

Royal Netherlands Institute for Sea Research
Landsdiep 4
1797 SZ 't Horntje (Texel)

Vestmannaeyjum 12. apríl 2019
UST201903-262/Þ.V.B.

Subject: research permit -Hydrothermal vent chimneys

The Environment Agency of Iceland has received an application from Royal Netherlands Institute for Sea Research, dated March 27th, for research permit in Strýtur hydrothermal vent chimneys.

Arnarnesstrýtur hydrothermal vent is protected cf. 510/2007. Researches and collection of specimen are subject to a permit from the Environment Agency of Iceland. It is prohibited to disrupt the hydrothermal vent chimneys and attach any kind of sign on the vents.

The Strýtur hydrothermal vent is protected cf. regulation no. 249/2001 Researches and collection of specimen are subject to a permit from the Environment Agency of Iceland. It is prohibited to disrupt the hydrothermal vent chimneys and attach any kind of sign on the vents.

Description of the project:

This project is part of a master's thesis on the biodiversity of copepods along the Mid-Atlantic Ridge. The aim is to compare the populations of copepods from shallow and deep-sea hydrothermal vents. The deep-sea samples were already collected during a research cruise to the Steinahol vent field in 2018. Copepod samples will be taken with plankton nets and/or will be removed from the surface by carefully scratching small surfaces (<10 cm²). No geological features will be disturbed, no soil will be sampled, no flora or megafauna will be harmed. Samples will be collected on both vent sites Strýtan and Arnarnesstrýtur. Total number of samples is 10, 5 at each location. Each sample is <10 cm² surface area. Sampling will occur on May 9-11th. Two research divers will conduct the sampling and one diving instructor, Erlendur Bogason.

Review:

The Environment Agency sent a request to the advisor committee for the nature monument for impact assessment on the research. The committee had no comments on the research or the methods.

Impact assessment:

The Environment Agency of Iceland considers the project not likely to have negative impact on the conservation value of the nature monument. According to application the research project will be supervised by Erlendur Bogason who has supervision of the site on behalf of the Environment Agency.

Conclusions and conditions:

The Environment Agency of Iceland hereby grants Royal Netherlands Institute for Sea Research a research permit at Strýtur and Arnarnesstrýtur hydrothermal vent chimneys as described above on its behalf on following conditions:

- Keep this letter with you on site during the project.
- If the dates of the project change the Environment Agency shall be notified as soon as possible.
- The Environment Agency should be informed if there will be any changes to the project description.
- 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.
- Samples collected by scratching the surface should be collected where the laceration is not noticeable.
- This permit is only valid for sample collection according to the application.
- Geological formations and landscape should not be disturbed.
- Damage to the site is prohibited while collecting the samples.
- The permit conditions should be introduced to the staff before the work begins.
- All traces of the work must be removed carefully off the site by the end of the work/project.
- The divers will be under supervision from Erlendur Bogason who supervises the site on behalf of the Environment Agency.
- 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 the 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. ordered the licensee to fix damage to the nature and vegetation and/or stop 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).

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

Request:

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

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

Sincerely

Hildur Vésteinsdóttir

Hildur Vésteinsdóttir
Director

David Örvar Hansson

Davíð Örvar Hansson
Team leader