



0.2 mm sea level equivalent only, but

Tropical glaciers.

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The climate of regions that contain tropical glaciers is characterized by (i) air temperature variations that are larger on a daily than on an annual cycle ("the night is the winter of the tropics"), (ii) the sun being at zenith at least one time per year, and (iii) one or two more or less pronounced precipitation and dry seasons. Tropical glaciers are often steep and thin and are located on exposed slopes and summits of high mountains. Because of these characteristics tropical glaciers are highly sensitive to changes in a variety of climate variables and, in many cases, important components of the regional water supply. As really important climate indicators they also complete a "global" network of glaciers, most of which are found at mid and high latitudes. Long taken more as objects of curiosity than as subjects of serious research they increasingly provide us with information about present climate change. However, the picture of reconstructed tropical glacier variation and climate change is not yet satisfyingly completed. Still, the puzzle is taking some shape and should soon allow us to make more robust projections of future glacier extents and water availability. A state of the art review.