

The rivers on the ice sheet

Almost every day new information is received about the extensive melting of the Greenlandic Ice Sheet. The melting will have major consequences for humans and for flora and fauna. Changes will occur worldwide, because of the expected increase in the sea levels.

From eleven kilometres altitude the ice sheet looks enormous. The white ice and snow reaches out to all horizons. Huge rivers of melt water are formed on top of ice. There are also formed large, blue lakes.

This whole landscape is unpredictable. It changes all the time. The ice moves, and new rivers and lakes are created. During these years the ice draws back on the Greenland coast, and new areas of mountains and rocks are visible. It will be interesting to see if this is another climatic cycle, or whether it is a continuous process towards a greater and greater melting of the ice.

The Greenlandic society often becomes aware of these large natural changes. In this month huge amounts of melt water smashed a bridge at the settlement Kangerlussuaq in West Greenland. The fish and shrimp stocks are changing, and this requires rapid transformation of the fishery.

The situation tells us about the extremely vulnerable conditions we all depend. Although Man often think of himself as the master of the world, humanity is subject to a nature that has much larger forces than we can imagine.

But from the comfortable seat on the airliner eleven kilometres above the earth surface is the melting ice sheet a beautiful sight.



The surface of the Greenlandic Ice Sheet, July 2012

The rivers on the ice sheet

Quit

Go to the Text