

Future of Ice

The Arctic and Antarctic are undergoing rapid and dramatic change due to globalization, climate change and other impacts of human activities. The University of Washington is capitalizing on our established expertise in the polar regions by investing in research, education and outreach to help us further understand and address the changes currently taking place in these critical regions.

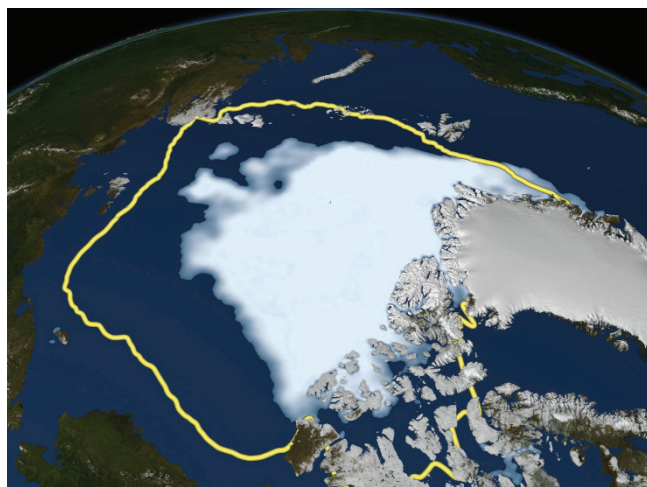
The Importance of Ice

Our planet's high latitude environments—the Arctic and the Antarctic—are experiencing rapid, multifaceted and complex changes. The disappearance of ice is one aspect of change that drives many others, affecting social, economic, political, and environmental systems. The polar regions are home to nearly 4 million people and play a role in the national security of many countries. They are visually breathtaking and have captured imaginations and inspired pioneers from the first Arctic peoples to modern-day scientists.

The distance of the Arctic and Antarctic from the major population centers of Earth's more temperate and tropical latitudes can put these places out of sight and out of mind, yet their health—from social and economic to environmental—has deep implications both locally and for the entire globe.

Future of Ice Initiative

The University of Washington has built a leadership position in polar research over the past 40 years with programs in social science and policy, and unparalleled breadth as well as depth in the natural sciences. In an effort to better understand the changing systems of our planet's high latitudes, a number of UW units are investing in current and expanded polar research, educational resources to develop future leaders in science and policy, and public activities that bring the story of the poles to our doorsteps.



In September 2012, Arctic sea ice was reduced to a record minimum. The yellow outline is the average sea ice extent in September. (NASA)



The University's largest research vessel, the 274-foot R/V Thompson conducts research in polar regions. (Photo: Kathy Newell)



Advancing Science

- New investments in faculty and infrastructure are accelerating research and continuing to advance our leadership in polar studies.
- Emerging collaborations across disciplines—natural sciences, social sciences, humanities, arts, policy and more—are building needed knowledge about the intersections of these complex areas.
- A new distinguished postdoctoral program has been launched by the Quaternary Research Center and the Applied Physics Laboratory, and supported by the College of the Environment, providing resources for the best and brightest early-career scholars.
- A new investment to the Jackson School of International Studies from the Andrew Mellon Foundation is invigorating social sciences and policy studies in the Arctic.



A changing climate has implications for indigenous and non indigenous communities, as well as numerous industries, that depend on polar environments. (Photo: Carol Jolles)

Strengthening Education

- A new Arctic Studies Minor, coordinated by the Jackson School for International Studies and the School of Oceanography, provides undergraduates with opportunities to gain skills relevant to addressing major science and policy issues connected to the Arctic.
- UW offers numerous graduate level classes focused on or highly relevant to the polar regions, including a new seminar—offered jointly by faculty from Anthropology, Canadian Studies and Oceanography—that introduces students to interdisciplinary, policy-relevant themes with faculty and students from diverse fields of study.
- Students, faculty, staff and the public have the opportunity each year to learn from a visiting scholar from Canada under The Canada Fulbright Visiting Chair in Arctic Studies program. The Fulbright program brings scholars, scientists, practitioners and leaders involved in Arctic affairs to the University of Washington to build new synergies among those working in the Circumpolar North and to reinforce relations between UW and Canadian scholars.

Building Strong Partnerships

- The Future of Ice Initiative is possible because of strong partnerships between the College of the Environment, the Quaternary Research Center, the Polar Science Center at the Applied Physics Laboratory, the Canadian Studies Center at the Henry M. Jackson School of International Studies, the College of Arts & Sciences, the Program on Climate Change, and more.
- A number of private foundations, artists, independent scholars, and others have supported the Future of Ice Initiative, with the goal of providing opportunities to extend academic work beyond the UW, and work collaboratively with people and institutions doing real-world work in the polar regions.

Learn more at <http://ice.uw.edu>