



ANTARCTICA: A FRAGILE CONTINENT OF EXTREMES

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Beauté de l' Antarctique: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Aa7FapWC0PM>

The background features a light beige gradient. In the top-left corner, there is a white circle partially cut off by the edge, with several blue dashed lines curving downwards and to the right. In the bottom-right corner, there is another white circle partially cut off, with several blue dashed lines curving upwards and to the left. A solid orange line also curves from the bottom-right towards the center.

Antarctica: a fragile continent of Extremes

A satellite view of Earth showing the continent of Antarctica at the bottom. The continent is highlighted with a white dashed outline. The rest of the Earth's surface is shown in shades of blue, green, and brown, representing oceans, forests, and landmasses. The word "Antarctica" is written in white text on the left side of the image.

Antarctica

- + The fifth largest landmass on our planet (14,2 M km²).
- + The coldest (-89,6°C), windiest (320 km/h), world's driest (humidity 3 %) and the most isolated continent on Earth.

A satellite view of Earth showing the continent of Antarctica at the bottom. The continent is highlighted with a white outline. The surrounding oceans and other landmasses are visible in shades of blue, green, and brown. The word "Antarctica" is written in white text on the left side of the image.

Antarctica

- + The thickest ice section 4776 m.
- + The Antarctic ice represents more than 90 % of earth's fresh water-budget.

A satellite view of Earth from space, showing the continent of Antarctica and the surrounding Southern Ocean. The continent is highlighted with a white dashed outline. The word "Antarctica" is written in large white text on the left side of the image. On the right side, there is a list of facts about the continent, each preceded by a purple plus sign. The background shows the Earth's surface with clouds and landmasses.

Antarctica

- + Approximately 45 species of birds, 17 species of penguins.
- + A home to some 350 species of lichen, 100 species of moss and hundreds of species of snow algae.
- + There are no trees and shrubs.
- + The life of fauna and flora on the continent and in the ocean is still balanced.
- + The continent is still ecologically clean (although penguins still have traces of DDT from the 50's from the previous century).

A satellite view of Earth showing the continent of Antarctica in white. The surrounding oceans and parts of the Americas and Europe are visible in shades of blue and brown. The word "Antarctica" is written in large white letters on the left side of the image.

Antarctica

- + Norwegian **Amundsen** and his four companions reached the South Pole on December 14, 1911. Exploration ended tragically, all five men died.
- + British explorer **Robert Scott** arrived at the Pole in January 1912, 35 days later.
- + The Pole lay untouched for another 44 years, when in 1956 the first aircraft landed at the Pole.

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The Antarctic treaty



The Antarctic treaty

- + Signed by the 12 nations:
Argentina, Australia,
Belgium, Chile, France,
Japan, New Zealand,
Norway, South Africa, the
UK, the USA and the Soviet
Union in 1959.
- + The Treaty is open to any
UN member state that
wishes to accede to it.

A satellite view of Earth from space, showing the Western Hemisphere. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent dark blue and black gradient. On the left side, there are several white dashed lines that curve across the continent of North America. On the bottom right, there is a solid orange line that curves across the Atlantic Ocean and South America. The text is overlaid on this background.

The Antarctic treaty

- + No country holds indisputable title over any part of Antarctica.
- + There are no indigenous people.
- + It has no native government.
- + There is no navy or coast guard.



The Antarctic treaty

- +A world where there are no wars, where the environment is fully protected and where research is the priority.
- +A natural reserve devoted to peace and science.



The Antarctic treaty

- + Prohibits nuclear explosions, the disposal of nuclear waste and any measures of a military nature.
- + Guarantees freedom of science and promotes the exchange of scientist and research results.
- + Removes the potential for sovereignty disputes between treaty partners.
- + Prohibits mining.



Initiative and Activities in Slovenia regarding the signing of the Antarctic Treaty



Initiative in Slovenia

- + The magical trip to Antarctica in 2011 was the reason I fell in love with it.
- + In 2012, I gave the initiative in my LC Ljubljana Tivoli for the Republic of Slovenia to sign the Antarctic Treaty.



Ratification of the Antarctic Treaty

- + With the Act on Ratification of the Antarctic Treaty, the Republic of Slovenia in 2019 acceded to the Antarctic Treaty as the 54th country in the world and the 20th member of the EU.
- + The signing of the agreement is the result of the initiative put forth by the Civil Initiative and the cooperation of the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts.



Council for the Antarctic and Arctic Research

- + The Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts established Council for the Antarctic and Arctic Research.
- + We have managed to bring together a number of Slovenian researchers, internationally recognized, willing to actively engage in research into the polar regions and especially the Antarctic and the Arctic.



The Council

- + The Council proposed to the Government the establishment of the National Centre for Antarctic and Arctic Research.
- + The Council proposed to the Government to sign the "Protocol on Environmental protection".
- + The Council proposed to the Government the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding on cooperation in the field of Antarctica research between the Ministry of foreign affairs of the Republic of Peru and the Ministry of the environment and spacial planning of the Republic of Slovenia.

A satellite view of the Earth showing the Middle East, Europe, and parts of Africa. A dashed white line indicates a flight path starting from the Mediterranean coast, going east across Europe, then south and east across the Atlantic Ocean, and finally curving south and east across the Indian Ocean. An orange line is visible in the bottom right corner.


Green Light World Flight 2012-2023 (GLWF)

- + A research project performing global measurements of aerosols, black carbon and CO₂ and determining their impact on our environment, climate change and human health.
- + Scientists: Matevž Lenarčič, the pilot and prof. dr. Griša Močnik, Center for Atmospheric Research at the University of Nova Gorica, Slovenia



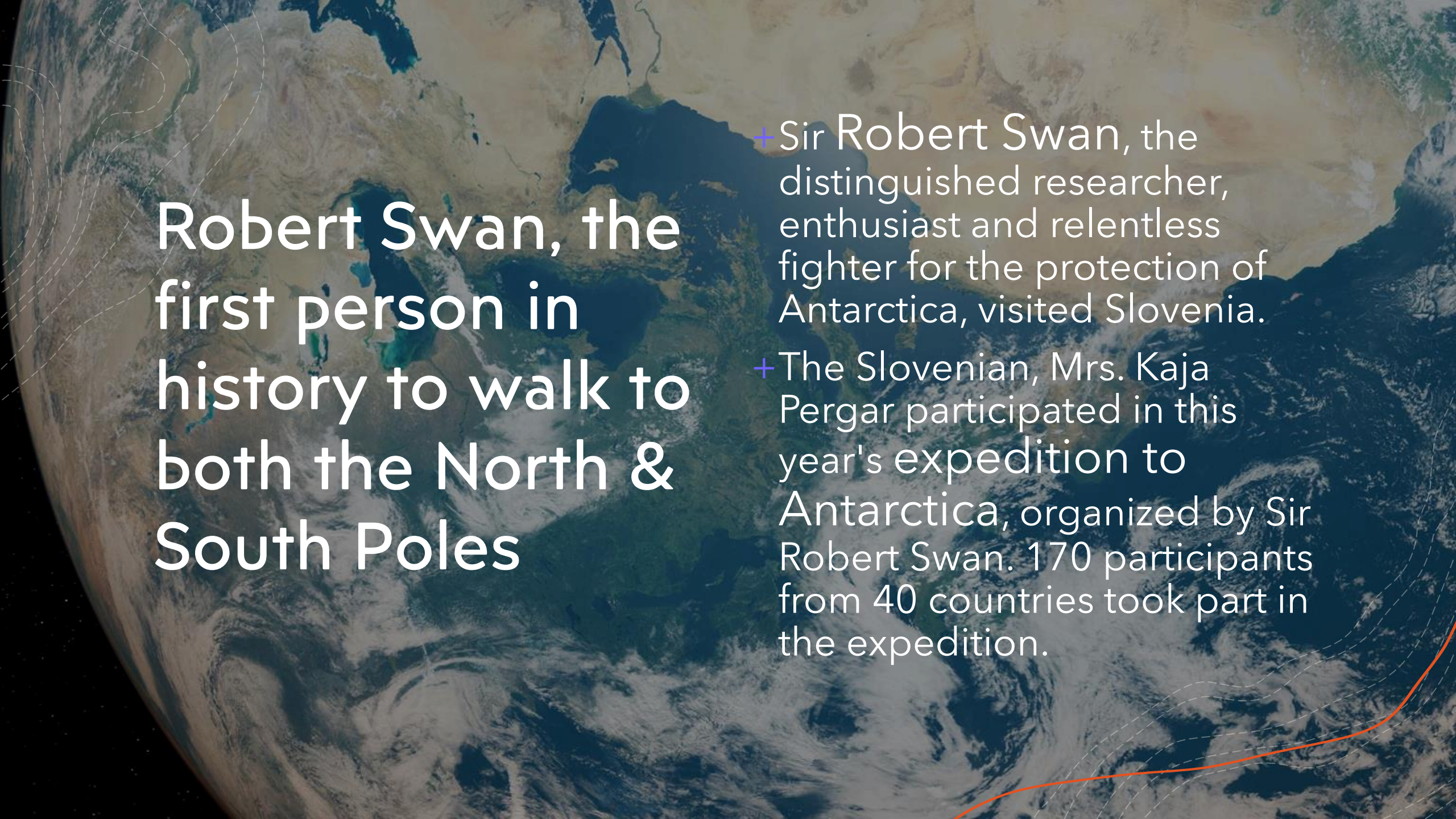
Greenland and dark ice

- + Dark ice - greatest fungal diversity, many species new to science.
- + Glacial algae - environmental filter.
- + Concentration of plant pathogenic fungi - dissemination to agricultural regions.
- + Symbiotic, lichen-like interactions of fungi and algae - supporting algal growth.
- + Leading Scientist: prof. dr. Nina Gunde Cimerman, Biotechnical Faculty of the University of Ljubljana, Slovenia



Mercury and other pollutants in the context of climate change in Antarctica

- + Research is focused on the occurrence and fate of mercury in the Antarctic environment in the context of climate change.
- + Studying the protective role of selenium in the accumulation of Hg in organisms, especially at the top of food chains (penguins, mammals, birds).
- + Leading Scientist: prof. dr. Milena Horvat, Jožef Stefan Institute, Slovenia



Robert Swan, the first person in history to walk to both the North & South Poles

- + Sir Robert Swan, the distinguished researcher, enthusiast and relentless fighter for the protection of Antarctica, visited Slovenia.
- + The Slovenian, Mrs. Kaja Pergar participated in this year's expedition to Antarctica, organized by Sir Robert Swan. 170 participants from 40 countries took part in the expedition.

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Conclusion

A satellite view of Earth from space, showing the Eastern Hemisphere. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent dark blue layer. On the left side, there are several white dashed lines that curve across the continent of Africa. On the bottom right, there is a solid orange line that curves upwards. The word "Conclusion" is written in a large, white, sans-serif font on the left side of the image.

Conclusion

+ If it were not for the civil initiative, which proposed the signing of the Antarctic Treaty, if it were not for The Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts as the highest intellectual/scientific institution in Slovenia and the scientists/researchers gathered within the Council for Antarctic and Arctic Research, who all realized the importance of this project, we would have no such consultation here today.

A satellite view of Earth from space, showing the Western Hemisphere. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent dark blue layer. On the left side, there are several white dashed lines that curve across the continent of North America. On the right side, there is a solid orange line that curves across the Atlantic Ocean and South America. The text is overlaid on this dark layer.

Conclusion

+Protecting Antarctica is vital for the future of our planet, and we must do everything we can to extend the Antarctic Treaty, which expires "tomorrow" - in less than two decades from now.



Conclusion

+Slovenia can be an example that Lions, as a civil initiative, can contribute to the solution of today's ecological, climatic and energy problems on our planet.

Where we are headed on Earth...



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PKj2rU7wFRY>



The final message

- + I appeal to Lions in countries that have not yet signed the Antarctic Treaty to take the initiative for their governments to sign it.