

Antarctic losing ice at historic pace

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A noted geosciences professor says the Antarctic Peninsula is undergoing greater warming than nearly anywhere on Earth.

Professor Eugene Domack of Hamilton College in Clinton, N.Y. -- writing in a cover article for the current issue of the journal Nature -- said the Antarctic warming may be associated with human-induced greenhouse effects.

Domack says the spectacular collapse of the Antarctica's Larson B Ice Shelf -- an area roughly the size of Rhode Island -- is unprecedented in 10,000 years.

He said his paper provides evidence the break-up of the ice shelf was caused by thinning during thousands of years, as well as short term (multi-decade) cumulative increases in surface air temperature exceeding the natural variation of regional climate during the Holocene period -- the last 10,000 years.

The recent collapse is attributed to climate warming in the Antarctic Peninsula, which is more pronounced than elsewhere in the world. In recent years, Domack said, the Antarctic Peninsula has lost ice shelves totaling more than 4,825 square miles.

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