

TORJUS AND MIRO EXPLORE THE ARCTIC: A Book about Arctic Science for and by Kids

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Principal objective

We propose to make a book, radio documentary and potentially a film about two 8-year old boys that follow their fathers on an Earth Science research expedition to East Greenland. We shall publish the book in English, Norwegian, Danish and Dutch, which are the languages spoken by the boys. The radio documentary will be in Dutch and Norwegian.

The story line of the book is 'the making of the book itself'. Both boys have seen their fathers travel to remote and exiting field locations as long as they have lived. Now they want to see this for themselves. They want to find out about expedition life in the Arctic, the animals, landscapes, and people who live there, the climate that they have heard is changing, and then they want to make a book about what they are discovering, to tell other kids about it.

The two boys in their own words will narrate the book, but adult professionals will help them to find material, and to tell, write and edit and translate their story.

Project summary

East Greenland boasts some of the most spectacular geological sites of the world. The scale of the landscape, the range of colors and structures of the rocks is striking. Sea and land mammals, birds and large fish are numerous and easy to approach. People have only lightly touched the land, and travelers are true guests of nature. Collectively this makes East Greenland a showcase of natural phenomena and beauty, and an ideal site to appreciate Earth science in general and Arctic science in particular. However, east Greenland is not an easy place to go, and relatively few people have had the privilege. Our aim is to 'bring' Arctic research in Greenland to the general public, and children in particular.

The story will be about the scientific questions that lead this expedition, and about the life of scientists on an Arctic expedition. The boys will experience fishing 80 cm Arctic char, they will watch seals, whales, fox, hare and muskoxen play; they will make visits to well preserved trappers huts, many still standing as they were left about fifty years ago; and also experience of present day Inuit and European life. The expedition will take the form of a two-week, 400 km trip in rubber boats, in the fjords of central East Greenland. One boat will be carrying the two father-and-son-teams, and the other the photographer and writer.

After this trip we will stay in a small Inuit village, Ittoqqortoormiit, which is the northernmost Inuit settlement on then East Coast of Greenland. From the village we will make trips in chartered cabin cruisers, to sites of hot springs along the outer coast East Greenland. The visit to the village will add a window on the people of the Arctic and their relation with nature and climate.

Scientific research will be at the heart of this expedition: Hartz and Hovius will carry forward their ongoing research in the area. Science and logistics will guide where and how we go, but it will be the curiosity of the boys that leads the story.