

# Funeral for Lost Ice: Iceland Bids Farewell to Glacier

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OKJOKULL GLACIER, Iceland — It was a funeral for ice.

With poetry, moments of silence and political speeches about the urgent need to fight climate change, Icelandic officials, activists and others bade goodbye to what once was a glacier.

Icelandic geologist Oddur Sigurðsson pronounced the Okjokull glacier extinct about a decade ago. But on Sunday he brought a death certificate to the made-for-media memorial. After about 100 people made a two-hour hike up a volcano, children installed a memorial plaque to the glacier, now called just "Ok," minus the Icelandic word for glacier.

The glacier used to stretch six square miles (15 square kilometers), Sigurdsson said. Residents reminisced about drinking pure water thousands of years old from Ok. "The symbolic death of a glacier is a warning to us, and we need action," former Irish president Mary Robinson said.

This was Iceland's first glacier to disappear. But Sigurdsson said all of the nation's ice masses will be gone in 200 years. "We see the consequences of the climate crisis," Icelandic Prime Minister Katrín Jakobsdóttir said. "We have no time to lose."

Jakobsdottir said she will make climate change a priority when Nordic leaders and German Chancellor Angela Merkel meet in Reykjavik on Tuesday. "I know my grandchildren will ask me how this day was and why I didn't do enough," said Gunnhildur Hallgrimsdottir, 17.

The plaque, which notes the level of heat-trapping carbon dioxide, also bears a message to the future: "This monument is to acknowledge that we know what is happening and what needs to be done. Only you know if we did it."