The Oil Drum
DISCUSSIONS ABOUT ENERGY AND OUR FUTURE

A thought on Hurricane strength in the Gulf

Posted by Heading Out on September 19, 2005 - 12:50am
Topic: Miscellaneous

Some time before Hurricane season we posted a reference from the UK where one of their submarines had been measuring Arctic ice. It found that one of the driving forces for the Gulf Stream, the Odden ice shelf, which used to grow out into the Greenland Sea from the Arctic ice cap each winter, had stopped forming. As a result it no longer melted in the spring driving cold water down to the bottom of the Atlantic, and thereby helping power the Gulf Stream. In consequence with the GS running slower less heat is being taken out of the Gulf and sent North.

While I do not have the original reference to hand, the Times has an equivalent story, that describes what has occurred.

With more heat left in the waters of the Gulf, this provides additional power to hurricanes that enter that body of water, with consequences that we have seen in Katrina, and, sadly, may now begin to expect from Rita. It also means that the winters in Western Europe may not be as pleasant in the future. Which given some of the depletion rates from the supplies in the North Sea, and the inability of Russia to significantly increase exports, may be giving the British Government, among others, a bit of heartburn right now.

Update [2005-9-19 1:19:45 by Prof. Goose]: And, under the fold is a link to the latest modeling of Rita. No clue yet, folks.

Update[2005-9-19 8:50 by Heading Out]: There is also the reference to the National Geographic picture of the platform locations in the Gulf.

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http://euler.atmos.colostate.edu/~vigh/guidance/atlantic/early1.png

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