



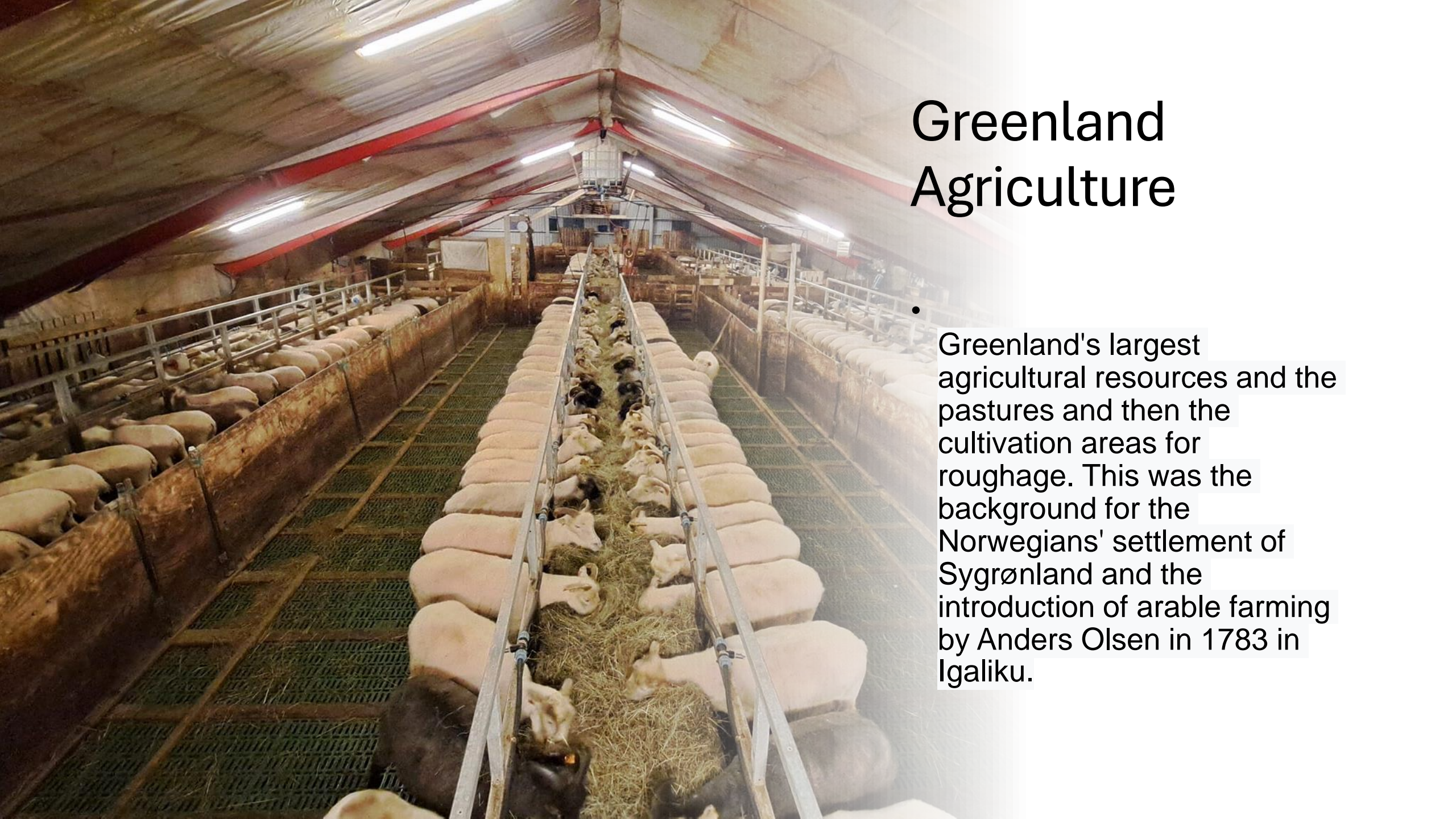
Greenland Agriculture

Country notes for the project “Lanbrugssamarbedje”



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- Greenland's largest agricultural resources and the pastures and then the cultivation areas for roughage. This was the background for the Norwegians' settlement of Sygrønland and the introduction of arable farming by Anders Olsen in 1783 in Igaliku.



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- Today, sheep farming is the central production in Greenlandic agriculture, precisely on the basis of grazing areas and the establishment of fields that can ensure fodder for the winter period.
- It is by virtue of growing vegetables and processing grass into meat that agriculture has its justification.
- The prerequisite for agriculture in Greenland depends on the use of the agricultural land, i.e. the amount of cultivated land and the productivity of this land.



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- These conditions will eventually determine whether Greenland's agriculture is profitable, but because the pastures are larger than the cultivation areas, a mismatch has arisen between the sheep's winter feed requirements and the amount of feed produced, which limits profitability.
- After the disaster year in the winter of 1966-67, when due to a harsh winter there was a reduction in ewes from 48,000 to 20,000, a production change from extensive to intensive sheep farming was carried out.



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- In order to maintain the number of ewes, stables were built at the time without taking into account the capacity of the cultivation areas. This has meant that Greenland's agriculture today imports approximately half of the winter feed, which entails significant costs and uncertainty for the sheep farmers, as well as a loss of national economic opportunities due to the high import of concentrated feed.

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- The Greenlandic farmers have access to rich pastures around their farms. Many of the farmers have, over generations, built agriculture from the ground up with an extensive infrastructure, such as their own electricity and water supply. In most places, there are still good development opportunities, both for cultivating fields and expanding hydropower. Farmers usually have easy access to the sea, which is the most important transport route for many of Greenland's farmers.



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- Farmers are self-employed and are responsible for their own purchases. Despite this, acquisition has major limitations that many other types of production are not subject to. Social requirements such as sustainability, animal welfare and more cause extra costs in production. In addition, farmers have to operate their businesses wherever their land is, which potentially complicates logistics because they are severely limited by access to resources in the area. Farmers also have to take a large financial risk, where factors beyond their control come into play, for example the weather. Warm weather and regular rain are good. Cold weather, drought or too much rain can cause poor harvests.

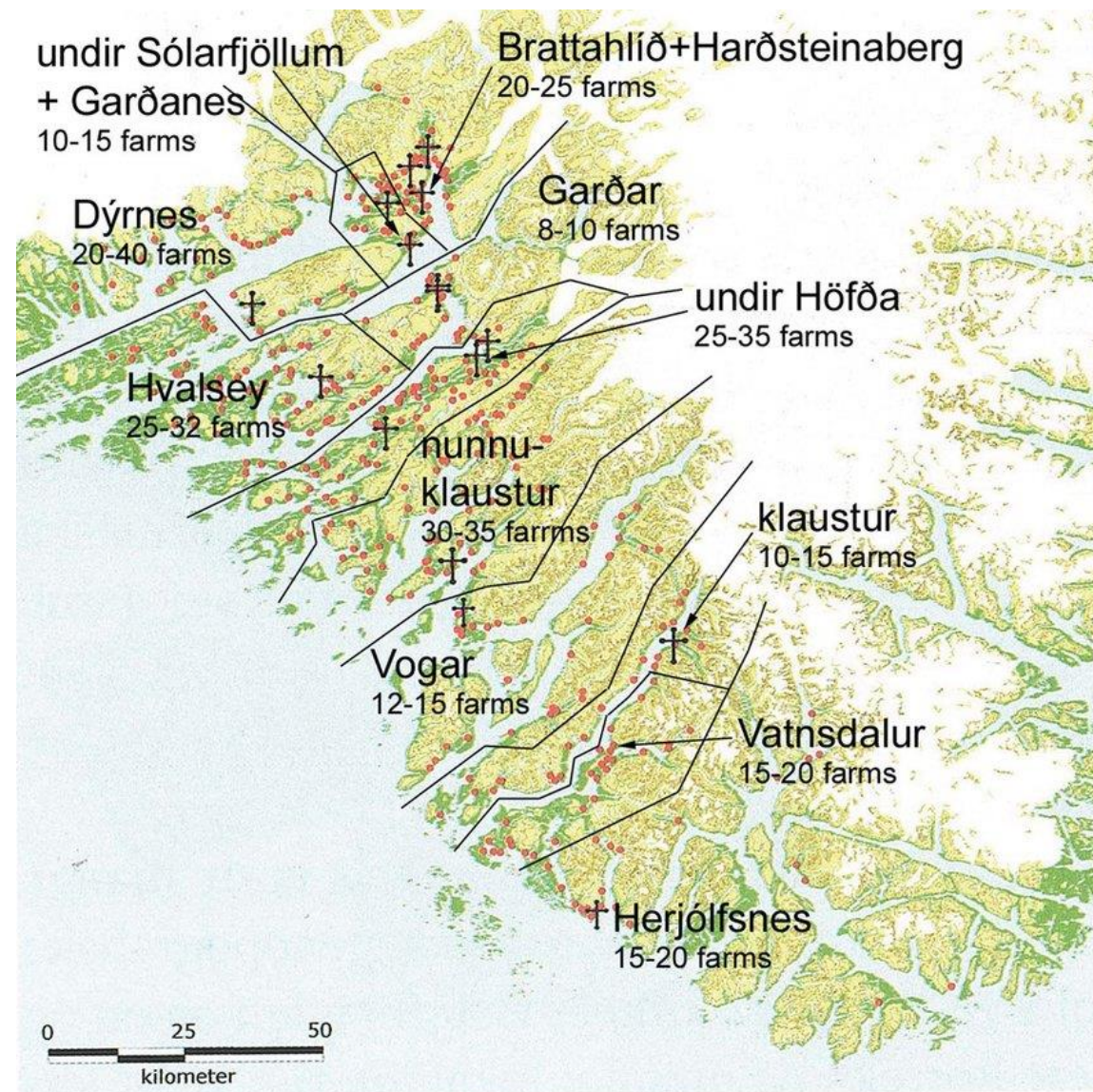
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- Although the sea is the main transport route, there are few farms with drainage facilities, which is a logistical challenge. In some areas, there are primitive dirt roads between farms and communities, which enable road transport in the summer. But the sea route is still most important when it comes to the transport of goods and machinery, and also for the delivery of lambs for slaughter in the autumn.



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- It places great demands on farmers. The farmers should be good agronomists, animal keepers, entrepreneurs and business managers. However, when the scale of the agricultural operation is not sufficient, for example, they can also engage in tourism, which requires good customer service, knowledge of local history, marketing and cooking skills. It goes without saying that a farmer who is good at livestock and agronomy is also a good business manager or a good tourist host.




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- There has been a steady decline in the number of farmers in Greenland over the last few decades, while the farms that remain have not grown enough to keep up the number of ewes
- Farmers cannot control the weather, but the weather is one of the most essential reasons for whether they achieve good or bad results. The weather largely determines the quality of the pastures, when the sheep are put out to pasture, and how much winter feed in turn affects how good lambing is in the spring and the survival rate of lambs on the summer pastures.

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- Farmers may have in common that, for example, they have run out of self-processed feed in May, and that they will have to let the sheep out earlier than is optimal. In addition, if the grass on pastures is not sufficiently good, this can lead to a greater loss of lambs, which affects the economy. In the autumn, you can have a similar situation if you hesitate to take the animals to the barn, in order to save feed. The result is that the animals are not in optimal condition when they are to be mated, and therefore achieve fewer lambs. The problem is that too many sheep are kept in relation to the amount of winter fodder that is produced. Farmers are close to the limit in normal years, which means they are working at high risk.
- in autumn some farmers are keeping their sheep too long at home fields, with no other feeding, and they lose fat/condition, that makes less twins, even flushing.



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- The yield of the fodder crops changes from year to year, mainly as a result of weather and climate. The pastures depend on sufficient sunlight and an adequate amount of rainfall to produce good yields. In a report on the climate in Greenland, it appears that Maan expects a warmer climate, which may result in longer growing days, but also more drought. This will directly affect farmers' finances, both with a higher risk of poor growth.

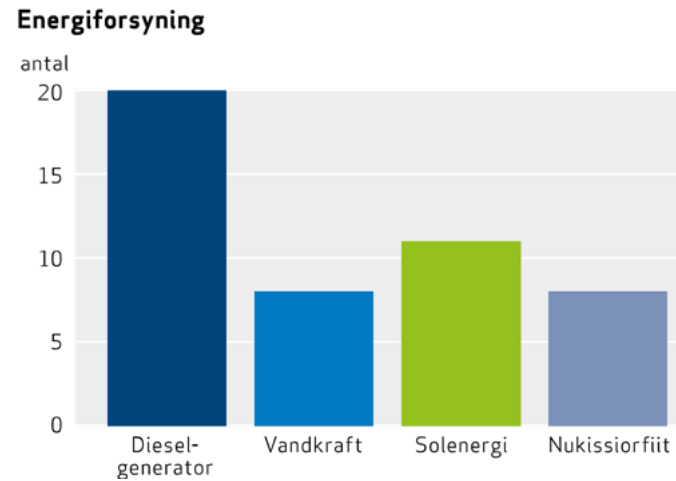
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- There is therefore now a need for a boost in productivity, both in terms of land and animals, by means of a systematic investment in new construction, renovation of stables, new establishment of fields and the improvement in the breeding of both animals and forage.



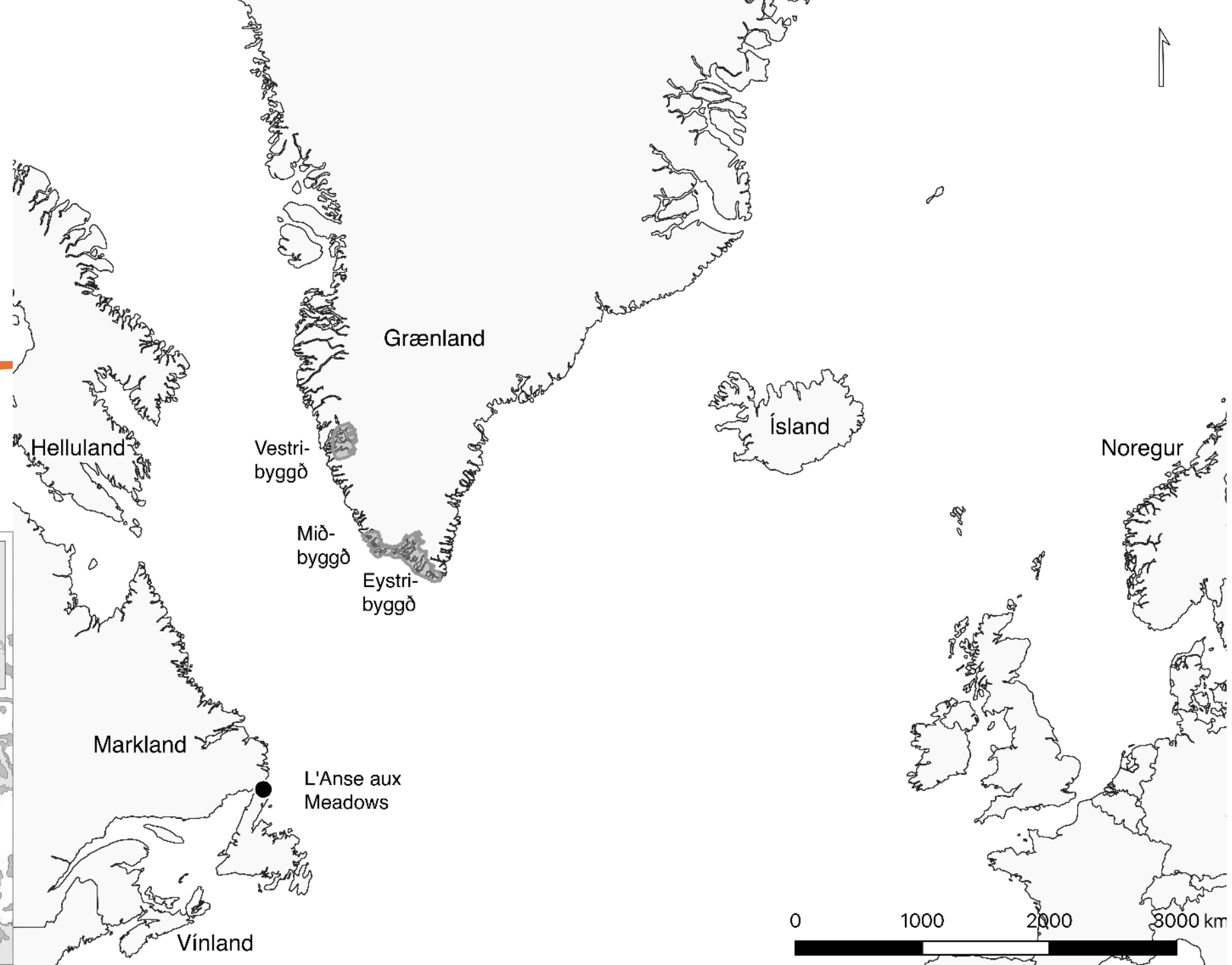
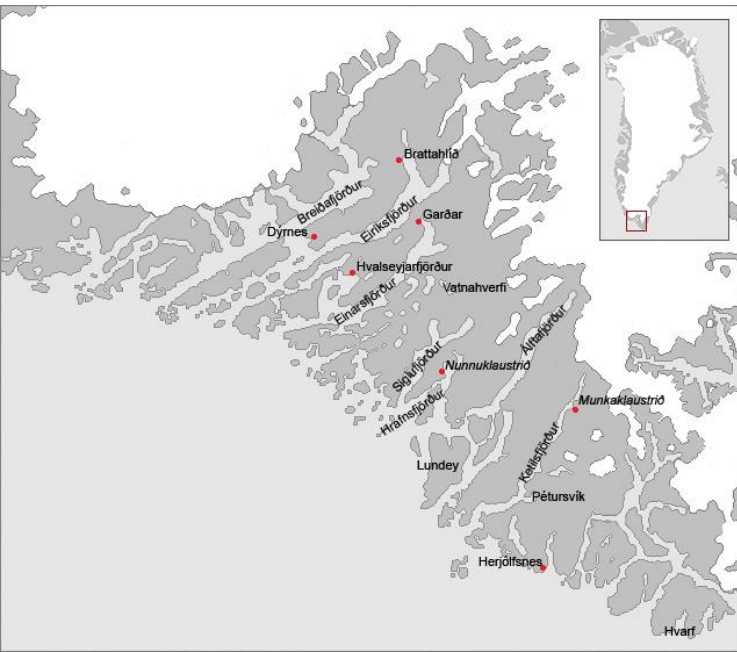
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139 Heste
0 Bifamilier
260 Høns
373 Køer
3.000 Tamrener

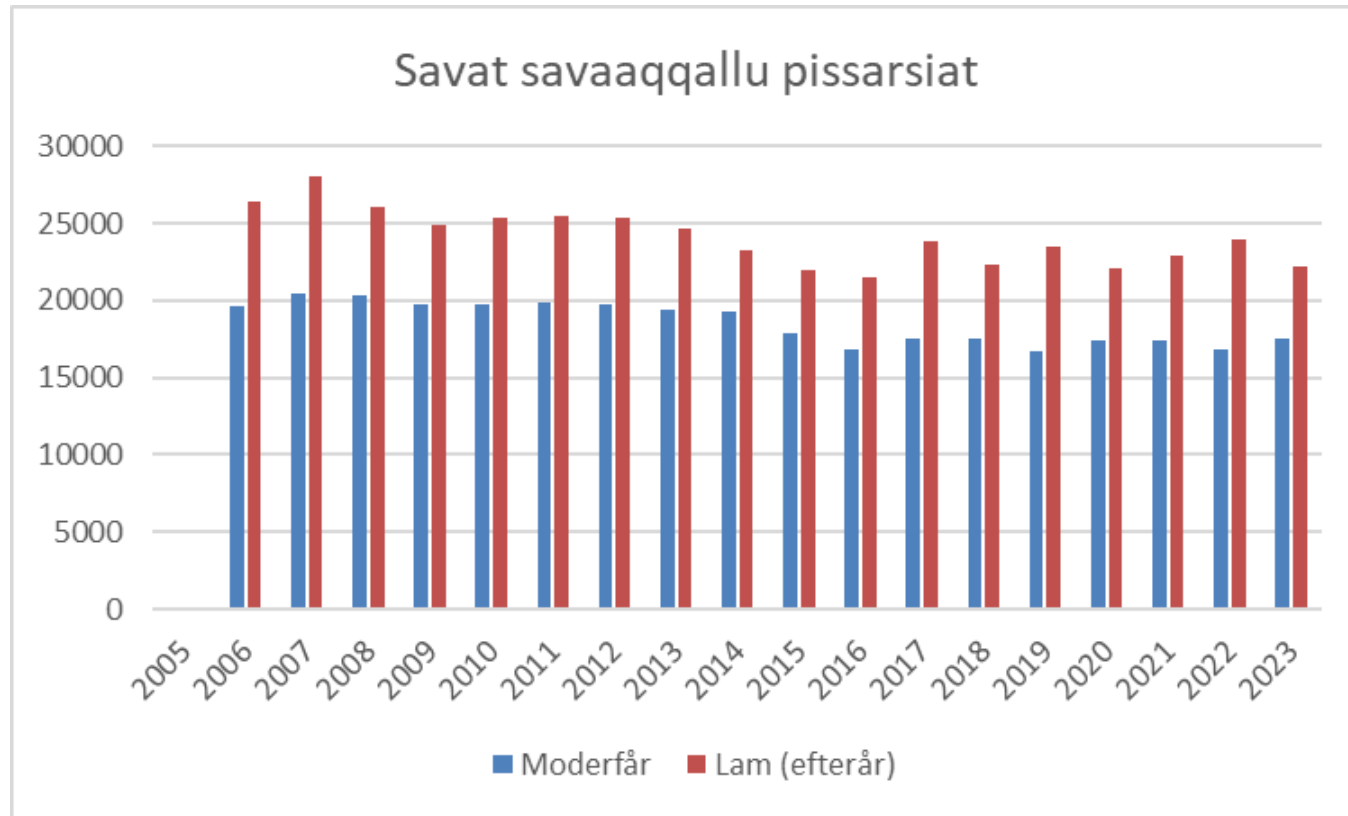


The map shows Eystri settlements in Greenland

Kortið sýnir Eystri byggð á Grænlandi.



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