

REGULATION on Vatnajökull National Park

CHAPTER I

Declaration of Protection for Vatnajökull National Park. General provisions

Article 1

Declaration of protection for Vatnajökull National Park

The area delimited in Article 3 and Annex I is hereby, in the framework of this Regulation, declared to be a protected area and a National Park, in accordance with Article 1 of the Act on Vatnajökull National Park. This protected status enters into force through the establishment of this Regulation. In addition to public lands, there are also areas of land within Vatnajökull National Park which the private land-owners and local governments have agreed should be given protected status.

Vatnajökull National Park is a governmental institution and the Minister for the Environment and Natural supervises all matters relating to the Park. A special board of directors, appointed by the Minister for a period of four years at a time, manages the institution and oversees the operation of the National Park. The managing director of Vatnajökull National Park is empowered by the board, through an official duty regulation, to manage its daily operations and administration. Vatnajökull National Park is divided into four administrative regions, cf. Article 6, each of which is overseen by a regional committee; cf. the Act on Vatnajökull National Park, Articles 7 and 8.

Article 2

The objective of the declaration of protection

The objective of the declaration of protection for Vatnajökull National Park and its primary spheres of influence is to protect nature in the area, including topographies, biota and natural formations, and its cultural property, as well as to give the public an opportunity to get to know and enjoy the nature and history of the area. Information about nature and nature conservation, history, human life and cultural property of the area shall be offered within the National Park, as well as support for research to further knowledge of these factors.

This type of land use is designed to support communities and economic activities near the National Park and therefore the establishment of Vatnajökull National Park should be considered to be an important action to strengthen the communities in the area.

Article 3

Boundaries of the National Park and of specific areas within the Park

The boundaries of the National park are laid out in Points 1–3 below; see also the map in Annex I to this Regulation. All the coordinates are given in the Isnet93 system. Wherever the boundaries follow the edge of a glacier, the reference is the glacier edge as it was on 1 July 1998:

1. A line from the edge of Austurtungnajökull glacier where the river Lambatungnaá runs from under the glacier, along the glacier's edge to a point on the mountain Goðaborg with the coordinates E671864 m, N450243 m; from there a straight line to the top of the mountain Geitafellstindur and onward in a straight line to the glacier snout at the lowest point of Hoffellsjökull glacier, coordinates E673332 m, N440320 m, and from there along the edge of the glacier to the eastern boundary line of the farm Flatey á Mýrum where it touches the glacier's edge. From there along the farm's boundaries to a point 200 metres above the electrical power line that intersects the Flatey lands. From there along the electrical power line at a distance of 200 metres, to the boundary between Flatey farm and the farm Skálafell. From there to the top of the mountain Hániþa and onward along a line midway between Hániþa and the mountain Snjófell, to the edge of the glacier. Along the glacier edge to the river Kolgríma and along the western bank of Kolgríma to point M (coordinates E661187 m, N421142 m). However, the National Park's boundaries shall be drawn 100 metres north of a mine that is situated in Hjallanes down by Kolgríma, so that the mine will be situated outside the National Park. From point M up to the rock face above the escarpments that skirt the lowest line of cliffs to the Kistugil ravine (a line drawn between the following points: A660861 m, N421038 m; A660607 m, N420765 m; A660537 m, N420949 m). From there up along the east side of Kistugil to point N (coordinates E660542 m, N420933 m) and from there to a cairn at point O (coordinates E660508 m, N421238

m) to a cairn at point P (coordinates E660012 m, N421441 m) at the side of the mountain. From there in a straight line to the edge of the glacier through point R (coordinates E659813 m, N422084 m). From there along the edge of the glacier to a point in Fellsárjökull glacier (coordinates E639657, N410468) along the river Fellsá to the Fellsfoss waterfall and from there in a straight line to the sea across Hrollaugsaar (coordinates E643576, N402299). West along the coastline to a point (coordinates E631684, N390291) on the beach at Breiðamerkurfjara just east of the mouth of the river Breiðá (Breiðárós) and from there in a straight line east of the river Fjallsá to the glacier at Fjallsárlón glacier lake (coordinates E627105, N393970) to a point (coordinates E625006, N391770) in the southern part of Hrútárjökull glacier. From there along the edge of the glacier to the boundary between the farms of Svínafell and Skaftafell II at the edge of Svínafellsjökull glacier, and from there along an extension of that boundary line on Svínafellsjökull glacier to the intersection with a rhumb line from the marker at Gömlutún through the front edge of Hafrafell mountain, and along that line through the front edge of Hafrafell to the marker at Gömlutún, and from there to the boundary between the counties of Austur-Skaftafellssýsla and Vestur-Skaftafellssýsla in Skeiðarársandur at Highway 1. From there along a line northwards along the county boundaries, to the edge of Skeiðaraárjökull glacier, and from there to the intersection with a line drawn to point I (coordinates E547164 m, N407083 m) at the glacier edge, from there to point 2 (coordinates E546329 m, N405705 m) to the south of Fljótsoddi, from there in a line along points 3 to 20, south-east, south and to the west of Innri-Eyjar to point 20 (coordinates E540777 m, N396544 m) east of the mountain Blængur. From there to the highest point of the mountain Varmárfell, point 21 (coordinates E538705 m, N393125 m). From there to the highest point on the mountain Hnúta, point 22 (coordinates E528737 m, N387484 m), and from there to the hill Innra-Grjótárhöfuð, point 23 (coordinates E522619 m, N383196 m), south of the river Skaftá. From there to point 24 (coordinates E519347 m, N381663 m). From there to point 25 (coordinates E517764 m, N381660 m) by the Fjallabaksleið nyrðri road, approx. 1km south of the Eldgjá ravine. From there along a dotted line through points 26 to 37, 500 metres west of the Fjallabaksleið nyrðri road, to Landmannalaugar. From there to point 37 (coordinates E511443 m, N385844 m) at the junction on the trail to Faxasund, across the highest point of the mountain Breiðbakur, point 38 (coordinates E531513 m, N409494 m); from there to coordinates E540539 m, N420228 m at the edge of Tungnárjökull glacier to the boundary of the communities of Skaftárhreppur and Ásahreppur where the river Tungná runs from under the Tungnárjökull glacier. Along the river Tungná to point A (coordinates E537750 m, N423116 m) east of Jökulheimar. From there in a straight line to point B (coordinates E523446 m, N416683 m), which is located on an 815 metre high peak in the far south of the Ljósufjöll mountain range. From there in a straight line to point C (coordinates E519371 m, N415861 m) which is located on the community boundaries between Ásahreppur and Rangárþing ytra between the Svartikambur ridge and the hill Þveralda. From there in a straight line to Þveralda at Austurbotnar in Þórisvatn lake and from there in the same direction to point D (coordinates E511087 m, N424643 m). From there in a straight line to Hvannagil ravine (coordinates E518743 m, N431517 m). Along Hvannagil and then to the river Kaldakvísl to point E (coordinates E537575 m, N447537 m), south of the mountain Syðri Háganga. From there in a straight line to Hraunbúi (coordinates E541737 m, N443929 m) and then eastwards to point F (coordinates E545382 m, N448350 m) and from there in a straight line to Skerðingur (coordinates E546539 m, N455644 m), Krosshnjúkar (coordinates E544529 m, N461447 m) and Fjórðungakvísl (coordinates E541782 m, N474087 m). From there to point G (coordinates E543077 m, N476013 m) and along a line from point G between the following points: H (coordinates E544473 m, N476816 m), I (coordinates E544528 m, N476661 m), J (coordinates E545448 m, N475961 m) and K (coordinates E546621 m, N475790 m). From there along a track north of the Tungnafellsjökull glacier and east along the Dyngjufjallaleið road (see coordinates in Annex 4, Table 1) to point L (coordinates E582902 m, N504084 m) on the boundary between the communities of Þingeyjasveit and Skútustaðahreppur. From there in a straight line north along the community boundary line to the public lands boundary line (coordinates E583290 m, N533119 m), as per the decision by the Icelandic Wilderness Committee, 6 June 2008 in Case No 1/2007. From there in a north-easterly direction to a point south of Suðurárbotnar (coordinates E584084 m, N536263 m) and from there south-east to the source of the river Suðurá (coordinates E589424, m, N532285, m). Then to the east to a point (coordinates E599832 m, N532285 m), where the Bláfjallshalar hills can be seen towards true north. From that point straight north to the south end

of Bláfjallshalar (coordinates E599832 m, N543511 m). From there in a straight line south-east to a benchmark at the elevation of 860 metres (coordinates E614242 m, N520630 m) south of the mountain hut Bræðrafell at the mountain Kollóttadyngja and then in a straight line north past the roots of the mountain Herðubreiðartögl (coordinates E623529 m, N519569 m). From there in a straight line to the centre of the river Jökulsá á Fjöllum north of the mountain Hlaupfell (coordinates E631409 m, N515719 m). From there in a northerly direction along the centre of the river, along the community boundary between Skútustaðahreppur and Fljótsdalshérað, to Árkross where the river Kreppa flows into the river Jökulsá á Fjöllum (E630946, N522956). From there southwards along the main fork of the river Kreppa, east of the mountain Lónshnúkur, to where Kreppa meets the river Kverká and then along Kverká to the glacier Brúarjökull (E637496, N478888). From there along the edge of the glacier to the eastern boundary of the nature reserve in Kringilsárrani where the river Jökulkvísl runs from under the glacier; cf. notice No 181/2003. From there along the eastern boundary of the nature reserve to point S (coordinates E650403 m, N477828 m) east of the Háslón reservoir. From there in a line 1km away from, and following the eastern bank of, Háslón (625 metre contour line) to the road to Kárahnjúkar (Kárahnjúkavegur), and then east along a line 200 metres south of, and following, the road, to the Hraunaveituvegur road to the west of the river Jökulsá in Fljótsdalur. From there along a line 200 metres to the west from the Hraunaveituvegur road and following that road and a track to the Eyjabakkavað ford. From there in a straight line to a point (coordinates E671027 m, N477861 m) 1km to the south of the Kelduárlón reservoir and from there in a straight line to the Háuklettar boulder field. From Háuklettar in a straight line to the hill Markalda through the innermost part of the mountain Geldingarfell, along the county boundaries between Múlasýsla and Austur-Skaftafellssýsla, to the beginning point at the edge of the glacier. The part of the mountain Ærfjall that rises above the edge of the glacier surrounding the mountain does not fall within the National Park boundaries.

2. From the south and east of the waterfall Dettifoss in a straight line to the highest peak of the mountain Eilífur. From Eilífur northwards to the Langahlíð hillside, which marks the boundary out towards the south- and westernmost point of the Langavatnshöfði hill. From there in a straight line to the Botnslækur stream at the southern end of Ásbyrgi and from there the boundary follows the southern boundary of the farm Meiðavellir in a westerly direction to the Sjónarhóll hill (E611939 m, N613360 m). North from Sjónarhóll to a point (E611805 m, N614813 m) to the southernmost part of the eastern edge of the Kiðagil ravine (E611822 m, N614908 m) and from there northwards to the south-west corner of the fence around a hayfield (E612128 m, N616075 m) and from there in a straight easterly line to the cliff edge of Ásbyrgi to a point (E612803 m, N615930 m). From there to point Y (coordinates E613224 m, N615889 m) to the western edge of the mountain Eyjan and across Eyjan directly to point Z (coordinates E613437 m, N615942 m) to the eastern edge of Eyjan and then along the cliff side to the highway. East along the highway until it reaches the eastern side of the older Ásbyrgi road and along this to the boundary fence of the forestry area and east to the Ásbyrgi cliffs. From there along the cliff side as far as it reaches, north to the highway and along the highway to the river Jökulsá. The eastern boundary of the National Park follows the centre line of the river Jökulsá á Fjöllum.
3. The river bed of Jökulsá á Fjöllum within the boundaries of the farms Hólssel, Víðidalur and Möðrudalur. To the west, the boundary of the Park follows the centre line of the river Jökulsá á Fjöllum. To the east the boundary follows the bank of Jökulsá. More precisely, the bed of the river Jökulsá á Fjöllum is considered to lie within the Park between the following points of intersection:
 - a. Hólssel; from the north, the boundary is delimited by the intersection point between Jökulsá and a line from the mountain Syðra-Normerlsfjall directly west to Jökulsá. From the south the boundary is delimited by the stream Ytri-Vatnsleysa.
 - b. of the valleys Víðidalur and Möðrudalur; in the north, the boundary is delimited by the river Skarðsá and from the south by the mouth of the river Arnardalsá (Arnardalsárós).

In the areas of Esjufjöll, Jökulsárgljúfur, Skaftafell and Askja special rules apply; cf. Articles 10, 16 and 30 of this Regulation. The coordinates of these areas are set out in Annex 4, Table 2, to this Regulation.

Definitions

The meaning of words and terms in this regulation is as follows:

- (1) *Guidelines for Protected Area Management Categories* means specific classes and criteria for protected areas (*International Union for Conservation of Nature – IUCN*) 1994.
- (2) *A group riding tour* means a riding tour with more than 20 horses.
- (3) *Biological diversity* means diversity of organisms, diversity within species and the diversity of the ecosystem the organisms are part of.
- (4) *Sustainable tourism* means tourism that meets the needs of both tourists and local people while promoting conservation and increased market opportunities for the future. This means that resources are managed in such a way as to fulfil economic, social and aesthetic needs while maintaining culture, necessary ecological processes, biological diversity and necessary living conditions.
- (5) *Sustainable land use* means land use utilising a particular biological resource in such a way as to not exploit its capital, i.e. using it in such a way that it is able to renew itself.
- (6) *Defined staging points* means staging points for horse riders, as per Article 14, that are defined in the management plan and shown on published maps of the National Park, but are not necessarily signposted.
- (7) *A riding route* means a route intended for traffic on horseback that is identified in the management plan.
- (8) *A cautionary approach* means the point of view that management, decision-making and planning are based on in specific cases. Its purpose is to minimise as much as possible any negative effects from construction projects and human activities on the land, biota, biological diversity, soil, plants, trees, vegetative cover, topographies, landscapes, geological formations, cultural property, water, including groundwater, water catchment areas, the flow direction of water, its volume and quality or other factors of nature and other natural conditions within the National Park, as per criteria in individual provisions of this Regulation. A cautionary approach may be applied even when there is no scientific certainty on the possible outcome of construction projects, actions or lack thereof, or when it is unclear what exactly the connection is between cause and effect.
- (9) *A cycling or hiking route* means a route that is identified in published National Park documentation.
- (10) *A cycling, hiking or riding path* means a route with an altered surface that is identified in National Park documentation.

- (9) *A road* means a permanent road, street, trail, path, alley, bridge, square, parking area or similar, used for general traffic.
- (10) *Management plan* means a plan made for Vatnajökull National Park in accordance with the provisions of Articles 12 and 13 of the Act on Vatnajökull National Park. The management plan shall set out the conservation objectives for individual areas within Vatnajökull National Park, specific conservation actions, land use and construction projects, roads, riding paths, footbridges and the main hiking routes, public right of way, tourist access to the area, and hunting. The management plan will also specify cycling and riding routes, as well as pollution prevention measures and other factors.
- (11) *Protection category* means a defined category of protected status along with criteria according to the *Guidelines for Protected Area Management Categories*.
- (12) *Motor vehicle* means a vehicle outfitted with a motor that propels it.

Article 5

Level of protection and international conservation conventions.

The levels of conservation for specific areas or landscapes within the National Park shall reflect the objectives of the declaration of protection and other land use in the area and shall conform to the *Guidelines for Protected Area Management Categories*.

The following conventions and their subsequent amendments shall be taken into consideration during the preparation of the management plan and the implementation of this Regulation:

- (1) The Convention for the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage; cf. notice No 42/1995 in Section C of the Government Gazette.
- (2) The Convention on Wetlands of International Importance, Especially as Waterfowl Habitat; cf. notice No 1/1978 in Section C of the Government Gazette.
- (3) The Convention on Biological Diversity; cf. notice No 11/1995 in Section C of the Government Gazette.
- (4) The Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats; cf. notice No 17/1993 in Section C of the Government Gazette.

Article 6

The administrative regions of the National Park.

Vatnajökull National Park is divided into four administrative regions and each region has a regional committee appointed by the Minister for the Environment and Natural Resources for a period of four years at a time. The administrative regions are: (1) The northern region, (2) the eastern region, (3) the southern region and (4) the western region. The boundaries of the administrative regions are shown in a map in Annex II to this Regulation.

Each administrative region is an independent administrative unit under the responsibility of a Park warden. Two Park wardens may be hired for those administrative areas where the two main Park facilities are situated. The board of directors determines the division of labour between the National Park wardens within the same administrative regions in consultation with the regional committee, and the division of labour shall be described in the Park wardens' letter of appointment.

Article 7

The management plan and its legal effectiveness.

The management plan for Vatnajökull National Park shall be drawn up in accordance with the provisions of the Act on Vatnajökull National Park, Articles 12 and 13.

It shall set out the conservation objectives for individual areas within Vatnajökull National Park, specific conservation actions, land use and construction projects, roads, riding paths, footbridges and the main hiking routes, public right of way, tourist access to the area, and hunting. The management plan will also specify cycling and riding routes, as well as pollution prevention measures and other factors.

The regional committees shall, each for its respective region, draw up a proposal for a management plan in collaboration with the Environment Agency of Iceland and the Icelandic Institute of Natural History. While preparing the management plan, each regional committee shall consult with the owners of land within their respective regions of the National Park, with local councils and other stakeholders in the area.

The board of directors of Vatnajökull National Park reviews the proposals of the regional committees and uses them as the basis of the management plan for Vatnajökull National Park. The board shall take care that the management plan complies with the Act and Regulation on Vatnajökull National Park. The board can amend the regional committees' proposals. The board's proposal for the management plan for Vatnajökull National Park shall be prepared in collaboration with the Environment Agency of Iceland and the Icelandic Institute of Natural History. The proposal shall be publicly notified and the public and stakeholders shall be given the opportunity to submit their comments before the final proposal is submitted to the Minister. The deadline to submit comments on the proposal for the management plan shall be at least six weeks from the date of the notification.

The board's proposal for the management plan for Vatnajökull National Park shall be submitted to the Minister for the Environment and Natural Resources for approval. The Minister for the Environment and Natural Resources can amend the management plan if he considers it, or specific parts of it, to contravene the Act on Vatnajökull National Park, this Regulation or the Park's conservation objectives. When the Minister for the Environment and Natural Resources has ratified the management plan for Vatnajökull National Park it shall be notified in Section B of the Government Gazette and shall enter into force upon publication.

The management plan may be amended, using the procedure laid out in paragraphs 2–4. The Park's board of directors can propose amendments to the management plan without having received a proposal from the regional committee in question. In such cases, the opinion of the regional committee shall always be sought before the proposal is submitted to the Minister for the Environment and Natural Resources. The management plan for Vatnajökull National Park shall be revised at least every 10 years.

Local councils are bound by the contents of the management plan when they draft their patial plans for areas within Vatnajökull National Park.

Construction projects, road construction and any removal of materials within Vatnajökull National Park are only authorised if they are anticipated in the Park's management plan. Conditions may be set out in the management plan for the manner in which any construction projects may be carried out and on the monitoring thereof in order to ensure that such construction projects do not unnecessarily disturb nature, e.g. biota, geological formations, hydrography or topographies, or cultural properties within Vatnajökull National Park. Under this Act, no special authorisation from the Park's board is necessary for any construction work anticipated in the management plan. The Park warden concerned monitors the compliance of such construction projects with the provisions of the Act on Vatnajökull National Park and those of this Regulation and the management plan, and that the conditions set out for the project in the management plan are being followed. In other respects the provisions of the Nature Conservation Act apply to any construction projects within Vatnajökull National Park.

CHAPTER II

Traffic and visits to the National Park

Article 8

Opening hours and services in the National Park

Vatnajökull National Park is open all year round and visitors who travel within it do so at their own responsibility.

The public's access to the National Park shall be facilitated as much as possible without causing damage to nature or cultural properties.

Visitor centres are situated within Vatnajökull National Park, where information and services are available. The National Park's visitor centres are situated at the following locations:

- (1) Ásbyrgi;
- (2) Mývatnssveit;
- (3) Skriðuklaustur;
- (4) Höfn í Hornafirði;
- (5) Skaftafell;
- (6) Kirkjubæjarklaustur.

The objective of operating visitor centres is to be able to give the public information and education about nature in the area, e.g. topographies, biota and geological formations, and on nature conservation, the history, human life and cultural properties of the area, as well as any necessary services. The board of directors of Vatnajökull National Park determines the arrangement of the operation of the visitor centres and other information and service centres within the National Park and close to it.

Article 9

Rights and obligations of visitors

The public is free to travel within Vatnajökull National Park and to stay there for legitimate purposes, as is further laid down in this Regulation. Every individual is obliged to respect nature and cultural properties within the National Park and to show extreme care and consideration so that no damage is caused to nature, cultural properties and structures within the National Park. The burying or burning of refuse within the National Park is prohibited.

Visitors to the National Park must obey the instructions of the Park wardens and other Park staff as regards their treatment of the environment and their conduct within the Park, and must be familiar with Park rules, which can be found on the Park's website and at the visitor centres.

Article 10

Camping

Visitors to the National Park must camp within organised camp sites. The Park's management plan sets out rules in camping away from organised camp sites.

The board may, in cooperation with the regional committee in question, lay out special rules on camping for specific areas, including a complete ban on camping. Such rules shall be published on the Park's website and in its visitor centres.

Article 11

Pets

Pets may only be brought into the National Park under the secure control of their owners. Care must be taken that pets do not disturb the National Park's plant and animal life, damage nature and cultural properties or disturb visitors.

Article 12

Fire

The lighting of open fires out in the wilderness of the National Park is prohibited. Visitors who have brought in their own firewood are allowed to light camp fires in specially designed and marked fire pits. The collecting of firewood is prohibited within the National Park.

Special care must be taken when cooking appliances are used in vegetated areas and in other places where a fire could cause damage. The board may, in cooperation with the regional committee in question, lay out rules banning the use of cooking appliances in particularly fragile areas of the National Park, temporarily or permanently. Such rules shall be notified on the Park's website and at its visitor centres.

Article 13

Foot traffic etc.

Visitors of the National Park may travel through it on foot, on skis, skates, snowshoes and non-motorised sleds or by other comparable means. Where there are marked trails, visitors must use those or follow the instructions of the Park wardens.

Article 14

Traffic on horseback

Horseback riding within the National Park is allowed, on defined or marked riding routes. Temporary corrals for resting or over-night confinement of horses may be erected at defined staging points. Group riding tours within the National Park are subject to an authorisation from a Park warden, who can set conditions for the travel mode in conformity with the provisions of the management plan in order to ensure that there will be no damage to nature and cultural properties within the Park.

Travellers on horseback must make sure, during rides in the highland areas of the National Park and other sparsely vegetated areas, that they have enough feed for their horses. The pasturing of horses within the National Park is prohibited, except in cases covered by paragraph 1.

Article 15

Cycling

Bicycling is allowed on roads, in parking areas and on marked cycling tracks within the National Park. Bicycling is allowed on hiking paths where cycling is not specifically prohibited, with the condition that no damage is done and cyclists shall take full consideration of foot traffic. The Park warden can allow bicycle traffic on specific riding routes or tracks, on the condition that the bicyclists take full consideration of riders on horseback and make way for them. The Park wardens can prohibit bicycle traffic on hiking paths and hiking routes with heavy traffic or where there is risk of damage to the vegetation. The derogations in Article 16(2) and Article 17 from the prohibition of the off-road driving of motorised vehicles for particular purposes also apply to bicycle traffic.

Article 16

Motorised vehicle traffic

The off-road driving of motorised vehicles is prohibited within Vatnajökull National Park. Motorised vehicle traffic is only allowed on roads designed for it, in accordance with the management plan and in compliance with any signs, on the condition that the roads are not impassable due to muddy conditions or closed under an order from the Icelandic Road and Coastal Administration or a Park warden.

In derogation to paragraph 1, the driving of motorised vehicles and snowmobiles is allowed within the National Park as long as the ground is covered in snow and frozen, and care is taken not to cause any damage. This does not apply to Jökulsárgljúfur, Skaftafell, Hoffell and Askja; cf. the delimitation on the map in Annex 2 and the coordinates in Annex 4, Table 2. Motorised vehicle traffic on Vatnajökull glacier is allowed, except on routes that have been marked for other uses, as per paragraph 3.

The following areas of Vatnajökull glacier are closed to motorised vehicle traffic, unless the Park warden authorises it. All the coordinates are given in the ISN93 system:

- (1) Hvannadalshnúkur, the whole year, within a frame delimited by these coordinates (ISN93): E612950 m, N392450 m; E614190 m, N392450 m; E614190 m, N391580 m; E612950 m, N391580 m.
- (2) Örafajökull, from 20 April to 15 September, south of a line extending between the coordinate points (ISN93) E609570 m, N392483 m and E620811 m, N392483 m.
- (3) Kverkfjöll, from 15 June to 15 September, north of a line extending between the coordinate points (ISN93) E609800 m, N466255 m and E613690 m, N461603 m.

The above mentioned areas identified in paragraph 3 are shown on a map in Annex I to this Regulation.

Article 17

Off-road driving for specific purposes

In urgent cases, the off-road driving of motorised vehicles is allowed within the National Park when the ground is not covered in snow or frozen (cf. Article 16(2)), for soil reclamation work and to halt soil erosion, for construction projects, the laying of electrical cables, roads and other utility installations, research, film-making, land surveying and agricultural activities, provided that the activities in question can not be carried out in any other way. Such driving of motorised vehicles shall take place after consultation with a Park warden and with authorisation from landowners or rights holders where applicable. A comparable authorisation is in place for law enforcement and rescue operations, with the exception of manoeuvres.

Off-road driving is allowed on cultivated land for agricultural purposes, as long as it causes no damage to nature.

Special care must be taken when driving off-road under this provision, in order to reduce the risk of damage to nature. Such driving must take place using the proper equipment. All efforts must be made during the above-mentioned activities to transport materials and other necessities in such a way as to avoid off-road driving.

Article 17a

Closure of areas

In derogation to the provisions of Article 8, the Park warden may, for the purposes of film-making, temporarily close specific areas of the National Park to general traffic. Such a closure shall only be authorised if it is considered necessary and does not cause unnecessarily severe disruptions to other economic activities or to public access. Such closures shall not last any longer than necessary and shall not reach a larger area than necessary. Such a decision of closure shall be published in Section B of the Government Gazette and by prominent means in newspapers and on the Park's website. The decision shall be justified in the notice, the boundary of the closed off area shall be mentioned and also the length of the closure.

Article 18

Activities within the National Park

Any research into the natural features and cultural properties within the National Park that is not done on behalf of the Park authorities or as part of the adopted management plan, as well as any film-making, filming of advertisements and other such activities, is subject to authorisation from a Park warden.

Tourism services that have facilities within the National Park shall be organised on the basis of sustainable tourism principles.

Article 19

Use of firearms.

All use of firearms is prohibited within the National Park, unless allowed under Articles 26, 28, 29 or 30.

CHAPTER III
General Protective Rules

Article 20

Prohibition of damage and disturbance

Any damage or disturbance of nature within the National Park, e.g. biota, geological formations or topographies, cultural properties and man-made structures, is prohibited.

More precisely, paragraph 1 refers to biota, biological diversity, soil, plants, trees, ground cover, topographies, landscapes, geological formations, water, including groundwater, water catchment areas, the flow direction of water, water levels, volume and quality of water, or other factors of nature.

Article 21

Conservation of biological diversity.

Special emphasis shall be placed on the conservation of biological diversity within the National Park. Where the exploitation of individual species is allowed, care shall be taken to ensure it is in keeping with the adopted management plan. If ecosystems or habitats have been damaged or diminished so as to affect biological diversity, an implementation scheme on improving the situation and reclaiming the ecosystems, if that is considered possible, shall be drawn up. The scheme shall be part of the management plan for the region in question, and shall reflect the conservation objectives of the National Park and the protection category of the area in question.

The Park warden is responsible for implementing the scheme mentioned in paragraph 1 and for monitoring the necessary actions that are taken.

Article 22

Modification of biota

It is prohibited to cultivate or spread foreign plant and tree species, as well as the seeds thereof, within the National Park. Foreign plant species are those that are subject to the definition in Regulation No 583/2000 on the Import, Cultivation and Distribution of Foreign Plant Species.

It is prohibited to bring foreign animal species, including insects, into the National Park or to distribute them within it.

Article 23

Inscriptions on natural formations and cultural properties

Any kind of inscription on natural formations or cultural properties within the National Park is prohibited.

Article 24

Reclamation of land resources, biota, geological formations and land areas

Action may be taken within the National Park with the purpose of protecting and/or reclaiming land resources, biota, geological formations and areas of land, cultural properties and man-made structures, e.g. due to encroachment by humans, animals or plants or due to natural disasters, water erosion or coastal erosion, soil erosion or other disturbances by humans or natural forces.

Actions taken in accordance with paragraph 1 shall comply with the conservation objectives of the National Park, the defined protection category for the area in question and the provisions of this Regulation.

Pending the approval of the management plan, the board of directors of Vatnajökull National Park may authorise any actions covered by paragraph 1. The Environment Agency of Iceland and other specialist bodies shall be consulted as necessary in each case, before any decision is made.

Landowners or occupants shall also be consulted if the decision concerns an area within the National Park that is privately owned or occupied by people, as well as the regional committee concerned.

A decision made in accordance with paragraph 3 shall be based on the National Park's conservation objectives, the defined protection category for the area concerned, and on the cautionary approach. Authorisations may be subject to conditions regarding the manner in which construction work will be carried out and monitored, in order to ensure that the work does not cause undue disturbance of biota, geological formations or topographies.

A decision by the board in accordance with paragraph 3 shall be advertised on the Park's website and by other prominent means, and shall include the premises of the decision, the main justifications, and any conditions, if applicable. The right to appeal, the method of appeal and the deadline for appeal shall be mentioned as well.

The Park warden in question monitors the compliance with the conditions set by the board.

Article 25

Pollution control

The Park's management plan shall set out any specific pollution control measures that may be necessary in order to attain and maintain the Park's objectives. They shall be based on the Park's conservation objectives, the defined protection category for the area concerned, and on the cautionary approach.

In other respects, pollution control within the National Park is governed by the provisions of Act No 7/1998 on Hygiene and Emissions Control and any regulations pursuant to that Act.

CHAPTER IV

Provisions on Construction Projects and Land Use

Article 26

Traditional land use

Traditional land use, such as livestock grazing, the hunting of birds and reindeer, fishing in rivers and lakes and the collecting of driftwood is allowed for rights holders within the areas delimited in Annex III, subject to compliance with the provisions of laws covering each type of land use. Such use is prohibited in other areas of the National Park.

According to Article 20(2) of the Act on Vatnajökull National Park, land use within the National Park shall be sustainable.

The rights of farmers to herd sheep on horseback will continue to be considered a traditional right of farmers within the areas delimited for traditional land use in Annex III. The provisions of Article 17 apply to any off-road driving within those areas.

Article 27

Fishing in rivers and lakes

Fishing is only allowed in rivers and lakes within Vatnajökull National Park inside the areas covered by Article 26; cf. Annex III.

Article 28

Hunting of birds and reindeer

Hunting of birds and reindeer within Vatnajökull National Park is only allowed inside the areas covered by Article 26; cf. Annex III. Hunting is covered by Act No 64/1994 on the Conservation, Protection and Hunting of Wild Birds and Wild Mammals and by regulations pursuant to that Act.

The driving of vehicles by reindeer hunting guides is covered by Regulation 528/2005, as amended by Regulation 497/2007.

Article 29

Hunting of mink

Mink hunting is allowed within Vatnajökull National Park and is covered by Act No 64/1994 on Conservation, Protection and Hunting of Wild Birds and Wild Mammals and by Regulation No 437/1995 on the Hunting of Minks and Foxes, with subsequent amendments.

Article 30

Hunting of foxes

Fox hunting continues to be prohibited within the following areas: In Skaftafell, in Jökulsárgljúfur and in Esjufjöll, as delimited in the map in Annex I and by the coordinates given in Annex 4, Table 2.

Article 31

Construction, removal of materials, etc.

Construction projects, the laying of roads, paths and trails and any removal of materials within the National Park are only authorised if they are anticipated in the Park's management plan.

Any construction undertaken in accordance with paragraph 1 shall comply with the conservation objectives of the Park, the defined protection category for the area in question and the provisions of this Regulation. Local plans shall be made for all construction projects within the National Park.

Conditions may be set in the management plan for the manner in which any construction projects may be carried out and on the monitoring of such work in order to ensure that such construction work does not unnecessarily disturb nature in the area, such as topographies, biota and geological formations.

The board of directors of Vatnajökull National Park may, until the Management plan enters into force and in consultation with the local council in question, authorise construction projects covered by paragraph 1. Before such a decision is made, the Park warden and regional committee in question, the Environment Agency of Iceland and other specialist bodies shall be consulted as necessary in each case. Landowners and occupants shall also be consulted if the decision concerns an area within the National Park that is privately owned or occupied by people, as well as the regional committee concerned.

When making a decision according to paragraph 4, the board shall base it on the Park's conservation objectives, the defined protection category for the area concerned, and on the cautionary approach. Authorisations may be subject to conditions regarding the manner in which the work will be carried out and monitored, in order to ensure that the work does not cause undue disturbance of biota, geological formations or topographies.

A decision by the board in accordance with paragraph 4 shall be advertised on the Park's website and by other prominent means, and shall include the premises of the decision, the main justifications, and any conditions, if applicable. The right to appeal, the method of appeal and the deadline for appeal shall be mentioned as well.

The Park warden concerned monitors the compliance of such construction projects with the provisions of the Act, Regulation and management plan for Vatnajökull National Park and that the conditions for the construction project in question, which were set in the management plan or in the board's authorisation, are being respected.

In other respects, the provisions of the Nature Conservation Act apply to any construction projects within Vatnajökull National Park.

CHAPTER V Special Protective Actions

Article 32

The closure of the National Park or of individual areas within it in order to protect nature and/or human lives

If an area is at risk for damage and immediate action is considered necessary, the Park warden responsible for the region in question can decide to temporarily close a demarcated area to all traffic by motorised vehicles. Such a decision by a Park warden to temporarily close an area shall be published in Section B of the Government Gazette and by other prominent means in newspapers and on the Park's website. The decision shall be justified in the notice, the boundary of the closed off area shall be mentioned and also the length of the closure.

A Park warden may close the National Park or individual areas within the Park without prior notice if it is considered that the presence of humans or traffic through the area is likely to cause damage to nature, e.g. biota, geological formations or topographies. This includes the closure of an area during the reindeer calving period, or due to other similar reasons. Such decisions, including the reasoning for them, shall be made public at the location in question if possible, and on the Park's website, without delay, and shall be announced at the next meeting of the Park's board and the regional committee in question.

A Park warden may close the National Park or individual areas within the Park without prior notice if a hazardous situation arises within the Park due to a natural hazard.

Article 33

Expulsion from the National Park

A Park warden or other Park staff may expel from the National Park any person who transgresses against the provisions of the Act on Vatnajökull National Park and those of this Regulation and such transgressions shall be reported to the police if necessary.

CHAPTER VI Miscellaneous Provisions

Article 34

Administrative decisions and right of appeal

Decisions made on the basis of this Regulation may be appealed to the Minister for the Environment and Natural Resources. A ministerial ruling is the final ruling at the administrative level.

All those who have legally protected interests connected to the appealed decision, as well as environmental protection organisations and outdoor activity organisations with legal jurisdiction in Iceland, provided they have more than 30 members and the purpose of the organisation is to protect the interests the appeal pertains to, have the right of appeal under this Article. Environmental protection organisations are defined as organisations whose main purpose is to protect the environment. Outdoor activity organisations are defined as organisations whose main purpose is to promote outdoor activities and protect the environment. Organisations under paragraphs 2 and 3 shall be open to the public, issue annual reports on their activities and their accountancy data shall be audited.

Article 35

Per diem fines.

The board of directors of Vatnajökull National Park may decide to levy per diem fines of up to 500 thousand ISK, which accrue to the Treasury, in order to compel the parties concerned to take action they are legally bound to take under the Act on Vatnajökull National Park and this Regulation, or cease any illegal activities.

Article 36
Criminal liability

Under Article 22 of the Act on Vatnajökull National Park, any violation of this Regulation is punishable with fines or imprisonment of up to two years.

Article 37
Legal reference and entry into force

This Regulation is adopted in accordance with the provisions of Articles 7, 15 and 20 of the Act on Vatnajökull National Park and enters into force forthwith. At the same time the following regulations cease to apply: Regulation No 879/2004 on Skaftafell National Park, including subsequent amendments, cf. Regulation No 367/2005; and Regulation No 359/1993 on Jökulsárgljúfur National Park, including subsequent amendments, cf. Regulations No 285/2001 and 929/2005. Notice No 188/1978 on the Esjufjöll Nature Reserve also ceases to apply henceforth.

The Ministry for the Environment and Natural Resources, 7 June 2008.

Þórunn Sveinbjarnardóttir.

Ingibjörg Halldórsdóttir.