

To be more specific I would suggest the following definition:

Ice island

An elevation of the sea bed, not within the confines of an ice shelf, permanently capped with ice projecting above sea-level but with no rock visible above sea-level.

The term "ice-capped island" would be largely a descriptive term because, cartographically, this feature would be regarded as an ordinary island.

Following the S.C.A.R. decision to use the prefix "sub-glacial" before ordinary generic terms to designate features which are beneath Antarctic ice, it should be pointed out that Diagram (4) illustrates a "sub-glacial island." However, until seismic ice-depth determinations are carried out, such a fact will not be known. One would expect, therefore, that as exploration proceeds some "ice islands" will be reclassified as "sub-glacial islands" for cartographic purposes, although for descriptive purposes the name "ice islands" would probably be retained.

Antarctic Division,

Department of External Affairs,

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6 February 1961

PHILLIP LAW

REFERENCE

1. Armstrong, T., and Roberts, B. Illustrated ice glossary. *Polar Record*, Vol. 8, No. 52, 1956, p. 4-12.—
Armstrong, T. The recording and reporting of floating ice. *Polar Record*, Vol. 9, No. 60, 1958, p. 184-90.

SIR,

Terminology for Antarctic ice features

P. G. Law raises an interesting and important point in regard to the nomenclature of ice features, which I most heartily endorse.

The use of the term "ice island" is perhaps a bit unfortunate, but there was a justification if the alternate definition of an island is considered—something set distinctly apart from its surroundings. I do not particularly like the term iceberg which to me represents a portion of a glacier discharged into the sea, instead of a portion of an ice shelf which has broken loose. Though a descriptive term such as "shelf berg" or "shelf island" might be coined, it is a bit too late, for the unfortunate T-3 has now been grounded for nearly a year and is slowly disintegrating. I would much prefer the title "floating ice island" and would argue that these are so few that the extra title is unimportant.

Perhaps to complicate the issue of Law's ice islands, there is Roosevelt Island on the Ross Ice Shelf, surrounded not by the sea in a strict sense but by a floating ice shelf. Also Law's "ice islands" may in time become either "islands," or "islands (ice capped)," or the ice of ice islands may even become detached, in which case the ice island title would be more apt to follow the original ice than the under-water shoal that remained.

The troubles with ice feature definitions come from lack of knowledge of details and with the possibility of temporal changes. The former in many instances may never be resolved, and the latter is a threat that must be lived with. The solution lies in simple terms, and I am very much in favor of Law's suggestions of "ice islands," and would also include such features as Roosevelt Island (Roosevelt Ice Island). When and if the rock above sea-level becomes exposed either artificially or naturally, or is proven by geophysical means to be above sea-level, the term "ice" could be dropped. If the ice as a whole became detached the term "floating" could be added. My understanding of the sub-glacial prefix concept was that it would be mainly applicable to large sub-continent geographical provinces such as plateaus, ranges, channels, etc. It need not confuse the isolated island issue.

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A. P. CRARY

SIR,

Terminology for Antarctic ice features

We have read with interest the letters on this subject by Mr. Law and Mr. Crary, and fully agree with their views about the need for continued revision and extension of the terms and definitions of Antarctic ice features.

Mr. Law's illustrations of four types of island illustrate the problem well. His types (1) and (2) call for no comment, either in definition or term. However, we suggest that his remarks on types (3) and (4)