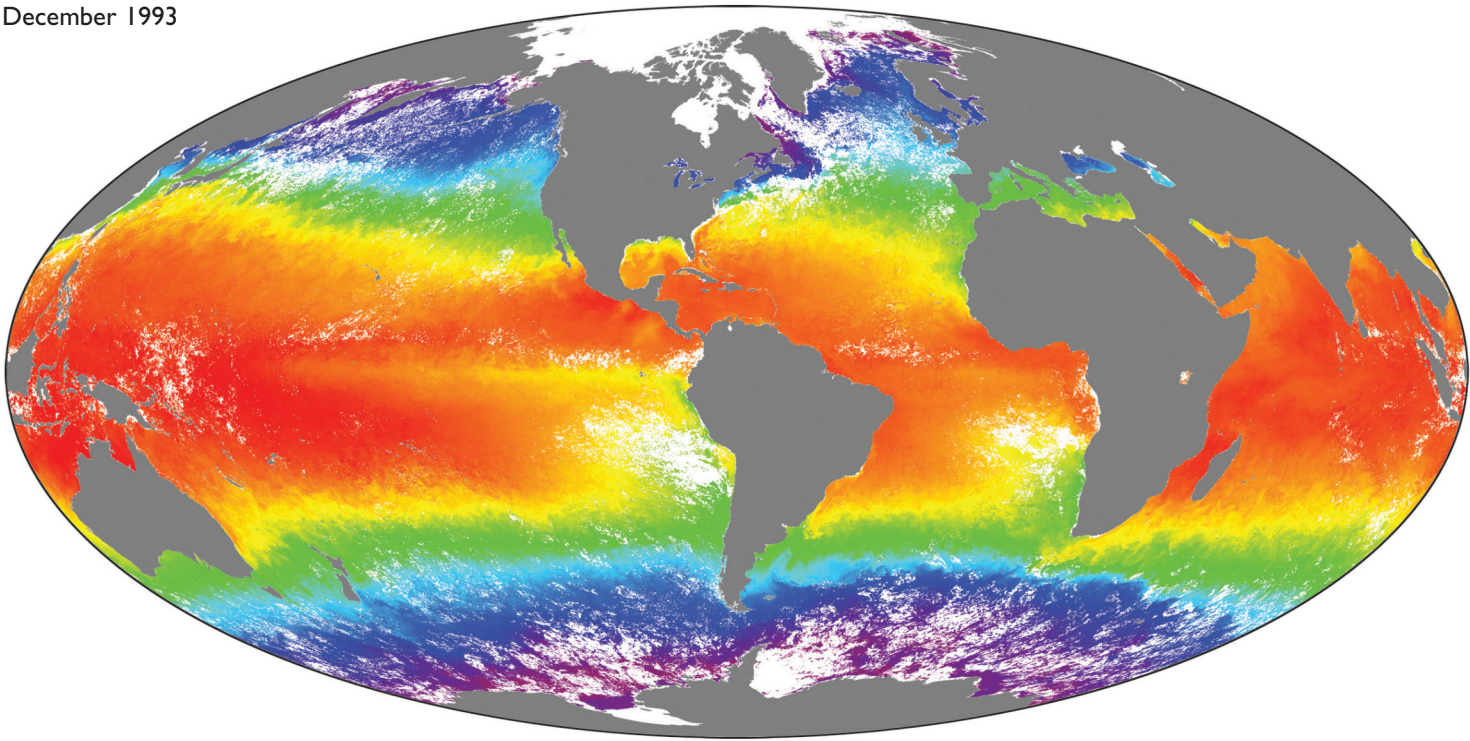
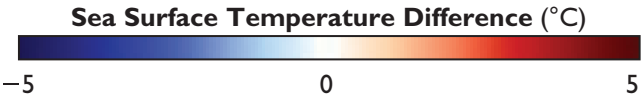
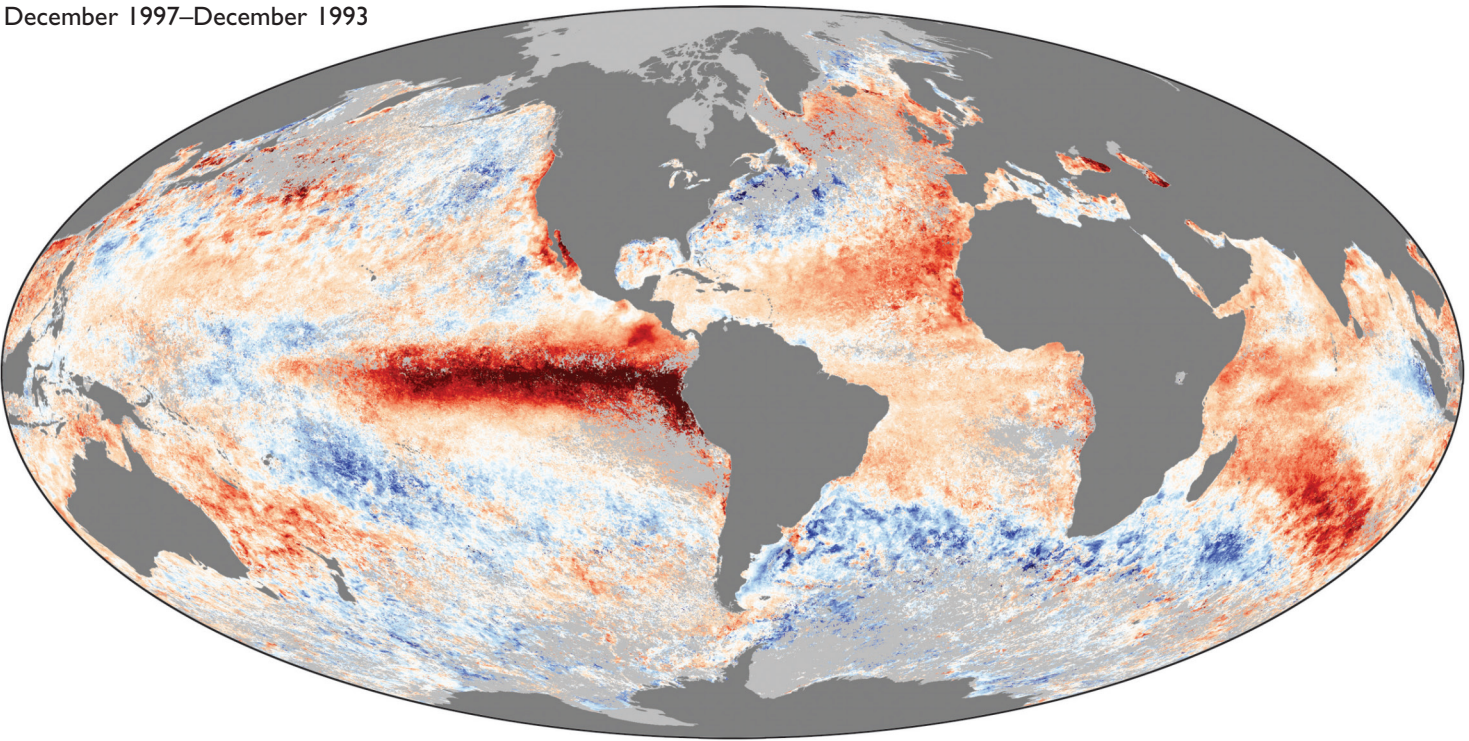


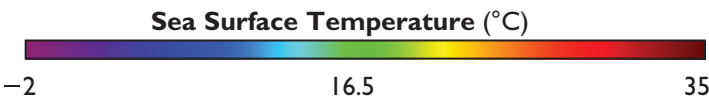
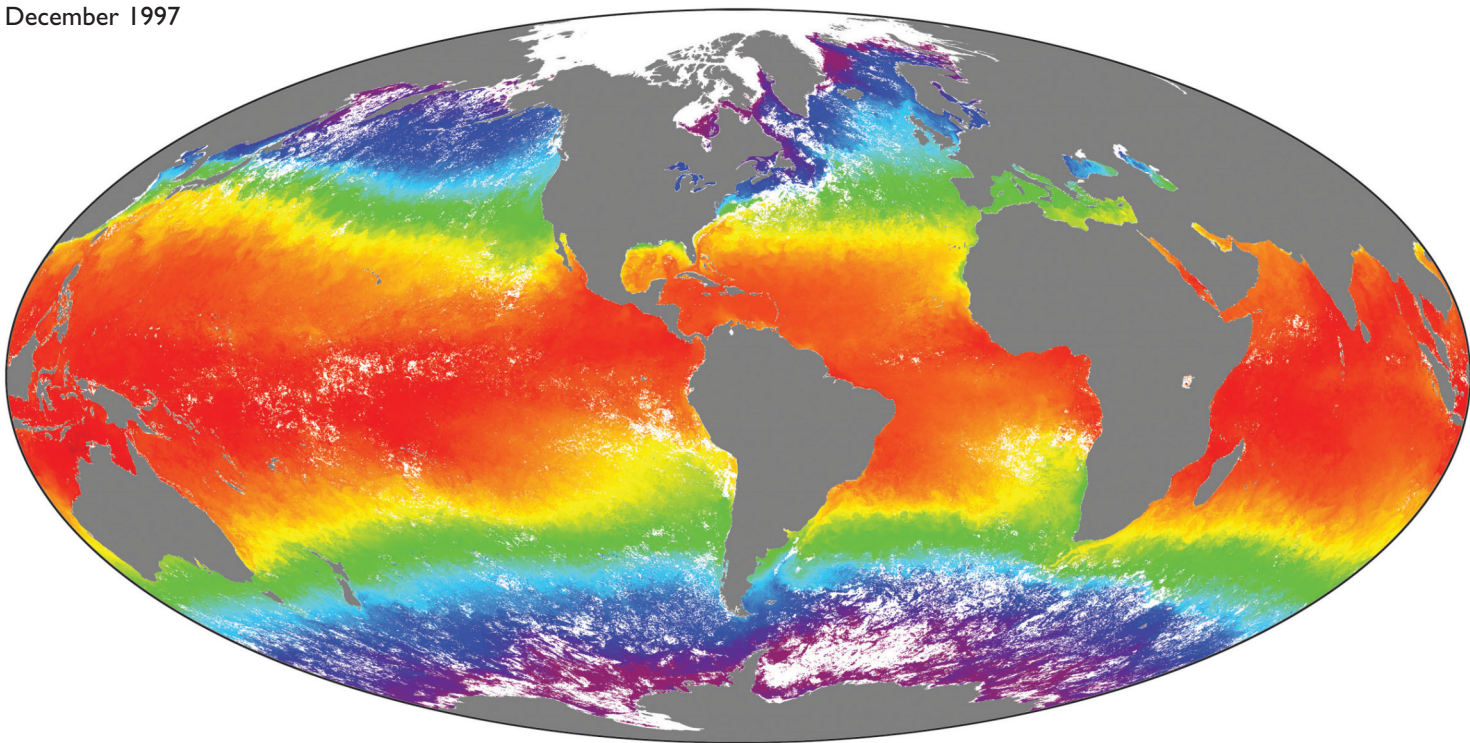
December 1993



December 1997–December 1993



December 1997



Contrasting images of the global ocean-surface temperatures for December 1993, showing the normal situation, and December 1997, during an El Niño event (opposite), and their difference (above). The most significant change between the two cases is that the warm temperatures, usually centered in the western Pacific, extend across the whole Tropical Pacific during the El Niño, and the usually cold waters off Peru, important to the local ecosystem, are missing. (Data from the AVHRR instrument on the NOAA-11 and NOAA-14 satellites.)