

# Environmental Change in North Atlantic Islands

Umhvørvisbroytingar á oyggjum í Norðurhøvum

**Tórshavn 17-20 May 1998**

*Editors: Dorete Bloch and Pehr H. Enckell*

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The islands in the northern Atlantic, and certain coastal parts in the area have, in geological terms, been free of ice only for a relatively short time after the Weichsel glaciation.

Some of these areas are also the parts of Europe most recently settled by Man. Fishing and hunting were until recently the dominating subsistence activities and agriculture always played a secondary role.

This implies, first, that periglacial land forms and patterns can still be easily seen and interpreted and second, that human activities have only to a minor degree transformed the landscape, as compared to continental Europe.

Chronological studies are furthermore facilitated by a number of datable tephra layers from Icelandic volcanic eruptions, and by the rather sudden vegetational and faunal changes occurring at Landnám, as evidenced in the palynological record.

This geological and historical background formed an ideal setting for the symposium on *Environmental Change in North Atlantic Islands*, held in Tórshavn, Faroe Islands, on 17 to 20 May 1998. The topics spanned the whole time period from the Weichsel glaciation to the present, and the studies presented covered the whole area from Greenland in the west to Scandinavia in the east and from Spitsbergen in the north to Scotland in the south.

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