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1. What are the reasons for the record-breaking minimum this year?

In the period up to 1nd including 2006 there was a near linear variation between the max winter ice area and the following summers ice area (52-58% of max area disappeared during the summer). In the period 2007-2011 about 70% are the winter area disappeared. This could indicate that the extreme disappearance i 2007 triggered a new " normal" normal state. The consistency over five years indicates that this is not a purely statistical fluke. The question now is whether the near 75% disappearance i 2012 is a noise on the last years disappearance level or the start of a stabilization at another level.

2. How would you characterize the success of Outlook predictions this year and any differences between methodologies?

As we make only one prediction and have no updating we are content with the fact that we at the first prediction and the lowest and thereby closest prediction to the unfortunate low level of summer ice. Our model contains no explicit physics and is based on previous years observation and the observation of the "statistical memory" of the system is between 18 and 24 months. That this model is just as good as any of the models that use explicit physics and oceanography really implies that the basis of these models is very rudimentary.

3. What do you see as our main "lessons learned" from this year?

See above comment.