

The glacial processes have been of great importance to human history in the region. The earliest stone-age inhabitants - known as the Saqqaq people - arrived in Greenland about 4400 years ago, and settled in the area of Ilulissat. They continued to live by the icefjord for about 1500 years. Stone-age settlements indicate that local resources were both plentiful and stable. Meltwater from the glacier brings large quantities of nutrient salts to the fjord. It is precisely this constant supply of nutrients that has supported the rich life in the fjord, which throughout the ages has guaranteed good hunting and fishing grounds for the local people.

Ilulissat Icefjord



For more information

Visit the websites: www.geus.dk/viden_om/voii/index-dk.html: Information about Ilulissat Icefjord. Here you will find lots of easily accessible information about the icefjord, and you can enjoy a video or go for an animated flight through the magical landscape.

www.asi.gl. This site gives information about Greenland's Asilerisoq (Nature Guide). Click 'Find your Asilerisoq', and again for Ilulissat. Here you will find more information about Ilulissat Icefjord.

Ilulissat Icefjord



In Denmark, the Heritage Agency of Denmark is responsible for submitting new proposals for inclusion on the World Heritage List. A special committee under UNESCO decides whether to include the proposed candidates on the list. Being nominated for inclusion on the World Heritage List does not in itself imply any new form of protection, but it does provide additional recognition and status.

A worldwide presentation of the cultural and natural heritage of mankind is given on UNESCO's website at www.unesco.org. The world heritage of Greenland is presented on the website of Greenland Home Rule at www.nanoq.gl.

The Danish sites included on the World Heritage List can be found on the website of the Heritage Agency of Denmark at www.kulturarv.dk

The Ilulissat Icefjord World Heritage Site is protected, and rules have been drawn up regarding entering or staying in the area.



KULTURARVSSTYRELSEN

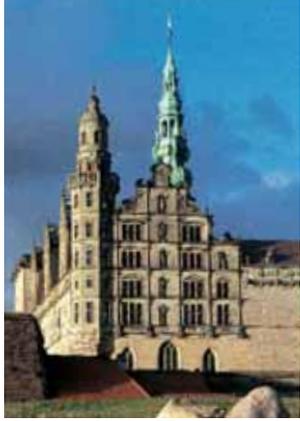
H.C. ANDERSENS BOULEVARD 2
DK-1553 KØBENHAVN K

TELEFON +45 33 74 51 00
post@kulturarv.dk
www.kulturarv.dk



Ilulissat Icefjord World Heritage in Denmark and Greenland





Kronborg Castle



Ilulissat Icefjord



Roskilde Cathedral



The Jelling Monuments

UNESCO

UNESCO stands for the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. The objective of UNESCO is to contribute to international peace and universal respect by promoting collaboration among nations. The organisation was founded in 1945, and Denmark and Greenland have been members since 1946.

Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage

UNESCO adopted the Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage in 1972 in light of the increasing threat of destruction to archaeological monuments and natural areas by war, natural disasters, pollution, tourism or simply decay.

The Convention calls on all nations to promote the protection of the cultural and natural heritage of local or national importance. The objective is to identify and seek to assure the conservation of the cultural and natural heritage that is important to all the peoples of the world. The cultural and natural heritage of mankind.

Cultural and natural heritage may include monuments, groups of separate or connected buildings, cultural landscapes or natural areas. It may be works of nature, works of man or the combined works of nature and man. It may be a structure that represents an important stage of development from the point of view of history or a natural phenomenon of outstanding value from the aesthetic or scientific point of view.

The international cultural heritage and natural heritage make up UNESCO's World Heritage List. The purpose of the list is to arouse global awareness of our common heritage, thus facilitating its protection and conservation. Furthermore, its purpose is also to strengthen international solidarity in this area with a view to increasing cross-frontier scientific and economic cooperation.

Denmark and Greenland ratified the 'World Heritage Convention' in 1979, and in 1994 the Jelling Mounds, Runic Stones and Church were added to the World Heritage List. The year after, Roskilde Cathedral was included. In 2000, Kronborg Castle was added to the list, and most recently, Ilulissat Icefjord was included in 2004.

Ilulissat Icefjord

Ilulissat Icefjord is the first site in Greenland, and one of the first in the Arctic, to be included in UNESCO's World Heritage List. Its inclusion is in recognition of its unique importance for glaciology - the science of ice - and its scenic beauty. In addition to being simply beautiful, the area has played a central part in Greenland's cultural history.

Much of the stunning beauty of Ilulissat Icefjord is due to the unique combination of the vast quantity of icebergs produced by the huge glacier at the head of the fjord and the presence of the 'iceberg bank' at the fjord mouth.

The glacier, Sermeq Kujalleq, calves an impressive number of cubic kilometres of ice each year. In 2007, the figure was about 70 cubic kilometres. That is more than was produced by any other glacier outside Antarctica. Its ice-stream is one of the fastest in the world, moving at about 20m per day. The ice-stream is contained within a deep, narrow channel, which is approximately 3-6 km wide.

Ilulissat Icefjord



Calving, when large parts of the glacier front break free, occurs only a few times each year, during the summer. However, smaller pieces of ice are continually breaking off, and this can be observed all the year round. After calving in the summer, the glacier gradually advances during the winter, as the front is stabilised by the sea-ice in the fjord.

The majestic icebergs that drift towards the mouth of the fjord and ground on the bank create an obstruction that causes smaller icebergs to accumulate behind them. Only after they have melted enough to float over the threshold, or the pressure from the ice in the fjord has become great enough to force them over it, do they drift out further, disappearing into Disko Bay.

The icebergs are extremely varied in size and shape. They can vary in size from small blocks to giants that rise more than 100m above the sea. Some are rounded, while others have jagged peaks and pinnacles. When large icebergs capsize in Disko Bay, they make large waves that can be a danger to boats in the bay and people along the coast.