

## Foreword to the special issue: the Boreal Triassic

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This collection of papers on the Boreal Triassic grew from a conference in 2002, which was initiated as part of the networking activities linked to the International Geosciences Project (IGCP) 467—Triassic Time and Trans-Panthalassa Correlations—from an original suggestion by Mark Hounslow and Mike Orchard of the International Union of Geological Sciences Subcommittee on Triassic Stratigraphy. The aim of the conference was to provide insight on improved Low- to High-Latitude correlations, and a greater regional understanding of the Arctic Triassic successions. Around 30 participants were expected, in part drawn by the prospect of visiting Spitsbergen and its Triassic outcrops—a once in a lifetime opportunity for many.

The Boreal Triassic Conference was held in Longyearbyen, Svalbard, at 78°N, from 16 to 19 August 2006. There were 69 delegates, representing 17 nations. The venue was the new campus facilities of the University Centre in Svalbard, which were ideal for our purposes. The participants stayed at the Polar Hotel, neighbouring the university.

All of the participants visited the famous Festningen section of western Spitsbergen, which features sediments of Early Permian to Early Tertiary age that are exposed along a single coastal profile. The trip was a full-day ship excursion, which included walking 5 km along the coastal exposures. From the ship we could observe the characteristic sharp peaks and jagged ridges that gave the island the name Spitsbergen, with nice glaciers lying between the mountains. The coarsening-upward sequences of the Triassic succession demonstrated the five major sedimentary sequences that can be traced around the Arctic. Although the weather was quite wet that day, dulling the pleasure taken in observing the exposures, all participants had an enjoyable day, rounded off with some much appreciated on-board cuisine.

The conference was supported by BG Norge, Chevron, ConocoPhillips, Norsk Hydro ASA, RWE DEA, Statoil ASA and Total, and the ship-based excursion was made possible by ENI Norge. IGCP 467 and the Subcommittee on Triassic Stratigraphy supported some of those attending the conference. In Longyearbyen, the local coal-mining company Store Norske Spitsbergen Kulkompani AS and the University Centre in Svalbard are thanked for making the conference possible. SINTEF Petroleum Research and the University of Oslo's Natural History Museum gave us (AM and HAN) time to arrange the conference and prepare this special issue.

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The Organizing Committee of the Boreal Triassic Conference

Atle Mørk,<sup>1</sup> Hans Arne Nakrem,<sup>2</sup> Mark Hounslow<sup>3</sup> & Wolfgang Weitschat<sup>4</sup>

1 SINTEF Petroleum Research and Norwegian University for Science and Technology, NO-7465 Trondheim Trondheim, Norway. E-mail: atle.mork@sintef.no

2 Natural History Museum, University of Oslo, P.O. Box 1172, Blindern, NO-0318 Oslo, Norway. E-mail: h.a.nakrem@nhm.uio.no

3 Centre for Environmental Magnetism and Palaeomagnetism, Geography, Lancaster Environment Centre, Lancaster University, Bailrigg, Lancaster, LA1 4YQ, UK. E-mail: m.hounslow@lancs.ac.uk

4 Geological–Paleontological Institute, University of Hamburg, Bundesstrasse 55, DE-201 Hamburg, Germany. E-mail: wolfgang.weitschat@uni-hamburg.de