「北極海冰融化速度超出預期」新聞解讀

撰稿人: 盧孟明

氣象局科技中心在 3 月底進行今(101)年 1 至 3 月氣象新聞票選活動,同仁選出最想進一步了解的新聞,由新華網在 2 月 24 日發布的「最新氣候模型顯示北極海冰融化速度超出預期」¹¹¹獲得第一高票。

新聞指出:德國馬克斯·普朗克氣象研究所和德國氣候計算中心 23 日推出的最新氣候模型顯示,北極海冰融化速度與二氧化碳排放緊密相關,北極海冰融化速度超出先前預期,如不控制溫室氣體排放,北極海冰將徹底消失。

為進一步瞭解這一則新聞,筆者在德國馬克斯·普朗克氣象研究所網站找到英文版新聞原稿^[2],發現原標題是「北極海冰仍有希望」(Still hope for Arctic sea ice)。為何說「有希望」呢?檢示原稿及相關論文之後確定必須要從科學家提出的氣候「引爆點」(tipping point)談起。

「引爆點」乃是隨著 2000 年出版的暢銷書《引爆趨勢》(The Tipping Point - How little things can make a big difference) 出現的時髦名詞。暢銷書談的並不是氣候,而是對於社會風潮引爆現象的觀察分析,強調若環境已處於蓄勢待發的狀態,不必太費力就能引爆大流行。譬如某種新商品在推出初期往往需藉極大的廣告力量以打開市場,一旦造成流行之後藉消費群帶動的市場擴張力量遠遠超過廣告作用。引爆點也可以稱爲臨界點,揭示接下來發生一連串過程的不可逆特性。

美國國家航空暨太空總署(NASA)科學家詹姆士·漢森(James Hansen)博士是主張氣候引爆點已近的重要學者之一,他指出引爆有兩個重點要注意,其一是引爆水準(tipping level)又稱臨界值,其二是爆發點(point of no return)又稱不可逆轉點。達到臨界值表示在沒有外力作用的情況下變化依然能夠持續進行因而是「不可

逆」,而達到不可逆轉點則表示不可逆的過程已經開始;換言之,只要還未達到不可逆轉點,縱使變化已經發生但還是有延緩達到那一點的機會,一旦過了引爆點就沒有機會逆轉。這好比把一個大球從坡谷費力地推到坡峰,只要再輕輕一下大球便會往坡峰另一邊向下滾去;坡峰就是一個不可逆轉點,下坡的開始的位置便是臨界點,在沒有其他力量介入的狀態下過了臨界點之後的向下移動是不可逆轉的過程。

德國馬克斯·普朗克氣象研究所(MPI-M)科學家認爲「北極海冰仍有希望」是基於他們發現所謂北極海冰夏季無冰的不可逆過程並不存在;換句話說,北極海冰的成冰過程主要是由海面上的大氣溫度所主宰,也就是即使北極在氣候上覆冰面積最小的夏季(圖 1)出現了一段無冰的時間,若溫度的平均狀態保持不變,由於海洋與大氣會不斷相互影響,「無冰」的情況不是可長久維持的穩定狀態,因此氣候引爆點的「不可逆」不適用於推論夏季北極海冰將完全消失。

前述結論是 MPI-M 使用該研究所最新的地球氣候系統模式獲得的,這個氣候模式也是代表德國參加聯合國政府間氣候變遷專門委員會(IPCC)第五次氣候變遷評估報告(AR5)模擬研究的模式。模擬結果顯示,北極海出現夏季完全無冰狀況之後,不出3年海冰的夏季面積就能恢復到無冰以前的規模。MPI-M 科學家指出"過",一些早期的其他研究指出北極海冰的消失過程是一種氣候引爆現象(即使大氣不增溫海冰也不會恢復),是因爲過度簡化了海洋的成冰過程。

海洋成冰過程中最重要的一個機制就是冰與反照率反饋(ice-albedo feedback)。海水和海冰反射陽光的能力大不相同(圖 2),在海表面沒有冰的情况下,海水可吸收 94%的太陽入射能量;當海表面有冰時,由於冰的反射力強,海水僅能吸收到 50%的太陽入射能量;如果海冰上有雪覆蓋,雪對陽光的反射能力更勝於冰,以致於僅有約 10%的太陽入射能量可被海水吸收。由此可知海冰對於海表面可儲存的熱能有非常大的影響,認為海冰消失不可逆的主要就是根據海水儲存大量熱能會阻礙海冰的形成,然而 MPI-M 科學家指出這是因為沒有考慮北極海散熱速率大於吸熱造成的誤判。如果考慮海水的散熱過程,還有新形成的冰隨

波移動的因素,結果顯示海水並沒有阻止海冰形成的機制。除了海水快速散熱有 利於海冰形成之外,輕薄的新冰因爲容易移動,實際上比已有一些年紀的厚冰更 有助於新冰的形成,而加快海冰面積擴張的速度。

MPI-M 發布的新聞稿中特別指出,本研究結果決對不是說北極海冰面積減少(圖 3)和人爲排放溫室氣體濃度增加無關。事實上,大氣溫度是影響氣候模式中海冰形成的最主要因素,如果全球暖化速度不減,再過數十年北極海夏季將會無冰。因此,全球居民都當盡力將暖化程度控制在不高於工業革命前2℃,這也是「北極海冰仍有希望」的緣由。

另外,雖然氣候引爆點不適用於北極海冰消失過程,在極區陸地上的冰原和冰河面積的減少卻有其引爆效應。近半世紀以來北極的格林蘭和南極洲西部冰蓋面積都在縮減,其現在和未來的變化以及可能的影響是氣候變遷學者極度關心的研究課題。

⁽¹⁾http://big5.xinhuanet.com/gate/big5/news.xinhuanet.com/tech/2012-02/24/c_1227 49360.htm

^[2]http://www.mpimet.mpg.de/nc/en/aktuelles/single-news/article/still-hope-for-arctic-sea-ice.html)

^[3]Tietsche, S., D. Notz, J. H. Jungclaus, and J. Marotzke (2011), Recovery mechanisms of Arctic summer sea ice, Geophys. Res. Lett., 38, L02707, doi:10.1029/2010GL045698.

^[4]Notz, D. (2009), The future of ice sheets and sea ice: Between reversible retreat and unstoppable loss, Proc. Nat. Acad. Sci. U. S. A., 106(49), 20,590–20,595, doi:10.1073/pnas.0902356106

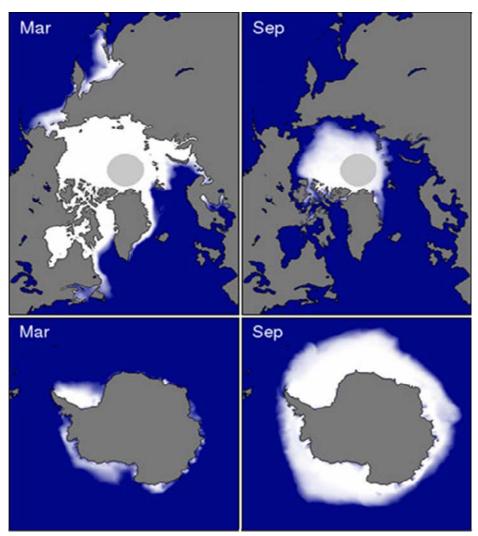


圖 1: 衛星觀測1979-2000年極區海冰分布平均狀況 • 上圖為北極圈三月(左)和九月(右)的海冰範圍(白 色區域)。下圖與上圖相同但為南極圈的海冰分布。 三月與九月分別為北(南)極圈海冰面積最大(小)和最 小(大)的月份。 資料來源:

http://nsidc.org/cryosphere/sotc/sea_ice.html

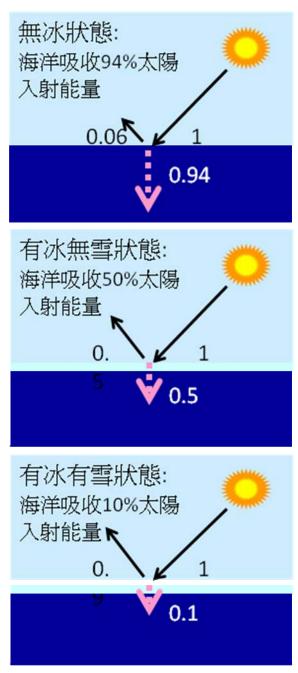
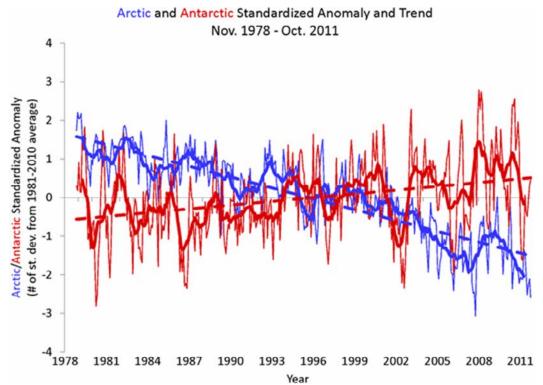


圖 2: 海表面之冰、雪對海表層能 **星吸收影響**示意圖。



Year 圖 3: 根據衛星觀測資料估計的北極(紅色)與兩極(藍色)海冰範圍從1979年11月到2011年 10月的變化程度。曲線值表示相對於1981-2010年距平但換算成標準差倍數之後的標準 化距平。資料來源: http://nsidc.org/cryosphere/sotc/sea_ice.html

補充資料: 新聞來源

1. 中文

http://big5.xinhuanet.com/gate/big5/news.xinhuanet.com/tech/2012-02/24/c_1227493 60.htm

最新氣候模型顯示北極海冰融化速度超出預期2012年02月24日10:25:49

新華網柏林 2 月 2 3 日電(記者郭洋)德國馬克斯·普朗克氣象研究所和德國氣候計算中心 2 3 日推出的最新氣候模型顯示,北極海冰融化速度與二氧化碳排放緊密相關,北極海冰融化速度超出先前預期,如不控制溫室氣體排放,北極海冰將徹底消失。

海洋學家約翰·容克勞斯說,如果溫室氣體不斷增加,全球氣溫大幅升高, 北極海冰將急劇減少,到本世紀中後期,人們在夏季將不見海冰蹤影,如果情況 繼續惡化,即使在冬季,北極海冰也會最終消失。

按照他的說法,如將全球氣溫升高幅度控制在2攝氏度以內,北極海冰雖然依舊會減少,但不會完全消失,"至少在21世紀的夏季不會"。

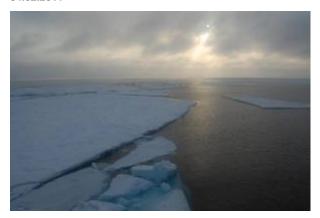
馬克斯·普朗克氣象研究所所長約赫姆·羅茨柯說,氣候模型顯示,如果<u>工</u> <u>氧化碳</u>排放不受限制地繼續增加,到2100年,全球平均氣溫還會升高4攝氏 度,到時候,全球將會迎來更多持續不斷的極端高溫天氣。 實際上,二氧化碳增多除導致氣候變暖外,還會加快海水酸化。按照容克勞斯的說法,由于二氧化碳排放增加,如今的海水酸度已較工業化前提高30%。海水酸化對一些海洋生物可能造成致命性打擊。

2. 英文

http://www.mpimet.mpg.de/nc/en/aktuelles/single-news/article/still-hope-for-arctic-se a-ice.html

Still hope for Arctic sea ice

04.02.2011



The substantial decline of Arctic sea ice in recent years has triggered some fears that the ice cover might be approaching a "tipping point" beyond which the loss of the remaining sea ice would become unstoppable. However, new research carried out at the Max Planck Institute for Meteorology in Hamburg/Germany now indicates that such tipping point is unlikely to exist for the loss of Arctic summer sea ice. The sea-ice cover reacts instead relatively directly to the climatic conditions at any given time. Hence, the ongoing loss of Arctic sea ice could be slowed down and eventually stopped if global warming were to be slowed down and eventually stopped.

Steffen Tietsche, lead author of the study that appeared this week in the scientific journal *Geophysical Research Letters* [1], said that he was quite surprised when he found this result: "It seems so obvious that a tipping point for Arctic summer sea ice exists: with a smaller sea-ice cover, more sunlight is absorbed by the dark open water of the polar ocean. This water

therefore warms efficiently during summer, which leads to additional melting of sea ice and even more open water. This feedback loop can in principle cause the loss of Arctic sea ice to become at some point self-amplified and hence independent of the prevailing climate conditions." To examine the validity of this concept, the researchers used a climate model in which they removed the Arctic sea-ice cover completely at the beginning of summer. In doing so, they maximized the absorption of solar radiation. "We expected the ocean to remain ice free after the initial ice removal, because so much more heat would be absorbed by the open water during summer", Tietsche said. However, in the model simulations the ice always recovered within about three years to the conditions it had before the artificial removal. This indicates that sea ice extent closely resembles the prevailing climate conditions at any given time, which makes the existence of a tipping point unlikely.

The researchers find that two processes contribute most to the recovery of the ice cover: First, during winter the ocean loses most of the additional heat it gained during summer. This heat loss is very efficient after the removal of the insulating sea-ice cover, because then the ocean is in winter directly in contact with the cold atmosphere. Second, the thin ice that eventually forms during winter grows very fast, because thin ice does not insulate as efficiently as thick ice. The heat that is released from the ocean through the thin ice leads to an increased heat loss from the atmosphere into space and to a decreased heat transport from the South into the Arctic. The combination of these stabilizing feedbacks more than compensates for the additional absorption of sunlight during summer. The findings of this new study confirm work that was carried out by American scientists with a much simpler model [2]. "This general agreement of models with substantially different complexity usually indicates that the result is robust", says Jochem Marotzke, director at the Max Planck Institute and co-author of the new study.

The researchers underline that their results do not question the dramatic loss of Arctic sea ice or its relation to anthropogenic climate change. "If we don't slow down global warming extensively, we will lose the summer sea-ice cover in the Arctic within a few decades", says Tietsche. "Our research shows that the speed of sea-ice loss is closely coupled to the speed of global warming. We think that it's important to know that we can still do something about slowing down or possibly even stopping the loss of the sea-ice cover."

Publications:

[1] Tietsche, S., D. Notz, J. H. Jungclaus, and J. Marotzke (2011), Recovery mechanisms of Arctic summer sea ice, *Geophys. Res. Lett.*, 38, L02707, doi:10.1029/2010GL045698.

[2] Eisenman, I., and J. S. Wettlaufer (2009), Nonlinear threshold behavior during the loss of Arctic sea ice, Proc. Nat. Acad. Sci. U. S. A., 106(1), 28–32, doi:10.1073/pnas.0806887106.

Contact:

Prof. Dr. Jochem Marotzke

Max Planck Institute for Meteorology

Phone: +49 (0)40 41173 - 440 (Secretary - 311)

Email: <u>Indication of the indication of the ind</u>

Dr. Dirk Notz

Max Planck Institute for Meteorology

Phone: +49 (0)40 41173 - 163 Email: <u>dirk.notz@zmaw.de</u>