Tracking Melting Ice Sheets and the Impacts

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Published on July 11, 2018

Just how quickly are the earth's ice sheets melting? What happens when they melt and what is their impact on the atmosphere and ocean levels? Answers to questions like these are expected by way of NASA's new climate-monitoring satellites. A report about the satellites a few days ago tells of how "the twin Gravity Recovery and Climate Experiment Follow-On (GRACE-FO) satellites switched on their lasers in search of one another for the first time." The two satellites will connect while orbiting Earth and both will monitor the melting ice sheets, rising sea levels and the flow of magma underground.ClimateYou previously reported on GRACE-FO's predecessor, GRACE that uses similar technology. But the updated GRACE-FO is now equipped with microwave ranging system and an experimental laser ranging interferometer (LRI) instrument is onboard.The data will add to what we already know: that 3 trillion tons of ice have disappeared since 1992, ice sheets in Antarctica have been melting and from 2012 – 2017, the ice melted at a shocking rate of 241 billion tons a year.

Watch the video.