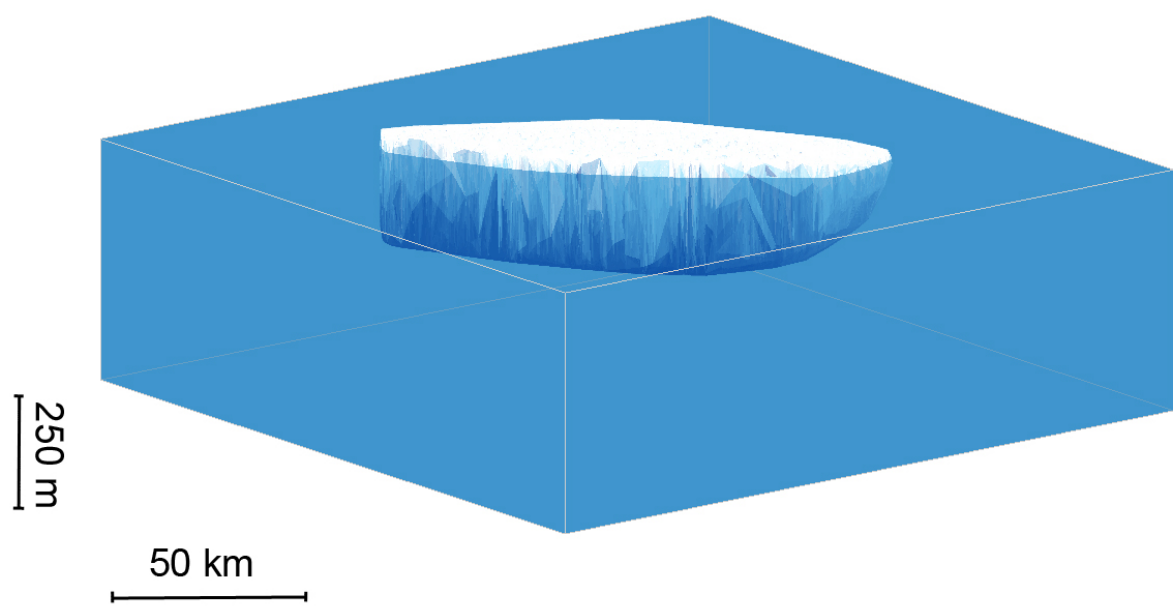


ESA satellites see giant iceberg ready to break free



This iceberg will be one of the biggest ever seen
[Access the image](#)

10 July 2017

A deep crack almost 200km long has appeared in Antarctica, leaving a huge chunk of ice barely connected to its ice shelf. Before long the crack will completely separate the ice, leaving it adrift in the ocean, and creating one of the biggest icebergs ever known!



CryoSat is used to measure the changing thickness of ice on Earth
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ESA scientists have been watching this in action using a satellite called CryoSat, and a pair of satellites called Sentinel-1A and 1B. Data collected from these satellites shows that the iceberg will contain an incredible 1155 cubic kilometres of ice! It will be around 30 metres high above the water, but as with any iceberg, most of it will actually be underwater – down to a depth of over 200 metres!



Sentinel satellites watch over Earth
[Access the image](#)

While it is quite common for icebergs to form from Antarctic ice, this one is much bigger than most. It is actually so large that it could be dangerous to ships, so it will have to be tracked as it floats across the ocean. This could prove difficult, as the iceberg may break into many pieces, each one being a hazard. ESA satellites will keep an eye out though, which will be much appreciated by anyone sailing nearby!

The CryoSat satellite was designed to help us understand more about how ice on our planet is changing, in part due to climate change. The Sentinel satellites take photos and gather data about Earth, helping us to take care of our home planet. Working together they are powerful tools to study events like this iceberg forming.

Cool fact: The Sentinel satellites use advanced radar imaging technology to take pictures even through thick cloud!

Related articles

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