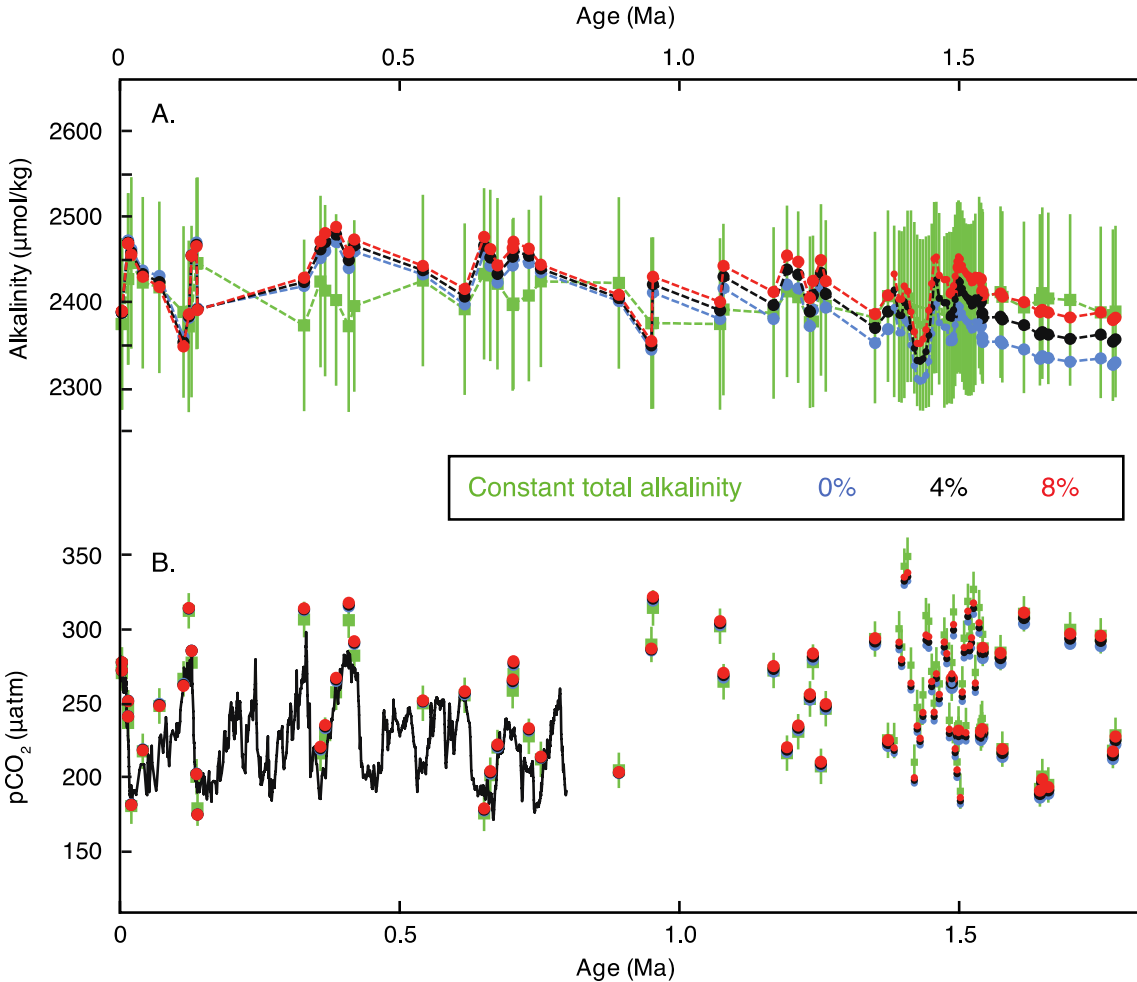


Figure S2. Comparison of various alkalinity scenarios used to estimate pCO_2 from Site 668B. (A) Alkalinity estimates for 4 scenarios; green squares represent ‘constant total alkalinity’ in which alkalinity is scaled as a function of sea level; the uncertainty band is $\pm 100 \mu\text{mol/kg}$. Blue, black, and red circles represent scenarios in which continental weathering, calcite production, and seafloor dissolution impact ocean alkalinity after the geochemical model of *Clark et al.* [2006]. Alkalinity was estimated from this same model in the study of *Hönisch et al.* [2009], although the time axis of the model alkalinity output was erroneously reversed in that study. The pCO_2 estimates we derive here are nearly the same as the original publication, which reflects the small influence alkalinity has on the pCO_2 estimate when alkalinity differs by less than $200 \mu\text{mol/kg}$. The difference between the other estimates reflects the relative contribution of Canadian Shield weathering to global weathering rates (blue = 0%, black = 4%, red = 8%). The average absolute value of the difference between the 0% scenario and the constant alkalinity scenario is $33 \mu\text{mol/kg}$. (B) Comparison of pCO_2 calculated via the different alkalinity scenarios compared to ice core pCO_2 [Bereiter et al., 2015]. The impact of the varying alkalinity scenarios on calculated pCO_2 values is smaller than the uncertainty in the constant total alkalinity scenario ($\pm 100 \mu\text{mol/kg}$); the largest difference in calculated pCO_2 between any varying alkalinity scenario and the ‘constant total alkalinity’ scenario is $12 \mu\text{atm}$. Uncertainty in the lower panel is only due to alkalinity in the constant total alkalinity scenario (2σ).

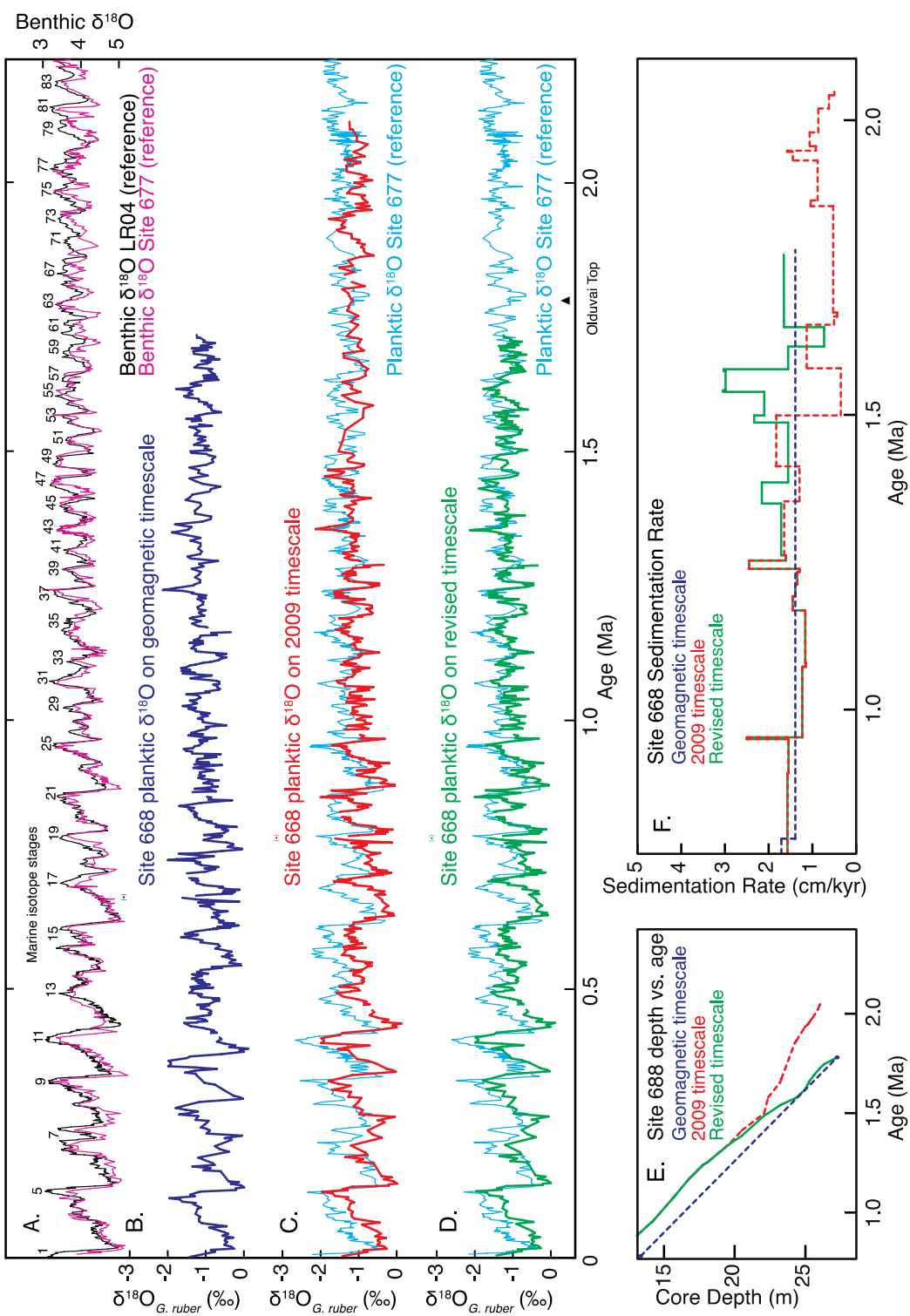


Figure S3. Comparison of published and revised age model for Site 668B. (A) Reference curves are the benthic $\delta^{18}\text{O}$ stack (black line) [Lisiecki and Raymo, 2005] and benthic $\delta^{18}\text{O}$ from Site 677 (magenta line) [Shackleton *et al.*, 1990]. (B) Site 668B planktic $\delta^{18}\text{O}$ plotted using the

original timescale from ODP initial reports, which relied on geomagnetic estimates and microfossil appearances [*Shipboard Scientific Party*, 1988]. (C) Site 688B planktic $\delta^{18}\text{O}$ plotted using the published '2009 timescale' (red line) [*Hönisch et al.*, 2009], which was based on visual alignment of the Site 668B planktic $\delta^{18}\text{O}$ record with both the Site 677 planktic $\delta^{18}\text{O}$ record (light blue line) [*Shackleton et al.*, 1990] and the LR04 benthic $\delta^{18}\text{O}$ stack [*Lisiecki and Raymo*, 2005]. (D) Site 668B planktic $\delta^{18}\text{O}$ plotted using the revised timescale (green line), which remains the same as the previously published '2009 timescale' for ages 0-1.3 Ma and is only adjusted for ages prior to 1.3 Ma. Revisions are made in AnalySeries [*Paillard et al.*, 1996] based on visual alignment of the Site 668B planktic $\delta^{18}\text{O}$ record with the Site 677 planktic $\delta^{18}\text{O}$ record and using the top of the Olduvai magnetic reversal as an additional tie point (core depth 27.2-27.3 m; 1.78 Ma [*Shipboard Scientific Party*, 1988]). (E) The depth vs. age comparison for the revised timescale for Site 668B. (F) Using the revised timescale, sedimentation rate for Site 668B varied between 0.7 and 3.0 cm/kyr.

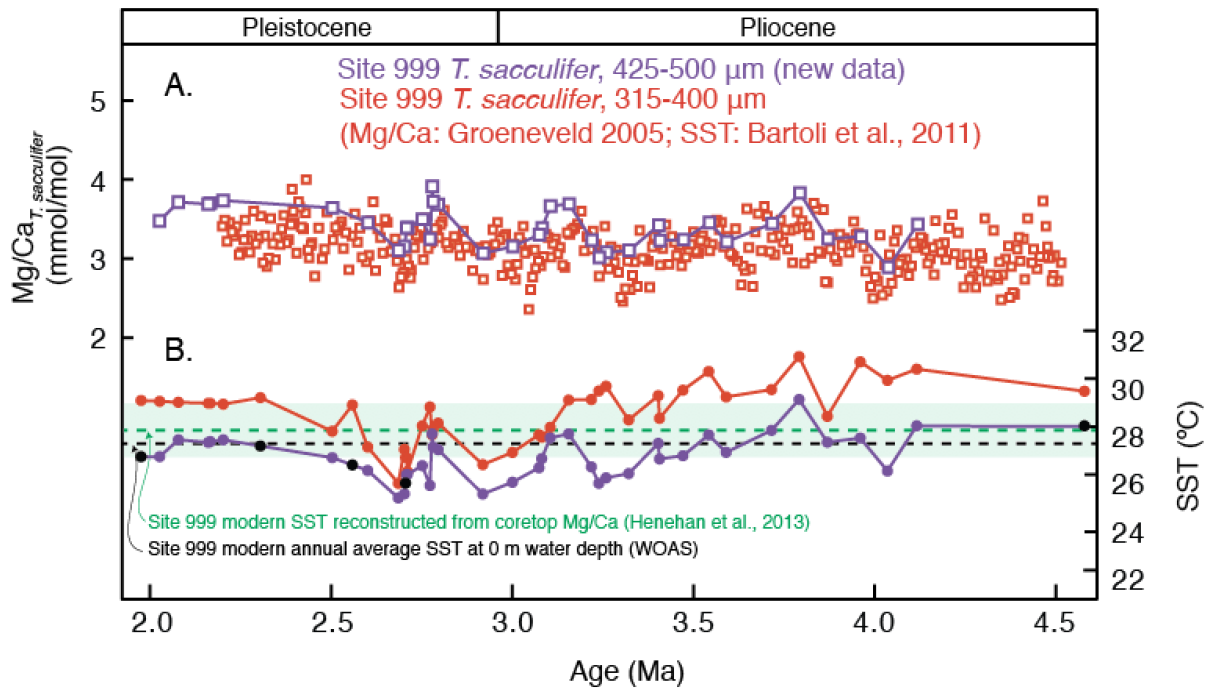


Figure S4. (A) Site 999A *T. sacculifer* (425-500 μm) measured Mg/Ca values (open purple squares) from the same or adjacent samples to those with boron isotope measurements from *Bartoli et al.* [2011]. The original *T. sacculifer* Mg/Ca record [*Groeneveld, 2005*] used by *Bartoli et al.* [2011] is plotted for reference (open red squares). The new Mg/Ca data are slightly higher and from the same larger size fraction also used for $\delta^{11}\text{B}$. (B) The new SST estimate (filled purple circles) is then calculated using the new Mg/Ca data and applying an upward adjustment by +10% due to our use of the reductive cleaning step, which has been reported to lower the Mg/Ca value by 10% [*Martin and Lea, 2002*]. The new SST record is corrected for changes in $\text{Mg}/\text{Ca}_{\text{sw}}$ using the approach of *Medina-Elizalde et al.* [2008] and a modern $\text{Mg}/\text{Ca}_{\text{sw}}$ value of 5.2 mmol/mol [*Evans and Müller, 2012*]. Because the correction for changing $\text{Mg}/\text{Ca}_{\text{sw}}$ is not linear, we include the species-specific power-law exponential H-value of 0.41 [*Delaney et al., 1985; Evans and Müller, 2012; Evans et al., 2016*]. $\text{Mg}/\text{Ca}_{\text{sw}}$ data are from *Fantle and dePaolo* [2006], which is consistent with $\text{Mg}/\text{Ca}_{\text{sw}}$ estimates from marine evaporite fluid inclusions [*Horita et al., 2002; Brennan et al., 2013*]. Sediment was not available for 5 out of the 42 samples in the record; SST was estimated by extrapolation from new *T. sacculifer* measurements (filled black circles). The correction for dissolution with depth [*Dekens et al., 2002*] is omitted in favor of the calibration of *Anand et al.* [2003] as water depth at this core location (2839 m) is well above the tropical Atlantic lysocline (4200 m) and bottom waters are supersaturated with respect to calcite ($\Omega = 1.5$). The original SST record (red circles) was based on *T. sacculifer* from a smaller size fraction (315-400 μm), a modern $\text{Mg}/\text{Ca}_{\text{sw}}$ value of 4.96 mmol/mol, and the depth-based dissolution correction of *Dekens et al.* [2002], which resulted in ~1.8 K warmer calculated SST. Modern SST reconstructed from core top material [*Henehan et al., 2013*] and from annual average climatology (WOAS) is plotted for comparison.

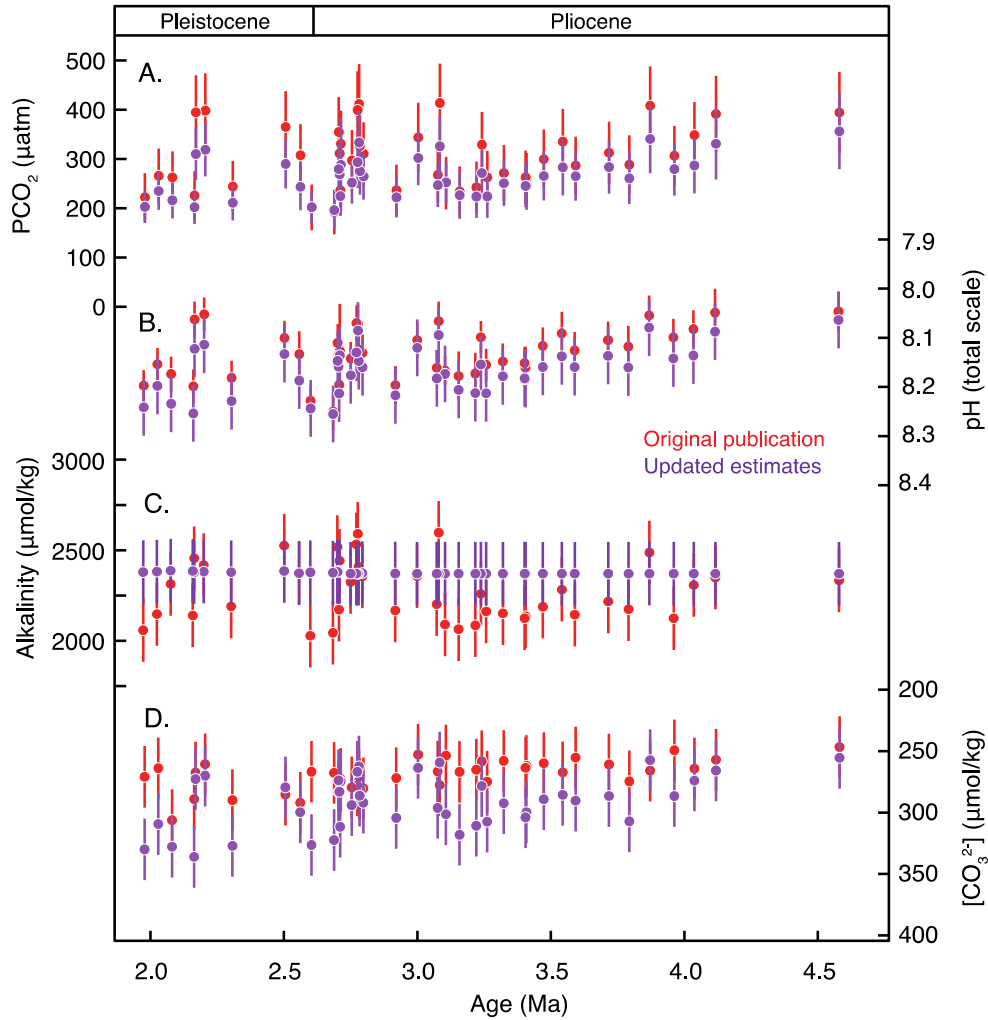


Figure S5. Original paleoceanographic estimates (red symbols) from *Bartoli et al.* [2011] compared with updated estimates (purple symbols) for (A) PCO_2 , (B) pH, (C) total alkalinity, and (D) carbonate ion concentration, $[\text{CO}_3^{2-}]$. The original publication paired pH with carbonate ion concentration estimates as input parameters for the carbonate system whereas this study uses estimates of total alkalinity as the second parameter. Using pH and alkalinity as inputs reduces the PCO_2 variability compared to the original estimate. Furthermore, if PCO_2 is calculated using $[\text{CO}_3^{2-}]$ as the second parameter, the corresponding alkalinity widely varies over a range of ~ 800 $\mu\text{mol}/\text{kg}$, which highlights the greater sensitivity of calculated PCO_2 in (A) to small uncertainties in $[\text{CO}_3^{2-}]$. Such a large variability in alkalinity is unreasonable given geochemical modelling constraints [*Tyrrell and Zeebe, 2004; Ridgwell, 2005*] and the limited range of late Pleistocene alkalinity (~ 120 $\mu\text{mol}/\text{kg}$) [*Clark et al., 2006*] due to the stabilizing effect on alkalinity from the distribution of calcium carbonate accumulation in the deep sea.

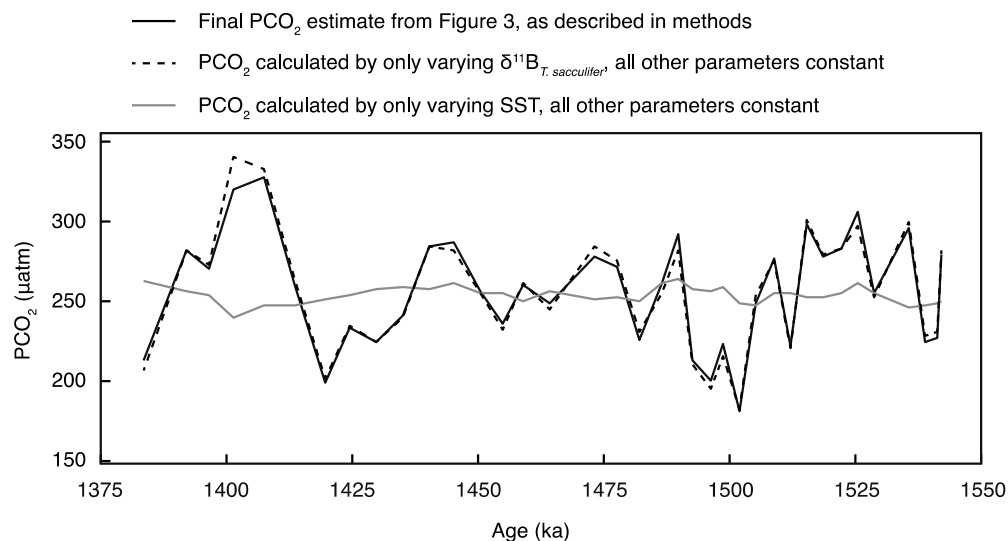


Figure S6. Sensitivity study of contributing factors to PCO_2 calculations (Site 668B, this study). (A) The primary component of calculated PCO_2 is the initial $\delta^{11}\text{B}$ measurement input. Here the final PCO_2 estimate (from Figure 3) is plotted alongside PCO_2 calculated by varying only the measured $\delta^{11}\text{B}_{T. \text{sacculifer}}$ values and keeping all other parameters constant (dashed line). The second greatest contributor to calculated PCO_2 uncertainty is SST. However, if pCO_2 is calculated by only varying SST, the maximum pCO_2 range is minimized to only $\sim 24 \mu\text{atm}$ (grey solid line).

Site ODP 668B (Hönisch et al., 2009)
 $\delta^{11}\text{B}$: *T. sacculifer* (515-865 μm), Mg/Ca: *G. ruber* (250-300 μm)

Site ODP 668B (this study)
 $\delta^{11}\text{B}$: *T. sacculifer* (>500 μm), Mg/Ca: *G. ruber* (300-355 μm)

Site ODP 999A (Bartoli et al., 2011) *T. sacculifer* (425-500 μm)

Site ODP 999A (Foster 2008; Henehan et al., 2013) *G. ruber* (300-355 μm)

Site ODP 999A (Martínez-Botí et al., 2015) *G. ruber* (300-355 μm)

Site ODP 999A (Seki et al., 2010), *G. ruber* (300-355 μm), SST from U^{K}_{37} index

Site ODP 999A (Chalk et al., 2017), *G. ruber* (300-355 μm)

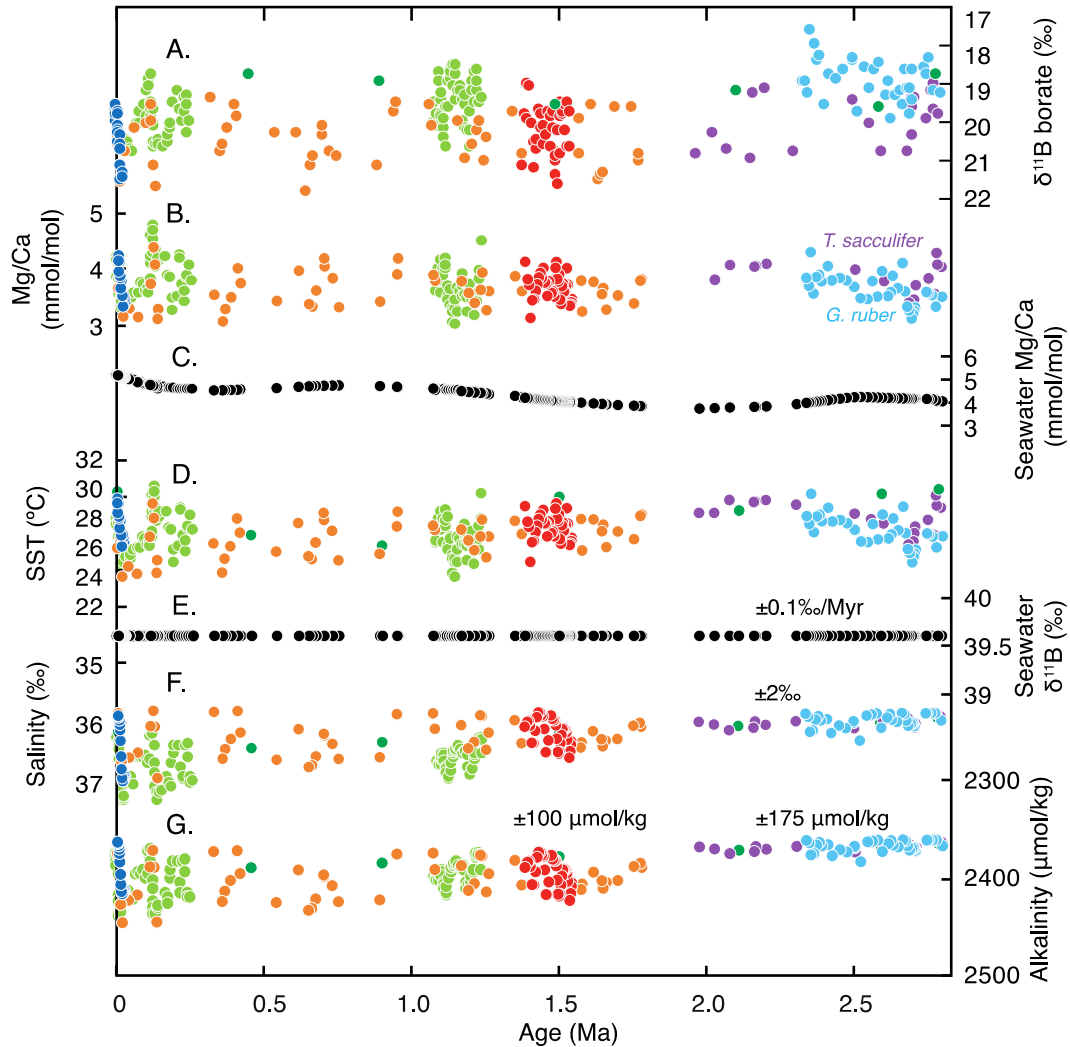


Figure S7. Supplemental data for pCO_2 calculations in Figure 4, differentiated by $\delta^{11}\text{B}$ source: dark blue [Henehan et al., 2013], orange [Hönisch et al., 2009], red (this study), purple [Bartoli et al., 2011], light blue [Martínez-Botí et al., 2015] and green [Seki et al., 2010]. (A) Borate $\delta^{11}\text{B}$ calculated from foraminiferal $\delta^{11}\text{B}$ of foraminifera and analytical technique-specific calibrations (see Methods for details). (B) Mg/Ca data are used for SST reconstructions and are based on *G. ruber*, 250-300 μm (orange), *G. ruber*, 300-355 μm (red), *T. sacculifer*, 425-500 μm (purple) and *G. ruber*, 300-355 μm [Henehan et al., 2013; Martínez-Botí et al., 2015]. (C) The Mg/Ca value

of seawater (used for correcting Mg/Ca-based SST) is taken from *Fantle and DePaolo* [2006], which for this time period is consistent with Mg/Ca_{sw} estimates from marine evaporite fluid inclusions [*Horita et al.*, 2002; *Brennan et al.*, 2013]. (D) SST is based on Mg/Ca data and corrected for changes in Mg/Ca_{sw} [*Evans and Müller*, 2012] in all cases, except *Seki et al.* [2010] who based their SST estimates on the alkenone unsaturation index (U^k₃₇). (E) The δ¹¹B value of seawater is assumed to have been constant over the past 5 Ma (F) Salinity at Site 668B is derived from the modeled sea level estimates of *Bintanja and van de Wal* [2008] as described in the text, with an uncertainty of ±2‰. (G) Alkalinity calculated using local S:ALK relationship of TA_{668B} = 65.62*S+22.84 and TA_{999A} = 59.19 + 229.08 [*Foster*, 2008], based on modern surface WOCE and GLODAP data. Alkalinity uncertainty is ±100 μmol/kg for the past 1.9 Ma and ±175 for samples older than 1.9 Ma.

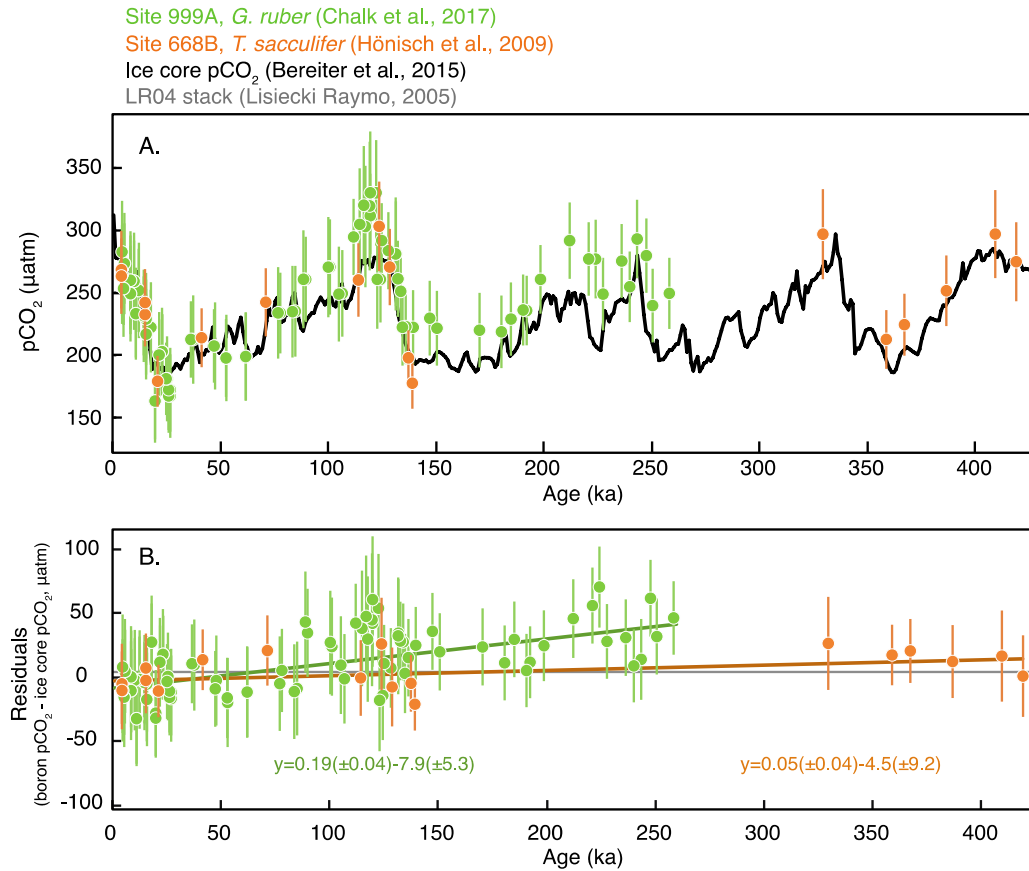


Figure S8. (A) Expanded view of boron-based pCO₂ from Figure 7, as calculated using the published $\delta^{11}\text{B}$ measurements [Hönisch et al., 2009; Chalk et al., 2017] and the boundary conditions set forth in the Methods, compared with pCO₂ from ice core measurements [Bereiter et al., 2015]. (B) Difference between boron-based pCO₂ and ice core pCO₂. Over the past 260 ka, the difference between *G. ruber*-based pCO₂ and ice core pCO₂ is larger further back in time, which we suggest is most likely due to small evolutionary changes in *G. ruber* ecology or habitat over time.

Based on Martínez-Botí et al., 2015 (*G. ruber* $\delta^{11}\text{B}$), various $\delta^{11}\text{B}_{\text{calcite}}$ to $\delta^{11}\text{B}_{\text{borate}}$ calibration slopes (m) and intercepts (b)
 Based on Bartoli et al., 2011 (*T. sacculifer* $\delta^{11}\text{B}$), as presented in text

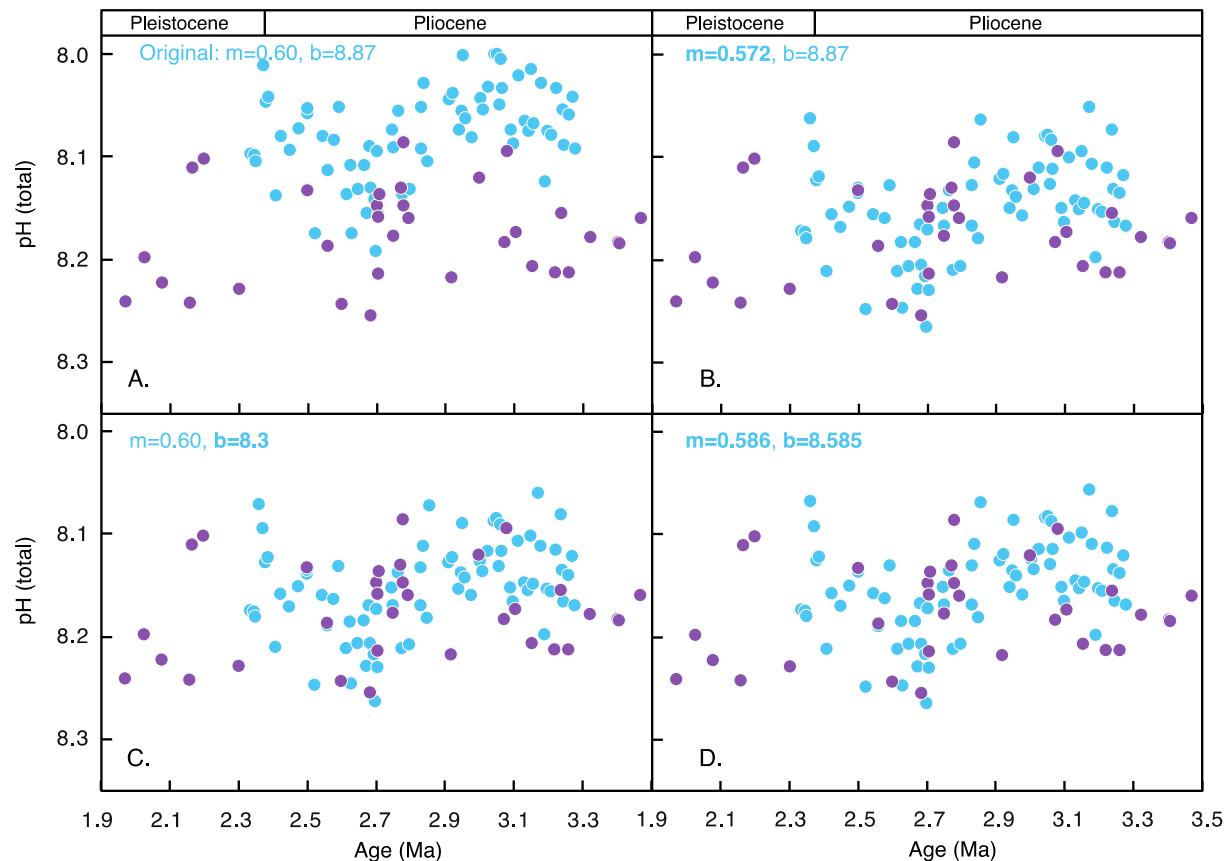


Figure S9. If we assume that the *T. sacculifer*-based pH record from Site 999 is correct for the early Pleistocene-late Pliocene, the pH offset of the *G. ruber*-based pH record from Site 999 from the same time period could be due to a biologically-mediated change in the slope and/or intercept of the *G. ruber* $\delta^{11}\text{B}_{\text{calcite}}$ to $\delta^{11}\text{B}_{\text{borate}}$ relationship. The modern *G. ruber* $\delta^{11}\text{B}_{\text{calcite}}$ to $\delta^{11}\text{B}_{\text{borate}}$ calibration has a slope of 0.60 and intercept of 8.87 [Henehan et al., 2013]; if the *G. ruber* calibration slope is modified to force the two pH records to match, then the new Plio-Pleistocene slope for *G. ruber* samples would become 0.572 (panel B). If instead the intercept is modified to force a match, the new intercept is 8.3 (panel C). A number of potential matches can be made by changing both the calibration slope and intercept; a third example of one of these potential solutions is given in panel D.

Table S1. Data from Figure 2. Calibration of $\delta^{11}\text{B}$ of *T. sacculifer* (>450 μm) to $\delta^{11}\text{B}$ of seawater borate ion as measured via N-TIMS for down-core records.

Culture							
pH ¹	$\delta^{11}\text{B}$ (‰)	$\delta^{11}\text{B}$ 2se	$\delta^{11}\text{B}$ borate (‰) ³	$\delta^{11}\text{B}$ borate uncertainty ⁴	Temp. (°C)	Sal.	Reference
7.49	17.68	0.8	14.18	0.22	27	35.4	<i>Sanyal et al.</i> , 2001 ²
8.03	20.69	0.25	18.20	0.66	27	35.4	⁵
8.07	20.71	0.7	18.65	0.58	27	35.4	<i>Sanyal et al.</i> , 2001 ²
8.45	24.40	0.21	23.89	0.47	27	35.4	⁵
8.47	25.85	0.5	24.20	0.78	27	35.4	<i>Sanyal et al.</i> , 2001 ²

Core top							
pH ¹	$\delta^{11}\text{B}$ (‰)	$\delta^{11}\text{B}$ 2se	$\delta^{11}\text{B}$ borate (‰) ³	$\delta^{11}\text{B}$ borate uncertainty ⁴	Temp. (°C)	Sal.	Reference
8.17	20.84	0.34	19.97	0.04	27.72	35.25	ODP 668B, <i>Hönisch et al.</i> , 2009
8.12	20.80	0.22	19.36	0.04	25.8	40.02	GeoB 5810 ⁶
8.14	20.66	0.28	19.69	0.04	29.14	34.3	RC10-139, <i>Hönisch and Hemming</i> , 2004
8.14	20.49	0.19	19.61	0.04	28.45	34.42	V34-54, <i>Hönisch and Hemming</i> , 2004
8.07	20.42	0.19	18.77	0.03	27.63	35.82	ODP 999A ⁶

Core top details				
Core	Latitude	Longitude	Sample	<i>T. sacculifer</i> size fraction (μm)
GeoB 5810	29.56°N	35.02°E	10-20 cm	450-500
ODP 999A	12.75°N	78.73°W	1-1, 3-5 cm	515-865

¹ All pH values on the total scale.

² Culture studies corrected for $\delta^{11}\text{B}_{\text{sw}}$ where $\delta^{11}\text{B}_{\text{sw}}$ was different from 39.61‰. *Sanyal et al.* [2001]. In addition, *T. sacculifer* $\delta^{11}\text{B}$ data from an old NBS 6³ radius of curvature NTIMS at SUNY Stony Brook corrected by -1.1‰ to be equivalent with $\delta^{11}\text{B}$ measured on the Triton at LDEO [*Hönisch et al.*, 2009].

³ $\delta^{11}\text{B}$ of borate calculated using $\alpha_{\text{B3-B4}}$ after *Klochko et al.* [2006] and T, S effects on pK*B after *Dickson* [1990] and *Millero* [1995], with constants corrected after *Rae et al.* [2011] and the isotopic composition of borate calculated using the revised boron isotope mass balance of *Rae* [2018].

⁴ The uncertainty in $\delta^{11}\text{B}_{\text{borate}}$ is based on the pH uncertainty only and does not take into account uncertainties in temperature and salinity.

⁵ New cultured *T. sacculifer* data are based on specimens cultured in Puerto Rico in 2010 using methods identical to *Allen et al.* [2012]. Both samples were analyzed on the Triton TIMS at LDEO using established analytical [*Hönisch et al.*, 2009] and cleaning methods [*Russell et al.*, 2004].

⁶ Core top $\delta^{11}\text{B}$ measurements are carried out with the same technique as described in the text, section 2.1. Core locations and samples are described above.

Table S2. Summary of peak marine isotope stages (MIS) used to define average data for cross plots and maximum and minimum pCO₂ estimated for each stage.

MIS	Start age (ka)	End age (ka)	Age (ka)	Glacial pCO ₂ (μatm)	Interglacial pCO ₂ (μatm)	Comment
44	1370	1385	1384	214		MIS 44 min
45	1395	1410	1397		271	MIS 45 max
			1402		320	
			1408		327	
46	1415	1426	1420	201		MIS 46 min
			1425	234		
47	1436	1450	1441		285	MIS 47 max
			1446		287	
48	1454	1467	1456	237		MIS 48 min
			1459	261		
			1465	249		
49	1485	1491	1487		262	MIS 49 max
			1490		292	
50	1495	1504	1496	201		MIS 50 min
			1499	224		
			1502	183		
51	1514	1527	1516		299	MIS 51 max
			1519		278	
			1522		284	
			1526		306	
52	1537	1542	1539	226		MIS 52 min
			1541	228		

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