

Echotours  
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### **Permit to fly a drone in Hornstrandir**

The Environment Agency of Iceland has received an application from Echotours, dated May 27<sup>th</sup>, 2022, for a permit to fly a drone 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:***

Drone will be used while hiking from 17<sup>th</sup> of July-22<sup>nd</sup> of July. The route will start in Hesteyri hiking to Látrar, passing by Lake Fljotsvatn and again resting in front of Álfsfell before heading to Höfn where the group will be picked up at Veiðileysufjörður. Maps of where the drone would fly was attached to the application.

#### ***Impact assessment:***

The Environment Agency of Iceland considers the project likely to have negative impact on birdlife if the drone is used too close to bird cliffs. The drone flight can have negative effect on visitors experience but can be reduced if conditions of the permit are fulfilled.

#### ***Conclusions and conditions:***

The application for flying a drone near bird cliffs within Hornstrandir nature reserve is declined. Areas where droneflight is not allowed is shown on a map attached to this letter.

The Environment Agency of Iceland hereby grants Echotours permission on its behalf to fly a drone as described above, **except near bird cliffs**, on 17<sup>th</sup> of July-22<sup>nd</sup> of July 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.

- The applicant shall inform rangers in the area about their arrival and departure. This is to be done 48 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.
- The crew must follow rules of conduct that apply to the area.
- It is only allowed to camp at designated campsites.
- If any complications occur during the project, please contact the ranger or the Environment Agency of Iceland, tel. +354 591 2000.
- All disturbance to animals and wildlife 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.
- Drones cannot be used in areas marked purple on map attached to this letter.
- It is not allowed to use drones if other people are in the area.
- It is not allowed to use the drones if falcons and eagles are in the area.
- 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 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.
- 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 area. 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.
- It is forbidden to fly drones next to bird cliffs in a closer proximity than 200 meters during nesting season.

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 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.

***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 is 52.600 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.

Þórdís Björt Sigþórsdóttir

*Team leader*

Davíð Örvar Hanson

*Sérfræðingur*