



Regulations relating to the protection of the Sassen-Bünsow Land National Park in Svalbard

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Legal basis: Adopted by Royal Decree on 26 September 2003 pursuant to the Act of 15 June 2001 No. 79 relating to the protection of the environment in Svalbard (Svalbard Environmental Protection Act), Section 12, Section 16, Section 21 and Section 22. Proposed by the Ministry of Environment (now the Ministry of Climate and Environment).

Amended by the Regulations of 15 March 2013 No. 284, 19 December 2013 No. 1757, 4 April 2014 No. 378, 3 December 2021 No. 3395.

Amended by the Regulations of 9 February 2024 No. 230 (entry into force on 1 January 2025).

Section 1. *Protection*

Parts of Sassendalen and Bünsow Land in Svalbard are protected as a national park under the name Sassen-Bünsow National Park.

Section 2. *Boundary delimitation and scope*

The protected area comprises Sassendalen with the mountain and plateau areas on the north side of the valley, the mountain and glacier areas east of Tempelfjorden, Bünsow Land, as well as the marine areas in Tempelfjorden (within a straight line between Sveltihel and Bjonapynten) and in Gipsvika.

The National Park comprises approximately 1,157 km² of land area (including glaciers and freshwater) and approximately 73 km² of marine area and affects cadastral unit numbers 1, 25, 26 and 27.

The boundaries of the National Park are shown in the attached map at a scale of 1:250,000, dated September 2003 by the Ministry of Environment. Coordinates shall be given for the break points.

The map and protection regulations shall be stored with the Governor of Svalbard, the Norwegian Environment Agency and the Ministry of Climate and Environment.

Section 3. *Purpose*

The purpose of protecting the areas is to preserve a vast, continuous and virtually untouched arctic fjord and valley landscape with intact habitats, ecosystems, species, natural ecological processes, landscapes and cultural heritage, as an area for research and for the experiencing of Svalbard's natural and cultural heritage. The protection is particularly intended to safeguard:

- vast areas of continuous vegetation, including vulnerable plant species;
- vast wetland areas and important nesting, feeding and moulting areas for birds;
- rich bird life (geese, waders and seabirds);
- well-developed and interesting geological and quaternary features;
- valuable cultural heritage;
- the characteristic and well-known mountain formation Tempelet.

Section 4. *Protection provisions*

1. *Landscape and natural environment*

1.1 No activities may be undertaken that may permanently affect the landscape or natural environment, such as the construction of buildings, installations, including tank farms, and permanent installations, the installation of barracks or similar structures, laying of pipes and cables, extraction, deposit, relocation, and storage of earth masses, levelling, construction of roads, quays, landing sites, etc., dredging of the seabed or scraping of the soil surface, draining and other forms of reclaiming, boring, blasting, or similar activities, and the extraction of minerals, oil, and fossils.

1.2 The provision in Section 1.1. does not preclude:

- the use of permitted fishing and hunting tools.

2. *Flora and fauna*

2.1 Flora and fauna are regulated by Chapter IV of the Svalbard Environmental Protection Act and Section 4 of the Svalbard Act and related decisions.

3. *Cultural Heritage*

3.1 Cultural heritage in the area is regulated by Chapter V of the Svalbard Environmental Protection Act and related decisions.

4. *Access and passage*

4.1 All access and passage shall take place in such a manner that it does not harm or in any other way damage the natural environment or cultural heritage or result in unnecessary disturbance to humans and the fauna.

Any person accessing or staying in the protected area shall prevent the occurrence of new, permanent tracks or wear and tear to the terrain or cultural heritage. Rocks, logs and other items used at the site shall be cleared and returned to the location where they were found. Sufficient distance shall be maintained in relation to:

- fauna, in order to avoid unnecessary disturbance; and
- protected cultural heritage that is not in use, to ensure that such sites are not exposed to trampling or other activities resulting in a risk of damage.

4.2 Cycling is only permitted on frozen and snow-covered ground.

4.3 Tenting and camping activities are regulated by the Svalbard Environmental Protection Act and the regulations issued pursuant to the Act.

4.4 Off-road motor traffic on ground that is not snow-covered and on thawed ground is prohibited. Off-road motor traffic on frozen and snow-covered ground and motor traffic on river systems and at sea are regulated by the Svalbard Environmental Protection Act and the regulations issued pursuant to the Act.

4.5 Landing of aircraft is prohibited. It is prohibited to fly closer than one nautical mile from large, known concentrations of mammals and birds. This prohibition also applies to overflight of the areas above at altitudes below 300 metres and out to one nautical mile from land. The prohibition against overflight applies to the extent weather conditions permit.

4.6 Ships that call in the marine area of the National Park may not have more than 200 passengers on board.

4.7 The Norwegian Environment Agency may issue regulations prohibiting/regulating any access and passage in all or parts of the National Park if this is considered necessary in order to avoid disturbance to fauna or wear and tear on vegetation or cultural heritage.

5. *Pollution*

- 5.1 All pollution to air, water or soil that causes or may cause damage or nuisance to the environment is prohibited, except for pollution that is caused by permitted motor traffic.
- 5.2 Abandoning or disposing of waste is prohibited.
- 5.3 Substances and objects that may harm the flora and fauna, which are unsightly or that may entail a risk of pollution must not be stored or abandoned.
6. The use of unmanned vehicles (drones) and other remote-controlled or autonomous unmanned devices in the air, on the ground, on and beneath the surface of the water is prohibited.

Section 5. General exceptions

The provisions in Section 4 do not preclude:

- emergency response by the fire, police or rescue services and inspection or supervision in accordance with the Svalbard Environmental Protection Act, Section 77 and Section 87.
- the use of unmanned vehicles (drones) and devices as mentioned in Section 4(6), for the same purposes mentioned in the previous sub-item and for use in the tasks of the management authority.

Section 6. Exemptions/permits

Within the framework of the Svalbard Environmental Protection Act, the management authority may grant permission for:

- renovation and minor extensions to existing buildings;
- reconstruction of buildings that have been destroyed by fire or natural disaster;
- measures as mentioned in Section 4(1) in connection with the establishment and operation of hunting stations;
- landing with the use of aircraft in connection with supervision, maintenance and operation of sector lights and other public aids to navigation;
- *the use of unmanned vehicles (drones) and devices as mentioned in Section 4(6) for purposes other than recreational and hobby activities.*

In addition to the measures mentioned in the first paragraph, the management authority may, when scientific or other special reasons so indicate, grant exemptions from the protection provisions in Section 4.

Permits or exemptions mentioned in the first and second paragraph may only be granted provided this does not conflict with the purpose of the protection regulations and will not have a significant impact on the conservation value of the area.

In an exemption/permit, the grounds for the decision shall include an account of how the management authority has assessed the impact the exemption/permit may have on the environment and the weight that has been attached to this.

Section 7. Management

The management authority or the instance so authorised by the management authority may implement management measures to promote the purpose of the protection. A plan containing more detailed guidelines for

the implementation of such measures may be drawn up. The plan shall be approved by the Norwegian Environment Agency in consultation with the Norwegian Directorate for Cultural Heritage.

0 Amended by the Regulations of 15 March 2013 no. 284 (entry into force on 1 July 2013).

Section 8. *The management authority*

The Governor of Svalbard is the management authority pursuant to these Regulations.

Section 9. *Penalties*

Any person who wilfully or negligently contravenes provisions laid down in or under these Regulations is liable to fines or to a term of imprisonment not exceeding one year. If a risk of substantial environmental damage has occurred or been caused or if there are especially aggravating circumstances, a term of imprisonment not exceeding three years may be imposed. An accomplice is liable to the same penalties.

Section 10. *Entry into force*

These Regulations enter into force immediately.