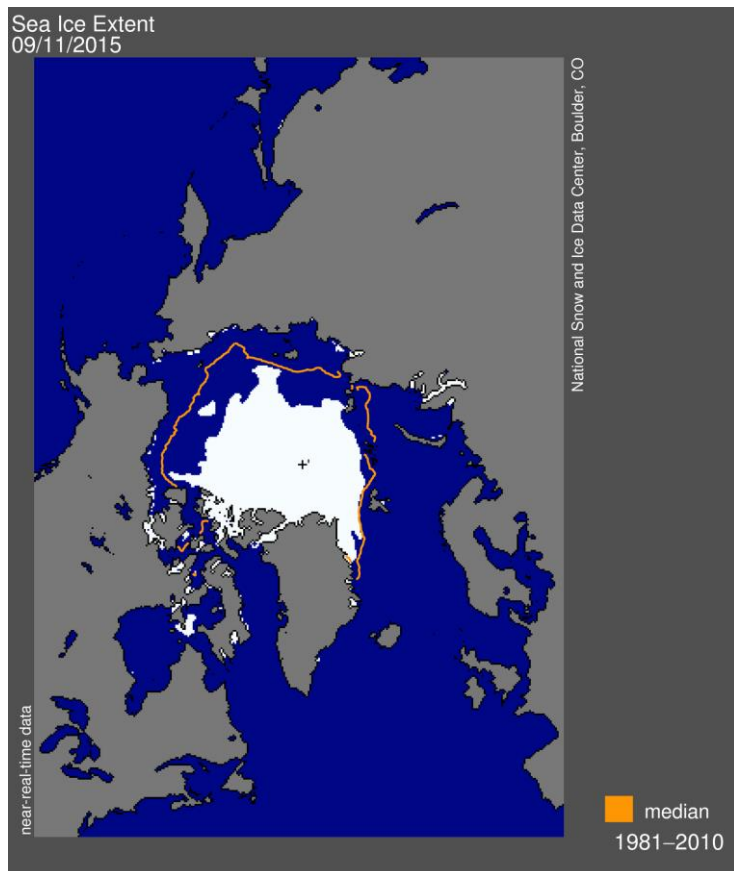
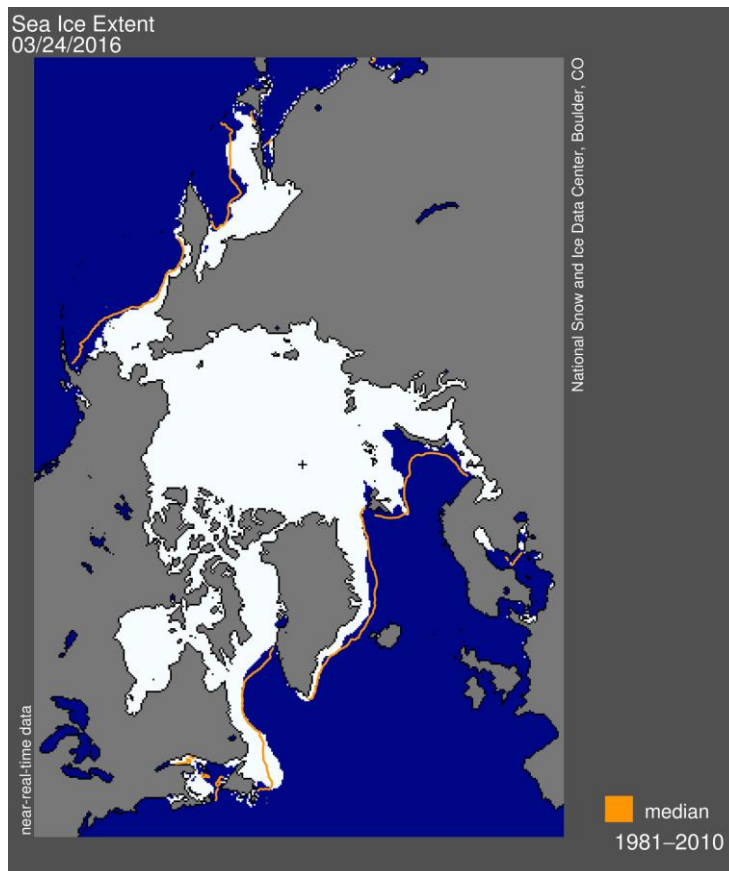
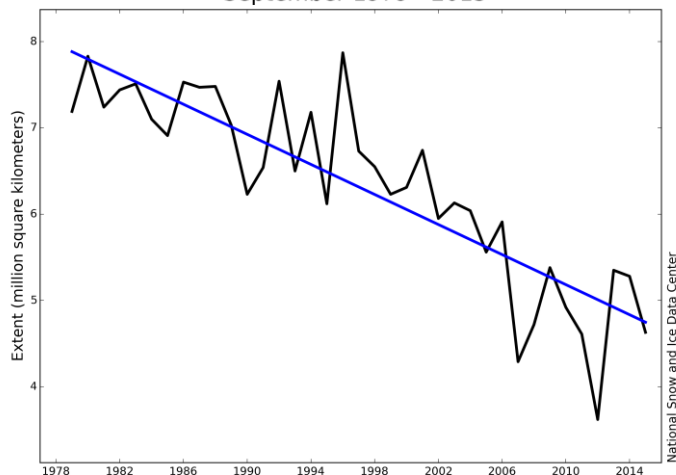


Handout A: The Melting Arctic Ice

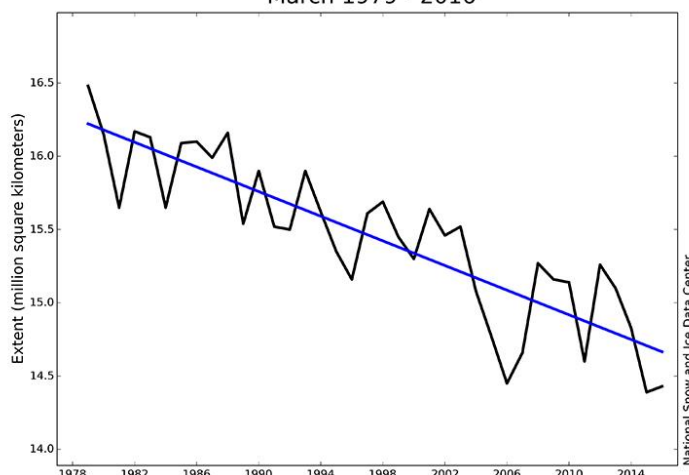
Arctic Sea Ice Seasonal Minimum and Maximum, 2015/16



Average Monthly Arctic Sea Ice Extent
September 1979 - 2015

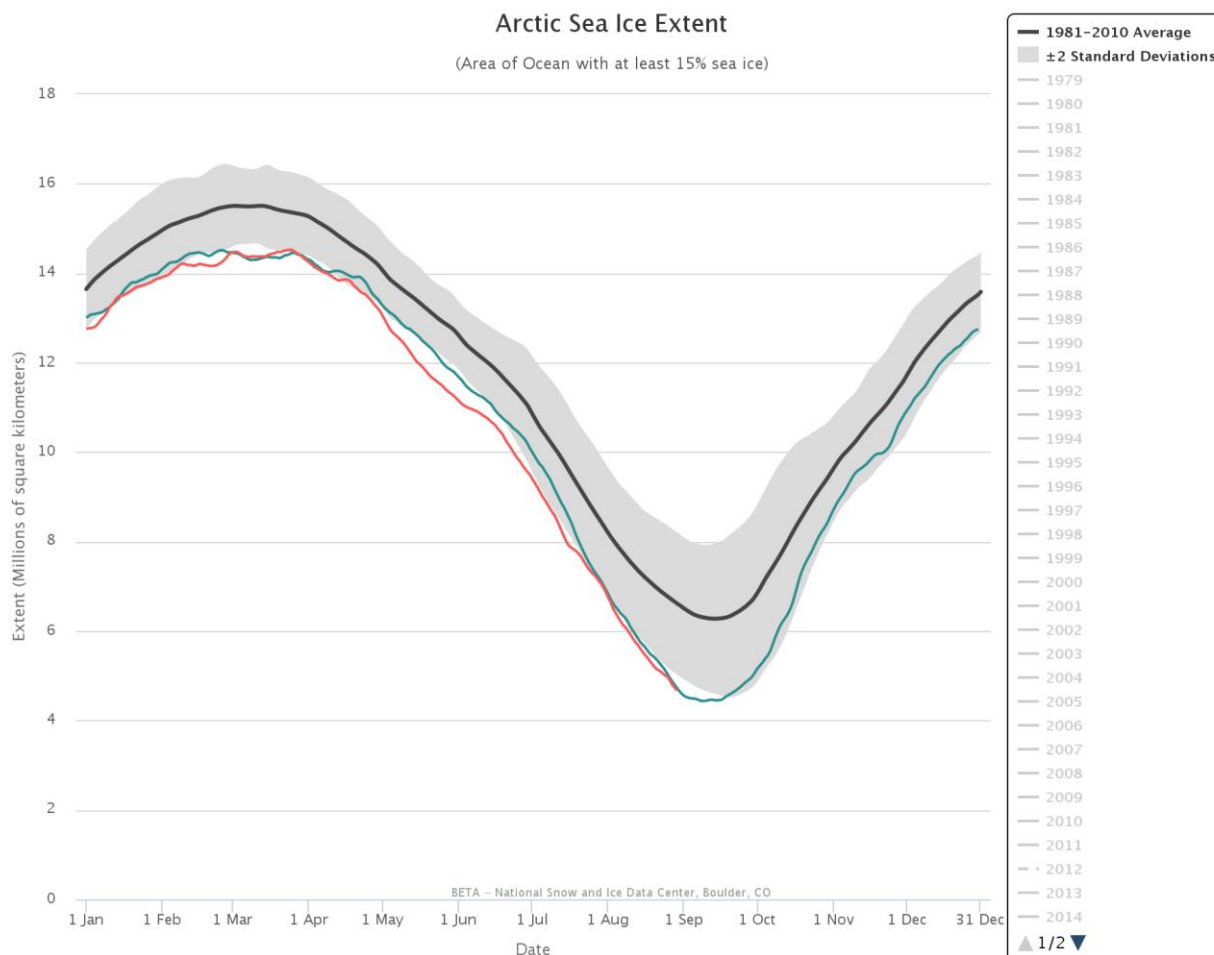


Average Monthly Arctic Sea Ice Extent
March 1979 - 2016



Charts courtesy of the National Snow and Ice Data Center, University of Colorado, Boulder.
Imagery from the NASA MODIS instrument, courtesy NASA NSIDC DAAC.

More imagery, information, and analysis can be found at http://nsidc.org/data/seaice_index/.



Questions to consider:

- What do the charts tell you about ice cover in the Arctic over time?
- What is the relationship between the maps and the charts?
- The charts indicate the average extent of Arctic sea ice each September and March. Why might these months in particular be significant?
- Consider the graph above, which shows the average sea ice extent over the period 1981-2010 compared with the data from 2015 (in blue) and 2016 (in red). How does the sea ice extent in 2015 compare to data from previous years? How does it compare to the data from 2016? Is this significant or not, and why?