



Act on the Thingvellir National Park

2004 No. 47 1 June

Entered into force on 1 June 2004. Amended by Act 88/2008 (entered into force on 1 Jan. 2009, except for transitional provision VII, which entered into force on 21 June 2008), Act 140/2009 (entered into force 31 Dec. 2009) and Act 126/2011 (entered into force 30 Sept. 2011).

Article 1 Thingvellir by Öxará and its vicinity shall be a protected shrine for all Icelanders as a national park.

The boundaries of the national park at Thingvellir and the protected land shall be as follows: In the south, the boundary is a line drawn from the boundary of the farms of Arnarfell and Mjóanes on Langitangi, west across the lake to Grjótnes on the boundary of the farms of Skálabrekka and Kárastadir. From that point, the boundary follows the boundaries of those farms to the boundary of Selkot and then the boundary of Selkot and Kárastaðir to the county borders of Árnessýsla and Kjósarsýsla on Há-Kjölur. From that point the boundary follows the county borders to the source of the river Öxará at Lake Myrkavatn and to the peak of Hásúla, and thence in a straight line eastwards to the highest point of Mt. Gafell. From there, the boundary lies southward to Hrafnabjörg and along the eastern and southern boundary of the farm Gjábakki and along the eastern boundary of the farm Arnarfell in Langitangi.

The protected area shall be under the protection of the Althing and remain the perpetual possession of the Icelandic nation. It can never be sold or pledged.

Article 2 The national park at Thingvellir shall be subject to the management of the Thingvellir Commission.

The Althing shall, at the start of each [election term]¹⁾ elect seven Members of Parliament to the Thingvellir Commission and an equal number of alternate members. Their mandate shall remain in effect until a new Commission has been elected. [The Minister]²⁾ shall appoint a chairman and vice-chairman from among the principal members; in other respects the Commission itself shall allocate tasks among its members.

[The Ministry]²⁾ is the supreme authority in matters relating to the national park at Thingvellir; this includes powers of decision regarding administrative complaints relating to decisions made by the Thingvellir Commission.

[The national park is in all respects exempt from the Act on recreational homes and site leases for recreational homes.]¹⁾

¹⁾Act 140/2009, Art. 1. ²⁾Act 126/2011, Art. 384.

Article 3 The land of the national park shall be protected with a view to preserving its appearance as a national shrine and to maintain to the extent possible its original natural features. The public shall be permitted to enjoy the site pursuant to rules established by the Thingvellir Commission. Geological formations, flora and fauna in the area shall be protected; however, the Thingvellir Commission is permitted to take measures to cull animals which are incompatible with the objective of the protection. The national park shall, at the discretion of the Thingvellir Commission, be protected from grazing by livestock, and the Commission shall establish special rules on livestock breeding on occupied farms within the national park.

Article 4 Within the boundaries of the national park, any action which may contaminate or pollute water in the area, both surface water and groundwater, shall be prohibited.

The biota of Lake Thingvallavatn shall be protected and care taken not to disrupt the habitat and breeding grounds of arctic char and trout stocks that currently inhabit the lake.

The Thingvellir Commission is empowered to establish special rules to enforce these provisions on water protection within the national park.

Article 5 Any disruption of soil or construction work within the Thingvellir National Park is prohibited except with the permission of the Thingvellir Commission; the prohibition applies, *inter alia*, to house building, road construction, installation of electrical and telephone cables, drilling for water, excavation of minerals and mining for resources from the ground and cultivation activities. The Thingvellir Commission is permitted to attach to any permission granted for construction work within the national park such conditions as the Commission may regard as necessary for the purposes of protection pursuant to this Act.

Article 6 The Thingvellir Commission is authorised, as allocations of funds out of the State Budget will permit, to buy individual properties, installations and utilisation rights within the National Park which are not owned by the State of Iceland.

The Thingvellir Commission is authorised, with the consent of [the Minister],¹⁾ to expropriate any properties, facilities and utilisation rights within the national park for the purpose of enforcing the protection stipulated in this Act. Assessment of compensation is subject to the Expropriation Act.

Any person suffering pecuniary loss as a result of protection measures taken pursuant to this Act is entitled to damages from the State Treasury. In the event of failure to reach an agreement on compensation, such compensation shall be determined in accordance with the provisions of the Expropriation Act.

¹⁾Act 126/2011, Art. 384

Article 7 The Thingvellir Commission shall prepare a regulation¹⁾ on the national park, its protection and use, to be confirmed by the [Minister]²⁾. The regulation may provide for visitors' fees within the national park for services rendered and staying in the Park and to cover the cost of the services and supervision of visitors who stay in the Park.

The Thingvellir Commission can also establish special temporary rules on traffic within the national park, including the prohibition of off-road driving and camping in certain areas, and the same applies to hunting animals and birds within the Park. Also, the Thingvellir Commission may establish rules on the treatment of toxic materials, sewage and other things that may entail risk of pollution of the soil and/or water within the national park, including Lake Thingvallavatn, and the transport of hazardous materials and pollutants within the Park.

¹⁾Reg. 848/2005. ²⁾Act 126/2011, Art. 384

Article 8 The Thingvellir Commission shall appoint a managing director of the Thingvellir National Park, who will serve also as the warden of the national park. The managing director shall hire other employees of the national park.

Article 9 Violations of the provisions of this Act, regulations and rules established in accordance with this Act are punishable by fines or imprisonment in the case of serious violations. ...¹⁾

¹⁾Act 88/2008, Art. 233

Article 10 This Act shall enter into force on 1 June 2004. ...

Transitional provisions The current Thingvellir Commission shall retain its mandate until a new commission has been elected in accordance with Article 2. Notwithstanding the provision of Article 2, the second paragraph of Article 2 shall not take effect until after the next election to the Althing.