

On thin ice: Sea ice - ecosystem linkages in a changing ocean

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In both hemispheres, polar sea ice environments are changing at dramatic speed. Because both the Arctic and the Antarctic Oceans host a large variety of sea ice-associated life forms, these drastic changes of the physical environment have already significantly affected Polar ecosystems, and are predicted to cause more severe ramifications in the future. A key aim of this talk is to raise awareness of the need to better understand and protect the endangered beauty of sea ice-associated biodiversity. I will investigate several examples of critical relationships between the physical structure of sea ice habitats and sea ice-associated organisms and communities in both Polar Regions. The crucial importance of inter-disciplinary research for understanding these relationships and predicting future developments will be highlighted. Concepts of current and future inter-disciplinary sea ice research will be discussed.