

Kangerlussuaq, Greenland 11th July 2003

Danish led international deep ice core drilling project in Greenland has almost completed drilling through the ice sheet.

These days, the excitement is growing in the NorthGRIP ice camp on the Greenland Ice Sheet. Yesterday the length of the ice core drilled exceeded 3054 m and the NorthGRIP core became the longest ice core ever drilled in Greenland. The ice at this depth is 118,000 years old. It is from a time when climate was declining from the warm Eemian period into the last Ice Age. The Eemian is the period between the last two ice ages, it lasted from 130,000 to 115,000 years before present and was 2 deg C warmer than our present climate. The results from the NorthGRIP ice core will give us information on how the climate after a warm interglacial period cooled down into an Ice Age. In the perspective of global warming, the knowledge on how the warm Eemian climate ended in an Ice Age is very relevant.

The ice at NorthGRIP (75.09 deg N, 42.32 deg W, 2930 m a.s.l.) is believed to be 3080 m deep and we hope to reach bedrock in less than 10 days. The ice at the bedrock is melting due to the geothermal heat from the Greenland bedrock and it has been a struggle for the dedicated team of researchers to drill through this warm ice. The progress in the drilling at NorthGRIP can be followed in the diary on the web side www.glaciology.gfy.ku.dk where pictures from the camp also can be found.

More information on the international NorthGRIP deep drilling project can be obtained by contacting our Field Operations Manager J.P. Steffensen.

From the NorthGRIP camp
Project Leader Dorthe Dahl-Jensen
Professor, Niels Bohr Institute, University of Copenhagen

Facts on the NorthGRIP Project.

NorthGRIP (North Greenland Ice Core Project) is an international collaboration between Denmark, Germany, Japan, Sweden, USA, Switzerland, France, Belgium and Iceland. The project is lead by Danish researchers. The deep drilling project was started in 1996 and 25 researchers from the participating nations have spent 3 months each summer on the Greenland Ice Sheet. During the field seasons the team has worked in shifts around the clock in order to drill and measure the precious ice cores. It will be a great day indeed for us to reach our goal - the bedrock.

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