

Ice age permafrost unearthed in Poland to help clock warming

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The frozen river Oder is seen from a bridge between Poland and Germany in January, 2010. Permafrost dating from the end of the last Ice Age around 13,000 years ago recently discovered in Poland could prove an invaluable tool in gauging global warming, Polish geologists said on Friday.

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The unique discovery of pre-historic permafrost was made on Monday in a corner of north-eastern Poland bordering Lithuania, near the village of Szypliszki.

[Geologists](#) drilling at the site were astounded to find the temperature of the [drill cores](#) decreasing rather than increasing -- as is normally the case -- the deeper they went.

The core containing ancient frost is the first of its kind found in central Europe and is an invaluable source of information about the climate on the Earth tens of thousands of years ago, the Polish geologists said.

Usually, similar valuable information can be derived from ancient cores found in Antarctica or [Greenland](#).

"It is like touching cold that is 13,000-years-old," Professor Jerzy Nawrocki, director of the Polish Geological Institute (PGI), told reporters in Warsaw on Friday.

"On August 3, our scientists noted 0.07 degrees Celsius (32.12 Fahrenheit) at a depth of 356 meters (389 yards) in an exploratory [borehole](#)," he said, adding the finding "confirms the hypothesis of scientists that [glaciers](#) were present in Poland".

"Our discovery is important especially in relation to present discussions about global warming," said fellow-PGI Professor Jan Szewczyk, who heads the research project.

"In order to be able to build reliable models of future climate changes, we need to have trustworthy data from the past," he said.

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