

SEARCH Regional Sea Ice Outlook 2011 June Report

Region of Interest: Western Parry Channel region of the Northwest Passage

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Clearing of the Northwest Passage:

As of the end of June total sea ice area in the Western Parry Channel region of the Northwest Passage began tracking less than previous light years of 2007 and 2008 but still above the record low of 2010 (Figure 1a). The multi-year ice (MYI) area has remained steady and is well below the historical average and just slightly above 2010 (Figure 1b). June air temperatures in the Western Parry Channel were near normal for 2011 (Figure 2) compared to last year when they were several degrees above normal (Figure 3). At this point clearing of the region is still unlikely but given the current conditions it does seem as though we are headed for another light sea ice year in the Western Parry Channel region of the Northwest Passage.

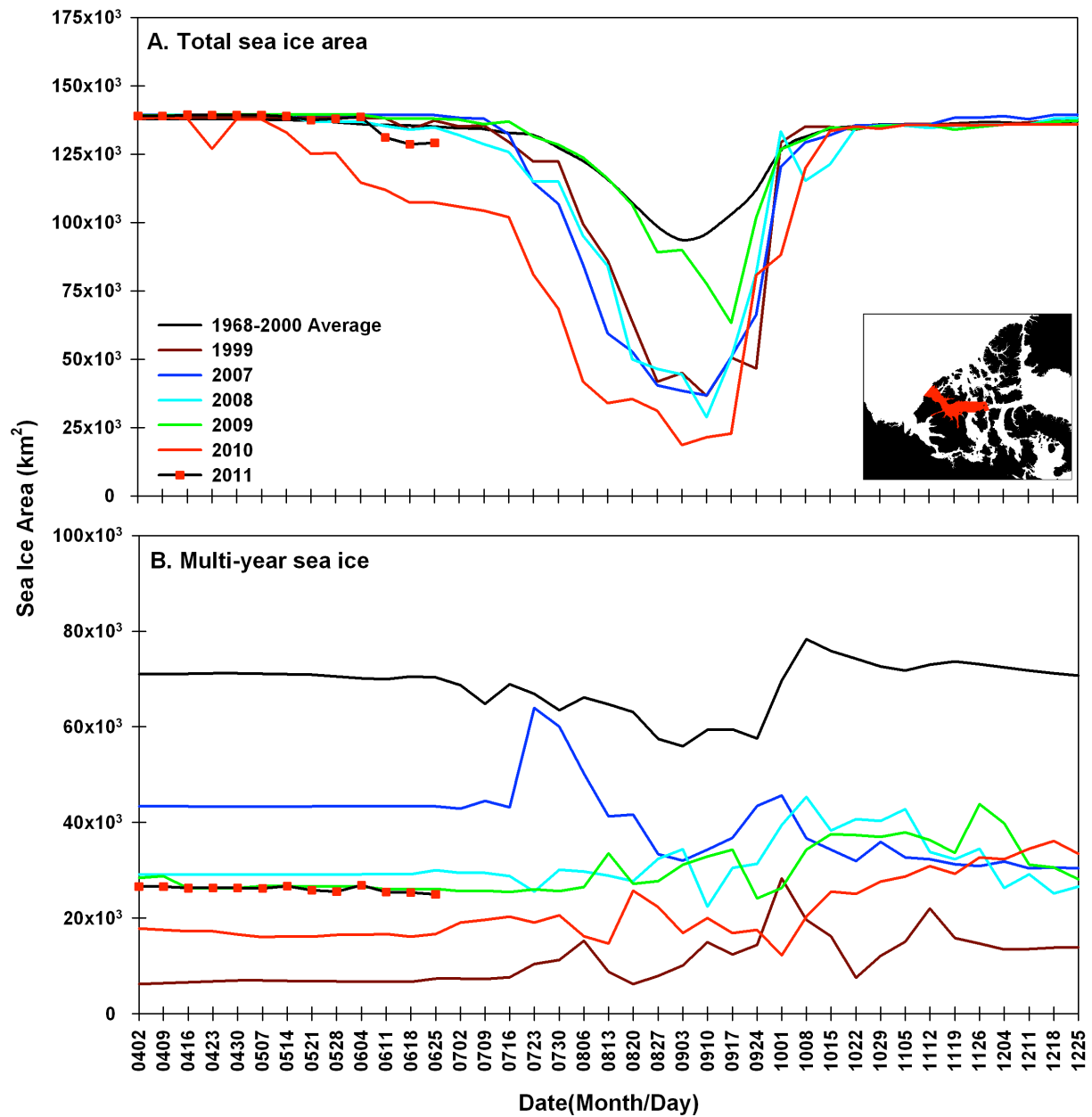


Figure 1. Time series a) total sea ice and b) multi-year ice (MYI) area for selected years within the Western Parry Channel. Data is from the Canadian Ice Service.

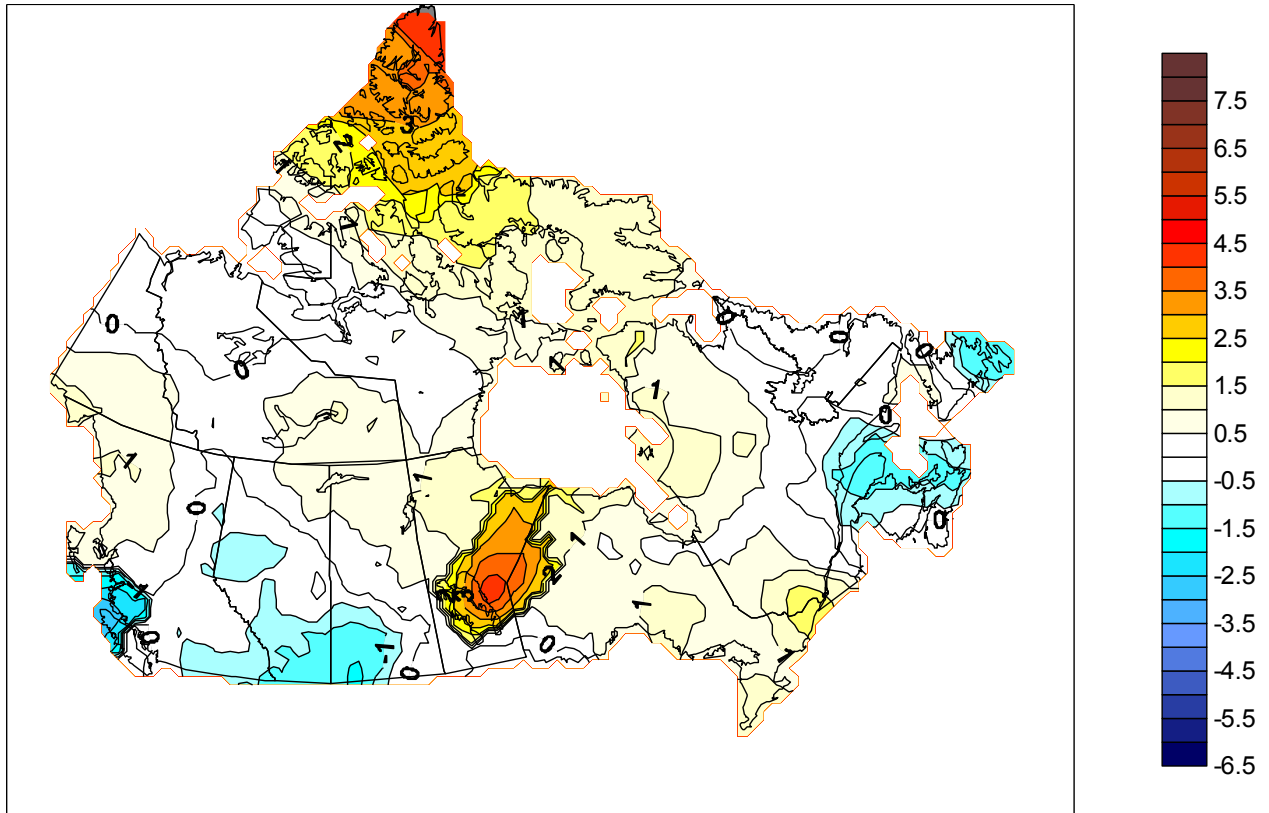


Figure 2. June 2011 surface temperature anomalies over Canada compared to the 1970-1999 average. Data is from Environment Canada.

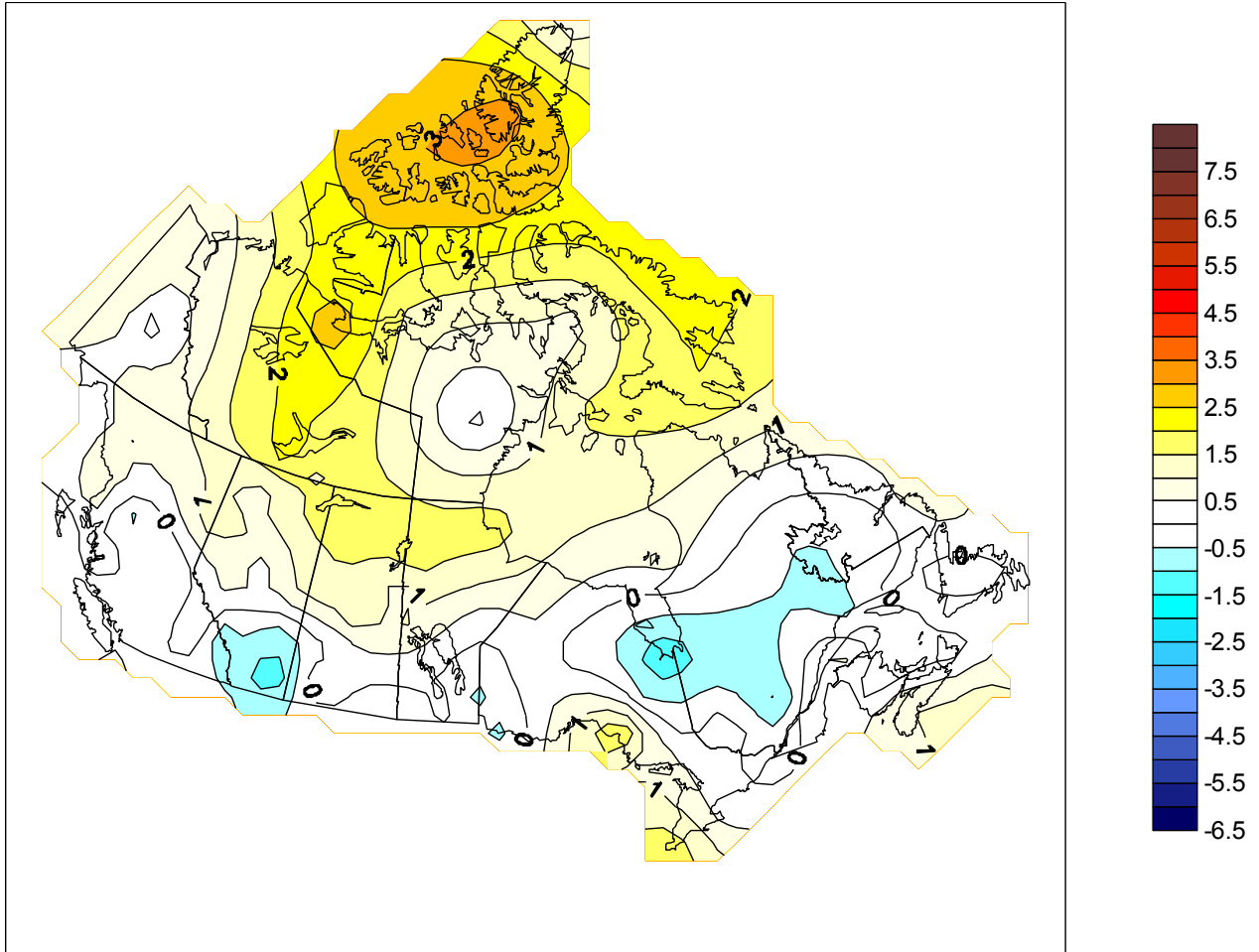


Figure 3. June 2010 surface temperature anomalies over Canada compared to the 1970-1999 average. Data is from Environment Canada.