

WORLD'S LARGEST ICEBERG BREAKS OFF FROM ANTARCTICA, SAYS ESA

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A huge ice block has broken off from western Antarctica into the Weddell Sea, becoming the largest iceberg in the world and earning the name A-76.

It is the latest in a series of large ice blocks to dislodge in a region acutely vulnerable to climate change, although scientists said in this case it appeared to be part of a natural polar cycle.

Slightly larger than the Spanish island of Majorca, A-76 had been monitored by scientists since May 13 when it began to separate from the Ronne Ice Shelf, according to the U.S. National Ice Center.

The iceberg, measuring around 170 km long and 25 km wide, with an area of 4,320 sq km is now floating in the Weddell Sea.

It joins previous world's largest title holder A-23A — approximately 3,880 sq. km. in size — which has remained in the same area since 1986.

A-76 was originally spotted by the British Antarctic Survey and the calving — the term used when an iceberg breaks off — was confirmed using images from the Copernicus satellite, the European Space Agency said.

Icebergs form when hunks of ice break off from ice shelves or glaciers and begin to float in open water.

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