



Exploring glacial change - flying in the tailwind of the early 20th century Greenland explorers

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TITLE: Exploring glacial change - flying in the tailwind of the early 20th century Greenland explorers

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ABSTRACT BODY: In the early 1930s Greenlandic explorers and scientists began using airplanes as an effective mean of surveying and mapping the hitherto unknown and inaccessible lands. By replacing the dogsled and the drawing board with the seaplane and camera, huge areas could now be covered. Here in the 21st Century the photographs now serve as a snapshot of the state of the glaciers, and possess unique scientific value as they stand as the first testimony of hundreds of Greenlandic glaciers.

In the summer of 2013, we flew in the paths of the early flights and captured the changes that occurred during the last 80 years. To revisit all the historic glaciers would be a near impossible, not to mention extremely expensive task, so we targeted the most important glaciers in terms of present mass loss as well as the most aesthetically appealing historical images.

The result is a then-and-now comparison that vividly captures both the raw beauty of the land and the ongoing often dramatic glacial changes. As the historic flights covered nearly half the Greenlandic coast line, we capture both areas of massive retreat and areas of still stand and even advance.

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