

Tobias Mennle filmproduction  
Berlinerstr.14  
77746 Schutterwald  
Germany

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UST202002-406/H.H.  
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### **Subject: permit to film in Hornstrandir**

The Environment Agency of Iceland has received an application from Tobias Mennle filmproduction, dated February 26<sup>th</sup>, for filming permit within Hornstrandir Nature reserve.

Hornstrandir is protected as a nature reserve by act no 60/2013 on nature conservation, cf. Regulation no 332/1985. Disturbance to geological formations, vegetation and wild animal life in the protected area is prohibited. According to the management plan for Hornstrandir, filming and photography that can affect wildlife and visitor experience and flying an unmanned aircraft/drone within the boundaries of the protected site is subjected to a permit from the Environment Agency.

#### ***Description of the project:***

The project is to film documentary film at Hornstrandir, dates are:

- June 22<sup>nd</sup> – 29<sup>th</sup>, tent in the basecamp of the fox monitoring group.
- June 30<sup>th</sup> – July 7<sup>th</sup>, hiking with Ester in Hornstrandir to monitor foxes – tent.
- August 10<sup>th</sup> – 20<sup>th</sup>, tent at toilet camp.

Planned drone flights are:

#### **Between June 22 and July 8**

1. 66.450156, -22.427558 flying NE towards 66.450839, -22.425696 following Ester along the ridge looking down towards the lake, flight height 5-50m
2. 66.45756,-22.439648 flying SE across the moorland towards 66.451950,-22.429658, height 100m
3. Circling around the location waterfall/lava stacks at mouth of bay: 66.429989, -22.443343, flight height 10-100m
4. 66.457685, -22.421243 hovering over Ester as she looks down into the birdcliffs (V-shaped cliff edge at the coastal path). Flight height around 5 meters. The drone will have rotor rails, will take off slowly and go straight to almost fixed position above Ester. This is important for the story as it powerfully connects Ester's journey with the bird cliffs.



**Between August 10 and August 20**

5. Circling around the location waterfall/lava stacks at mouth of bay: 66.429989, -22.443343, flight height 10-100m
6. 66.453743,-22.429507 following Ester walking on the path NE, height 10-50m

Also is requested for use of generator for the time period June 22<sup>nd</sup> - 29<sup>th</sup> and August 10<sup>th</sup> - 20<sup>th</sup>. It is the small Honda generator and maximum use in optimal weather is twice a week for 2.5 hours to recharge batteries and save data.

***Impact assessment:***

The Environment Agency of Iceland considers that the cinematography itself has little effect on the natural features and protection of the area, except for the possible effect of low altitude drone flight.

The value of Hornstrandir ecosystem is high worldwide. It is one of few places in Iceland where arctic foxes are protected. The year 2019 was difficult for foxes at Hornstrandir. According to the mammal ecologist from the Icelandic Institute of Natural History that monitors the fox population each year, cubs were only found in 25% of the normal dens in the area

There are seven internationally important birdcliffs in Hornstrandir, where Hornbjarg and Hælavíkurbjarg are the largest in size. In the cliffs five priority species lay their eggs, Fulmars, Black-legged kittiwake, guillemot, Brunnich's Guillemot and Razorbill. For some species, more than 50% of the Icelandic stock is found in these two large birdcliffs.

Hornstrandir are managed as category IB (IUCN) and as a part of that management people are given the opportunity to experience solitude, quietness and tranquility.

Guests will likely become aware of the project both due to drone flights and engine noises.

***Conclusions and conditions:***

June/July is the breeding period for many seabirds that nest in Hornbjarg cliff. Flying a drone near the cliff in low altitude in June can cause great disturbance and stress for the birds nesting there. The Environment Agency of Iceland thereby **declines** Tobias Mennle application for flying a drone near Hornbjarg during nesting season as described in the description of the project above for drone flights 1,2,4 as well as using engine at the campsite by Hornsá.

As mention earlier, the nature reserve is managed as wilderness area, category IB. Part of the management is to limit as much as possible, motorized noise, as visitors should be able to experience the quiet, and the sounds of nature. At the campsite at Hornsá, rangers can not monitor the use of motorized engine and there for will The Environment Agency not allow the use of it there.

The Environment Agency **grants** Tobias Mennle permission on its behalf to film within Hornstrandir nature reserve and fly a drone as described in flight paths 3,5-6 on following conditions:

- Keep this letter with you on site during the project.
- If the dates of the project or project description changes the Environment Agency shall be notified as soon as possible.

- The applicant shall inform rangers 48 hours before arriving in the area.
- Fauna, geological formations and landscape should not be disturbed in any way.
- All disturbance to animals and wildlife is strictly prohibited.
- Always stay on authorized paths/tracks when possible.
- Be conscious of other guests on the sites and make sure that drone flight causes as little disturbance as possible to other visitors.
- If the drone flight causes disturbance to birds or other animals in the area the applicant shall cease the flight at once.
- An unmanned aircraft should never be flown near people. Please take precaution not to disturb people's experience, their safety or personal privacy nor the general peace of the protected areas 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.
- The conductor of the unmanned aircraft is responsible for the aircraft within the protected area. This includes responsibility so that people, fauna and nature is unharmed because of the aircraft's use and that no permanent mark be left on the site in question. Should the aircraft crash, all components from it must be collected and removed from the area.
- If any complications occur during the project, please contact the ranger or the Environment Agency of Iceland, tel. +354 591 2000.

If the developer 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 has already charged a fee for processing the application.

***Supervision:***

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

Sincerely

*Hildur Hafbergsdóttir*

Hildur Hafbergsdóttir  
advisor

*Kristín Ósk Jónsdóttir*

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advisor