

Is there a positive feedback between Arctic stratus  
and diminishing sea ice?

Master thesis

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## 0.1 Abstract

This will be my abstract.

Write it later....

No more than a page and should contain:

- main findings - how it compares to others - a conclusion?

# Chapter 1

## Introduction

Here I will write my introduction. Something about how low clouds in the Arctic have a warming affect as opposed to the cooling effect they have on lower latitudes. This warming is due to the lack of SW radiation flux to reflect, and the emission of LW radiation flux to the ground therefore makes a greater difference.

(Something citing the IPCC report 2013 on the ice conditions in the Arctic, and something about Arctic clouds and radiation?)

Clouds are an important regulator of the Earth's radiation budget. They cover approximately 60% of the Earth's surface Lohmann2005. It is well know that low clouds have a cooling effect at the surface due to their reflecting of incoming solar radiation. However, the effect is opposite in the Arctic, which I will elaborate on in the theory section. Therefore it is important to investigate the changes in low clouds and their properties in the Arctic.

### 1.1 Main goal

### 1.2 My contribution

The findings in my thesis have been achived with some of the most recently developed code (by Greg Thompson) for cloud microphysics and their effects on radiation, in modelling. The results build further on the work of many researchers @name-some-and-cite and contribute and may raise some questions for further research within the field.

### 1.3 Structure of the thesis

In the following chapter 2 Background I will present the background for my thesis; what work I hope to compare with and relate my thesis to. Also I will touch upon why the subject of my thesis is important. In chapter 3 Theory the most important theory and basic knowledge needed to understand some of the processes in clouds and their possible effect on the sea ice. Chapter 4 Model and methods is where I explain how I have worked with different tools to get the results presented in chapter ?? which are further discussed in chapter ?. A summary of main findings and conclusions are presented in the last chapter ? Summary and conclusions, before the lists of figures and references at the very end.

### 1.4 Area description

Here I should describe the area I have studied, and why it was chosen. (figure) The area was chosen because it had some ice in september, and because there have been research campaigns over the area with focus on clouds in the arctic (which is what I am studying). (show a map..?) Know the correct names of the seas and the land!!

## Chapter 2

# Background

In this chapter I shall present some recent literature on the subject. Some new (and older) research that makes my thesis interesting and relevant to the field. No one has done this study with a weather forecasting model, it is interesting to look at changes in parameters in similar meteorological conditions, the same initial and boundary conditions in every run. Describe some of the work done by Palm2010? WuLee2012 and others on autumn low clouds in the Arctic to emphasize the importance of my work.

Is my work new thinking and does it seem to be very extensive?





# Chapter 3

## Theory

### 3.1 Arctic clouds

The Arctic cloud cover is dominated by low clouds @cite. Most high amounts of stratus clouds are over the oceans Klein1993. The Arctic is the only region where the season of maximum stratus does not correspond to the season of greatest lower troposphere static stability Klein1993, which could be due to lack of evaporation during the cold winter months. According to [2] stratus in the Arctic basin peaks during summer at nearly 62%, while during the winter season the stratus only accounts for 18% of the cloud cover. This leads them to conclude that the seasonal cycle of stratus in the Arctic is driven by the temperature cycle, thereby moisture content in the atmosphere, rather than the static stability.(, as opposed to other areas.)

Are there any typical cloud properties special to the arctic? CURRY!

The air in the Arctic is very stable in winter (polar night) and clean as there are not many sources for pollution. In Autumn the sea ice extent reaches a minimum after the summer melting and leave open water to influence low clouds and their properties.

Low clouds have bases below 2000 m. Stratus (St) are layered clouds that form when extensive areas of stable air are lifted. Stratus clouds are normally between 0.5 and 1 km thick, whereas they can be several km wide (@citeAguadoBurtpage188?).

Figure 3.1: McDonald1958.

### 3.2 Radiation and clouds

Clouds consist of droplets that absorb, emit and scatter radiation. In this thesis shortwave (SW) radiation means solar radiation and longwave (LW) radiation covers the terrestrial infrared radiation. How clouds scatter and absorb SW and LW radiation. Explain something about blackbodies, clouds and blackbodies? Stefan–Boltzmann's law states that the flux density emitted by a blackbody is proportional to the fourth power of the absolute temperature @citeLiou2002page12. For a greybody, like a cloud, the equation can be written

$$F = \epsilon \sigma T^4 \quad (3.1)$$

where the emissivity of the greybody,  $\epsilon$ , is included.  $F [W m^{-2}]$  is the flux density emitted by the greybody, and  $\sigma = 5.67 \cdot 10^{-8} J m^{-2} sec^{-1} deg^{-4}$  is the Stefan–Boltzmann constant.

Write about optical depth from Wallace and Hobbs: Normal optical depth or optical thickness,  $\tau_\lambda$  is a measure of the cumulative depletion that a beam of radiation directed straight downward (zenith angle  $\theta = 0$ ) would experience in passing through a defined layer WallaceHobbs2006. The optical depth can be expressed as

$$\tau_\lambda = \int_z^\infty k_\lambda \rho r dz \quad (3.2)$$

where  $k_\lambda$  is the mass absorption coefficient, which has units of  $m^2 kg^{-1}$ ,  $\rho$  is the density of air, which has units of  $kg m^{-3}$ , and  $r$  is the mass of the absorbing gas per unit mass of air.

As mentioned in Chapter 1 Introduction there is no solar radiation to reflect during winter and the polar night in the Arctic, whereas in the summer the zenith angle is so high that even though there is sunlight 24 hours a day the cooling effect in summer does not average out the heating effect the clouds have in winter. The low cloud's ability to absorb and emit terrestrial radiation dominates over their reflective effect on the solar radiation. @cite?

How do clouds reflect radiation? What is the effect of more water? Or more ice? What about the droplet size? (effective radius)  
How do clouds absorb and emit radiation? Effect of more or less water or ice? Droplet size?

Ice is more effective in reflecting SW than water. Snow has a higher albedo than rain. Is there any use in presenting some albedo values for water, snow, ice? Or open water versus sea ice? New ice versus old sea ice?

Make sure to include something on how LWC/LWP and effective radii plays in, if this is to be mentioned in the results or discussion!!

### 3.3 Aerosol effect on clouds

Aerosols affect clouds in numerous ways. They have a direct effect on the climate by scattering and absorbing SW radiation. acting as CCNs og INs. elaborate? Diminishing sea ice could lead to an increase in the aerosol number concentrations in the area where ice has retreated. The open sea surface it self would lead to an increase in release of sea salt to the lower atmosphere @cite. The lack of sea ice would also increase the likelihood that the sea could be used for shipping, which would pollute the area @cite. There are two known indirect effects that aerosols have on radiation, through clouds. The first indirect effect was proposed by [4] and is some times referred to as the Twomey effect. The second indirect effect was proposed by [1] @citecorrectly

#### 3.3.1 The first indirect effect

(Maybe just call it all indirect effects and refer to Lohmann and Feichter)  
The first indirect effect, suggested by [4], describes the enhancement of cloud albedo as a consequence of an increase in aerosol content and thereby available CCNs. In short, the first indirect effect is a cloud albedo enhancement. By increasing droplet concentration and hence the optical thickness of a cloud, pollution acts to increase the reflectance of clouds Twomey1977. The optical thickness is increased when the number of CCN is increased. Although the changes are small, the long term effects on climate can be profound Twomey1974.

Meg: The optical depth will change with changes in aerosol number concentrations and changes in clouds and their properties. For instance if a cloud has many small droplets, the optical depth will be higher. Where as fewer cloud droplets will yield a lower optical depth, resulting in more SW radiation reaching the ground — possibly having a warming effect on the area.

#### 3.3.2 The second indirect effect

Albrecht 1989 The second indirect effect, or the cloud lifetime effect, suggests more numerous but smaller droplets reduce the precipitation efficiency

and by that enhances the cloud lifetime and hence the cloud reflectivity Albrecht1989. This effect has been estimated to be of roughly as large as the first indirect effect Lohmann2005.

Production of DMS by phytoplankton Charlson 1987

## Chapter 4

# Model and methods

### 4.1 Model description

To produce results for the thesis, a formulation of the Weather Research and Forecasting (WRF) Model called the Advanced Research WRF (ARW) has been used, version 3.6.1. The model is developed at the National Centre for Atmospheric Research (NCAR) in Boulder, Colorado. The ARW model is the first fully compressible conservative form nonhydrostatic model designed for both research and operational numerical weather prediction (NWP) applications Skamarock2008.

### 4.2 Model setup

I run ARW with a horizontal resolution of 4 km, and 72 vertical layers. This resolution is sufficient to resolve clouds @citation.

The vertical layers in the ARW model are called eta levels. These levels have uneven vertical spacing, defined by @insertequation @citaion. Since the level is dependent on pressure, the height varies in both time and space. Consequently the levels in the lower troposphere are closer to each other than higher up in the troposphere. Therefore the low clouds in the area can be resolved. (@How close? what heights??)

@Area description. Sea names: Beaufort and ??. By Canada and Alaska, this is because data from the area has been used for research by others @citations. The area is not ice free any part of the year @cite, and provides a good place to simulate cloud and sea ice interaction.

The sea ice in the area was removed by editing the input file constructed? built? by WPS and real.exe, to get results to compare with results from runs

with ice.

From diminishing sea ice we might experience an increase in sea traffic, which would lead to an increase in aerosol content in otherwise clean air @citation. To include increase in aerosol concentrations due to lack of sea ice I used the microphysics scheme developed by Greg Thompson and Trude Eidhammer described in [3].

The scheme uses a monthly mean for aerosol number concentrations derived from multi-year (2001-2007) global model simulations @citationColarco2010??(det har de cita) in which particles and their precursors are emitted by natural and anthropogenic sources and are explicitly modeled with multiple size bins for multiple species of aerosols by the Goddard Chemistry Aerosol Radiation and Transport (GOCART) model (@desiterteGinoux2001).

Choice of schemes and reasons should be presented. As should hos WPS and real.exe and wrf.exe works. At least short about what they do and contribute with to get to the end results. Explain some of the improvements in the micro physics scheme in combination with the revised radiation schemes (RRTMG for SW and LW).

## 4.3 Model runs

### 4.3.1 Manipulation of input files

Elaborate on removal or placing of sea ice. Elaborate on multiplying the aerosol number concentration with a factor 10. By use of ncap2 from NetCDF (NCO).

### 4.3.2 Changed ice run

Removed ice from the input file for the model run by using NCO and ncap2. The point of this is to compare the run with no ice to the control run, and see if there are any changes to the cloud properties.

### 4.3.3 Changed aerosols run

Multiplied the aerosol number concentration fields at all levels with a factor of 10 by using NCOs ncap2, using the same tool I also changed the belonging..? (tilhørende..) variables in the bdy input file (is this a building file.. or what?). The goal is to find changes in cloud properties compared to those in the control run.

## 4.4 Input data

E.... (ECMWF) ERA-Interim reanalysis... used as input for initial and boundary?? conditions. Downloaded by python scripts provided by Anne (more names) at the IT-help ??? at section for Meteorology and Oceanography at the University of Oslo.

## 4.5 Processing of the results

Figures presented in my thesis, I made (unless other is stated) by use of National Centre for Atmospheric Research (NCAR) Command Language (NCL), with a lot of help and inspiration from the example scripts for WRF-users available at ([URL for examples](#)).

Also I made some figures with MatLab provided by the university. Most figures that are not over a map is made with MatLab. MathWorks, it is very useful and easy to use.





# Bibliography

- [1] ALBRECHT, B. A. Aerosols, Cloud Microphysics, and Fractional Cloudiness. *Science* *245*, 4923 (1989), 1227–1230.
- [2] KLEIN, S. A., AND HARTMANN, D. L. The seasonal cycle of low stratiform clouds, 1993.
- [3] THOMPSON, G., AND EIDHAMMER, T. A study of aerosol impacts on clouds and precipitation development in a large winter cyclone. *Journal of the Atmospheric Sciences*, 2012 (2014), 140507124141006.
- [4] TWOMEY, S. Pollution and the Planetary Albedo. *Atmospheric Environment* *8* (1974), 1251–1256.