

Freshwater ecosystems and global change: Introduction to EURO-LIMPACS

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Freshwater ecosystems, already under stress from land-use change and pollution, now face additional pressures from climate change, directly and through interaction with other drivers. Euro-limpacs; (European Project to Evaluate Impacts of Global Change on Freshwater Ecosystems) is concerned with the science required to understand and manage the ecological consequences of these interactions. The project involves 38 institutes from the EU, wider Europe, Russia and Canada. It is funded by the EU 6th Framework Programme and started in February 2004 and will finish in 2009. The project will bring together a consortium of leading scientists aiming to integrate river, lake and wetland ecosystem science at the catchment scale. The main focus of the project is on key drivers of aquatic ecosystem change such as land-use, nutrients, acid deposition and toxic substances, and how the drivers interact with global variables, especially climate change, by using time series analysis, space-for-time substitution, palaeolimnology, experiments and modelling. Iceland's role in this project is mainly on climate – eutrophication interactions and involves experiments, palaeolimnological analysis and space-for-time substitution on series of lakes. Currently, there are three Icelandic and one Danish postgraduate students working on experiments in geothermal influenced streams and one German postgraduate student working on palaeolimnological analysis.