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Research permit for Friðland að Fjallabaki, Hverfjall and Snæfellsjökull National Park

The Environment Agency of Iceland has received an application from Universitat zu Köln, dated 14th of June, for research permit within protected sites in Iceland, Friðland að Fjallabaki nature reserve, Hverfjall natural monument and Snæfellsjökull National Park from 22nd of July-1st of August 2022.

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.

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.

Snæfellsjökull National Park is protected as a national park cf. regulation no. 568/2001. 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. Permit from the Environment Agency is needed for research projects on nature and heritage monuments within the national park according to art. 20 in the regulation.

Description of the project:

Sampling of small boulders (4-5kg in size) and rubble (1-2kg in size) laying on the ground. Using hammer and perhaps chisel to remove weathered parts of the rocks. Collecting 1 to 2 kg of rock material. The applicant states that the researchers do not plan to disrupt the state of the protected area. The plan is to take samples that are laying on the ground and that are not directly attached to a bigger geological structure. If needed the applicants want to go offroad and hike to get closer to the preferred location.

Impact assessment:

Based on the information from the applicant the Environment Agency of Iceland does not consider the research likely to have negative impact on the conservation values of the national park. Damage due to 1- 2 kg sampling is small or insignificant. Research might however contribute to increased knowledge of the geology of the areas and is likely to increase their conservation value.

Conclusions and conditions:

The Environment Agency of Iceland hereby grants Universitat zu Köln, permission on its behalf for research within Hverfjall, Friðland að Fjallabaki and Snæfellsjökull National Park as described above on from 22nd of July-1st of August 2022 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.
- Do not take samples from geological features that are close to hiking paths and guests.
- 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.
- When it is necessary to go off-path, extra care must be taken not to cause damage to terrain, including vegetation, soil, and geological formation. All traces of activity must be removed afterwards.
- This permit is only valid for research purposes. It does not include permit to utilize the samples for commercial purposes. The samples cannot be signed over to third party for commercial use.
- Every measure should be taken to avoid damage to the sites and unnecessary disturbance while collecting samples.
- Samples should be collected where any resulting disturbance to soil, vegetation or geological formations is not visible to other visitors.
- All vehicles used during field exploration must be labelled with the identity of the researcher's institute. All participants in the project must wear high-visibility clothing during field work, labelled with the identity of the researcher or the research institute.
- 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.

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 to prevent damage to nature if environmental conditions change.

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

If you wish to export samples from Iceland a special permit is needed from the Icelandic Institute of Natural History (www.ni.is).

The Environment Agency of Iceland wishes to receive, free of charge, a copy of all reports and scientific articles that result from the research project.

Permission fee: Environmental and Natural Resources Board of Appeal

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 research is 39.400 ISK according to art. 24. b. in the agency's tariff no. 535/2015.

Supervision:

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

Sincerely

Magnús Freyr Sigurkarlsson
Advisor

Þórdís Björt Sigþórsdóttir
Team leader