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The 'great dying': rapid warming caused largest extinction event ever, report says

“大灭绝”：报告称，气候极速变暖曾导致有史以来最大的灭绝事件

Rapid global warming caused the largest extinction event in the Earth's history, scientists have found. The mass extinction, known as the “great dying”, occurred around 252m years ago and marked the end of the Permian geologic period.

科学家发现，全球迅速变暖曾导致了地球史上最大的一次灭绝事件。这场大规模集群灭绝也称“大灭绝”，它发生在大约 2.52 亿年前，标志着二叠纪地质时代的结束。

The event was the single greatest calamity ever to befall life on Earth, eclipsing even the extinction of the dinosaurs 65m years ago. Up to 96% of all marine species perished while more than two-thirds of terrestrial species disappeared.

这场大灭绝对于地球上的生命来说曾是一场最致命的灾难，严重程度甚至超过了 6500 万年前恐龙的大灭绝。多达 96% 的海洋物种死亡，超过三分之二的陆地物种消失。

The researchers built a model to analyse changes in animal metabolism, ocean and climate conditions. They found that marine animals essentially suffocated as warming waters lacked the oxygen required for survival. "For the first time, we've got a whole lot of confidence that this is what happened," said Deutsch, an oceanography expert who co-authored the research. "It's a very strong argument that rising temperatures and oxygen depletion were to blame."

研究人员建立了一个模型来分析动物新陈代谢、海洋和气候条件的变化。他们发现，海洋动物根本上是由于海水变暖，缺乏生存所需的氧气而窒息死亡的。研究合著人之一的海洋学专家多伊奇说：“这是我们第一次能这么确信，这场大灾难是怎么发生的。气温上升和氧气消耗是主要元凶，这是个非常有力的论点。”

Over the past century, global warming is already causing punishing heatwaves, flooding and wildfires around the world, with scientists warning that the temperature rise could reach 3C or more by the end of the century unless there are immediate, radical reductions in emissions.

在过去一个世纪里，全球变暖已经在世界各地引起了严重的热浪、洪水和野火。科学家警告说，除非立即彻底减少排放量，否则到本世纪末，气温上升可能达到 3 摄氏度或更高。

At the same time, Earth's species are undergoing what some experts have termed the "sixth great extinction" due to habitat loss, poaching, pollution and climate change. 与此同时，由于栖息地的丧失、偷猎行为、环境污染和气候变化，地球上的物种正在经历着专家所命名的“第六次大灭绝”。

"The past holds the key to the future," said Pamela Grothe, a paleoclimate scientist at the University of Mary Washington. "If we continue in the trajectory we are on with current emission rates, this study highlights the potential that we may see similar rates of extinction in marine species as in the end of the Permian."

玛丽华盛顿大学的古气候学家帕梅拉·格罗斯说：“以史为鉴。这项研究明确强调了一种可能性，如果我们继续保持目前的排放速度，现今海洋物种的灭绝速度可能逼近二叠纪末期。”

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重点词汇

extinction/ɪk'stɪŋkʃn/

n. 灭绝

- an extinct species (adj.)

mass/mæs/

adj. 大规模的

- mass stranding

Permian/'pɜːrmɪən/

adj. 二叠纪的

geologic period

地质时代

calamity/kə'læməti/

n. 灾难，灾祸

befall/bɪ'fɔːl/

v. (坏事) 降临于/发生在...身上

eclipse/ɪ'klɪps/

v. (日 / 月食) 光芒盖过 (天体) ; 淹没...的重要性 ; 凌驾于...之上

- There will be a total eclipse of the sun today. (n.)
- The sun will be totally eclipsed today. _
- The economy has eclipsed all other issues. _

marine/mə'riːn/

adj. 海洋的

perish/'perɪʃ/

v. (尤指因事故) 丧生，死亡；毁灭

- Three hundred people perished in the earthquake.

terrestrial/tə'restriəl/

adj. 陆地的；（动物）陆生的，陆栖的

- terrain; territory

metabolism/mə'tæbəlaɪzəm/

n. 新陈代谢

suffocate/'sʌfəkeɪt/

v. （使）窒息而死；（使）闷死

- Many of the victims had suffocated to death.

a whole lot (of)

大量；非常

- I don't like him a whole lot.
- = a whole bunch of

oceanography/ˌoʊʃə'nɑːɡrəfi/

n. 海洋学

co-author/ˌkoʊ 'ɔːθər/

v. 共同撰写，合著

depletion/dɪ'pliːʃn/

n. 减少，减小

be to blame

是...的原因，...应承担责任

- That driver was to blame for the accident.

punishing/'pʌnɪʃɪŋ/

adj. 繁重的，累人的；破坏严重的

- Currently she has a punishing schedule.

radical/'rædɪkl/

adj. 根本的，彻底的；激进的

- radical views
- radical changes

undergo/ˌʌndər'ɡəʊ/

v. 经历，经受（令人不快的事或变化）

- She underwent an operation.

poach/pəʊtʃ/

v. （侵入他人地界）偷猎，偷捕

hold the key to

是...的关键；能够解释或解决...

- The majority group holds the key to the result.
- Tourism holds the key to the region's recovery.

paleoclimate/ˌpeiliːəu'klaɪmɪt/

n. 古气候

trajectory/trə'dʒektəri/

n. 轨道，轨迹

- The inflation is on a downward trajectory.