



ENVIRONMENT AGENCY OF ICELAND

Who governs?

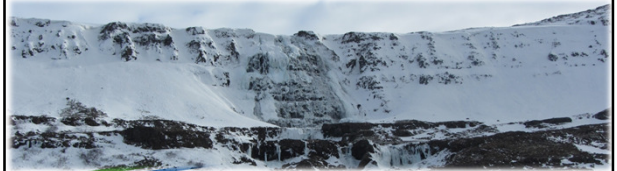
National Parks and other protected areas in
Iceland

Hákon Ásgeirsson



Contents

- Nature Conservation Process in Iceland
- Governance of Protected Areas
 - ✓ who and how
- Financing Protected Areas
- Future National Park?



Administration of nature conservation affairs

- The Minister for the Environment and Natural Resources has ultimate responsibility for nature conservation affairs.
- The Environment Agency is a public institution under the jurisdiction of the Ministry for the Environment.
- The Environment Agency is the Government's advisor on nature conservation.



Designation of areas



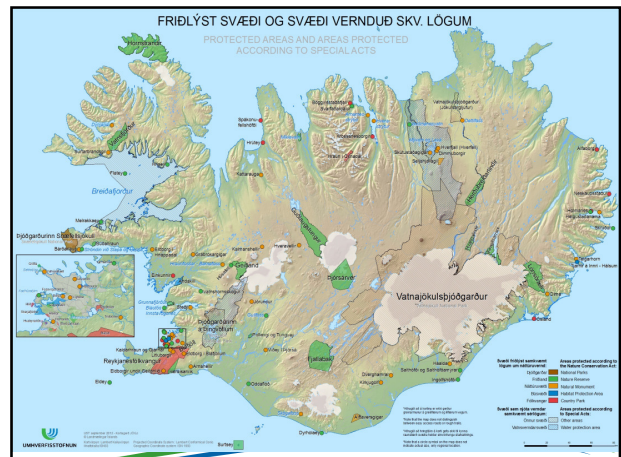
- Nature Conservation Strategy is to be drawn up every 5 years.
- The Environment Agency in consultation with the Icelandic Institute of Natural History prepares the strategy and collects data.
- The current strategy 2009-2013 includes 13 areas to be designated.



Nature conservation areas in Iceland



- 109 protected areas
 - ✓ National park (3)
 - ✓ Nature reserve (42)
 - ✓ Natural monument on land and in sea (40)
 - ✓ Habitat protection (3)
 - ✓ Country park (19)
 - ✓ Protection by special law (2)
- About 20% of the area of Iceland




UMHVERFISSTOFNUN

Supervision of protected areas (1)

- The Environment Agency shall oversee nature conservation areas unless otherwise prescribed by law.
 - ✓ Authorization from the agency is needed for projects where there is a risk of damage to protected sites of natural interest.
- Snæfellsjökull National Park** is governed by The Environmental Agency.




UMHVERFISSTOFNUN

Supervision of protected areas (2)

- Vatnajökull National Park** is an agency, within the Ministry for the Environment and Resources.




UMHVERFISSTOFNUN

Supervision of protected areas (3)

- Þingvellir National Park** is managed by the Thingvellir Commission.




UMHVERFISSTOFNUN

Supervision of protected areas (4)

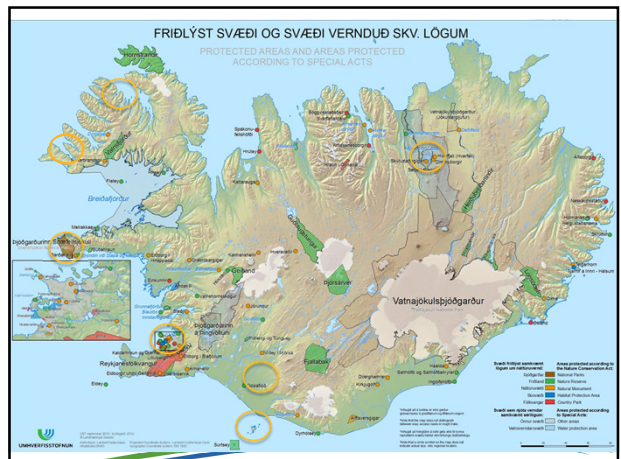
- Breiðafjörður fjord is managed by an advisory committee for the Minister of Environment and Resources.
- The Iceland Forest Service
 - ✓ Manages national forests. There are over 40 national forests. These forests are both used for recreation and timber productions.
- The Soil Conservation Service of Iceland
 - ✓ Manages over 100 soil conservation areas.




UMHVERFISSTOFNUN

Supervision of protected areas (5)

- Management contracts:
 - ✓ Individuals or legal entities may be entrusted with the supervision and operation of nature conservation areas, with the exception of national parks.
- Rangers and other personnel work in nature conservation areas.
- Volunteering:
 - ✓ The Environment Agency manages volunteering program in protected areas
www.lcv.is

Management of protected areas



UMHVERFISSTOFNUN

- Management plans:
 - ✓ The Environment Agency oversees preparations of management plans for protected areas managed by the agency.
 - ✓ Vatnajökull National Parks and Þingvellir N.P. prepare their own management plans.
- Projects:
 - ✓ The Environment Agency prepares projects or plans (development plans) within protected areas in order to meet conservation goals.
- Protected area status:
 - ✓ The Environment Agency, in cooperation with local authorities, landowners and the staff of the agency gathers information every year on the protection status of the nature conservation areas.



Reporting on condition of protected areas



UMHVERFISSTOFNUN

- The Environment Agency reports annually to the Minister for the Environment on the condition of protected areas in Iceland:
 - ✓ Focus is on infrastructure, safety, development, research etc.
 - ✓ The report also focuses on the status of the protected species/phenomena. Red flags are given to areas which are believed to be deteriorating or in danger of deterioration.
- These reports are for protected area only, not to adjacent areas or particular species as is stipulated in the habitats directive.



Financing nature conservation areas



UMHVERFISSTOFNUN

- Nature conservation areas in Iceland are financed by the state budget.
- Funding from the state is divided into operational financing and project financing budgets.
- Funding for nature conservation is divided amongst the three (four) agencies responsible for the nature conservation areas



Future National Park?



UMHVERFISSTOFNUN

- Látrabjarg
 - ✓ Bird cliff
 - ✓ Important bird area
 - ✓ Private owned area
- Conservation process
 - ✓ Committee of 9 advisors



Látrabjarg National Park?



UMHVERFISSTOFNUN



*Njótum umhverfisins og
stöndum vörð um það saman*

*The environment is yours to enjoy
and yours to protect.*