

A day in the life of a GEOGRAPHER: Palaeoclimatologist

Adrienne Foreman, a Palaeoclimatologist **PhD Student** of the Environmental Change Group, takes us through a typical day.

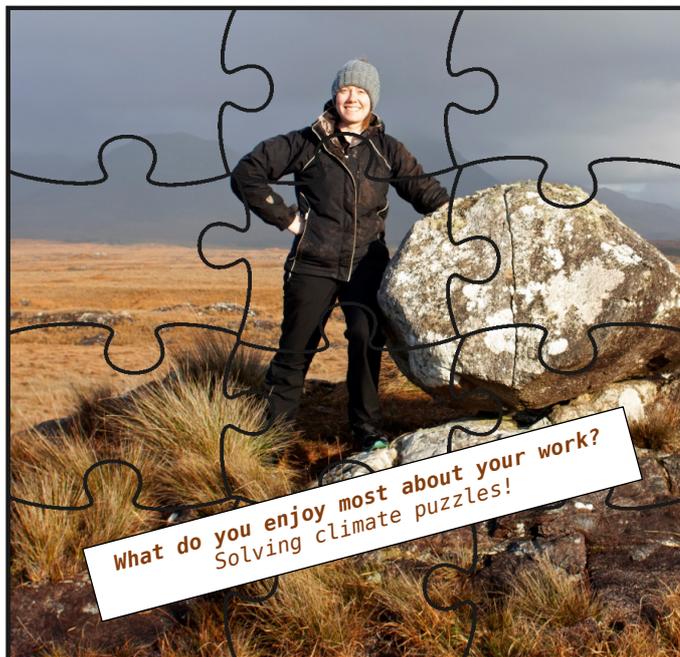
What is a Palaeoclimatologist?

Palaeoclimatologists investigate changes in the climates of the past. We use preserved climate indicators, such as glacial features, marine shells or dating of sediment layers to help us understand possible future climates.

"Climate change is, simply, the greatest collective challenge we face as a human family." (Ban Ki-Moon, United Nations Secretary-General)

What inspired you to join this field?

My love of hiking! Knowing I would be out in the field, exploring and climbing local mountains for my job didn't hurt. My love of nature and my desire to contribute meaningfully to the climate crisis.



What has been your favourite field site?

I'm only just starting out, but it's been amazing to work in my backyard (sometimes literally!) investigating the glacial landscape preserved in Connemara. Seeing a known landscape through new eyes has been a real privilege.

What does a typical day look like?

I might start with some work in the lab, *crushing and pulverising rocks* or *boiling the resulting sand in acid*. Then read some literature, work on the modules for my PhD, or do a little writing or teaching. The best days are in the field, taking cores or chiselling rocks in between climbing hills.

"Climate change impacts are projected to increase in the coming decades ... uncertainties remain in relation to the scale and extent of these impacts" (EPA)

How does your work make a difference to today's world?

I'm checking the accuracy of current climate prediction models in order to better prepare Ireland and other locations in the Northern Hemisphere for the coming changes in climate. Preparation is key.

"Uncertainty doesn't mean we don't know anything ... uncertainty is the engine of science, it drives our search to understand the universe" (Tamsin Edwards)