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## Climate shocker: Now global warming is making things colder

The polar vortex is back, but this year is different. Climate change is here, and we could be in for some wild weather.

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Pedestrians walk along wet and slushy streets in Manhattan as warmer temperatures melt snow from a historic weekend blizzard on January 27, 2016 in New York City.

By: **Genna Buck** Metro Published on Fri Apr 01 2016

The polar ice cap is the smallest we have ever seen it. Each winter, the vast arena of ice that covers the Arctic Ocean reaches a peak area big enough to cover all of Canada and about half the United States. This year is different. The ice's peak size is the smallest it's been in the 37 years we've measured it. Climate change is here, and we could be in for some wild weather.

### WHAT'S GOING ON?

Scientists believe sea ice helps keep the circling mass of cold air we call the polar vortex close to the North Pole.

- As global average temperatures have climbed, the Arctic Ocean ice has shrunk. Arctic temperatures were 5.5 to 8.3 C above normal this season.
- With less ice to reflect sunlight, the ocean absorbs it. This triggers changes to pressure and temperature and causes the jet stream to wander and wobble.
- The result? Frigid polar vortex air travels south, unleashing cold snaps like the one expected in the next few days from Manitoba to the Maritimes. Brr!
- A meandering jet stream is also a recipe for extreme weather events like Hurricane Sandy.

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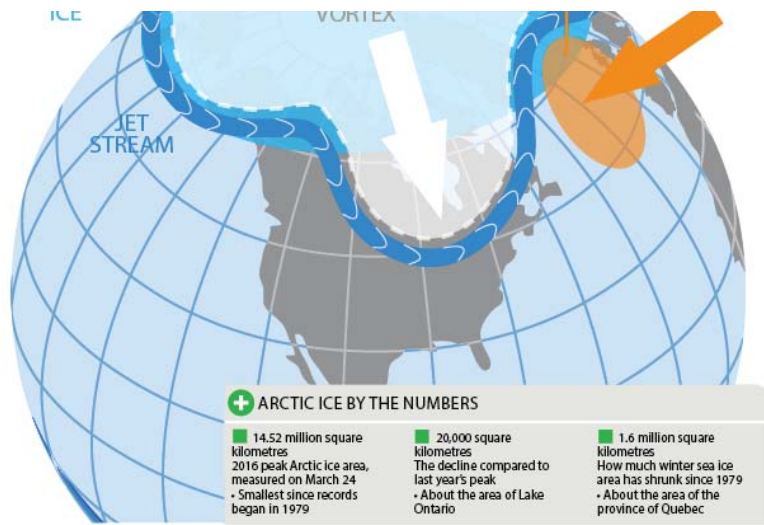
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