

U.S. National Ice Center

PRESS RELEASE



Iceberg D-15 Breaks into D15A and D15B in the Amery Sea

January 27, 2016, Suitland, MD — The U.S. National Ice Center (USNIC) confirmed the iceberg D15 broke into two pieces. Both the larger remainder, named D15A, and the smaller piece, named D15B, meet the size criteria for naming and tracking by the NIC.

D15A measures 51 nautical miles on its longest axis and 24 nautical miles wide and is located at 66°42' South, 81°55' East in the Amery Sea. D15B measures 33 nautical miles on its longest axis and 12 nautical miles wide and is located at 67°00' South, 81°38' East in the Amery Sea. Before breaking, D15 was the largest current iceberg in the world and had remained grounded in the same location for many years. D15A has now been demoted to the second largest iceberg, while D15B ranks in as fourth largest.

Analyst MST1 Matthew Tyson confirmed the split using Sentinel-1 image shown below.

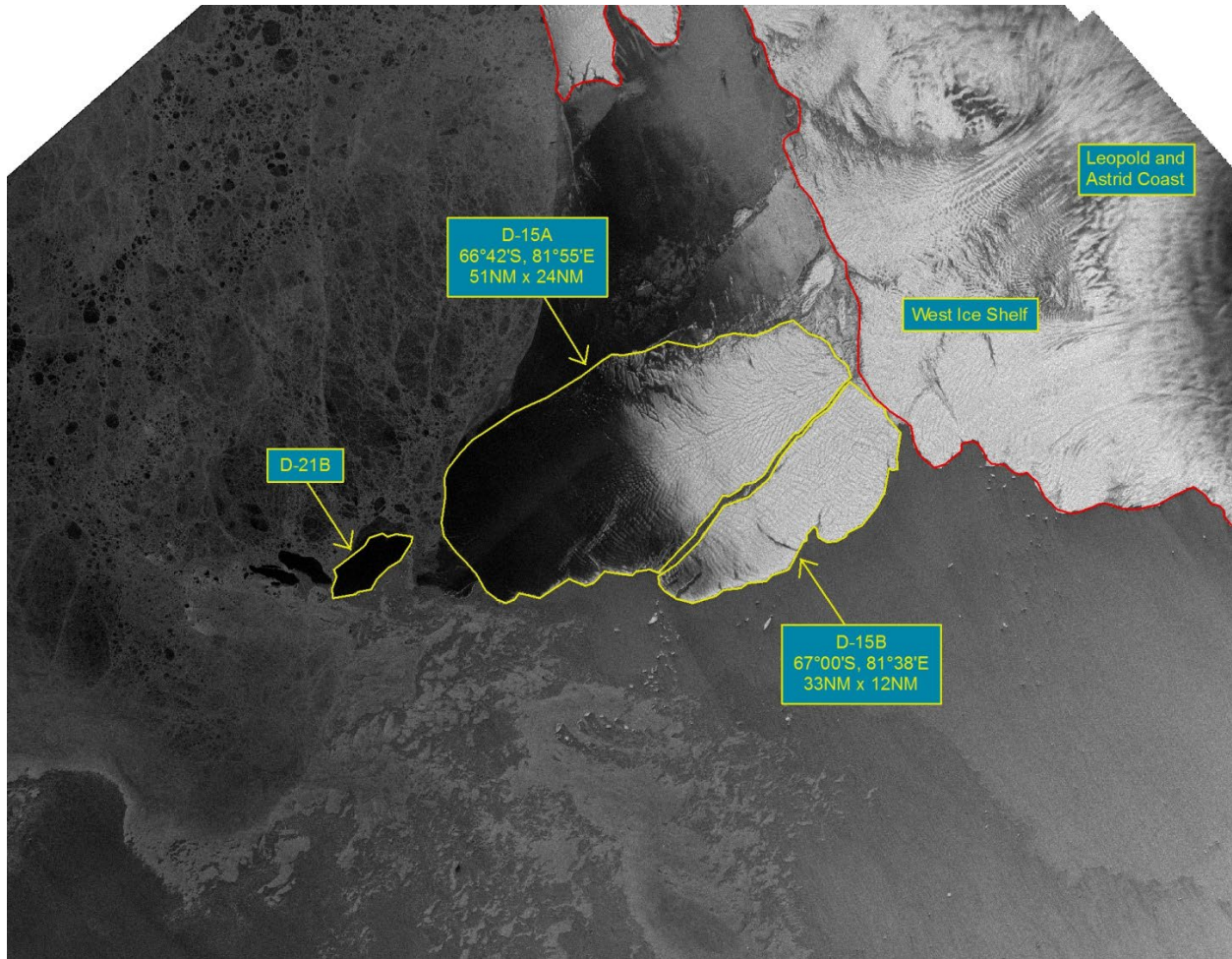
The criteria for icebergs in the Southern Hemisphere for the NIC to begin tracking is that the iceberg must either be at least 10NM along any axis or the iceberg must have an area of twenty square nautical miles or greater.

Iceberg names are derived from the Antarctic quadrant in which they were originally calved. The quadrants are divided counter-clockwise in the following manner:

- A = 0-90W (Bellingshausen/Weddell Sea)
- B = 90W-180 (Amundsen/Eastern Ross Sea)
- C = 180-90E (Western Ross Sea/Wilkesland)
- D = 90E-0 (Amery/Eastern Weddell Sea)

When first sighted, an iceberg's point of origin is documented by USNIC. The letter of the quadrant, along with a sequential number, is assigned to the iceberg. For example, C-19 is sequentially the 19th iceberg tracked by USNIC in Antarctica between 180-90E (Quadrant C). Icebergs with letter suffixes have calved from already named icebergs, where the letters are added in sequential order. For example, C-19D is the 4th iceberg to calve off the original C-19 iceberg.

Iceberg positions are analyzed weekly and are available on the USNIC webpage at:
<https://usicecenter.gov/Products/AntarcIcebergs>



SENTINEL-1 image of D-15A and D-15B, January 26, 2016

USNIC is a multi-agency center—subordinate to Naval Meteorology and Oceanography Command—operated by the Navy, NOAA, and Coast Guard which provides global to tactical scale ice and snow products, ice forecasting, and related environmental intelligence services for the United States government.

Naval Meteorology and Oceanography Command directs and oversees more than 2,500 globally-distributed military and civilian personnel who collect, process and exploit environmental information to assist Fleet and Joint Commanders in all warfare areas to make better decisions faster than the adversary.

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