

Madhusudan Harimurthy Vijayalakshmi

Reykjavík, June 14th 2023
UST202306-039/S.V.
09.04.00

Subject: Permit to fly a drone

The Environment Agency of Iceland has received an application from Madhusudan Harimurthy Vijayalakshmi, dated June 8th 2023, for a permit to fly a drone within Goðafoss, Hverfjall, Námaskarð, Landmannalaugar and Hveravellir.

Fjallabak, with Landmannalaugar included, 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.

Hverfjall is protected as a natural monument, cf. regulation no. 1261/2011. 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. The guest should follow marked paths at any given time. It is necessary to inform rangers when the drone would be flown over the area.

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.

Námaskarð is not a protected area. The applicant needs though to apply directly to the landowner/municipality of the areas. It is suggested to contact the operator of the area, *Sannir landvættir*, toti@sannir.is

Description of the project:

The applicant has requested to fly a drone in several locations within Goðafoss, Hverfjall, Námaskarð, Landmannalaugar and Hveravellir in the period of June 30th – July 6th 2023. He plans to fly it within Goðafoss, Hverfjall and Námaskarð June 30th and July 1st within Hveravellir Julynd and within Fjallabak July 5th and 6th. As he describes in his application, he has neither intention to go off paths nor to fly the drone near people. The drone would be

operated within the visual line of sights, neither over 120 m nor more than 30 min. at each areas. A sufficient map is included with the application, showing planned flightpaths.

Impact assessment:

The Environment Agency of Iceland considers the droneflight might have negative effect on other visitors experience at all of these nature reserves but if conditions of the permit are followed the agency considers that the impact can be reduced.

Within the Fjallabak nature reserve, drone flight can cause disturbance to other guests and wildlife. Drones are not allowed in the vicinity of the bathing pool in Landmannalaugar, while disturbance caused by the flight can be minimized with conditions of the permit in other locations within the nature reserve.

To minimize negative effects it is recommended to fly the drone early in the mornings or late in the evenings.

Conclusions and conditions:

The Environment Agency of Iceland hereby grants Madhusudan Harimurthy Vijayalakshmi permission on its behalf to fly a drone within Goðafoss June 30th and July 1st and within Fjallabak/Landmannalaugar July 5th and 6th as described above on the following conditions:

- Keep this letter with you on site during the project
- The applicant shall inform rangers in the areas about his arrival and departure. This is to be done 24 hours before entering the areas and again before leaving them.
- If the project dates or description changes the Environment Agency shall be notified as soon as possible
- If any complications occur during the project, please contact the ranger or the Environment Agency of Iceland, tel. +354 591 2000.
- The applicant must follow rules of conduct that apply to these areas
- All disturbance to animals and wildlife is strictly prohibited
- Flying a drone above or in the vicinity of the pool at Landmannalaugar is not allowed
- The applicant should always stay on authorized paths/tracks/roads and not enter closed areas
- 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.
- 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 areas. 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

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 for recreational purposes for up to two areas is ISK. 38.000. according to art. 29. c. in the agency's tariff no. 206/2023.

Sincerely,

Dagbjört Jónsdóttir
advisor

Sigrún Valgarðsdóttir
advisor