

Anke Butawitsch

Reykjavík, 22. júní 2023

UST202306-035/P.V.B.

09.04.00

Subject: permit to fly a drone Dimmuborgir, Fjallabak nature reserve, Goðafoss, Hveravellir and Kerlingarfjöll

The Environment Agency of Iceland has received an application from Anke Butawitscha and Saskia Butawitsch, dated June 5th 2023, for a permit to fly a drone within Dimmuborgir, Fjallabak nature reserve, Goðafoss, Hveravellir, Kerlingarfjöll, and Þórsmörk.

Dimmuborgir is protected as a natural monument, cf. regulation no. 1261/2011. 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.

Fjallabak is protected as a nature reserve, cf. regulation no. 354/1979. Construction work, extraction of minerals, disturbance to geological formations, vegetation and wild animal life in the protected area is prohibited. The use of unmanned aircraft (drones) within the nature reserve from 15th June – 15th September is subjected to a permit from the Environment Agency of Iceland.

Goðafoss is protected as natural monument, cf. regulation no. 647/2020. 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.

Hveravellir is protected as a natural monument. The Environment Agency however does not give permission for droneflights in the area as such restrictions are not covered in the protection plan for the area. For further information it is recommended to contact the service center upon arrival in the area.

Kerlingarfjöll is protected as an area of landscape, cf. Regulation no. 822/2020. Disturbance to geological formations, landscape, hot springs, other springs and ecosystems in hot springs in the protected area is prohibited. Permission must be obtained from the Environment Agency of Iceland for organized events and projects that need facilities, labour force or use of equipment within the protected area such as filming, at events and ceremonies.

Þórsmörk is not protected. The applicant needs to apply directly to the landowner/municipality of the area.

Description of the project:

At Fjallabak the droneflight will take place at several locations Frostastaðavatn, Bláhnúkur, Ljótípollur, Tungnaa, Hnausapollur Crater Lake, Ljótípollur Crater Lake, Blood Craters and Moss crater. Drone would also be used at Dimmuborgir, Goðafoss, Hveravellir and Kerlingarfjöll. Coordinates with location where the droneflight would take place was included in the application. There is no need to go off paths. There would be two persons with one drone each at each location. The flights would take place in the period June 22th – July 4th 2023.

Impact assessment:

The Environment Agency of Iceland considers the project not likely to have negative impact on nature and conservation value of the sites if conditions of the permit are followed. The project might have negative effect on other visitors experience of the site but if conditions of the permit are followed the Environment Agency considers that the effect can be reduced.

Conclusions and conditions:

After revision of the application and regulations for the sites and it is concluded that no permission is needed to fly the drone at Hveravellir and Kerlingafjöll if it does not disturb wildlife and other visitors experience.

The Environment Agency of Iceland hereby grants Anke Butawitscha and Saskia Butawitsch permission on its behalf to fly a drone within Goðafoss, Dimmuborgir and Fjallabak nature reserve as described above on June 22th – July 4th 2023 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.
- Crew members should always stay on authorized paths/tracks/roads.
- 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 crew should be conscious of other guests on the sites and make sure that filming 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.
- Off-road driving in Iceland is strictly prohibited.
- 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.
- At Dimmuborgum the drone can only fly in the area near the hiking paths Litli hringur, Stóri hringur and Kirkjuhringur and should never leave your sight.
- If falcons are seen in Dimmuborgir when the applicant wishes to fly the drone then it is not allowed to fly the drone there.

- 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

If the applicant 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/>).

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 76.000 ISK according to art. 29. b. in the agency's tariff no. 206/2023.

Supervision:

The Environment Agency will supervise the project. The supervisor will be a ranger from the Environment Agency.

Sincerely

Dagbjört Jónsdóttir

advisor

Pórdís Vilhelmína Bragadóttir

advisor