

# CHANGING GLACIERS AND SEA ICE

Glaciers and sea ice exist in fluctuation and motion close to the melting point and therefore are sensitive to changes in climate. Glacier net mass balance is a factor of melting and frontal ablation (loss) and snow accumulation (gain), which are influenced primarily by temperature and precipitation. Glaciers impact local ecosystems, most prominently by providing crucial dry season meltwater to streams in arid mountainous regions, also regulating stream temperature and flow. Sea ice is primarily influenced by temperature and wind. Sea ice impacts polar temperatures because of its albedo effect, and it further regulates global atmospheric and ocean circulation. Polar wildlife is dependent on sea ice presence for habitat, as well as its ability to provide seasonal fresh water for phytoplankton blooms.

