Recognizing Place

Reading the Cultural Landscape of Iceland
Defining Culture

“A society’s collective beliefs, symbols, values, forms of behaviors, and social organizations, together with its tools, structures, and artifacts created according to the group’s condition of life; transmitted as a heritage to succeeding generations and undergoing adoptions, modifications, and changes in the process”

- Bjelland, M., Human Geography: Landscape of Human Activities, 2013, pg. 478
Understanding the Cultural Landscape according to Carl Sauer

• Landscape: “an area made up of a distinct association of forms, both physical and cultural”

• Cultural Landscape: “Culture is the agent, the natural area is the medium, the cultural landscape the result”
Picture 1 – Central Reykjavik
Picture 2 – Blue Mountains
Picture 3 - Vik
Picture 4 - Geysir
Picture 5 – Heimaey
Picture 6 - Myvatn
Picture 10 - Krafla
Thought Question:

“The physical area is fundamental to any geographic study because it furnishes the materials out of which man builds his culture”


According to this quote, what type of impact could a changing environment have on the people living in an area? Hypothesize how a changing environment might impact the people of Iceland.