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From: University of Illinois
Published May 5, 2016 07:08 AM



Greenland's ice sheet not losing ice in its interior

Scientists studying data from the top of the Greenland ice sheet have discovered that during winter in the center of the world's largest island, temperature inversions and other low-level atmospheric phenomena effectively isolate the ice surface from the atmosphere -- recycling water vapor and halting the loss or gain of ice.

A team of climate scientists made the surprising discovery from three years of data collected at Summit Camp, an arid, glaciated landscape 10,500 feet above sea level in the middle of the Greenland ice sheet.

"This is a place, unlike the rest of the ice sheet, where ice is accumulating," says Max Berkelhammer, assistant professor of earth and environmental sciences at the University of Illinois at Chicago. Berkelhammer is first author on the study, reported in *Science Advances*, an open-access online publication of the journal Science.

Near Greenland's coasts, Berkelhammer said, "it's relatively warm, and the ice melts faster and faster."

"But in the center of the ice sheet, it's 25 below zero Celsius (-13 F), so it's always freezing, even if it warms. It's a very rare occurrence to go above freezing," he said. The authors note that "despite rapid melting in the coastal regions of the ice sheet, a significant area -- approximately 40 percent -- rarely experiences surface melting."

Image shows a fogbow over Summit Camp on the Greenland Ice Sheet. CREDIT: Max Berkelhammer

Read more at [EurekAlert](#).



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