

The speech given by Minister Mimi Karlsen at the inauguration of Silap Pissusianik Iisimatusarfik – the Climate Research Centre

Dear Chairman of Naalakkersuisut, Dear all,

On behalf of Naalakkersuisut, I am very pleased to be able to welcome you to the inauguration of the Climate Research Centre.

The increasing focus on climate change and the associated research has made the international community zoom in on Greenland and the Arctic.

Naalakkersuisut regrets that Minister for Science, Technology and Innovation, Helge Sander, is unable to participate in the inauguration of the Climate Centre due to alteration of the flight between Copenhagen and Kangerlussuaq.

Naalakkersuisut is pleased to be able to inaugurate the Climate Research Centre in Nuuk today. The Climate Research Centre is an international centre for studies of climate changes and their impacts on Arctic ecosystems, societies and infrastructure. The activities of this centre are in line with Naalakkersuisut's overall goals regarding research in Greenland. Research should contribute towards improving the quality of life of the population and be actively applied in the societal development. Thus, good research results should contribute to good and sustainable political and administrative decision-making.

The Centre's focus areas will be implemented as four overall target areas covering the scientific sectors within:

- Nature and the environment
- Society and industry
- Technology and construction
- and the interaction between the three sectors.

The Centre is based at Pinngortitaleriffik – the Greenland Institute of Natural Resources and Iisimatusarfik – the University of Greenland. This multidisciplinary centre is to focus on the effects of climate changes on nature and society in the Arctic. The Climate Research Centre will not only provide better facilities for Greenlandic and Danish researchers, it will also improve the possibilities for accomodating visiting researchers from abroad as well as education of PhD students.

In the long term, we need to improve basic knowledge of how climate changes affect the Greenlandic society, e.g. in terms of new industrial opportunities, altered patterns of settlement, living conditions, etc. We anticipate that Silap Pissusianik Iisimatusarfik – the Greenland Climate Research Centre – will establish itself as a centre for research, education, and documentation.

It is important to Naaalakkersuisut that users of the natural resources and researchers cooperate in creating new knowledge of the interaction between the Arctic environment and societies.

Naalakkersuisut hopes that the centre will contribute towards creating greater insight and knowledge within the international community with respect to climate changes and their consequences for the local, regional, and global communities.

The idea of establishing an Arctic climate research centre was formed following a meeting between the Danish Minister for Science, Technology and Innovation, Helge Sander, and the Greenlandic minister then in office. Subsequently, a Danish/Greenlandic group was set up, along with committees in Greenland and Denmark. The Climate Research Centre was established on 1 May 2009 with Professor Søren Rysgaard as Head of Centre.”

Naalakkersuisut has high expectations for the Climate Research Centre. Naalakkersuisut is confident that the Centre will be able to contribute significant and useful research results.

Naalakkersuisut would like to take the opportunity to thank the Aage V. Jensen Charity Foundation. Naalakkersuisut highly appreciates the Foundation's support in establishing and expanding the Institute of Natural Resources, which now also houses the Climate Research Centre.

Finally, Naalakkersuisut would like to express their appreciation that the Minister for Science, Technology and Innovation was inspired to establish an Arctic Climate Research Centre. Naalakkersuisut is sure that the cooperation between Greenland and Denmark concerning the Climate Research Centre will prepare the ground for good and sustainable decisions within our society.

Naalakkersuisut welcomes you all and congratulates you all on the inauguration of the Climate Research Centre.