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Permit to fly a drone within protected areas

The Environment Agency of Iceland has received an application from Robert Gloeckner, dated August 16th 2021, for permit to fly a drone within the protected areas Andakíl, Dimmuborgum, Dyrhólaey, Geysi, Gullfossi, Goðafossi, Gróttu, Grunnafirði, Hjalparfossi, Gjánni, Háafossi og Granni, Hverfjalli, Ingjólshöfða, Mývatn og Laxá, Oddaflóð, Salthöfða og Salthöfðamýrum, Skógafossi, the beach at Stapi and Hellnar, Snæfellsjökull national park and Svarfaðadalur.

Andakíl is protected as a habitat area for birds, cf. regulation no.338/2011. Construction work and disturbance to geological formations the protected area is prohibited. Operating an unmanned aircraft/drone in Kistufirði within the protected area is subjected to a permit from the Environment Agency of Iceland.

Dimmuborgir is protected as a natural monument, cf. regulation no. 1262/2011. Disturbance to geological formations, vegetation and wild animal life in the protected area is prohibited. Events and commercial filming is subjected to a permit from the Environment Agency of Iceland.

Dyrhólaey is protected as a nature reserve, cf. regulation no.101/1978. Construction work and disturbance to geological formations and wild animal life in the protected area is prohibited. A permit from the Environment Agency is needed for camping inside the nature reserve. This includes tents, motorhomes and campers.

Geysir is protected as natural monument, cf. regulation no. 660/2020. All disturbance of geological monuments is prohibited, incl. any inscriptions and disturbance of the activity and water level of the hot spring area, disturbance of hot springs, hot springs, soils and rocks, without permission. Helicopters and other manned aircraft may not land within the area without the permission of the Environment Agency. Operating an unmanned aircraft/drone within the protected area is subjected to a permit from the Environment Agency of Iceland.

Gullfoss is protected as a nature reserve, cf. regulation no. 141/1979. Disturbance to geological formations, vegetation and wild animal life is prohibited. Operating an unmanned aircraft/drone within the protected area is subjected to a permit from the Environment Agency of Iceland.



Goðafoss is protected as natural monument, cf. regulation no. 1261/2011. Disturbance to vegetation, wildlife and geological formation is prohibited. Operating an unmanned aircraft/drone within the protected area is subjected to a permit from the Environment Agency of Iceland.

Grótta is protected as a nature reserve, cf. regulation no. 13/1984. Construction work and disturbance to geological formations is prohibited. Disturbance to vegetation and wild animal life in the protected area is prohibited.

Grunnafjörður is protected as a nature reserve, cf. regulation no. 548/1994. Disturbance to geological formation and vegetation is prohibited.

Hjálparfoss, Gjáin, Háifoss and Granni are protected as natural monument, cf. regulation no. 110/2020. Disturbance to geological formations, vegetation and wild animal life in the protected area is prohibited. Permission must be obtained from the Environment Agency for organized events and projects that pose a risk of disturbance to geological formations, wildlife or guests in the area. Operating an unmanned aircraft/drone within the protected area is subjected to a permit from the Environment Agency of Iceland.

Hverfjall is protected as a natural monument, cf. regulation no. 1261/2011. Disturbance to vegetation and wildlife is prohibited. The guest should follow marked paths at any given time.

Ingólfshöfði is protected as a nature reserve, cf. regulation no. 388/1978. Disturbance to vegetation and wild animal life in the protected area is prohibited. Commercial filming that affects animal life in the area is subjected to a permit from the Environment Agency of Iceland.

Mývatn and Laxá area is protected according to act no. 97/2004. Permission from the Environment Agency of Iceland is needed for construction work and all activity that can affect wildlife, geological formations, vegetation and landscape in the area.

Oddaflóð is protected as a nature reserve cf. regulation no. 634/1994. Construction and disturbance to geological formations is subjected to a permit from the Environment Agency.

Pollengi og Tunguey is protected as a nature reserve cf. regulation no. 249/1977. Construction and disturbance to geological formations is subjected to a permit from the Environment Agency.

Salthöfði and Salthöfðamýrar is protected as a nature reserve cf. regulation no. 249/1977. Permission from the Environment Agency is needed for construction work in the area. Disturbance to vegetation and wild animal life in the protected area is prohibited.

Skógafoss is protected as a natural monument, cf. regulation no. 477/1987. Disturbance to geological formations, vegetation and wild animal life in the protected area is prohibited. Camping overnight is only allowed in a designated campsite. This includes tents, motorhomes and campers. Photography, cinemaphotography and events that can affect visitors experience in the area are subjected to a permit from the Environment Agency of Iceland. Operating an unmanned aircraft/drone within the protected area is subjected to a permit from the Environment Agency of Iceland.

The beach at Stapi and Hellnar is protected as a nature reserve cf. regulation no. 284/1988. Disturbance to geological formations, vegetation and wild animal life in the protected area is

prohibited. Operating an unmanned aircraft/drone within the protected area is subjected to a permit from the Environment Agency of Iceland.

Snæfellsjökull National park is protected as a national park cf. regulation no. 935/2021. All commercial filming projects within the national park are subjected to a permit from the Environment Agency of Iceland according to art. 17 in the Regulation. Permit from the Environment Agency is needed for any kind of commercial activity and events within the national park according to art. 17 in the Regulation. Operating an unmanned aircraft/drone within the protected area during nesting season is subjected to a permit from the Environment Agency of Iceland during nesting season.

Svarfaðardalur is protected as a nature reserve cf. regulation no. 443/1980. Permission from the Environment Agency is needed for construction work. It is not allowed to hunt birds in the area or disturb nests.

Description of the project:

List of sites and locations within them with dates when the flight will take place was attached to the application. In Laxá area the flight will take place at 3 locations, at the beach at Stapi and Hellnar at 4 locations and Snæfellsjökull national park at 7 locations. In other sites. The maximum altitude will not be higher than 50 meters above ground level in most cases. Most photographs and videos will be taken from lower angles with altitudes up to 20 meters. Very few shots are planned to be taken with an altitude of approx. 100 meters above ground level. However, there will be not a single situation the altitude will exceed 120 meters. the drone will not be flown farther away than a few hundred meters and thus landed in the same place where it took off. The droneflight will take place in the period of September 11th – 26th 2021. Number of participants in the project is 2 persons.

Impact assessment:

The Environment Agency of Iceland considers the project not likely to have negative effect on birdlife at all sites except for Oddaflóð. Nesting season is over in all sites but migrating birds use Oddaflóð for feeding and resting on their journey between nesting and winter ground. The droneflight might have negative effect on visitors experience at Geysir, Gullfoss, Goðafoss Háifoss, Gjáanna og Hjálparfoss. By following the conditions in this permit the agency considers that negative effect of the droneflight can be reduced.

Conclusions and conditions:

The Environment Agency of Iceland has concluded, based on the information given by the applicant, code of conduct that applies to the areas according to the regulation on protection and the management plan for the sites, that the project is not subject to a permit from the Environment Agency in the following sites: Andakíl, Dimmuborgum, Dyrhólaey, Gróttu, Grunnafirði, Hverfjalli, Ingólfshöfða, Mývatn og Laxá, Salthöfða og Salthöfðamýrum, Snæfellsjökull national park and Svarfaðadalur.

The Environment Agency of Iceland hereby grants Robert Gloeckner permission on its behalf to permit to fly a drone within the beach at Geysi, Gullfossi, Goðafossi, Hjálparfossi, Gjánni, Háafossi og Granni, Oddaflóð, Skógafossi and Stapi and Hellnar as described above on September 11th – 26th 2021 on the following conditions:

- Keep this letter with you on site during the project. The permit conditions should be introduced to the staff of the project before work begins.

- **The applicant shall inform rangers in the area about their arrival and departure. This is to be done 24 hours before entering the area and again before leaving it.**
- If the project dates or description changes the Environment Agency shall be notified as soon as possible.
- The crew must follow rules of conduct that apply to the area.
- If any complications occur during the project, please contact the ranger or the Environment Agency of Iceland, tel. +354 591 2000.
- The license should be conscious of other guests on the sites and make sure that droneflight causes as little disturbance as possible to other visitors. If the material is meant for public viewing it must be noted in the video/subtext that permission from the Environment Agency was obtained for the filming/photography.
- All disturbance to animals and wildlife is strictly prohibited.
- Off-road driving in Iceland is strictly prohibited.
- The project's staff is required to prevent all disturbance to the environment and make sure that all litter is removed from the sites.
- Crew members should stay on marked paths the whole time.
- An unmanned aircraft should never be flown in close proximity to people. Please take precaution not to disturb people's experience, their safety or personal privacy nor the general peace of the protected areas being filmed.
- According to Icelandic law it is forbidden to fly close to cliffs where birds nest. An unmanned aircraft should never be flown near animals or birds, neither in nesting areas nor during nesting season or any other seasonal time when animals or bird habitats are considered vulnerable.
- Flight time should be kept to a minimum and flight should be avoided during the area's busiest times of the day.
- If the use of unmanned aircraft causes disturbance to wildlife in the area, its use should be ceased at once.
- The conductor of the unmanned aircraft is responsible for the aircraft within the protected area. This includes taking responsibility of any possible risk of harm to people, fauna and nature and leaving no permanent marks on the site in question. Should the aircraft crash, all components from it must be collected and removed from the area.
- For safety reasons, the pilot of an unmanned aerial vehicle must wear marked clothing so that the person can be identified.
- **If there are many birds at Oddaflóð when the licensee arrives then droneflight at the site is forbidden.**
- **It is forbidden to fly drones in the canyon in front of the waterfall at Skógafoss.**
- **Due to security reasons, it is prohibited to fly drone less than 50m above Strokkur and Geysir.**
- It is forbidden to fly drones next to bird cliffs in a closer proximity than 50 meters, if birds are in the cliffs.

The Environment Agency wants to draw attention to art. 6 on the Nature Conservation Act no. 60/2013 which states that everyone is obliged to take good care of Icelandic nature and show extreme caution so that it is not spoiled. Every measure that can prevent damage to nature should therefore be taken in construction projects and other activities in nature.

If the licensee causes damage to nature, according to art. 87 in the Nature Conservation Act no. 60/2013, the Environment Agency of Iceland can, according to the Nature Conservation Act, f.e. order the licensee to fix damage to nature and vegetation and/or stop the project.

The Environment Agency of Iceland can according to art. 89 in the Nature Conservation Act no. 60/2013 change conditions of the permit, add new conditions or withdraw the permit in order to prevent damage to nature if environmental conditions change.

According to art 89. in the Nature Conservation Act no. 60/2013 the Environment Agency can withdraw the permit if conditions of the permit are not complied to.

Unmanned aircraft should take off and land in a safe distance from other visitors according to regulation 990/2017 on unmanned aircrafts.

The usage of a drone shall be according to regulation no. 990/2017 on the operation of remotely piloted aircraft (<https://www.icetra.is/aviation/drones/>).

Please note that according to the regulation all drones used for commercial flight need to be registered at the Icelandic Transport Authority.

A permission from the landowners and/or the municipality might be needed for the project.

Permission fee:

Environment Agency of Iceland charges a fee for processing applications for permits in protected areas based on Article 92 of Act no. 61/2013 on Nature Conservation. The fee for cinematography and/or photography is 52.600 ISK according to art. 24. b. in the agency's tariff no. 535/2015.

Sincerely

Hákon Ásgeirsson
advisor

Þórdís Vilhelmína Bragadóttir
advisor