

Sea Ice Outlook  
2019 July Report  
Individual Outlook

---

**Name of contributor or name of contributing organization:**

NSIDC (Barrett/Slater)

**Is this contribution from a person or group not affiliated with a research organization?**

**Name and organization for all contributors. Indicate primary contact and total number of people who may have contributed to your Outlook, even if not included on the author list.**

Andrew Barrett, National Snow and Ice Data Center

Drew Slater, National Snow and Ice Data Center

**Do you want your June contribution to automatically be included in subsequent reports? (If yes, you may still update your contribution via the submission form.)**

This is a new submission.

**What is the type of your Outlook projection?**

Statistical

**Starting in 2017 we are accepting both pan-Arctic and pan-Antarctic sea ice extent (either one or both) of the September monthly mean. As in 2016, we are also collecting Alaskan regional sea ice extent. To be consistent with the validating sea ice extent index from NSIDC, if possible, please first compute the average sea ice concentration for the month and then compute the extent as the sum of cell areas > 15%.**

**a) Pan-Arctic September extent prediction in million square kilometers.**

**b) same as in (a) but for pan-Antarctic. If your method differs substantially from that for the Arctic, please enter it as a separate submission.**

**c) same as in (b) but for the Alaskan region. Please also tell us maximum possible extent if every ocean cell in your region were ice covered.**

**"Executive summary" of your Outlook contribution (using 300 words or less) describe how and why your contribution was formulated. To the extent possible, use non-technical language.**

This projection was made using the Slater Probabilistic Ice Extent model developed by Drew Slater (<http://cires1.colorado.edu/~aslater/SEAICE/>). The model computes the probability of sea ice concentration greater than 15% for Arctic Ocean grid cells in the EASE 25 km grid. These probabilities are aggregated over the model domain to arrive at daily ice extents. A September mean ice extent is calculated from daily forecasts issued on July 1. While the model has predictive skill at lead times up to 90 days, NSIDC runs the forecast model with a 50 day lead time. Forecasts issued on July 1 for September have lead times spanning 62 to 91 days. Therefore we consider the mean September ice extent forecast for the July sea ice outlook to have some skill.

**Brief explanation of Outlook method (using 300 words or less).**

This is a non-parametric statistical model of Arctic sea ice extent. The model computes the probability of whether ice concentration greater than 15% will exist at a particular location for a particular lead time into the future, given current ice concentration. The only input is sea ice concentration. Probabilities are computed using data from the past 10 years. These probabilities are adjusted using daily near-real-time concentrations to make a forecast. Pan-Arctic Ice extent is the sum of the product of grid-box area the probability of a grid-box containing ice on the forecast date.

While not as sophisticated as a coupled ocean-ice-atmosphere models, this statistical method has the advantage that the forecasts for all points are completely independent in both space and time; that is, the forecast at any given point is not affected by its neighbors, nor its result from the prior

day. Therefore, the model can adapt to changing conditions and is not inherently subject to drift.

The model has performed well in comparison to others in the 2013/2014 SIPN Outlooks, in both extent value and spatial distribution. For 2012, a September mean forecast of below 4 million square kilometers was given. However, the model has also missed by as much as 0.6 million square kilometers in some years. Forecasting is difficult, but the model does have genuine skill at lead times as long as 90 days. Skill improves as lead time decreases, and September is the month with highest skill.

**Tell us the dataset used for your initial Sea Ice Concentration (SIC).**

NSIDC NASA Team, <https://nsidc.org/data/nsidc-0081>,  
<https://doi.org/10.5067/U8C09DWVX9LM>.

**Tell us the dataset used for your initial Sea Ice Thickness (SIT) used. Include name and date.**

**If you use a dynamic model, please specify the name of the model as a whole and each component including version numbers and how the component is initialized:**

Not Specified

**If available from your method.**

**a) Uncertainty/probability estimates:**

**Median**

**Ranges**

**Standard Deviations**

**b) Brief explanation/assessment of basis for the uncertainty estimate (1-2 sentences).**

**c) Brief description of any post processing you have done (1-2 sentences).**