

ALPS

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Greenland. Everything changes

25.10.2024–16.8.2026

ALPS Swiss Alpine Museum presents a major new exhibition that delves right into the heart of the transformations defining our era and examines all of the associated disruptions, dilemmas, and contradictions.

This cinematic exhibition spread over two floors of the museum explores the big issues of our day and the questions they raise: Climate change – what can be stopped, and what must we do to adapt? Can globalization and self-determined modernization plausibly exist side by side? Do villages have a future when cities seem ever more attractive? When does tourism become overtourism? The energy transition is dependent on rare earth elements, but are the resulting intrusions into the Arctic landscape justifiable? Greenland's present is full of contradictions and dilemmas.

Immersive projections serve as a counterpoint to around thirty filmed interviews with Greenlanders. A diverse assortment of figures including a fisherman, an actress, a politician, an airport manager, a student, a hunter, and an influencer tell of their experiences and personal opinions about Greenland. The exhibition also places a special focus on the vibrant local music scene. The diversity of viewpoints constantly challenges visitors to reconcile contradictions and question (overly) hasty judgements, while also grappling with the fact that – as actress Aka Niviâna Mørch Pedersen effectively pointed out in her interview – the supposed answers only ever lead to new questions. “Greenland. Everything changes” also reveals to us a world that exists in Switzerland, too – one that poses a number of similar challenges.

A programme of accompanying events and a high-quality 200-page magazine provide further insights and visual impressions, such as the work of the young Greenlandic photographer Inuuteq Storch, for example, who caused quite a stir with his work for the Danish pavilion at this year's Venice Biennale. The film recordings for “Greenland. Everything

changes” were made on three trips there between the summers of 2023 and 2024. The film team was led by the exhibition’s curator Beat Hächler and co-curator and filmmaker Gian Suhner, the pair responsible for the highly successful North Korea exhibition “Let’s Talk about Mountains” (which opened at ALPS in 2020).

Greenland – the “horizontal Alps”

“I would argue that many people in Switzerland imagine Greenland as a byword for snow and ice, for untouched nature, but also for the consequences of climate change, which is afflicting the Arctic particularly badly,” says Beat Hächler. And so the Arctic can certainly be compared to high Alpine zones – there’s good reason why Swiss polar researchers such as Alfred de Quervain described Greenland as the “horizontal Alps” in the early twentieth century. Even today, Switzerland and Greenland enjoy close links with respect to climate research.

“We too started off the film shoot with simplistic ideas in mind,” acknowledges Hächler, “and then we encountered people in a highly diverse and often contradictory setting. We realized it’s the same as the world we live in, but it comes across in a more concentrated form in Greenland. And this is what we want to show in the exhibition.” That’s why it was important above all to create a space for Greenlandic voices – free from any commentary or overhasty evaluations. The “facts and figures” are presented together in a separate area.

Talking with Greenlanders, not about them

It’s the film team’s attitude and approach that makes “Greenland. Everything changes” an exhibition with the people who live in Greenland rather than about them. Local cooperation was decisive for the project’s success. As Gian Suhner explains, “Over time we started understanding just what it was that we didn’t understand,” and that led to ever more conversations and new viewpoints. The idea is to invite visitors along on a similar journey and give them the freedom to decide which voices they would like to hear on their headsets. Alberte Parnuuna, a Greenlandic filmmaker who served as an advisor to the film team, states her wishes and expectations: “I simply want others to know that we are people in Greenland, just like there are people in Switzerland. Our shared experiences are much more powerful than geographical differences and distinct cultural codes.” And, in today’s world, where we all live, those experiences aren’t all that dissimilar.

Ecological footprint

The four-person film crew from Berlin and Bern went to Greenland three times for the “Greenland. Everything changes” exhibition project. They travelled by aeroplane, helicopter, and boat – there are hardly any road links in the region. There were additional journeys between Bern, Berlin, and Vienna during the post-production phase. The CO2 emissions for the shoot in Greenland plus post-production added up to around 27 tonnes. That’s around the same amount as generated by four people sharing two cabins on a 20-day cruise. The film team stayed in Greenland for a total of ten weeks, and in this period spent around 90,000 Swiss francs on transport, accommodation, food, restaurants, cultural activities, and film production costs. Sustainability was a key concern in terms of designing and operating the exhibition: ALPS exclusively uses sustainably produced electricity. The lighting utilizes an energy-saving LED system, and the projections rely on energy-efficient laser devices. The rope on the walls is made of OceanYarn, which is produced from recycled plastic ocean waste.

Media materials

- [High-resolution images for download](#)
- [Films and interviews](#) (Password: kalaallitnunaat)
- [Greenland sound playlist](#)



Images



Films &
interviews



Sound

For specific material and further questions, please contact:
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Greenland's ice is melting six times faster today than it did 40 years ago – Child in Kullorsuaq. Image: Julian Jonas Schmitt



The colorful houses of Greenland are a legacy of colonialism. Image: Julian Jonas Schmitt



More infrastructure, more tourists: Tourism hotspot Ilulissat. Image: Julian Jonas Schmitt



The Arctic is warming up to four times faster than the rest of the world.
Image: Gian Suhner



Traditional clothing – modern infrastructure: Life in Kullorsuaq in northern Greenland. Image: Gian Suhner



Connection to the globalized world: Kullorsuaq is supplied with clothes, food and other consumer goods by ship - in the summer. Image: Gian Suhner



Icebergs attract tourists – but many tourism companies are not owned by Greenlanders. Image: Julian Jonas Schmitt

Accompanying programme

The exhibition magazine

A high-quality magazine accompanying the exhibition “Greenland. Everything changes” offers over 200 pages of in-depth essays, interviews, and series of photos. Images captured by the ALPS film team appear alongside work by the young Greenlandic photographer Inuuteq Storch. International authors highlight the upheavals and transformations currently underway in Greenland, with topics ranging from the territory’s place on the geopolitical stage to Greenlandic influencer Qupanuk Olsen refuting the “Ten Misconceptions about Greenland”.

CHF 20 (plus shipping costs), 208 pages, in German, can be purchased at the ALPS shop in the museum or ordered at: shop@alps.museum. Purchasing the magazine also enables you to access online versions of the main articles in French and English.

Events and films at Kino REX Bern

The themes raised by the exhibition are examined in greater detail with an initial programme of events running up until the summer of 2025. In the #controversial series of exhibition tours, a variety of guests talk about Greenland as a climate hotspot, about the price of the tourism boom, and about our own capacity to cope with dilemmas. In cooperation with ALPS, Kino REX Bern invites viewers to come along on a filmic voyage of discovery to Greenland.

Cooperating in Museumsquartier Bern:

ALPS and Bernisches Historisches Museum

In 2025, Bernisches Historisches Museum will be focusing on its Greenland collection. Together with ALPS, it will invite visitors to come to the Greenland exhibition and take part in a critical dialogue: Whose voices will be heard? What relevant questions will be posed about power structures and the relationship between Greenland and Switzerland? Input from the general public will play a role in the reappraisal of the Greenland collection.

[More about the accompanying programme.](#)



Village life in Kullorsuaq. During the ice-free period, the supply ship comes every fortnight. Image: Julian Andrea Rupp



The world-famous ice fjord is a reason for many tourists to travel to Greenland. Three new airports are now being built for this purpose. Image: Julian Andrea Rupp



The Silent Disco in the final room offers a 'best of' Greenlandic music from pop, rock, rap, reggae and classics – selected by the Greenlanders who took part in the project. Image: Julian Andrea Rupp



The polar bear – omnipresent in Greenland, especially as a marketing motif on mascots, club flags and ice cream. The boxes contain facts and figures about Greenland. Image: Julian Andrea Rupp

Project team (selection)

Overall management/curation/texts	Beat Hächler
Co-curation/conception/direction	Gian Suhner
Editing	Felicitas Sonvilla, Gian Suhner
Cinematography / Camera	Julian Jonas Schmitt
Sound	Denis Elmaci, Felicitas Sonvilla
Sound design	Denis Elmaci, Karin Bucher
Scenography / Exhibition graphics	Atelier Philipp Clemenz: Philipp Clemenz, Christian Stern
Magazine: Concept/Editing	Daniel Di Falco, Salome Erni
Visual concept/graphics	Upset: Mirko Leuenberger, David Lüthi

Partners

Institutional partners	Kanton Bern, Bundesamt für Kultur, Burggemeinde Bern, Stadt Bern, Schweizer Alpen-Club SAC
Project partners	Bank EEK AG, Fondation Philan- thropique Famille Sandoz, Honorarkonsularische Vertretung des Königreichs Dänemark, Pully / Lausanne, Leister Stiftung, Paul Schiller Stiftung, Zürich Swisslos/ Kulturförderung, Kanton Graubün- den, Swiss Polar Institute, Tem- peratio-Stiftung, Universität Bern, Institut für Umwelt- und Klimaphy- sik, Ursula Wirz Stiftung
Event partners	Bernisches Historisches Museum, Bern, Kino Rex, Bern, Swiss Polar Class, Lernprogramm des Swiss Polar Institute, Magazin Reportagen
Communication partners	Polar Journal, Swiss Polar Institute

Topics and interview partners per room

Foyer 1st floor

Greenland. Everything changes

Greenland's ice masses are melting. But climate is just one amongst many drivers of change. The world's largest island is on the way to independence from Denmark, its former colonial ruler. Greenland has the world's largest deposits of rare earth elements, which are needed for the transition to renewable energy, and it will soon be ready to participate in this market. Greenland is investing in new airports to further promote the rapidly growing tourism sector. Greenland's economy needs more labour and is finding it in Thailand and the Philippines. New beginnings and a pioneering spirit, but also contradictions and dilemmas characterise Greenland today. We show how Greenlanders are shaping and experiencing these changes and discover parallels to the part of the world we live in.

Room 2

Climate change in an ice lab

Greenland ice is studied at the Department of Climate and Environmental Physics, part of the University of Bern's Physics Institute. The ice samples come from drill cores taken by international teams from the ice sheet over many years. The oldest ice is over 120,000 years old. This makes Greenland the most important climate archive on Earth alongside the Antarctic - a hotspot for international climate research. The ice samples provide insights into the climate of the past and a glimpse of the climate crisis today and in the future. How politics and society react to these findings is another challenge.

Chantal Zeppenfeld: Climate researcher, PhD student

Hubertus Fischer: Professor, Head of the Climate and Environmental Physics Division of the Physics Institute
Thomas Stocker: Professor emeritus, Former Head of the Climate and Environmental Physics Division of the Physics Institute

Room 3

Village Life

The village of Kullorsuaq lies far north of the Arctic Circle, 200 kilometres from the nearest hospital. Life revolves around fishing and hunting as well as the village with its shop, school, community and family work. During the ice-free period, the supply ship comes every two weeks. It brings groceries and consumer goods and takes the locally caught, frozen fish. Those who want to pursue higher education move away and usually never come back. Leave or stay? Live the tradition or give it up? These are questions that particularly young villagers ask themselves.

Jonas Kristinsen: Hunter, champion dog sled racer

Justine H. Olsen: Garment maker

Meqo Jensen: School principal, teacher

Martin Olsen: Municipal worker, hunter

Atsianguaq Olsen: Student, musician

Birgitta Kammann Danielsen: Social worker, teacher

Room 4

City life in the capital

Nuuk is growing rapidly. Soon 20,000 people, more than a third of Greenland's population, will be living in the capital. Housing is scarce and expensive. Nuuk is home to a shopping mall, Thai restaurants and start-ups. The old properties of the Danish colonial era stand alongside new building complexes that house the Greenlandic administration and parliament. Nuuk is home to the campus of Greenland's only university and one of the many state fish factories of 'Royal Greenland'. Many creative artists also live here and showcase their work in theatres, cinemas, galleries, museums and concert venues.

Inunnguaq Petrussen: musician, political adviser

Svend Hardenberg: Entrepreneur, actor

Nivi Christensen: Art historian, director of the Nuuk Art Museum

Qupanuk Olsen: Mining engineer, influencer

Kim Jakobsen: Rap artist, life coach

Merete Lindstrøm: Media spokeswoman for the fishing company 'Royal Greenland'

Aka Niviâna Mørch Pedersen: Actress, Greenland returnee

Arny Mogensen / Mala Johnsen: Entrepreneur, inventor of the streetwear brand 'Bolt Lamar'

Room 5

The ice fjord – a tourist hotspot

The ice fjord is world-famous and has been a UNESCO World Heritage Site since 2004. The icebergs that glide into the ocean here attract tourists from all over the world. They arrive by plane and cruise ship. And the numbers are increasing. Ilulissat is now building a new airport where large aircraft from Paris and New York will be able to land. Hotels are upgrading, but there is no shortage of critical voices. They warn against hasty development. Who will benefit? Who will miss out? What kind of tourism does Greenland need?

Matthias Burkert / Matthias Hütter: Outdoor tourists from Obersulm and Bühl, Germany

Flemming Bisgaard: Logistics entrepreneur, ex-pilot

Nukaaka Lund-Mathæussen: Student of building services engineering

Looqi Schmidt: Hunter, lecturer at the College of Social Pedagogy

Zhiling Xiong / Lu Jiao: Cruise ship passengers from Boston, USA

Ulrik Amdi Sørensen: Chief Operating Officer of the four-star hotel „Arctic“

Room 6

Facts & figures: Greenland in short

Alcohol consumption, fishing, global warming, Inuit, independence, forced contraception. These are just 6 of 31 key phrases that provide an insight into the facts and perspectives of Greenland today. Will everything change? The evidence is hidden in the boxes in this room. If you open them, you will learn more about the topics that have been addressed in the film rooms.

Room 7

Mining on the ice-free coast

Greenland is rich in mineral resources: metals, gemstones, coal, graphite, uranium, oil, gas and rare earth elements. Around 120 mining projects with international investors are currently awaiting approval. With his Tanbreez project near Qaqortoq, Australian entrepreneur Greg Barnes is planning to mine one of the largest deposits of rare earth elements. Rare earth elements are used in the manufacture of smartphones, LEDs, electric motors and wind turbines. Mining in Greenland will make Europe and North America less dependent on production from China, which currently dominates the market. However, mining projects are controversial.

Naaja H. Nathanielsen: Minister of Business, Trade, Mineral Resources, Justice and Gender Equality in the Greenlandic government

Hans Hinrichsen: Director of the Greenland School of Minerals & Petroleum in Sisimiut

Malik Vahl Rasmussen: Engineer, logistics entrepreneur, Greenland ice exporter

Greg Barnes: Geologist, investor, instigator of the Tanbreez project

Mariane Paviassen: Politician in the Greenlandic parliament, environmental activist

Room 8

Greenland becomes “Green Land”

On the approach to Narsarsuaq, the lush green meadows of Qassiarsuk stand out of the fjord landscape. It was here in the 10th century that the Vikings gave Greenland its name (which means ‘grassland’) and it has stuck to this day. Greenland’s agriculture is expanding: sheep farming for meat production and the cultivation of vegetables without the use of pesticides, like potatoes, cabbage and beets. Even strawberries and tomatoes are grown in the greenhouses of the state-run Experimental Farm. Greenland wants to become less dependent on expensive food imports. Climate change is working to its advantage.

Ellen K. Frederiksen: Teacher, B&B proprietor, sheep farmer

Tupaarnaq Kreuzmann Kleist: Sheep farmer, hunter, ex-ski racer

Kim Neider: Agronomist, director of the Experimental Farm in Upernaviarsuk

Room 9

Connecting sounds

The Inuit on the east and west coasts do not speak the same language. But music, with lyrics mostly sung in Kalaallisut, brings together the people on the world’s largest island. Making music is popular in Greenland. Song lyrics are a medium for vocalising Greenland’s issues and a forum for being heard. The playlists in this room represent the best of Greenlandic music including pop, rock, rap, reggae, country and classics, selected by the Greenlanders who contributed to the exhibition and supported by Inunnguaq Petrussen, the lead singer of the band ‘Inuk’.