



Written by [Rebecca Terrell](#) on November 14, 2009

Massive Iceberg Heralds Antarctic Cooling

Scientists are shocked by a massive iceberg floating into waters near the Australian Island of Macquarie. New Zealand's Otago Daily Times reports that satellites have located the iceberg more than 12 miles north of Macquarie and headed toward currents that could draw it closer to New Zealand or out into the Pacific Ocean. The giant floating slab of ice, first sighted last week south of the sub-antarctic island, measures 2,300 feet long and 1,148 feet deep, as reported by Sky News.



Scientists fear that it will pose a serious hazard to ships as it breaks up and melts on its northward journey. The Sky News article quotes Neal Young, glaciologist with the [Australian Antarctic Division](#) (AAD) of the Australian Department of the Environment, remarking on how unusual it is to see an iceberg so far north. "If the current trends in global warming were to continue I would anticipate seeing more icebergs and the large ice shelves breaking up," Young said.

However, research published in January by the Science & Public Policy Institute says differently. According to Christopher Monckton, author of [Warming Freezes the Southern Ocean: Another Mann-made Climate Change](#), temperatures in Antarctica have been cooling over the last half century. Moreover, "the extent of the sea ice surrounding the Antarctic continent has been growing slightly in recent decades, reaching a record extent late in 2007," says Monckton, quoting research from the University of Illinois. He also cites a number of scientists who refute data recently published in the journal *Nature* that claims Antarctica is warming. This data is not based on actual observation but on estimates from climate models concocted by [Michael E. Mann](#), professor with the Earth System Science Center at Penn State University.

One of the scientists quoted by Monckton was NASA researcher Ross Hays, who said that in Antarctica, "the summer seasons have been getting colder.... December 2006 was the coldest December ever." Hays pointed out that research presented to the American Meteorological Society last year noted more than 70 percent of Antarctica was cooling. "With statistics you can make numbers go to almost any conclusion you want," Hays lamented. "It saddens me to see members of the scientific community do this for media coverage."

In the ADD press release, Neal Young also said this newest headlining iceberg "is likely to be part of one of the big ones that calved from the Ross Ice Shelf nearly a decade ago." Hays said that in his own experience as a forecaster in Antarctica he has witnessed a reversal in the annual receding of the Ross



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Ice Shelf observed in the late 1980s. He maintains that vehicles can now safely drive on the ice, though helicopters had to be used to transport personnel and equipment 20 years ago.



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