



Written by [Rebecca Terrell](#) on October 11, 2012

Global Warming and the Arctic Economy

Climate change is destroying traditional cultures and economies in Greenland, according to a recently published article in the [New York Times](#). Correspondent Elizabeth Rosenthal highlights Narsaq, a town on the southern coast where the mainstay fishing industry is dwindling due to stock depletion in ever-warming waters. She reports a 50-percent decline in population in the past 10 years and a rising suicide rate. A local fisherman told her, "Lots of people have lost their livelihoods." Yet melting ice is uncovering "vast new deposits of minerals and gems ... forming the basis of a potentially lucrative mining industry" that could one day mean independence for Greenland from its parent state of Denmark.



Meanwhile, roughly five degrees latitude north of Narsaq, the fishing industry is exploding in Pangnirtung, Nunavut, Canada. Writing for the [Winnipeg Free Press](#), columnist Gerald Flood says the shrinking Arctic ice cap is fostering a commercial fishing industry along "two thirds of Canada's coast that had never been fished except for subsistence." The thaw is also making it possible to chart the Arctic sea floor for the first time in history, meaning safer travel not only for fishermen but also for increasing cruise ship traffic from a flourishing Canadian tourist industry.

These changes are unlikely to be short-lived. The U.S. National Snow and Ice Data Center (NSIDC) confirms a long-term downward trend in Arctic sea ice extent, noting the lowest seasonal minimum during this past summer in more than 30 years. Whether climate change is to be the hero or villain in such industry ebbs and flows as those noted above, the warming taking place is anything but global. Last week, Graham Lloyd of [The Australian](#) cited NSIDC data showing that "Antarctic sea ice has expanded to cover the largest area recorded since satellite mapping began more than three decades ago, in stark contrast to this year's record melt on the northern pole."

Lloyd pointed out that current climate change models did not anticipate either Antarctic expansion or rapid retreat of Arctic ice but said climate scientists warn there is "still cause for concern" and the activity "at the two poles is not connected." (These faulty climate change models are incidentally those on which governments worldwide base energy and environmental policy decisions.)

[New York Times](#) blogger Justin Gillis jumped on the story, claiming Arctic sea ice loss is much more significant and proof of global warming. After "running the numbers" he reported "the decline going on in the Arctic is almost 25 times the increase going on in the Antarctic." In response, researchers with [World Climate Report](#) accused Gillis of global warming alarmism. After exposing his faulty mathematics they concluded, "Overall, the Arctic is losing ice at a rate about 4 times what the Antarctic is gaining. Gillis got a remarkable 25 times difference. Indeed, he tortured the data until it finally confessed."

Gillis is not alone in alarmist tactics. Five years ago NASA climate scientist Jay Zwally predicted in



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[National Geographic News](#), “At this rate, the Arctic Ocean could be nearly ice-free at the end of summer by 2012, much faster than previous predictions.” Obviously NSIDC’s reported 2012 sea ice minimum of 1.39 million square miles cannot be classified as “nearly ice-free.” But the world still waits to see whether Al Gore’s [2009 prediction](#) that “the entire polar ice cap... could be completely ice free within the next five to seven years” will come true. So do the miners of Greenland and fishermen of Canada.



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