

In the jaws of the giant

The airport is located right next to the Greenland ice sheet. From the runway, we can see the huge glacier, which, as a large white and grey tongue, slowly spits ice and gravel out of the ice sheet.

Behind the glacier the ice sheet extends many thousands of square kilometres. The ice cover extends several thousand kilometres to the north, and the distance to the desolated wild cliffs at the Greenlandic east coast is more than a hundred kilometres.

The ice sheet creates its own weather system. In South Greenland the meteorologists continuously are working to be able to make a reliable weather forecast. The air currents, containing the warm air created over the ice, are forming the Foehn winds, and this wind moves down from the ice through the valleys at the coast. The Foehn wind often creates extreme unexpected storms in the local areas around the ice

sheet.

I have experienced the locally generated wind and turbulence just North of the airport Narsarsuaq. They often provide the planes a rough ride that makes even the most hardened passenger to grab the seat in front of her. The flights from the North often have to return to the north because the turbulence is too violent.

From my seat in the DASH-8 the landscape north of Narsarsuaq seems wildly and violently. It is deserted and desolated. The sunset exposes the driving snow from the mountain tops. In the mountains the temperature often falls 20 degrees below zero.

It feels as if we are close to the jaws of a giant. When will this giant again engulf the mountains below us?



The landscape North of Narsarsuaq, January 2016