Prelim Bits 22-01-2017

Rescue plan for the Vaquita:

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- The Vaquita (Phocoena sinus) is a rare species of porpoise.
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- They are small toothed whales that are very closely related to oceanic dolphins.
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- It is endemic to the northern part of the Gulf of California.
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- It is the **most endangered marine mammal species in the world.**
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- IUCN status - Critically Endangered.
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- International Committee for the Recovery of the Vaquita (CIRVA) was created by the Mexican Ministry of Environment to eliminate illegal fishing, removing gill nets and relocating remaining Vaquita to a temporary sanctuary and thereby conserving the species.
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Habitable exoplanet next to Earth:

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- The exoplanets are planets that exist outside Earth's solar system.
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- The term “habitable zones” refers to a planet where water could exist in a liquid state on a planet’s surface if there's sufficient atmospheric pressure.
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- Astronomers have located the habitable zone **"The Wolf 1061",** a planetary system that is 14 light years away from the Earth.
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- One of the planets in the wolf planetary system, **Wolf 1061c,** is entirely within the habitable zone.
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- It has an atmosphere more similar to Venus.
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- But the climate of Wolf 1061c is quite chaotic compared to earth, since the orbit around its star changes at a much faster rate than earth. The earth also experiences climate change due to change in its orbit around the sun which resulted in ice age previously.
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- Now the earth is in interglacial period.
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Warmest Year:

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- **The year 2016 was the warmest year since record-keeping began in 1880.**
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- The global average surface temperature last year was 0.94°C higher than the 20th century average and July was the warmest month ever recorded.
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- Two phenomena were responsible for this. One was climate change and other was El Nino.
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- Previously 2014 was the warmest year and the record was broken in 2015 and subsequently now in 2016 showing a continuous rise in the earth’s temperature.
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- This is only the second time that the annual temperature record has been

broken three years in a row. The previous trio was during World War II.
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- All 16 years in our current century rank among the 17 warmest on record.
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