



# NordBorN meeting in Iceland

Hvanneyri 5-8 March 2024



## Attendants

**In person:** Bjarni Diðrik Sigurðsson (BDS), Katrín Björnsdóttir (KB), Jarad Mellard (JM), Efrén López-Blanco (ELB), Miguel Villoslada (MVi), Mariana Verdonen (MV), Beatrice Trascau (BT), Isabel C Barrio (ICB), Mathilde Defourneaux (MD), James Speed (JDMS), Laura Barbero-Palacios (LBP), Kristine Bakke Westergaard (KBW), Emmanuel Pagneux (EP), Mariana García Criado (MGC), Isla Myers-Smith (IMS), Alejandro Salazar (AS), Tanguy Bernard (TB), Jón Guðmundsson (JG) [from left to right in the image]

**In person and online:** Christian Schultze (CS), Ása Aradóttir (AA), Hlynur Óskarsson (HO)

**Online:** Dorothee Ehrich (DE), Gunnar Austrheim (GA), Mathilde Le Moullec (MLM)



### First NordBorN meeting in Iceland -- plan overview

	Tuesday Mar 5, 2024	Wednesday Mar 6, 2024	Thursday Mar 7, 2024	Friday Mar 8, 2024	
08:30		departure from Hotel Borgarnes	departure from Hotel Borgarnes	early departure of some participants	in-person only
09:00		intro participants	external comms		in-person and online
10:00				NordBorN open meeting Sauðafell	management board only
10:30		coffee break	coffee break		
11:00					
12:00		LUNCH	LUNCH		
13:00		IT troubleshooting	how shall we work together? (cont)		
13:30		how shall we work together?			
14:00		Science coffee MV	Science coffee KB		
14:30		how shall we work together? (cont)	NordBorN housekeeping and wrap up		
15:15			budget		
16:00	drive from Keflavik or Reykjavik to Borgarnes	Krauma baths	drive from Hvanneyri to Reykjavik		
16:30					
17:00		dinner		dinner (not covered)	
18:00					
19:00	dinner		dinner		
19:30					

## Wednesday, March 6

### Welcome to the meeting

ICB gave a short presentation of the NordBorN project and some housekeeping notes. NordBorN is a project funded by NordForsk for the next 5 years (2024-2028) that involves 9 institutions, and a growing number of participants. Since the original funding application, MV has joined the team at AUJ as the first NordBorN postdoc, TB joined the team at UiT as a PhD student, MVi joined the team at UEF, and MLM and LBP joined the GINR team. Welcome all!

A total of 21 researchers attended the meeting in person (at least some parts) and three others attended online. All institutions were represented at the meeting.

### Introductions by participants

In advance of the meeting, participants were asked to prepare three slides to introduce themselves, answering following questions: 1) What are you working on? 2) How does that fit into NordBorN? and 3) What can NordBorN do for you?

Slides provided by participants have been archived in a folder shared among NordBorN participants, and the aim of keywords is to help map the connections between each other's work. Participants (either present in the room or online) presented their slides. After the individual introductions, the already existing connections between NordBorN partners both related to research and to education were identified. This mapping exercise was done on one of the walls of the canteen in Hvanneyri using strings to connect the different partners, but the system was a bit confusing (the same string connecting several partners linearly instead of indicating all the pairwise relationships). MV will make an online version of this "map", which will be made available.



### **IT troubleshooting (IT help for access to shared files, etc)**

For communication within the network, we decided to start using OneDrive for sharing files and email communication and see how it goes. We have established a team in Teams, but some participants are having trouble accessing. IT (Siggí Búi) helped with the access to the shared files.

### **How shall we work together?**

**Collaboration within and beyond the network.** Based on the input from individual participants in the morning, some ideas on projects where the network could work together were discussed. It was agreed that to establish a robust platform for studying borealization across the North (i.e., one of the key goals of NordBorN) we would need to include external partners. Still, it would be fun to come up with a project that involves all NordBorN partners.

One idea from IMS was to write together a perspectives article on the concept of borealization and how we are using it in terrestrial ecology. The term has been used before in the literature but with slightly different (or even opposite!) meanings. IMS started a shared document, which participants started working on during Thursday morning session. After the meeting it was agreed that MV would help lead the project. The manuscript draft can be found [here](#).

For collaboration with external partners, it was decided that for a project to be a “NordBorN project” it would have to be related to borealization (in its various definitions) and involve at least two NordBorN members.



**Funding opportunities for joint research and education projects (MV).** To raise awareness within the network about potential funding opportunities for joint projects, MV has prepared a funding database. She presented the database at the meeting and asked for feedback. Participants agree that such database is helpful and much needed. MV will ask for more suggestions for improvement of the database to make it more user friendly.

As well, NordBorN will need to keep track of submitted funding applications and those that secure funding. This goes hand-in-hand with the need to collect information about NordBorN related activities and contributions etc. for reporting purposes, for which MV and ICB are looking for the best options available.

**Potential early-career-scientist-led activities within the network.** Seven early career scientists (ECS; 5 PhD students, 2 postdocs) attended the NordBorN meeting. It is important for NordBorN to create space for ECS (as this is one of the main goals of the network). This could be in the form of ECS-led activities, or by organizing or facilitating activities for ECS. One suggestion was to organize grant application writing sessions, as that will be the next career step for many ECS. It was also emphasized that the network was an excellent place for ECS to be involved with, as many job opportunities can arise within the network or through its connections. MV agreed to keep an eye on and inform about available PhD courses and training opportunities that are related to NordBorN themes.

#### **Science coffee: Mariana Verdonen**

MV presented her PhD work, on *Periglacial landscape dynamics: coupled analysis of a changing Arctic using remote sensing and field observations* while others enjoyed some coffee and cake.

## **Thursday, March 7**

### **External communications**

During this session we split into smaller groups to do a preliminary stakeholder mapping for the NordBorN project (deliverable 1).

Participants were asked to identify stakeholders at four different levels: 1) International, 2) National, 3) Regional, and 4) Local. The digitized version of these maps can be found as an excel table [here](#).



A point that was discussed was that we need to appoint an External Advisory Group (EAG). The role of the EAG will be to provide advice and strategic inputs to the steering committee. This board will consist of selected external experts with knowledge in biodiversity and ecosystem shifts with climate change in northern regions, that can discuss the interests of different stakeholder groups. Ultimately, this board will also act as a bridge between NordBorN and the wider society, thus enhancing the dialogue with policy-makers. During the meeting it was agreed that it would be good to first have an overview of the stakeholders involved in borealization issues (i.e., the mapping exercise) before identifying potential candidates.

Regarding external communication, it was also discussed that participants should identify external communication persons at their institutions. ICB and MV will prepare a short news item about the NordBorN to be shared among partners. Participants are asked then to contact their institution's (external) communication services to translate (if needed) and publish the news in their external communication channels.

#### **Science coffee: Kata Björnsdóttir**

In this second science coffee, KB gave a short presentation of her PhD work, *Arctic vegetation responses to climate change*. Kata passed her midterm evaluation in the end of February.

#### **NordBorN housekeeping and wrap-up**

The next annual meeting will be organized by the team at Aarhus University. The idea is to have the annual NordBorN meetings as annual meetings ca. 2-day meeting and 2 days of travel to/from. Annual meetings could be attached to other meetings or conferences, or be the occasion for organizing such activities. ELB and Niels M. Schmidt will propose some potential dates for the meeting in 2025.



### **Budget [management board only]**

There have been some delays and adjustments to budget of the first year. There has been a delay in recruiting a PhD student at GU (own contribution). At UEF, the 12-month funding for a PhD position provided by NordForsk will be delayed by some months; the recruitment of the PhD position is ongoing (deadline for applications: April 15). At NTNU, the postdoc position (own contribution) will start in May 2024 (instead of Jan 2024) and the PhD position (own contribution) is being recruited (deadline for applications: April 1). At AUI the postdoctoral researcher (NordForsk funding) was recruited as planned on Jan 2024, but as a 60% position for the first three months; the postdoc position will be at 100% from April 2024. AUI's own contribution is also increased by an extension of the PhD position of MD until Dec 2024 (extended by 8 months). No changes were reported from UiT or AU.

## **Friday, March 8**

### **NordBorN open meeting**

At an open meeting organized in person at the Reykjavík campus of AUI (Keldnaholt) and on Teams, ICB presented the NordBorN network to invite other researchers to participate in the network's activities. Some NordBorN participants attended the open meeting and introduced themselves and what they work on.