

A satellite view of the Earth's Arctic region. A yellow line outlines the historical average extent of sea ice from 1981 to 2010. The ice is shown in light blue/white, contrasting with the dark blue of the open ocean. The surrounding landmasses, including parts of North America, Europe, and Asia, are visible in shades of brown and green. The background is the blackness of space with some stars.

Historical Average  
1981-2010

1  
00:00:00,130 --> 00:00:04,290  
NASA and NSIDC scientists report that

2  
00:00:04,310 --> 00:00:08,470  
sea ice in the Arctic reached an annual minimum extent of 1.7

3  
00:00:08,490 --> 00:00:12,670  
million square miles on September 11th, 2015.

4  
00:00:12,690 --> 00:00:16,770  
According to scientists, it is the fourth lowest extent on record.

5  
00:00:16,790 --> 00:00:20,940  
Scientists have continuously monitored Arctic sea ice using satellites

6  
00:00:20,960 --> 00:00:25,130  
since 1979. Compared to the 30-year average

7  
00:00:25,150 --> 00:00:29,280  
from 1981-2010, this year's minimum extent

8  
00:00:29,300 --> 00:00:33,290  
is 699,000 square miles lower a difference an area

9  
00:00:33,310 --> 00:00:37,320  
comparable to the state of Alaska. Scientists have observed a

10  
00:00:37,340 --> 00:00:41,390  
trend in declining sea ice coverage over the past three decades.

11  
00:00:41,410 --> 00:00:45,440  
Satellite measurements show 10 record minimums have occurred in the last

12  
00:00:45,460 --> 00:00:49,630  
11 years. Measurements also show that more than the thin seasonal ice

13  
00:00:49,650 --> 00:00:53,700

is melting. The thicker and slower growing multi-year ice is becoming

14

00:00:53,720 --> 00:00:57,880

increasingly less resilient. As a result, scientists say