

University of Valladolid
Edif. INDITI, Unidad Asociada UVA/CSIC centro astrobiología,
47151

Reykjavík, 12. júlí 2023
UST202305-246/P.V.B.
09.04.00

Subject: Umsókn um leyfi til rannsókna á Hveragerði Krýsuvík og Hveradal

The Environment Agency of Iceland has received an application from University of Valladolid, dated May 19th 2023, for research permit within within Hveragerði, Hveradal and Reykjanes country park.

Reykjanes country park is protected cf. regulation 520/1975. Disturbance to geological formations is prohibited.

Hveradalur in Hellisheiði and Hveragerði are not protected/under the supervision of Environment Agency. The applicant needs to apply directly to the landowner/municipality of the area.

Description of the project:

At Reykjanes country park the research will take place at Krýsuvík/Seltún. A few water and altered rock samples would be collected. The amount of material to be collected would be below 50ml (for liquid samples) and 10g (for solid samples) respectively. Water would be sampled by filling 50ml falcon tubes, while superficial altered rocks (below 10g) would be collected at the margin of the water stream with a sterilized scalpel. For each location, an average of 5 samples of water and 10 samples of altered rocks will be collected. Samples would be tested on site with a portable Raman spectrometer. The purpose is to detect traces of organic molecules in both water and altered rocks samples collected at the hydrothermal areas. Based on in-situ analysis, some samples will be collected and further investigated in the laboratory. In order to collect the samples it would be necessary to get close by foot to the water stream. Number of employees would be 2 persons and the sampling would take place July 24th-30th 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 sampling might be disturbed while the sampling takes place but by following the conditions the impact can be reduced.

Conclusions and conditions:

The Environment Agency of Iceland hereby grants University of Valladolid permission on its behalf to collect water and rock samples within Reykjanes country park as described above on July 24th-30th 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.
- 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 and make sure there are no footsteps visible after the sampling takes place.
- It is not allowed to walk on the sinter in the geothermal areas.
- If possibly sampling should take place early in the morning or late afternoon when fewer visitors are in the area.
- All traces of the work must be removed carefully from the site by the end of the project.
- If any complications occur during the project, please contact the ranger or the Environment Agency of Iceland, tel. +354 591 2000.
- 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 participants in the project must wear high-visibility clothing during field work and/ or labelled with the identity of the researcher or the research institute.

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.

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

Permit from the National Energy Authority is needed for researches in geothermal areas (www.os.is).

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

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 operational, events, research and other activities is **57.000 ISK** according to art. 29. a. 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

Valdimar Kristjánsson

Advisor

Pórdís Björt Sigþórsdóttir

Team leader