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2008 Sea Ice Minimum Summary Report

This summer at least shortwave forcing by cloudiness anomaly is considered to be weak compared with the preconditioning in winter to spring. Summer cloudiness over the Arctic Ocean in 2008 was relatively high compared with the anomalous low cloudiness seen in 2007.

On the other hand, the fraction of multi-year ice was smaller in the spring of 2008 than in 2007. The latter thinning of sea ice seems to promote the unexpected melting of sea ice seen in this August to September.

Regarding the prediction, I have no idea, although spring condition must be one of important indicators for predicting summer melt.

By taking advantage of higher resolution images by "AMSR-E" and its successor "AMSR2" to be launched in around 2012, we would be able not only to monitor sea ice concentration but also to track summer sea ice motion more precisely, which might be useful for getting a better OUTLOOK in near future. JAXA's AMSR/-E web: http://sharaku.eorc.jaxa.jp/AMSR/index_e.htm SIC monitor by IARC-JAXA: http://www.ijis.iarc.uaf.edu/cgi-bin/seaice-monitor.cgi?lang=e