

A DRIFTWOOD JOURNEY: THE INTERTWINING OF NATURE AND HUMAN CIVILIZATION

The journey of driftwood is not only a natural journey, but also a microcosm of the development of human civilization. From drifting in the ocean to finally landing on land, the wood gradually transforms as it creeps deeper inland. Initially as pure products of nature, they are transformed into walls in agricultural production, providing protection and defining space, or transformed under the skillful hands of artists into exquisite wooden crafts that serve as a medium for cultural expression.

Each transformation of these woods is deeply embedded in Iceland's long-standing folk culture and beliefs, telling stories from the Viking Age to modern times. They bear witness to the inheritance and changes of culture, and carry people's understanding and respect for nature and life. Each piece of driftwood is a witness to history and a transmitter of culture. Through them, we can gain insight into the close connection and profound interaction between Icelandic society and the natural environment.

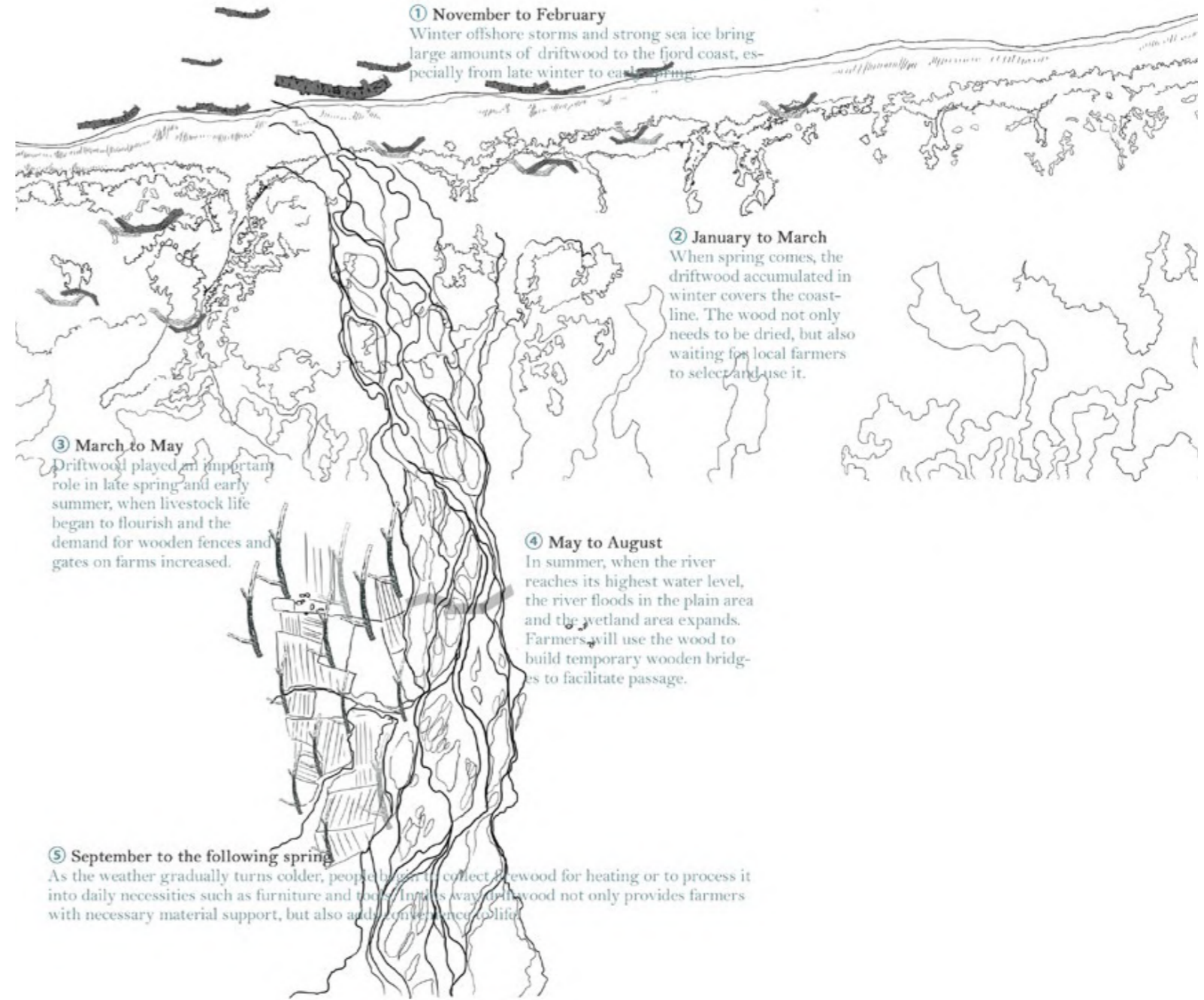
## Driftwood and Glaciers: Gifts from the Arctic Seas

The northern coast of Iceland, bordering the Arctic Circle, is a prime gathering spot for driftwood carried by the East Greenland Current. This area, sculpted by ancient glacial activity, reveals a dramatic natural landscape: towering mountains stand sentinel on either side, while a wide beach stretches between them like a giant natural pocket, designed to collect and preserve the timbers that have journeyed across the seas.

These fjords not only showcase breathtaking vistas but also bear witness to Iceland's culture and history. Each piece of driftwood on the beaches, washed by the sea, carries a story of its journey—from distant forests through relentless currents to this cold, enchanting land where it finally finds respite on the shores of northern Iceland.

Additionally, these fjords provide a valuable natural laboratory for researchers. Through studying the driftwood, scientists can interpret ocean current patterns, the impacts of climate change, and interactions within ecosystems. Thus, Iceland's driftwood serves not only as a gift from nature but also as an essential resource for scientific research and environmental monitoring.

Húsavík fjord, enriched with a wealth of driftwood, has become a hub for collecting and studying these natural voyagers. It attracts artists, photographers, and nature enthusiasts who seek inspiration and enjoy the gifts delivered from the depths of the ocean.



### ① November to February

Winter offshore storms and strong sea ice bring large amounts of driftwood to the fjord coast, especially from late winter to early spring.

### ② January to March

When spring comes, the driftwood accumulated in winter covers the coastline. The wood not only needs to be dried, but also waiting for local farmers to select and use it.

### ③ March to May

Driftwood played an important role in late spring and early summer, when livestock life began to flourish and the demand for wooden fences and gates on farms increased.

### ④ May to August

In summer, when the river reaches its highest water level, the river floods in the plain area and the wetland area expands. Farmers will use the wood to build temporary wooden bridges to facilitate passage.

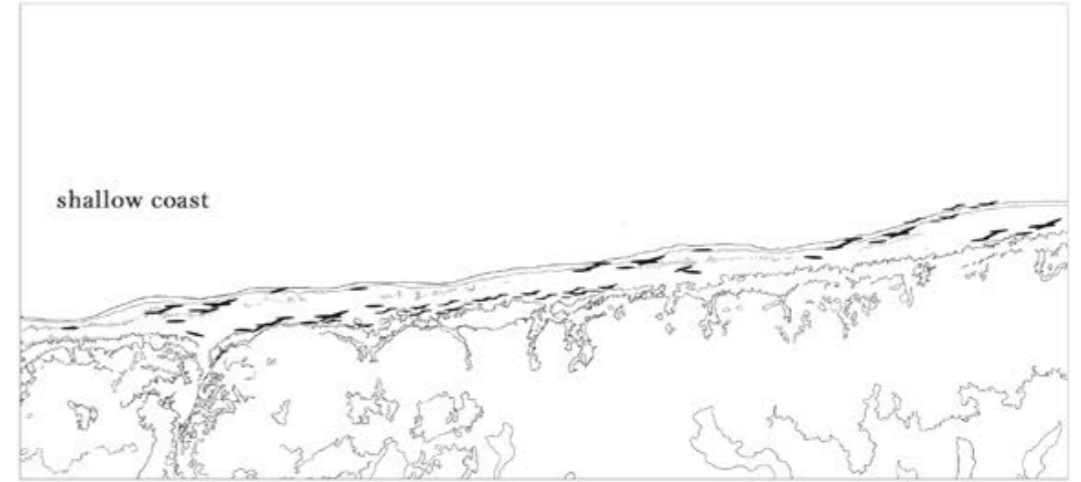
### ⑤ September to the following spring

As the weather gradually turns colder, people begin to collect firewood for heating or to process it into daily necessities such as furniture and tools. In this way, driftwood not only provides farmers with necessary material support, but also adds convenience to life.

① SELECTION OF DRIFTWOOD



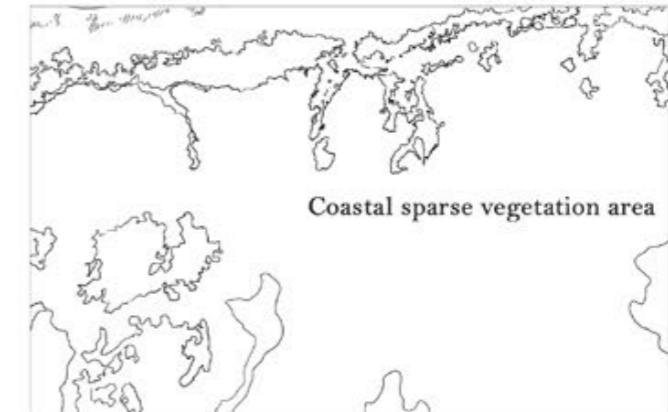
② DISPOSAL OF DRIFTWOOD



shallow coast

Driftwood collection point

On the site's beach, local farmers often visit the coastal areas that belong to their respective farm territories and carefully select the wood that floats to the shore. They used a traditional method to assess the quality of wood: tapping the wood with a stone. The sound produced by a tree trunk reveals its inner qualities; a crisp and loud sound usually indicates the quality of the wood, and such wood will be regarded as a precious resource and used in various construction and craft projects.

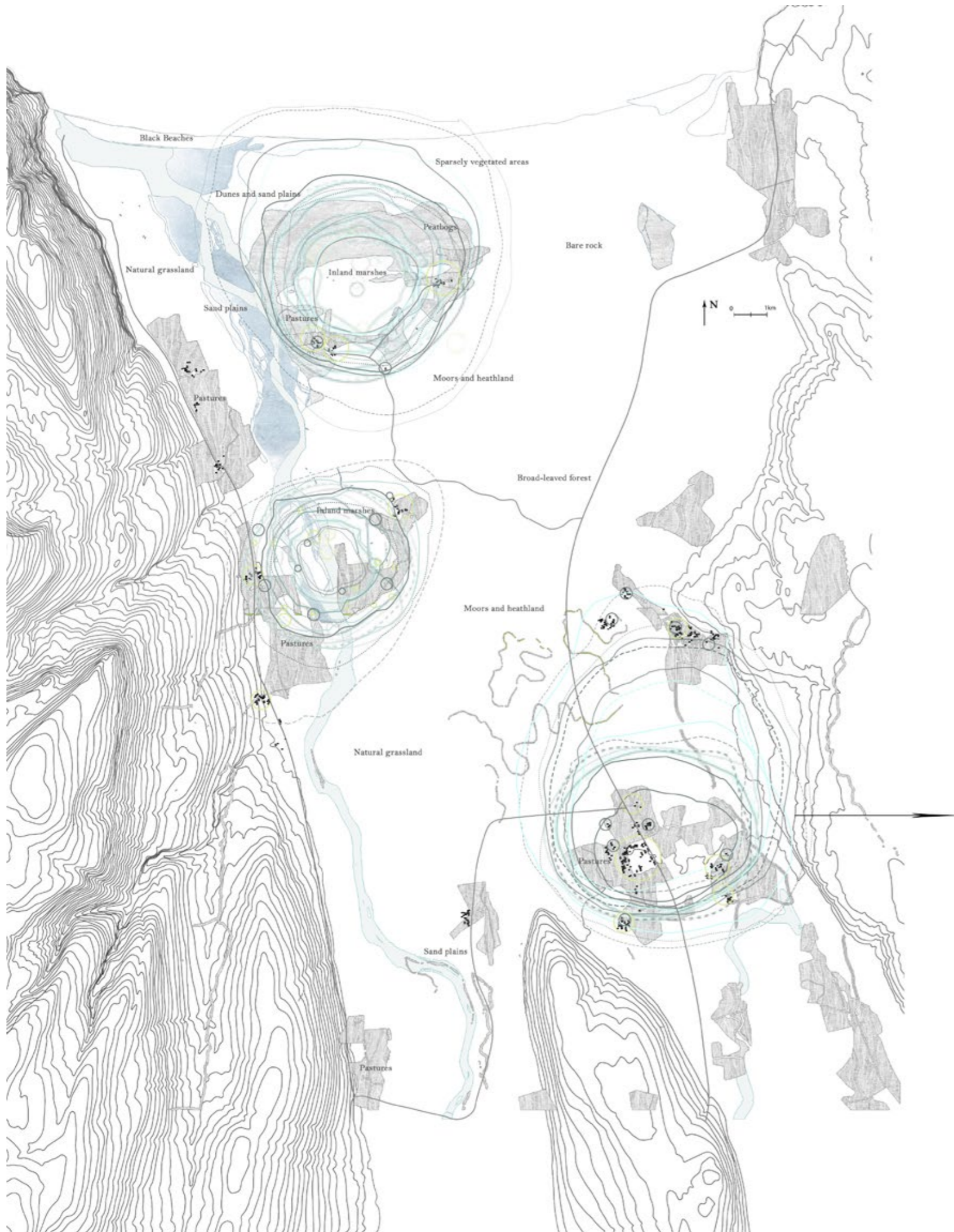


Coastal sparse vegetation area

Driftwood disposal site

After selection, farmers usually perform preliminary processing on the driftwood on grassy areas near the beach. A complete piece of driftwood is divided into parts based on different parts—the hard trunk, softer branches and bark, and possibly decayed debris. Each part has a purpose, from the large timbers used to build fences and farmhouses, to the smaller pieces used to make furniture or decorations.

This use of driftwood not only reflects the Icelanders' deep understanding and respect for natural resources, but also demonstrates their creativity and practicality in their self-sufficient lifestyle. Driftwood is not only a material resource, it also carries farmers' deep connection with the ocean and their respect for the environment.



### 3. STAGE OF PRAYERS AND BLESSINGS

During the non-agricultural slack season, this becomes the center where villagers send their best wishes and prospects for the coming year. During traditional festivals, villagers will hold traditional Icelandic prayer ceremonies and dance performances here. In these solemn ceremonies, driftwood is regarded as a sacred tool to communicate with the gods, and each piece of wood carries people's prayers and reverence.

These activities not only strengthen the cohesion of the community, but also deeply reflect the cultural and spiritual value of driftwood. It is a place where people come together to pray and celebrate together, and the presence of driftwood makes every event more special and meaningful.



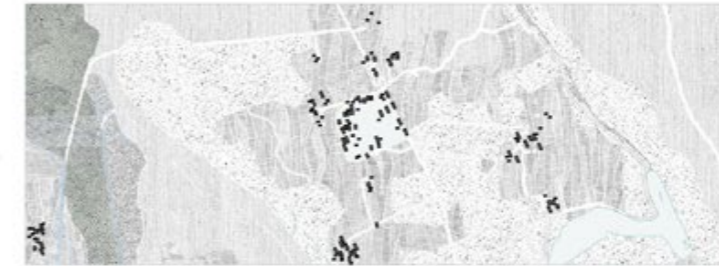
### 2. BUSY FARMING AND GRAZING AREA

This area is a dense center of pasture and farmland, full of activity and challenges. Here, thin and small driftwood is cleverly transformed into fences and small wooden field gates for pastures, which not only increases the functionality of the farm, but also enhances the beauty. These wooden doors not only facilitate the daily operations of the farm, but also add to the rustic charm.

However, it also faces serious challenges from river flooding in summer. When river water invades farmland, this area becomes the most vulnerable. As the erosion of rivers increases, pastures along the banks often suffer from water damage, which not only endangers the growth of crops, but may also pose a threat to the health of livestock.



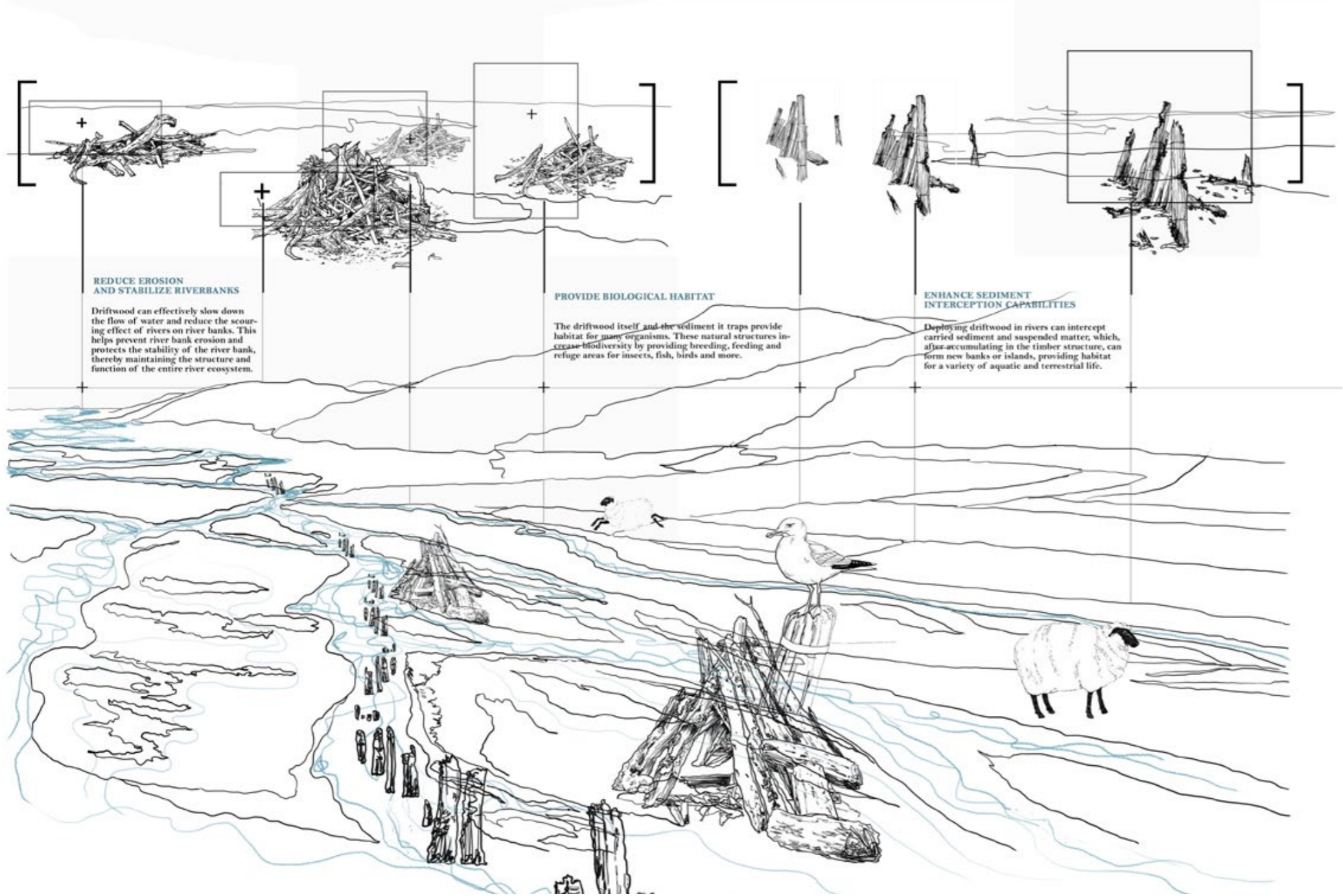
### 1. THE BEGINNING OF LIFE



This is the community core of Livestockford Village, a place with dense residential buildings and frequent social activities. In this community center, the lives of the villagers are closely connected, especially during the busy farming season. Everyone often gathers here to work together on farming and repairing sheep pens and fences. Driftwood here is not only a building material, but also cleverly transformed into various living utensils and artistic decorations, demonstrating its multifunctionality and cultural value.

In addition, this village also has a number of tourist dormitories to provide visiting travelers with a comfortable accommodation experience. It is an ideal meeting point and starting point for both local residents and tourists, providing a platform for everyone to communicate and explore.

CONCEPTION OF DRIFTWOOD SEDIMENT CATCHMENT SYSTEM

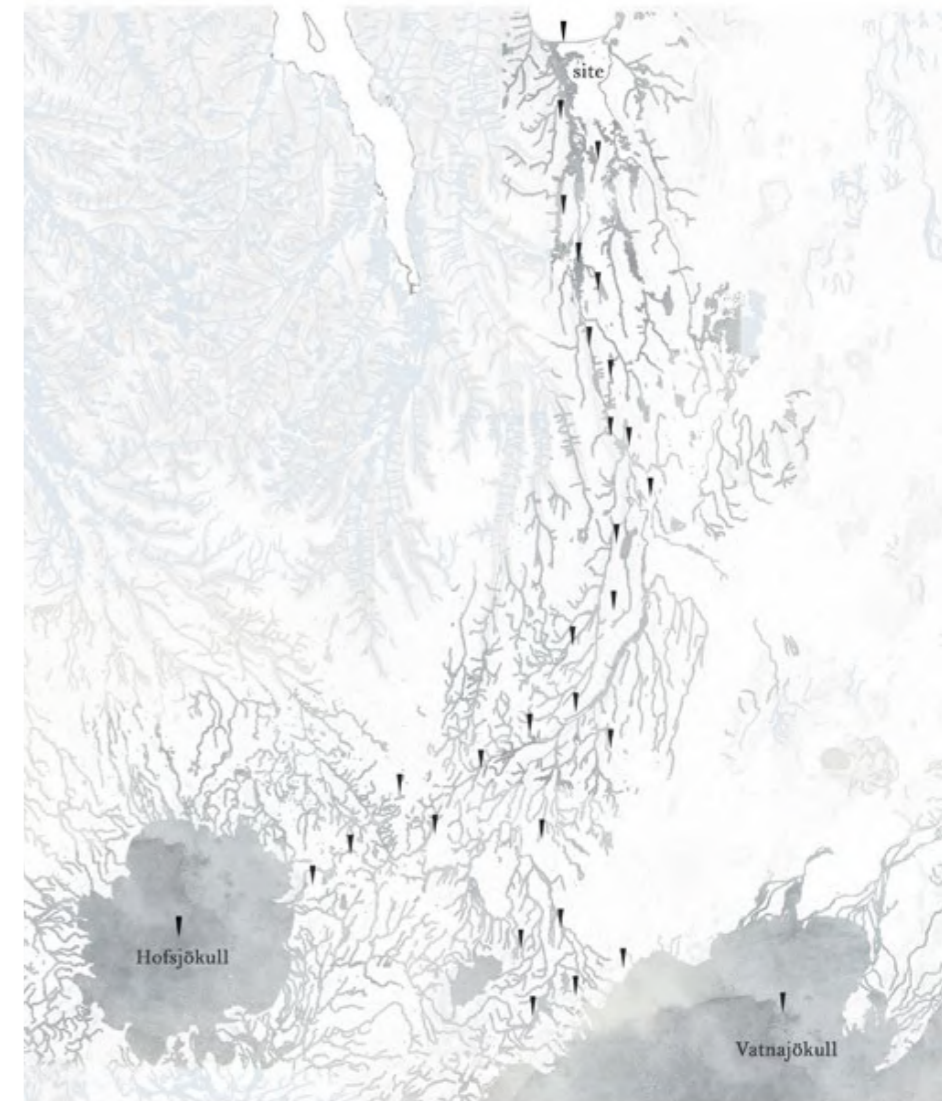


Driftwood, River and Glaciers

The great river of Husavik fjord originates from Iceland's largest ice cap, continually infusing Iceland's river systems with fresh vitality as it courses towards the site of our project. Amid the backdrop of global warming, the rapid melting of Iceland's glaciers has long been a cause for concern, and this process is accelerating. As a result, the future development of Iceland's hydrological systems faces significant challenges and changes. The project site, located in the flat downstream areas, is at increased risk of erosion, threatening the adjacent pastures and farmlands.

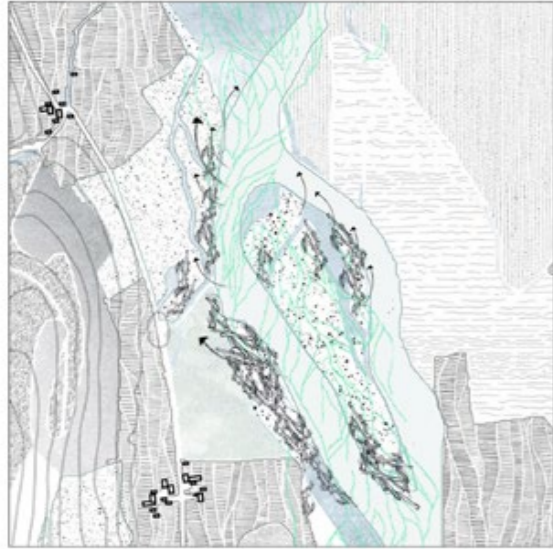
This river is not just a natural feature; it shapes the economic and cultural life of the local communities. Communities along its banks rely on it for agricultural irrigation and fishing, while the driftwood it carries has fostered local handicrafts and building materials. Driftwood, a natural gift from ancient glacial activities, not only enriches Iceland's ecosystems but also serves as a source of inspiration for art and cultural creations.

As the ongoing effects of climate change continue to impact glaciers and water systems, preserving these natural resources and maintaining ecological balance becomes increasingly crucial. The design and planning of the project site must take into account potential future changes in water levels and river courses to protect the area from the adverse effects of environmental shifts.



**DRIFTWOOD: A NATURAL SEDIMENT CATCHMENT SYSTEM**

0 Year

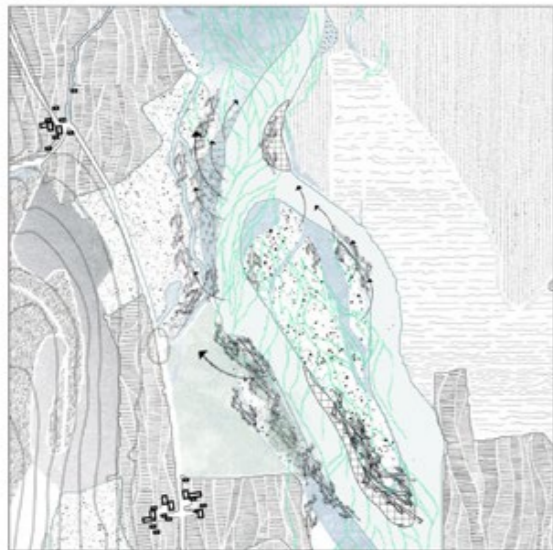


- Direction of river erosion
- Driftwood sediment catcher
- Pasture
- Dunes and sand plains

As the project began, appropriately sized pieces of driftwood were selected, stacked according to a predetermined plan, and placed on the eroding edge of the river. These stacks of driftwood not only effectively slow down the flow of the river, but also significantly reduce erosion of the surrounding ranch land. Additionally, they intercept and accumulate sediment in rivers, providing a natural and effective ecological engineering solution. In this way, driftwood not only improves the stability of the land but also enhances the resilience of the ecosystem.

This innovative use of driftwood exemplifies how modern environmental challenges can be solved through natural materials and traditional knowledge, demonstrating a practical approach to living in harmony with nature.

1 Year



- New river sediment
- River erosion space

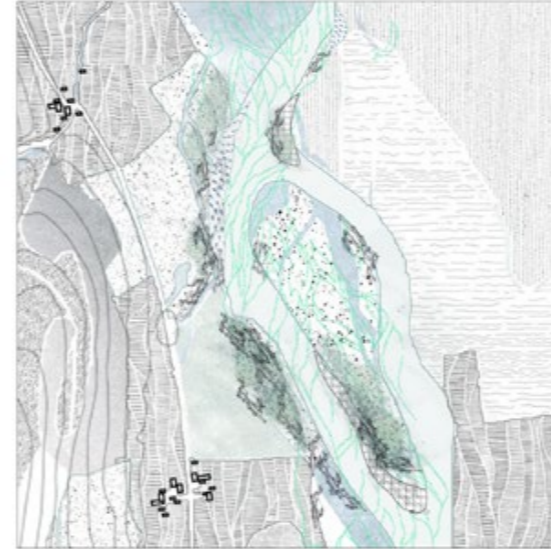
Due to the erosion of the river, about one-third of the driftwood had drifted downstream along the river or stayed on the shore. Although river erosion and sedimentation continue to change the original river channel, forming new sedimentation and erosion areas, the sediment interception system of floating logs successfully slows down the speed of river change.

The existence of this system significantly reduces the potential threat to the surrounding environment from rapid glacier melt and subsequent summer flooding.

In this way, driftwood not only protects river shorelines but also helps maintain the balance of river ecology and combat the effects of extreme weather events exacerbated by climate change.

**CONTINUOUS MONITORING OF THE DRIFTWOOD SEDIMENT CATCHMENT SYSTEM**

5 Years

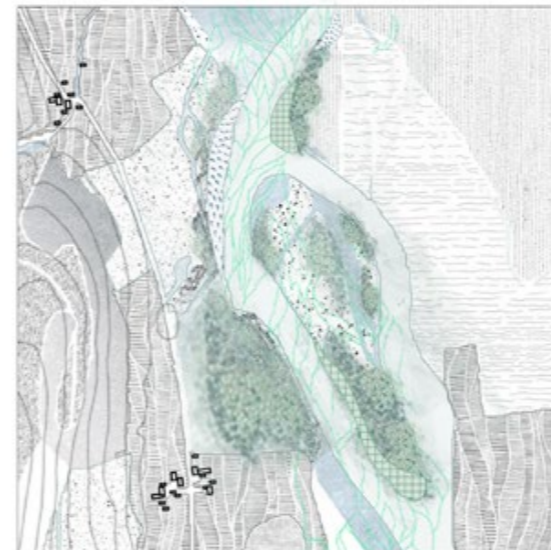


- Driftwood sediment catcher
- Pasture
- Dunes and sand plains
- Native vegetation

Five years following the implementation of the project, the accumulation of sediments and riverbank silt has significantly reduced the loss of driftwood, some of which has now become firmly embedded at the water's edge. Concurrently, the gradual stabilization of newly formed river islands has allowed native vegetation to take root and thrive. This burgeoning plant life has further mitigated river erosion and reduced soil erosion in adjacent pastures.

This ecological recovery process has not only strengthened the stability of the riverbanks but also provided valuable habitats for increasing biodiversity, showcasing the essential role of natural interventions in ecosystem management and restoration.

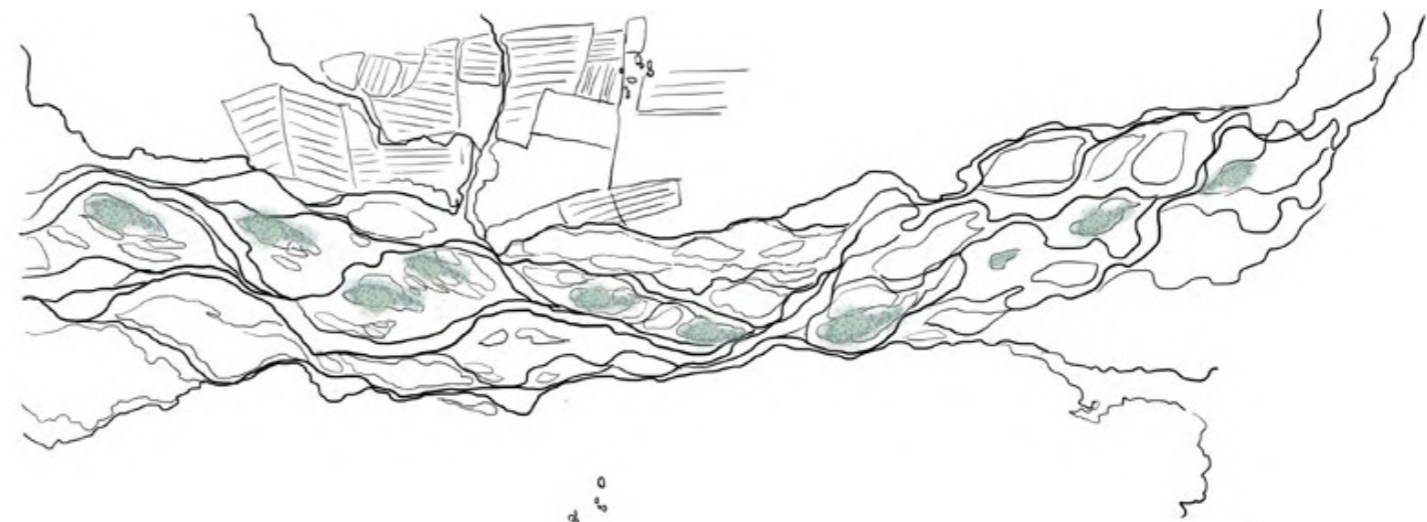
10 Years



- Native vegetation
- Solid sedimentary island
- River erosion space

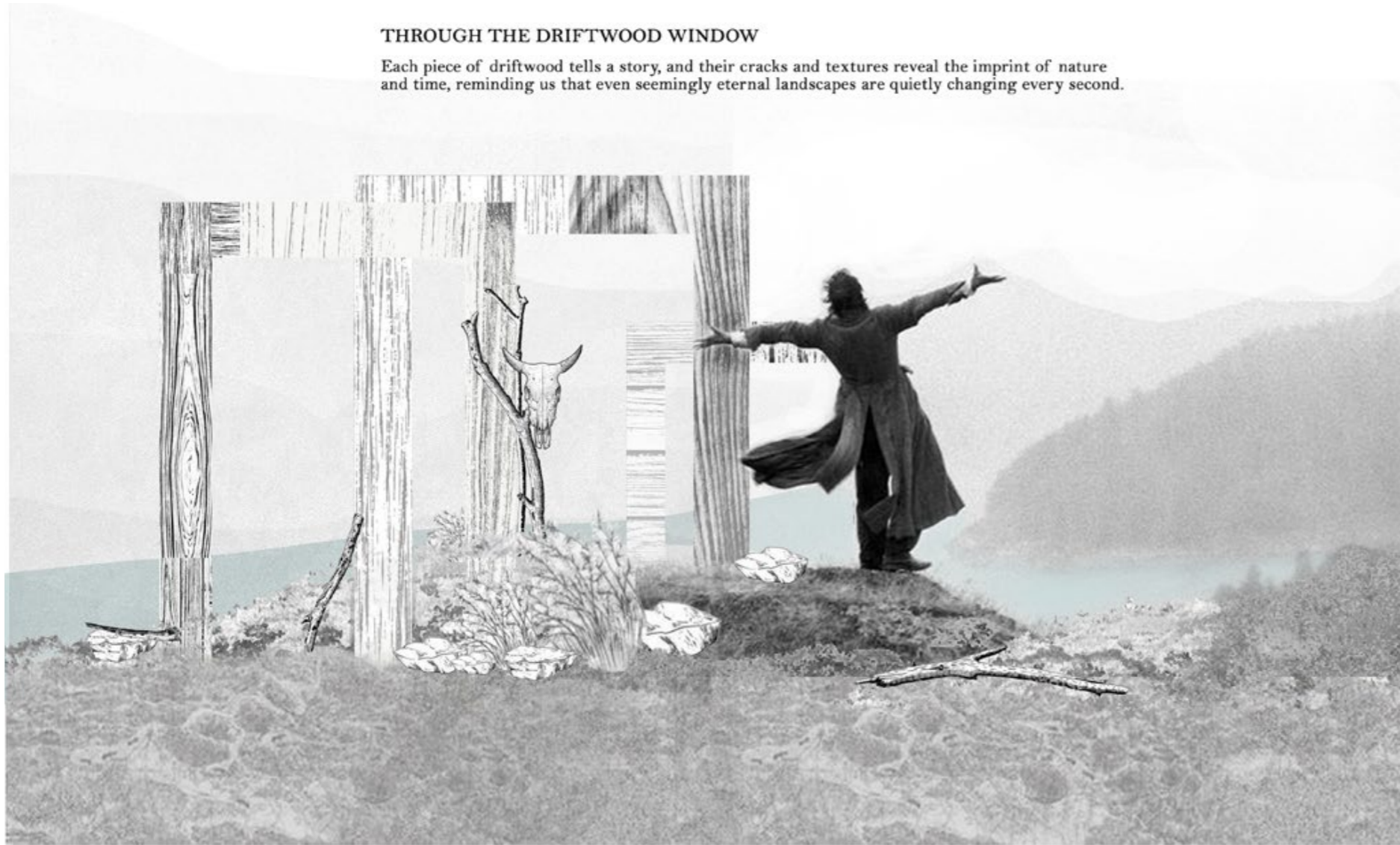
Ten years later, the river's ability to handle extreme weather has improved significantly. Sediments intercepted by the driftwood sediment interception system have formed solid islands of sediment due to the continued growth and reinforcement of native vegetation.

Thanks to a combination of natural forces, these small islands have been transformed into highly resilient watersheds, effectively protecting surrounding pastoral lands from erosion. In addition, these naturally occurring islands provide important habitat for local ecosystems, enhancing biodiversity while also increasing the entire basin's resilience to future climate change.



### THROUGH THE DRIFTWOOD WINDOW

Each piece of driftwood tells a story, and their cracks and textures reveal the imprint of nature and time, reminding us that even seemingly eternal landscapes are quietly changing every second.



### WITNESSING THE FAREWELL OF DRIFTWOOD

In this section of the river, the floating logs in the upper reaches drifted down with the current. We watched them gradually move away from us. Their slow disappearance seemed to indicate the possible disappearance of the floating logs in the future. Standing here, through the window frame made of driftwood, we look out at the raging river, which carries everything we still have but is gradually losing. Scenes like this are meditative and may allow us to more deeply understand and appreciate every moment we have.

Over time, these natural stage changes not only tell the story of natural cycles, but also reflect our subtle connection to the natural world. Each piece of driftwood carries memories of the past and is also a silent witness to future changes. In this fleeting world, they remind us to appreciate what's in front of us while thinking about our impact and responsibility on the natural environment.

-  *Pinus sylvestris*
-  *Larix decidua*
-  *Picea abies*

