

Tan shades indicate areas where the ice sheet is growing, blue shading indicates areas where it is shrinking.

Thawing permafrost

widespread evidence of melting

to melt all the permafrost will take centuries

locally disruptive melting is occurring

methane is liberated when permafrost melts

remote possibility that methane in minerals may be released

interaction with forest fires; shrubs encroaching on tundra

permafrost thawing will be accelerated if summer sea ice continues to retreat

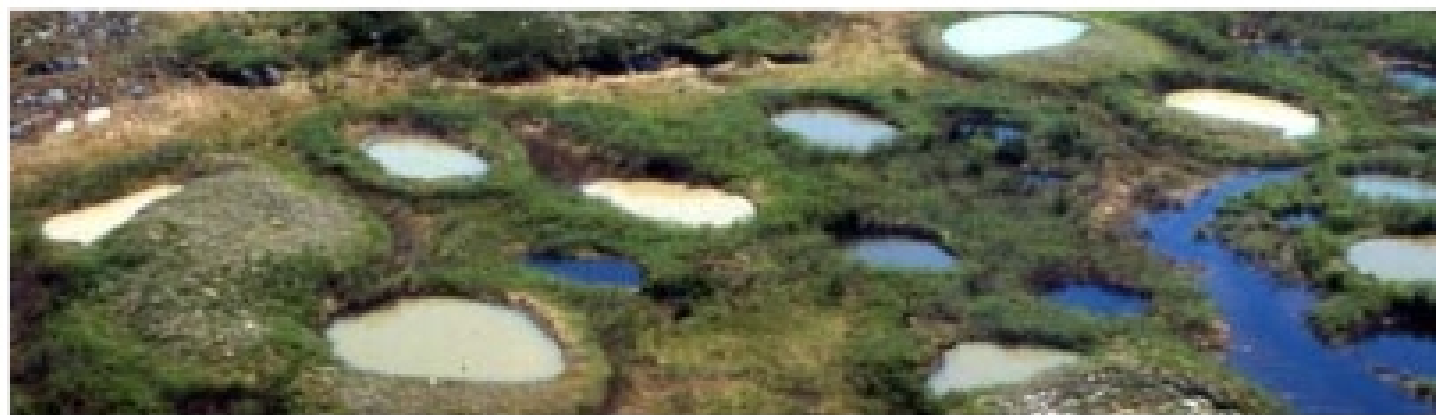
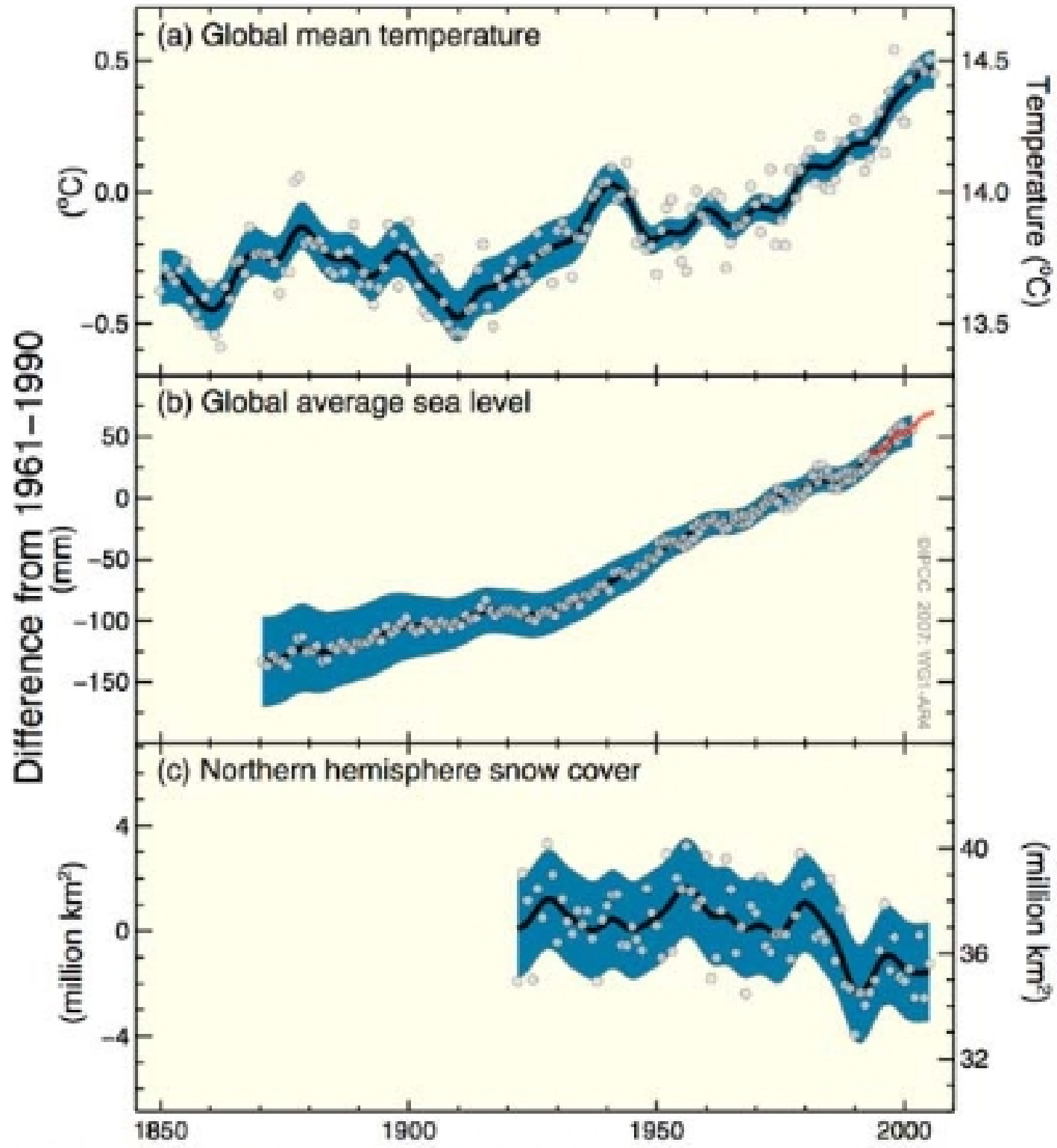


Photo at left is from the parking lot of the Geophysical Institute, University of Alaska at Fairbanks

Changes in Temperature, Sea Level and Northern Hemisphere Snow Cover



Snow cover

from the IPCC Fourth Assessment Report, 2007