



U.S. National Ice Center
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PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Antarctic Sea Ice Reaches Minimum Extent

March 14, 2018, Suitland, MD — Sea ice extent in the Southern Hemisphere reached its summer minimum during the last week of February 2018. Covering an area of 2.181 million square kilometers, this season's minimum sea ice extent is the second lowest on record. The lowest recorded minimum extent occurred in early March 2017 with 2.106 million square kilometers of coverage. This season's sea ice melt began in November 2017 and now begins a new season of sea ice growth.

Analysts at the U.S. National Ice Center (USNIC) continuously monitor the global sea ice environment. Personnel use spatial analysis to distinguish sea ice types,

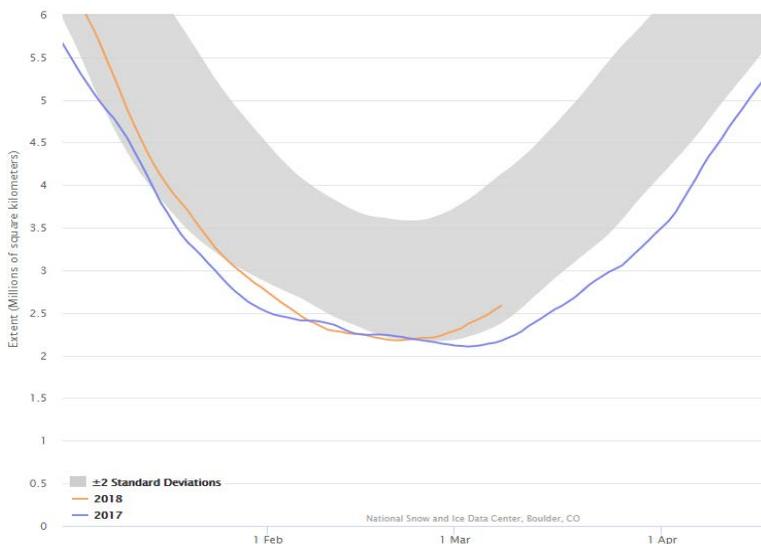


Figure 1. Antarctic Sea Ice Extent in 2018 and 2017. Note that these are both below two standard deviations of average ice extent. Credit: National Snow and Ice Data Center.

movement, growth and decline using a combination of synthetic aperture radar (SAR) and both visible and infrared satellite imagery to analyze the daily and weekly ice conditions in this remote region.

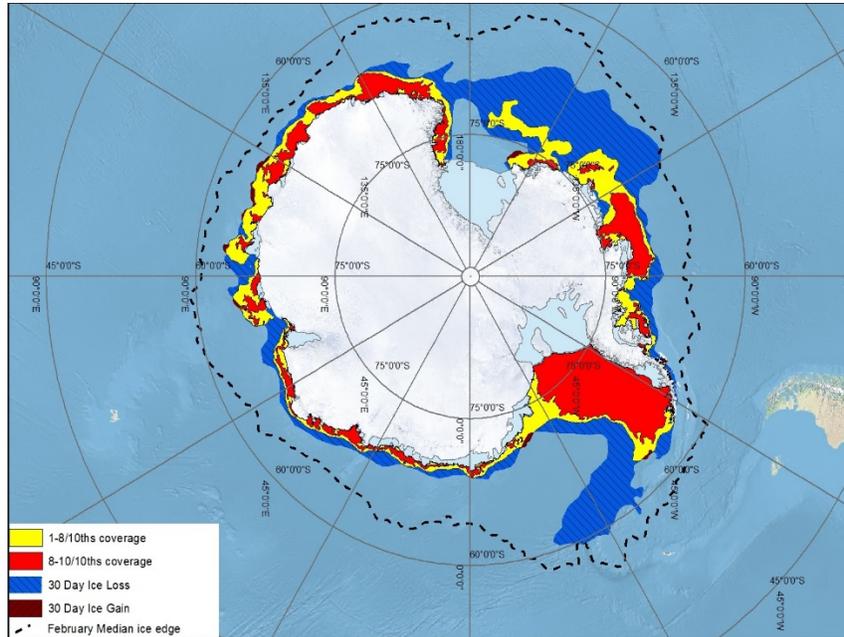


Figure 2. 30 Day Ice Gain / Loss during approximately the timeframe of minimum ice extent.

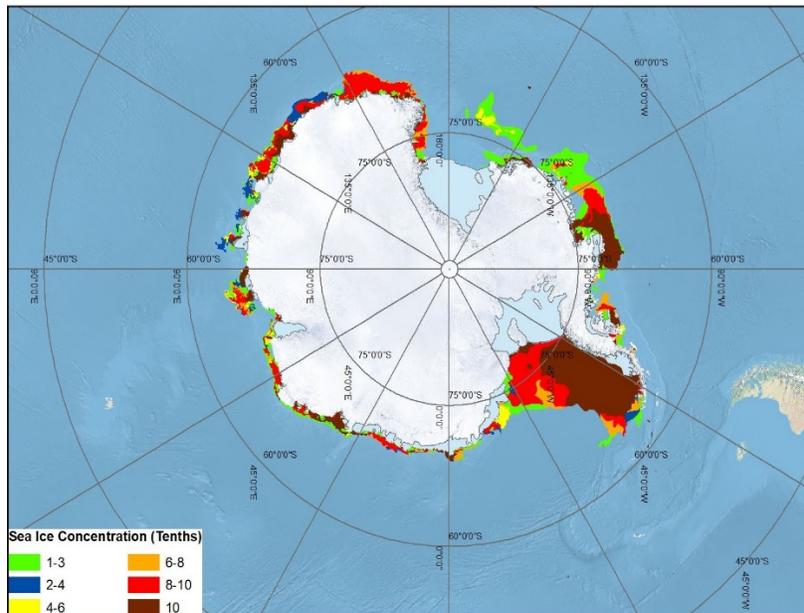


Figure 3. Sea ice concentration in the Southern Ocean on 22FEB18. Note particularly low sea ice concentration in the Ross and Amundson Seas.

To access daily products, weekly products, archival data and much more of our data in various formats, visit the USNIC webpage at: http://www.natice.noaa.gov/Main_Products.htm

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The U.S. National Ice Center is a multi-agency center operated by the Navy, NOAA, and Coast Guard and provides global to tactical scale ice and snow products, ice forecasting, and related environmental intelligence services for the United States government.

