

## 2008 Outlook

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1. Ice extent: 4.1 million km<sup>2</sup>
2. First-year ice tends to melt faster than multi-year ice and the first-year ice is far extensive this year than it was last year. So initial conditions support a lower ice year than 2007. (A major factor.)

The Pacific is cold and ice in the Bering Sea is persisting (approximately half the shelf still ice covered). There will be little or no assistance with ice melt by warmer water from the Bering Sea as apparently occurred when the Bering Sea was very warm (2001-2005). (Probably a significant but not major factor.)

In addition to melting ice, in 2007 much of the multi-year ice exited to the Atlantic because of atmospheric patterns. The probability of the atmosphere setting up as perfectly as it did last year is unlikely. (A major factor.)

3. While initial conditions support the idea that there will be a lower minimum ice extent than occurred in 2007, the other two factors should balance that tendency. This would result in a minimum ice extent very similar to what occurred in 2007.
4. Improved observations of ice thickness, temperature structure of upper water column, and improved modeling capability.