



EARTHCHECK

# ONSITE CERTIFICATION AUDIT REPORT FOR DESTINATIONS

WESTJORDS



REPORT DATE: October 6<sup>th</sup> & 7<sup>th</sup> 2016

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On behalf of EarthCheck

*The planet deserves more than half measures*



EARTHCHECK

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## DISCLAIMER

This Onsite Certification Audit report is limited to what the Auditor has read, seen and heard during these investigations.

The extent of this review is of compliance or noncompliance to the EarthCheck Destination Standard. The review of supporting evidence has been conducted on a random sampling basis.

## INTRODUCTION

### **Onsite Certification Audit Report**

This is an Onsite Certification Audit Report to determine if the Member has met the requirements of the EarthCheck Destination Standard. An approved EarthCheck Auditor has completed this report.

### **Authorisation Process**

A draft of this report is issued to EarthCheck for review. This review is completed within 14 days of receipt of the draft. The report is then sent to the member by their Relationship Manager for the member's acceptance. If in agreement with the findings, the member completes the 'Auditee Acknowledgement' section of this report and returns it to their Relationship Manager within 7 days of receipt. The Relationship Manager then immediately authorises the report, if accepted by the member.

# AUDIT SCOPE

## Scope of Audit

This report is based on an Onsite Certification Audit undertaken of nine communities, north-west Iceland (Westfjords) including a Desktop audit with the project coordinator.

## Methodology

The methodology of this Onsite Certification Audit included an opening and closing meeting with the coordinator, review of the Destination Self-Assessment Checklist with supporting evidence provided, verification of the Benchmarking data.

The member has been reviewed against the EarthCheck Destination Standard Version 2.0

## Supporting Evidence Reviewed –

The Onsite Certification Audit involved review of the following supporting evidence:

- Environmental, Cultural, Social, and Economic Sustainability Policy dated January 2013
- Benchmarking Assessment Report dated October 5<sup>th</sup> 2016
- Legislation Register dated 2015
- Destination Sustainability Action Plan dated 2016
- Destination Risk Assessment dated September 15<sup>th</sup> 2016
- Complaints Handling Policy and Procedure dated 2016
- Other supporting evidence cited are listed in text

## CONTACT DETAILS

### Member Contact Details

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## AUDIT FINDINGS

A summary of compliance against the EarthCheck Destination Standard is detailed in the steps below:

### STEP 1 – DESTINATION AUTHORITY

**Intent:** *To establish a formally constituted and mandated Destination Authority charged with the responsibility of implementing the Destination Sustainability Policy and management of the EarthCheck Benchmarking Program under an agreed and approved Destination Sustainability Action Plan. The Destination Authority will be responsible for exemplary sustainable practices in using the Destination Standard.*

#### **SUMMARY OF COMPLIANCE:**

The destination shows overall compliance to step 1. Destination Authority is formally constituted. It is mandated with the responsibility of implementing the Destination Sustainability Policy and management of the EarthCheck Benchmarking Program. A suitable Destination Sustainability Action Plan is published. Other required documentation is in place even though some can be improved. To assess the performance against the standard is sometimes difficult, the Destination being 9 municipalities. In many cases those promoting the standard can possibly have influence but no authority when implementing changes. Chain of command is long and complicated.

#### **Section 1.1: Constitution**

#### **SUMMARY OF COMPLIANCE:**

The Destination Authority does not have a Constitution Document. The destination is a group of 9 communities. The Destination Authority (Framkvaemdarad) is manned by the local community mayors.

**Minor CAR #1:** Constitution Document is needed, outlining the responsibilities of the Destination Authority members.

#### **Section 1.2: Mandated by Community**

#### **SUMMARY OF COMPLIANCE:**

The Destination Authority has empowerment from the community. Members were appointed post-election to govern the Destination Authority four years.

Evidence:

E-mail sent June 23<sup>rd</sup> 2014 with description of role and empowerment.

Mandate (Skipunarbréf) from the local government to Destination Authority member dated December 10<sup>th</sup> 2012. Every local government has to mandate their chosen member.

### **Section 1.3: Scope Requirements**

#### **SUMMARY OF COMPLIANCE:**

The Destination Authority does have a formal documented scope which matches the requirements of the EarthCheck Destination Standard.

### **Section 1.4: Destination Accountability**

#### **SUMMARY OF COMPLIANCE:**

The Destination Authority provides community briefings. Meeting topics are for example, energy conservation, sustainability, plastic as a threat to environment with regards to both public and private local enterprises. There is website and Facebook profile with information. Media cover, radio interviews were sighted. There is a yearly published report on progress made on the EarthCheck Standard. The Destination Authority provides the community with the ability to provide feedback on the EarthCheck process through web portal.

Evidence:

List of community briefings (photo).

Website [www.vestfiridir.is](http://www.vestfiridir.is)

Web portal

### **Section 1.5: Destination Coordinator**

#### **SUMMARY OF COMPLIANCE:**

An EarthCheck Destination Coordinator has been formally appointed. She is not supported by a letter of appointment or position description.

Lína Björk has held the position since 2013. It's a part time, approx. 20% employment. There is a plan (Sóknaráætlun) on increasing the manpower. An assistant, Magnús Jónsson, has been working alongside Lína the past few months.

The EarthCheck Destination Coordinator has not received training on the requirements of the Destination's Sustainability objectives besides information she has gathered herself. The Destination Coordinator is active in local sustainability work through different channels.

The EarthCheck Destination Coordinator does not have documented evidence of authority and empowerment.

Evidence:

[www.vestfiridir.is/umhverfissvottun](http://www.vestfiridir.is/umhverfissvottun) web link to contact the Coordinator.

Facebook profile on plastic free community.

Shopping bags distributed and info document on plastic contamination in three languages (photo).

**Minor CAR #2:** The EarthCheck Destination Coordinator does not have documented evidence of

authority and empowerment.

### **Section 1.6: Green Team**

#### **SUMMARY OF COMPLIANCE:**

The Destination does not have a Green Team in the context of the standard, established to support the EarthCheck Destination Coordinator. The local governments do have environmental counsels (politically elected - requirement by law) which acts as a support to the EarthCheck coordinator. The board of the communities (Fjórðungssamband) handles environmental issues and EarthCheck matters. The local mayors do meet three times per year.

The Team can include representation from both private and public sector. They are elected so it depends. The Destination's Green Team has not been trained in the EarthCheck program.

Assess the possibility of appointing a green team of sustainability enthusiasts for supporting the coordinator.

Evidence:

Meeting minutes, publicly available at [www.vestfiridir.is/fjordungssambandid](http://www.vestfiridir.is/fjordungssambandid)  
<http://www.fjordungssamband.is/>

### **Section 1.7: Organisational Chart**

#### **SUMMARY OF COMPLIANCE:**

The Destination Authority has not developed an organisational chart which reflects capacities within the Authority and community. The Destination Authority's responsibilities are not documented by way of Position Descriptions or Contractual Agreements. The process of compliance to the EarthCheck Destination Standard is appropriately funded and surprisingly accurate considering this is their first audit.

**Minor CAR #3:** Destination Authority's capacity, Scope and Responsibility needs to be better documented.

### **Section 1.8: Data Collection Strategy**

#### **SUMMARY OF COMPLIANCE:**

The Destination Authority is committed to the development of a Data Collection Strategy as to how it will obtain Benchmarking performance data. Documents are kept in well-structured folders on a public drive where documents can be shared and backups are taken. Environmental management handbook sighted. There is a process description on document handling in the handbook. Coordinator collects the data on KPI's. There are excel sheets for calculations.

Evidence:

Data collection strategy in EMS handbook



Computer folders

Calculations on excel sheets.

### **Section 1.9: Aggregated Benchmarking**

#### **SUMMARY OF COMPLIANCE:**

There is a system in place for the Destination Authority to capture Aggregated Benchmarking data to develop a report against planned targets.

Evidence: Aggregated performance report.

### **Section 1.10: Record Maintenance**

#### **SUMMARY OF COMPLIANCE:**

The Destination Authority keeps a log of the records of the process of compliance to the EarthCheck Destination Standard as listed.

Evidence:

Report published each year. Ársskýrsla Umhverfissvottunar Vestfjarða 2014. Published by the local authority (Fjórðungssamband) and edited by the coordinator. There are project descriptions, KPI's descriptions, the benchmarking results and future objectives.

Action plan 2014 – 2019 (Framkvæmdaáætlun). Plans and projects linked with all KPI's. This list has to be discussed and agreed by Destination Authorities.

## STEP 2 – POLICY

**Intent:** *To develop a Destination Sustainability Policy which has ownership from the community. Regard shall be had to the size and structure of the visitor economy.*

**Explanatory Note:** *This section addresses the requirements of the Sustainability Policy. The Policy is to make reference to the four outcomes - Environmental, Cultural, Social, and Economic (ECSE).*

Environmental, Cultural, Social, and Economic Policy

Yes

No

### **SUMMARY OF COMPLIANCE:**

The Destination shows general compliance. Destination Sustainability Policy is developed. It has ownership from the community and includes reference to the four outcomes and a scope.

### **Section 2.1: Develop Policy**

#### **SUMMARY OF COMPLIANCE:**

There is a Policy in place. The Policy does suitably address ECSE outcomes. It is suited to the local context of the Destination. It does suitably address local sustainable tourism activities and issues.

#### **2.1.1 Agreements and Policies**

The Policy does not make specific reference to the APEC PATA Code for Sustainable Tourism. It does however make specific reference to CSR and UNWTO code of sustainability.

#### **2.1.2 Integrated Approach**

There is an integrated approach recognised in the policy, environmental, social and economic outcome.

#### **2.1.3 Performance Targets**

The Policy recognises an integrated approach to achieving performance outcomes. Performance and stopping deterioration of the environment is recognised. Clause on helping individuals to improve their performance. The policy sets performance targets that relate to locally recognised issues.

#### **2.1.4 Performance Accountability**

The Policy does not allow for individualised performance accountability from public and private sector entities, including community members.

#### **2.1.5 Tourism Industry Leadership**

The Policy emphasises leadership by the tourism industry.

### **2.1.6 Consultative Mechanisms**

The Destination shows evidence of consultative mechanisms. It states intention to strengthen community awareness and corporate responsibility. There is no list of Destination Stakeholders.

### **2.1.7 Policy Adoption**

The policy has been adopted by the community mayors. It has not been promoted to all key stakeholders. There no list of stakeholder groups engaged within the Destination.

### **2.1.8 Policy Non Conformities**

Non-conformities have been reviewed and corrective and preventative action been taken.

### **2.1.9 Publically Available Policy**

The Policy is on public display. In the central office of the Destination Authority. Also on the web site, in the annual report, in the action plan and more. Copy of the Policy has not been provided to all key stakeholders. There is a commitment in providing accurate information particularly with advertising material. All public documents are maintained and updated regularly

### **2.1.10 Policy Annual Review**

The Destination has documented commitment of an annual review of the Policy. However, it was last reviewed in January 2013.

**Minor CAR #4:** The policy is to be reviewed and signed every year and a mechanism for stakeholder consultation should be developed.

Evidence:

The sustainability policy

The policy on public display

Mechanism to deal with non-conformances in the environmental management handbook.

## **Section 2.2: Environmental Outcomes**

### **SUMMARY OF COMPLIANCE:**

The Destination has an agreed on target improvements relevant to environmental KPAs. Those are listed in Action plan 2014 – 2019. The Destination Authorities has to agree. The communities then have to adopt and implement. The Coordinator does not have financial responsibility.

Evidence: Action Plan 2014 – 2019

## **Section 2.3: Cultural Outcomes**

### **SUMMARY OF COMPLIANCE:**

#### **2.3.1 Cultural Heritage Identification**

There is not strong evidence available of a commitment to involve the broader community in the identification, documentation, and management of cultural heritage. There is however plan which

the coordinator is promoting a project, scanning and documenting cultural heritage on the location.

### **2.3.2 Cultural Heritage Conservation**

The Destination is committed to conserve, value, restore and enhance natural and cultural built heritage sites, artefacts, and cultural expression. Sites have been protected, some for cultural reasons; Earth Check has not been involved.

### **2.3.3 Cultural Heritage Significance**

There is no evidence to show commitment to carefully managing the impact of tourism visitation on sites of cultural heritage significance.

**Minor CAR#5:** A plan is needed on how the Destination authority will in the future meet the requirements of the standard on Cultural Heritage.

## **Section 2.4: Social Outcomes**

### **SUMMARY OF COMPLIANCE:**

#### **2.4.1 Community Participation**

There evidence of a commitment to include the broader community in the identification of ECSE outcomes. This is done for example through reports and through community meetings where ECSE are discussed.

#### **2.4.2 Ethical Policy Development**

The Policy makes specific reference to the World Tourism Organisation (WTO) Global Code of Ethics.

#### **2.4.3 Education for Business**

There is no evidence of a commitment to provide education and learning opportunities for small to medium size businesses on matters of sustainability.

#### **2.4.4 Education for Community**

There is evidence of a commitment to support the education of community members to raise awareness of their individual impact to the achievement of sustainability targets. For example, the plastic free community project and a school project that is about to be initiated. The Commitment makes reference to educating about EarthCheck Benchmarking Indicators.

A plan on education to all stakeholders including businesses should be considered.

Evidence:

The policy

List of meetings and reports.

Projects to raise awareness.

<https://www.facebook.com/plastpokalausirvestfiridir/?fref=ts>

## **Section 2.5: Economic Outcomes**

### **SUMMARY OF COMPLIANCE:**

#### **2.5.1 Local Employment**

There is a policy to employ local people when possible. There is a demand by the communities that people that take on public roles move their residence to the area. Loss of people is a problem in all the communities. Local people are employed for management positions in the Destination

#### **2.5.2 Destination Sourced Products and Services**

The Destination is committed to incorporating a purchasing policy for the local procurement of products. Fair trade services are not especially sourced. Local businesses are given the opportunity to sell products and services to tourism related businesses.

#### **2.5.3 Seasonality**

There is a Destination marketing department who works closely with the tourism industry of the area to manage seasonal fluctuations. Seasonal fluctuations are recognised as a problem in Icelandic tourism.

#### **2.5.4 Ethical Business**

There is no special commitment to ethical and no exploitative arrangements with staff, suppliers and clients in the Destination except what is found in Icelandic labour laws. Sexual and commercial exploitation of minors (children and adolescents) has not been a subject to the EarthCheck in Westfjords. It is however illegal and there are other official means to deal with such matters. To which degree enterprises within the Destination provide equal opportunity for all, including equal wages and training is not known.

#### **2.5.5 Innovation**

The Destination encourages local business to develop innovative business concepts. ATVEST is the official body that promotes development. The innovation centre of Iceland also has a subsidiary in Westfjords.

#### **2.5.6 Sustainability Programs**

The Destination actively encourages the participation in registered sustainability certification programs for tourism related businesses, for example the EarthCheck Company Standard, a GSTC recognised sustainability certification program. There have been public meetings on the subject for local people and businesses. Two courses were held this year on environmental labelling. Many Schools and harbours in the area have sought environmental label (green flag and blue flag). Businesses are welcomed to the EarthCheck office for consultation. To date there is however only one business certified (VAKINN certification).

Evidence: PowerPoint education material. Courses (Vottadir Vestfirðir, Skref til framtíðar) held November 21<sup>st</sup> 2014.

List of courses and public meetings

Checklist and info material on environmental labelling.

Innovation projects at ATVEST (photo)

Local goods on public display (photo)

## STEP 3 - BENCHMARKING

### Benchmarking Assessment Report dated October 5th 2016 for the period January 1st to December 31st 2015

#### Activity Measure Verified:

The Destination shows good general compliance assessing the KPI's and benchmarking. There are many evidences of good deployment on energy and environmental management. This is however complicated and an expensive matter to solve. Some issues raised in the EarthCheck standard will not be managed directly by the Destination authority/coordinator. A plan/policy is needed for the destination on how it is to comply with the issues on culture, safety and economics. Some of those issues do have legal requirements and as such are the responsibility of either state or community institutions.

#### Section 3.1: Environment

##### **SUMMARY OF COMPLIANCE:**

##### **3.1.1 Energy efficiency, conservation and management**

Program is in place to ensure energy efficiency as much as possible. A specialist has been involved in the work to consult the communities in energy efficiency. A plead was sent to the communities on how to manage energy use. Some communities saved considerable amounts after implementing new ways of turning of lights and responsibly managing energy.

The Destination's energy supply is sustainable. Grid electricity is hydro per definition sustainable. Timber is not used for heating or cooking.

The use of renewable energy is maximised. There is ongoing search for geothermal energy. Few communities have harvested it (Reykhólar). Wind and solar and tide harvesting is still only in discussion.

The Destination encourages enterprises to measure, monitor, reduce, and publically report energy consumption and reduce reliance on fossil fuels. **Energy Data and Sources Verified:**

Month	Figure Reported	Figure Verified	Records	Variance
September 28 <sup>th</sup> 2016	23195600	243472080	Email to Lea Lange	0,9 %
Total for 2015 for Isafjordur. Email dated August 15 <sup>th</sup> 2016	3757501 kwh	3757501kwh	Excel report from the local energy provider and calculations by the coordinator.	0 %

Coordinator receives all information on energy use from the local energy provider. The figures are not broken down to months.

### **3.1.2 Greenhouse gas emissions**

There are reforestation initiatives as a commitment to the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions. Coordinator has been promoting the Paris convention. The info to the communities on energy reduction sighted.

Not known if ozone depleting substances, particularly refrigerant gases from older refrigeration and air conditioning systems released to the atmosphere. Banned by law and enforced by environmental authorities.

There are programs in place to offset the carbon generated in greenhouse gas emissions through carbon sequestration by for forest planting. The example is initiative Tungudalur and Dagverdardalur.

### **3.1.3 Air quality protection, noise control, and light pollution**

There is no ongoing monitoring on gaseous or particulate emissions which could affect air quality. The coordinator has been in contact with the environmental authorities on possibilities.

There are no ongoing or regular noise emissions monitoring noise. Noise is not a prominent problem in the communities. It is however reported as a problem in some communities as a result of industry.

Light pollution is not an issue which affects residents, communities, or wildlife.

### **3.1.4 Management of freshwater resources**

Freshwater is abundant in Westfiridir. The source(s) of freshwater for the Destination are sustainable. Shortage of water does not exist in the area.

There is a program in place to ensure water conservation as much as possible within the Destination. The quality is monitored. They monitor contamination close to the springs. There have been problems in some communities and farms.

There is no program in place to promote the retrofitting of toilets, taps/faucets, shower fittings and baths within the Destination. The coordinator did check this with the communities (double flush toilets).

There is no program in place to reduce the washing down of outside areas by property owners.

Rainwater harvesting in not used or promoted.

Grey water and wastewater is treated but not recycled. The treatment needs to be improved in some areas.

Native species are not planted as a means to reduce irrigation.

Coordinator is promoting the upset of meters to estimate water use by the communities.

**Water Data and Sources Verified:**

Month	Figure Reported	Figure Verified	Records	Variance
August 11 <sup>th</sup> 2016	1272844905	1272844905	Info form the water provider	0 %
2016 estimations and calculations	1272025000L	1272025000L	Estimation for 6970 persons living in the destination	0%

Freshwater use is estimated to be 500 L pr. day pr. person. Water use of some enterprises is metered

**3.1.5 Waste water management, drainage and streams**

In general, the Destination has access to a municipal wastewater/sewerage treatment system. However, in two communities wastewater management needs to improve.

It is not clear how well the destination is compliant the communities are to the wastewater regulations. If wastewater is treated to a standard to mitigate further environmental and human health impacts.

There is a law requirement to reduce the impact of oil and grease, litter, or silt wastewater to storm water courses. This is enforced by public health authorities. Earth Check has on its action plan a surveillance on how substances are stored.

The health authorities (Heilbrigdiseftirlit Vestfjarda) monitors drinking water and recreational water body quality.

**3.1.6 Ecosystem conservation and management**

There are 6 conservation areas in the destination. The Destination has an understanding of the conservation requirements of the local natural ecosystems, species or communities of conservation concern and protected areas.

Disturbance of natural ecosystems due to activities undertaken by the community within the Destination is not known of. There is a destination management plan in progress in Westfjords. The coordinator takes part in the progress. Tourism could become a threat to wildlife and nature in the area.

No fees or permit fees etc. is required for accessing any protected area.

The communities are financially responsible for the running of the protected areas.

There is ongoing research on wildlife in the area, for example foxes. Wildlife interaction with adverse effects has not occurred to auditors/coordinators knowledge.

There are known examples of for example fox hunting in an area where it is protected, stopped at the time by the ranger. Poaching or exploitation of protected animals is however not a prominent problem.



There is a red list published by the Natural Museum of Iceland. There is an inventory of existing threatened wildlife species.

### **3.1.7 Land use planning and development**

There is a commitment to habitat conservation and protected habitats in the area.

The Destination complies with and takes into account local land owner rights. Zoning requirements have not been established.

Land acquisition is in accordance with applicable legislation.

Property acquisition is in accordance with existing legislation.

Cultural and heritage considerations are not something to take into account except those of right to use land and ownership of land.

Planning laws and regulations are enforced by planning agency (skipulagsstofnun) and the communities.

Access for persons with special needs in design and construction of infrastructure is required by law. The communities have taken part in initiative to promote better access to sites. Coordinator did a survey showing that improvements are needed.

Public consultation is required by law and enforced by the communities carried out with reference to planning and development.

### **3.1.8 Transport**

The Destination does not have a sustainable transport plan and nothing in the action plan. The coordinator has however been involved in transport projects and initiatives to finance for example public transport. An energy provider has planned to set up electrical charging for cars in the whole country. There is public transport in the area.

The Destination has a program in place to promote the use of existing public transport services.

There is a program in place to improve existing public transport services. More destinations for public transport. Some communities are promoting it for groups, young people attending sports for example.

The Destination has a program in place to promote the use of sustainable transport modes such as cycling or walking. Bike lanes are being built and lanes are being snow ploughed for easy access. It's included in the local plans.

Evidence: Paths in the area.

### **3.1.9 Solid Waste Management**

Waste is sorted into paper, plastic and metals while the rest goes to landfill. Organic waste strategy is in progress. Waste to landfill has to be transported long way.

Local waste collector collects the sorted waste material.

The enterprises have to reduce, reuse, and recycle.

Solid waste disposed to a known and managed landfill (Fifholt) west Iceland (not within the Destination). If there is no available managed landfill, waste is disposed of safely and sustainably Skeljavik in the community of Strandabyggð is sometimes used.

**Waste Data and Sources Verified:**

Month	Figure Reported	Figure Verified	Records	Variance
Total for 2015	303.99	303.99	List from local waste collector on waste sent to landfill	%
Dated August 23 <sup>rd</sup> 2016	871	858,49	E-mail to Lea Lange. List from local waste collector on waste sent to landfill	2.5%
Total for 2015	2340	2340	List from local waste collector on waste sent to landfill.	0%

**3.1.10 Management of environmentally harmful substances**

The status of the use Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDSs) is currently not known. It's on the action plan. Same goes for storage harmful substance stored.

Not currently known if all harmful substances stored as per requirements of local regulations, international standards and MSDSs.

It is a legal requirement make arrangements where spills are possible, is containment/clean-up equipment held onsite, or readily available. The status is not currently known.

At a minimum, are bulk stores of harmful substances, such as fuels and oils, stored in bounded and preferably roofed storage areas?

There are plans on training and dissemination of info for community members, whose duties involve handling chemical substances, aware of the storage, handling, and clean-up requirements. This can include training on storage and handling, as well as point-of-use wall charts.

Not currently known if there is a system in place to ensure leakage This is however on the action plan and to be checked next audit. .

**Other indicators verified:**

n/a

## **Section 3.2: Cultural**

### **SUMMARY OF COMPLIANCE:**

#### **3.2.1 Cultural Heritage**

No system has been put in place to conserve natural heritage sites except that in the law and regulations.

No strategies have been put in place to conserve cultural heritage sites.

The inventory of existing sites is publically available within the Destination.

The communities have maintained inventories.

No evidence of training events relevant to cultural heritage tourism provided within the Destination. There are however some tourist activities on cultural heritage

#### **3.2.2 Integration of significant sites**

Indigenous matters are not of concern in Iceland.

There a cultural site maintenance fund available in Iceland. The fund can be used in the Destination upon demand and decision.

#### **3.2.3 Value indigenous heritage**

There is no program in place to recognise and honour indigenous knowledge.

## **Section 3.3: Social**

### **SUMMARY OF COMPLIANCE:**

#### **3.3.1 Management of social impacts of tourism**

There has been some monitoring of satisfaction of and wellbeing. There is no documented plan for monitoring of community satisfaction and wellbeing within the Destination.

#### **3.3.2 Provision of basic services**

Basic services to the local community are made available to all sectors in the Destination.

There are limited impacts to neighbouring communities.

#### **3.3.3 Poverty alleviation**

Poverty is a matter of the communities. There is a system in place for the alleviation of poverty.

#### **3.3.4 Gender equity**

The Destination has a documented commitment to achieving gender equity.

#### **3.3.5 Human Rights Issues**

The Destination does not have a commitment to provide or recognise a range of nonphysical

services.

The Destination has not publically reported on issues of human rights. It is however a matter of the media and local politics.

### **3.3.6 Quality of Life**

### **3.3.7 Safety**

The state provides police services to all which promote law and order.

Crime rate is monitored. It is difficult to see how the Destination can influence the rate in this case.

There is a register of offences to monitor crime rate. It is managed by the police. If it separately monitored property versus violent crime is not known.

Evidence: Email from the police (lögreglustjórinn) 25. Júlí 2016.

Evidence: The action plan of the Vestfjords tourist organisation. Stefnumótun ferðamálasamtaka vestfjarða 2010 – 2015 and draft to a new one.

## **Section 3.4: Economic**

### **SUMMARY OF COMPLIANCE:**

#### **3.4.1 Local socio-economic benefits of tourism**

There is ongoing communication on the socio-economic benefits of tourism. The tourism has been a life saver for the area.

The communities have an up-to-date, publically available inventory of its tourism assets and attractions.

There a system regular collection, monitoring and recording of resident's goals and concerns

Evidence sighted: Analytical report on tourism (Ferðapjónustugreining) 2015

There are support programs for local tourism business in place.

The coordinator has been helping with purchasing policy in place for the local procurement of goods and services. The communities have a policy on it.

Local businesses do use the opportunity to sell goods and services within the tourism sector.

The coordinator supports the participation of businesses in registered sustainability programs. Many are currently getting an Icelandic label called VAKINN

There is only one business (Hotel Isafjordur) (photo) who participate in registered sustainability programs. There is a list to be found on [www.umhverfisstofnun.is](http://www.umhverfisstofnun.is)

#### **3.4.2 Encourage business and community innovation**

There is a strategy to encourage innovation.

**Section 3.5: Measurement, Improvement, Monitoring, Training, and Records**

**SUMMARY OF COMPLIANCE:**

The destination shows good overall compliance. Plan on training needs to be completed.

## STEP 4 – COMPLIANCE

**Intent:** *To comply with local legislation and laws, or where appropriate national or international standards and regulations or best practice.*

**Explanatory Note:** *This section addresses the requirements for a Destination's regulatory compliance.*

### Legislation Register

Yes

No

### **Section 4.1: Operationally Legal**

#### **SUMMARY OF COMPLIANCE:**

The Destination shows over all good compliance. To auditors meaning it is compliant with local legislation and laws, or and where appropriate national or international standards and regulations or best practice. The destination aims to be compliant to all local relevant laws and legal requirements. There is no evidence of any prosecution or legal action against the Destination Authority within the last year in the field of environment.

### **Section 4.2: Legal Compliance**

#### **SUMMARY OF COMPLIANCE:**

There is a comprehensive legal register of legislation.

Records kept and the register is updated regularly. Major changes and requirements find their way in to the action plan.

Legal requirements have not publically been communicated to the community within the Destination by the Destination authority. They have however communicated requirements on environmental matters to the local community leaders.

Evidence:

Registry of legal requirements.

### **Section 4.3: International Standards**

#### **SUMMARY OF COMPLIANCE:**

The Destination and Destination Authority are committed to the adoption of international standards and/or best practice where applicable.

The register could also hold overview over international standards.

Evidence:

Legal register dated 2015

## STEP 5 – PLANNING FOR CONTINUAL IMPROVEMENT

**Intent:** *To develop, implement, maintain and monitor a multi-year Destination Action Plan, with community participation, based on the achievements of the Benchmarking Key Performance Areas (KPA's). Actual and/or potential risks shall be documented by way of a documented Risk Assessment as part of overall planning.*

### Destination Sustainability Action Plan

Yes

No

### Destination Risk Assessment

Yes

No

### Section 5.1: Destination Action Plan

#### **SUMMARY OF COMPLIANCE:**

The Destination shows good overall compliance. There is a Destination Action Plan. It is relevant to the scope of operations. The plan is developed, implemented, maintained and monitored over a series of years Destination Action Plan, with community participation, based on the achievements of the Benchmarking Key Performance Areas (KPA's). Actual and/or potential risks shall be documented by way of a documented Risk Assessment as part of overall planning.

#### **5.1.1 Defined ECSE Issues**

The Destination Action Plan clearly defines ECSE sustainability issues.

#### **5.1.2 Key Performance Areas**

There are locally developed criteria included in the Destination Action Plan and it addresses tourism activity and development issues.

#### **5.1.3 Stakeholder Engagement**

There is not strong evidence of both internal and external stakeholder contributions to the development of the Destination Action Plan.

#### **5.1.4 Action Plan Training**

There is no evidence of internal or external stakeholders receiving training to meet the requirements of the Action Plan.

#### **5.1.5 SBI Improvements**

The plan includes quantifiable improvement targets as identified by the EarthCheck Sector Benchmarking for Destinations. The quantifiable improvement targets in the Action Plan should be cross-correlated with the Sector Benchmarking Indicators.



**5.1.6 Action Plan Leadership**

The action plan is led by the Destination authority.

Evidence:

Action Plan 2014 - 2019

Risk assessment, dated September 19<sup>th</sup> 2016. Document AHÆTTA001

**Section 5.2: Publically Available Action Plan****SUMMARY OF COMPLIANCE:**

The Destination Action Plan been is not shared with the public.

**Minor CAR #6:** The Authorities should agree upon some kind of training to meet the standard requirements The Destination authorities should agree upon a method to make the action plan publicly available.

**Section 5.3: Action Plan Monitoring****SUMMARY OF COMPLIANCE:**

There is a system in place to monitor and measure performance against the Sustainability Policy and to monitor and measure performance against the Benchmarking Assessment Performance and improvement targets.

**Section 5.4: Non-Conformance Procedures****SUMMARY OF COMPLIANCE:**

There is a procedure in place for dealing with non-conformities. It is described in the environmental management handbook. No non-conformities have been corrected until now. Are Procedures for preventative action, for example an Internal Audit where not sighted.

**Section 5.5: Action Plan Review****SUMMARY OF COMPLIANCE:**

Periodic updates and regular reviews of the Destination Action Plan are undertaken.

## **Section 5.6: Risk Assessment**

### **SUMMARY OF COMPLIANCE:**

There is a documented Risk Assessment in order to assess all actual and/or potential risks and a procedure to identify aspects against the 12 Key Performance Areas. Major external influences are identified and potential impacts assessed.

**Minor CAR#7:** All 12 KPAs needs to be listed.

#### **5.6.1 Likelihood and Severity**

The Risk Assessment identifies the likelihood and severity of potential impacts. It does not include procedures to manage potential impacts.

#### **5.6.2 Impact Mitigation**

The Risk Assessment does not consider the ability to prevent and/or mitigate impacts should they arise.

#### **5.6.3 Climate Change**

The Risk Assessment includes reference to the predicted impacts of climate change. It does not include strategies to mitigate and/or adapt to the impacts of climate change.

#### **5.6.4 Risk Training**

The Risk Assessment does not include a list of those personnel who have been trained to respond to accidental and emergency situations. It does not include planned activities to be promoted to residents and visitors.

#### **5.6.5 Risk Assessment Review**

The Risk Assessment has just recently been completed and thus not been revised within the last twelve months. No changes to the operation have risen that need to be included in the Destination's Risk Assessment.

#### **5.6.6 Risk Assessment to the Public**

The Risk Assessment has not been shared publicly within the last twelve months. It will however be a part of the next annual report. It has been shared with and discussed with the destination authority and the local community authorities.

## STEP 6 – CONSULTATION, COMMUNICATION, & REPORTING

**Intent:** *To engage with Destination members through consultation to develop policies and plans; communicate regularly of Destination Standard achievements and challenges; and maintain reports, sharing outcomes with Destination members.*

**Explanatory Note:** *This section details the requirements for consulting, communicating the Destination's ESCE commitment, goals and objectives to all key stakeholders, and reporting mechanisms*

### Destination Sustainability Report

Yes

No

### Complaints Handling Policy and Procedure

Yes

No

### Section 6.1: Community Consultation

#### **SUMMARY OF COMPLIANCE:**

There is some evidence on compliance to engage with Destination members through consultation to develop policies and plans, for example in community meetings. Outcomes are to be shared with Destination members in the annual report.

#### **6.1.1 Feedback Management**

Evidence:

EHS management handbook, management of non-conformances VERKLAFFG001

Policy on feedback and complaints.

List of non-conformances and mitigation efforts.

Policy on the management of non-conformances.

Thorough description on how to gather info and data in VERKLAGTOL001

#### **6.1.2 Consultative Mechanisms**

Consultative mechanisms witnessed.

#### **6.1.3 Tourism Consultation**

Method of consulting with the tourism industry witnessed.

#### **6.1.4 Community Participation**

Evidence of community programs.

**6.1.5 Local Custom**

This will be checked in more detail in later audits.

**Section 6.2: Communication****SUMMARY OF COMPLIANCE:****6.2.1 Performance Communication**

Communication mechanisms witnessed.

**6.2.2 Environmental Awareness**

The plastic free community program is a good example. It has been noticed and discussed amongst public and the media.

Another example witnessed is an initiative called Tudran (the ball). The schools participate, children make balls out of waste.

**6.2.3 Interpretive Information**

Evidence: Interpretive information regarding sensitive or significant sites sighted.

**6.2.4 Customer Satisfaction**

The authority has not done customer satisfaction survey. However, public meetings give good idea on customer satisfaction. Many meetings have been held and the public is positive in general.

**Section 6.3: Reporting****SUMMARY OF COMPLIANCE:**

The destination authority reports in an annual published report.

**6.3.1 Effectiveness Reviews**

Evidence of reviews sighted.

**6.3.2 Sustainability Report**

Sustainability Report witnessed. Public distribution evidence sighted.

**6.3.3 Economic Contribution**

This will be checked in more detail in later audits.

**6.3.4 Consultation and Communication Recording**

This will be checked in more detail in later audits.

**6.3.5 Record Retention**

Draft reports sighted. This will be checked in more detail in later audits

## MINOR NON – CONFORMANCES RAISED IN PREVIOUS AUDIT

(Please note: This includes any Major Non Conformances that were downgraded to Minor Non Conformities in a Progress Review of Corrective Action Requests Report at the previous audit.)

#	Clause	Addressed	Not Addressed	Comments
	<b>First audit –n/a</b>			

## OBSERVATIONS

**SUMMARY:**

Overall observation is that the Destination Authority needs to better clarify and define their role within the municipalities they serve.

The coordinator should assess the possibility of appointing a green team of sustainability enthusiasts for supporting the coordinator.

A plan or a clarification is needed on how the Destination authority will in the future meet the requirements of the standard on Cultural Heritage.

The Destination does not have a locally sourced or sustainably sourced agricultural/seafood product preference policy.

A plan to identify and to educate/train stakeholders including businesses should be considered.

The legal register could also hold overview over international standards.

There is not strong evidence of both internal and external stakeholder contributions to the development of the Destination Action Plan.

The Destination Authorities should discuss and agree upon some method of training to meet the standard requirements. There is no evidence of internal or external stakeholders receiving training to meet the requirements of the Action Plan.

The status of the use Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDSs) is currently not known. Same goes for storage harmful substance stored. This is however on the action plan and to be checked next audit.

## BEST PRACTICES

**SUMMARY:**

Considering it's their first audit they are doing well. There is a strong commitment to fulfil the standards requirements.

## AREAS OF NON-CONFORMANCE

#	Clause	Grading	Non-Conformance
1	<b>Section 1.1</b> Constitution	Minor	Constitution Document is needed, outlining the responsibilities of the Destination Authority members.
2	<b>Section 1.5</b> Destination Coordinator	Minor	The EarthCheck Destination Coordinator does not have documented evidence of authority and empowerment.
3	<b>Section 1.7</b> Organisational Chart	Minor	Destination Authority's capacity, Scope and Responsibility needs to be better documented.
4	<b>Section 2.1.10</b> Policy Annual Review & <b>2.1.6</b> Consultative Mechanisms	Minor	The policy is to be reviewed and signed every year. The policy has not been promoted to all key stakeholders and a mechanism for stakeholder consultation should be developed including a list of relevant Destination Stakeholders.
5	<b>Section 2.3.3</b> Cultural Heritage Significance	Minor	A plan is needed on how the Destination authority will in the future meet the requirements of the standard on Cultural Heritage.
6	<b>Section 5.1</b> Destination Action Plan & <b>Section 5.2</b> Publically Available Action Plan	Minor	The Authorities should agree upon training to meet the standard requirements. The Destination authorities should agree upon a method to make the action plan publicly available.
7	<b>Section 5.6</b> Risk Assessment	Minor	All 12 KPAs needs to be listed in risk assessment

## AUDITOR CONCLUSION

Westfjords has been audited against the EarthCheck Destination Standard.

The Destination commitment to compliance with the EarthCheck Destination Standard is commendable. All recommendations are subject to ratification by the EarthCheck Authorities.

- Certification Recommended
- Conditional Certification Recommended
- Certification Not Recommended

Destination Name: Westfjords

Auditor Name: Haukur Tór Haraldsson



Auditor Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: October 18<sup>th</sup> 2016



## CORRECTIVE ACTION REQUESTS (CARS)

### Details of CAR (1 of 7)

Standard Clause:

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#### Section 1.1: Constitution

---

CAR Status:

MINOR

MAJOR

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CAR Details:

Constitution Document is needed, outlining the responsibilities of the Destination Authority members.

---

Program for Compliance:

3 months

12 months

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CAR Verification Method:

Revised Benchmarking Assessment

Progress Review of Corrective Action Requests

Next Onsite Certification Audit

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### Details of CAR (2 of 7)

Standard Clause:

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#### Section 1.5: Destination Coordinator

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CAR Status:

MINOR

MAJOR

---

CAR Details:

The EarthCheck Destination Coordinator needs to be provided with documented authority and empowerment.

---

Program for Compliance:

3 months

12 months

---

CAR Verification Method:

Revised Benchmarking Assessment

Progress Review of Corrective Action Requests

Next Onsite Certification Audit

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## Details of CAR (3 of 7)

Standard Clause:

AR Status:

CAR Details:

Program for Compliance:

CAR Verification Method:

### Section 1.7: Organisational Chart

MINOR

MAJOR

Destination Authority's capacity, Scope and Responsibility needs to be better documented.

3 months

12 months

Revised Benchmarking Assessment

Progress Review of Corrective Action Requests

Next Onsite Certification Audit

## Details of CAR (4 of 7)

Standard Clause:

CAR Status:

CAR Details:

Program for Compliance:

CAR Verification Method:

### Section 2.1.10 Policy Annual Review & 2.1.6 Consultative Mechanisms

MINOR

MAJOR

The policy is to be reviewed and signed every year. The policy has not been promoted to all key stakeholders and a mechanism for stakeholder consultation should be developed including a list of relevant Destination Stakeholders

3 months

12 months

Revised Benchmarking Assessment

Progress Review of Corrective Action Requests

Next Onsite Certification Audit

**Details of CAR (5 of 7)**

Standard Clause:

**2.3.3 Cultural Heritage Significance**

CAR Status:

 MINOR MAJOR

CAR Details:

A plan is needed on how the Destination authority will in the future meet the requirements of the standard on Cultural Heritage.

Program for Compliance:

 3 months 12 months

CAR Verification Method:

 Revised Benchmarking Assessment Progress Review of Corrective Action Requests Next Onsite Certification Audit**Details of CAR (6 of 7)****5.1 Destination Action Plan & Section 5.2: Publicly Available Action Plan**

Standard Clause:

CAR Status:

 MINOR MAJOR

CAR Details:

The Authorities should agree upon method for training to meet the standard requirements. A method to make the action plan publicly available is also needed.

Program for Compliance:

 3 months 12 months

CAR Verification Method:

 Revised Benchmarking Assessment Progress Review of Corrective Action Requests Next Onsite Certification Audit

## Details of CAR (7 of 7)

Standard Clause:

CAR Status:

MINOR

MAJOR

CAR Details:

All 12 KPAs needs to be listed.

Program for Compliance:

3 months

12 months

CAR Verification Method:

Revised Benchmarking Assessment

Progress Review of Corrective Action Requests

Next Onsite Certification Audit

## AUDITEE ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I accept the findings within this Onsite Certification Audit report as appropriate, and fairly represent our level of compliance to the EarthCheck Destination Standard. The supporting evidence provided to demonstrate our compliance has not intentionally misled the auditing body stated within this report.

EarthCheck Coordinator Name:

Lina Björg Tryggvad

Senior Management Name:

Abelsteinn Óskason

Senior Managers Position:

manager FU.

Senior Management Signature:

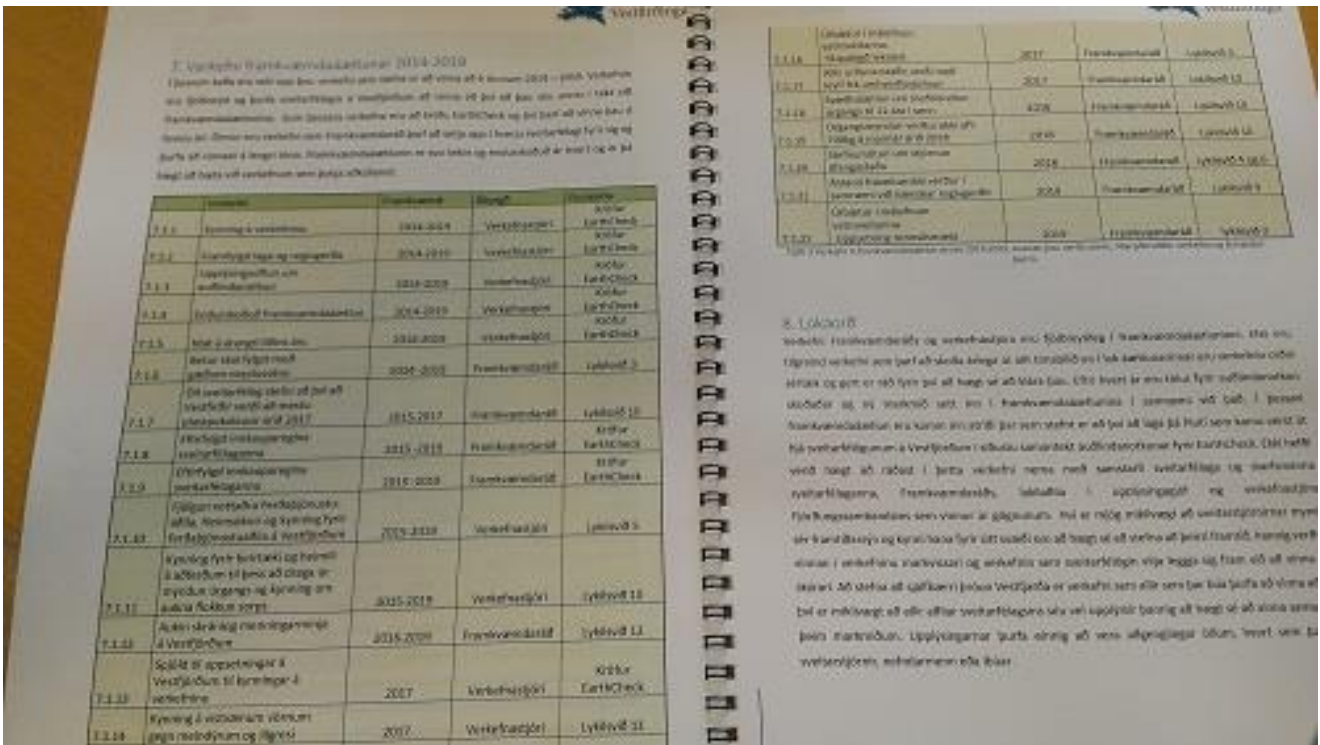
Stjórningsráðgjafi Væðingur  
Abelsteinn Óskason

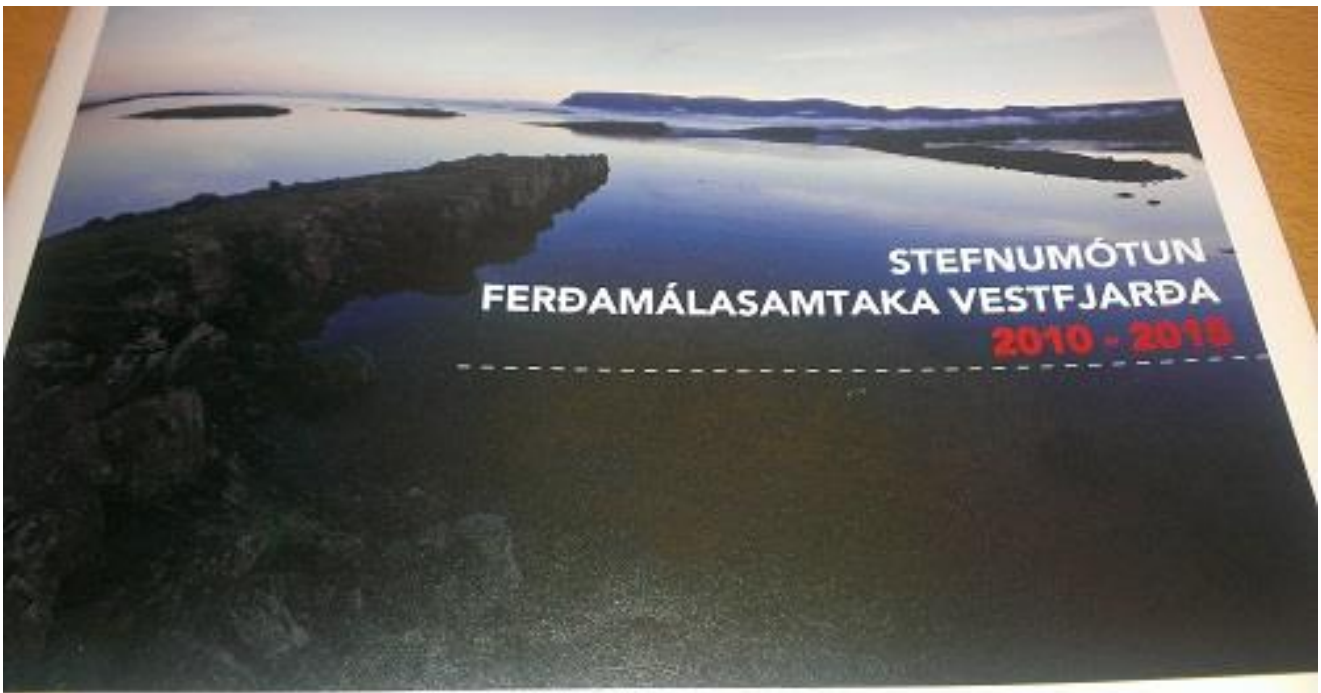
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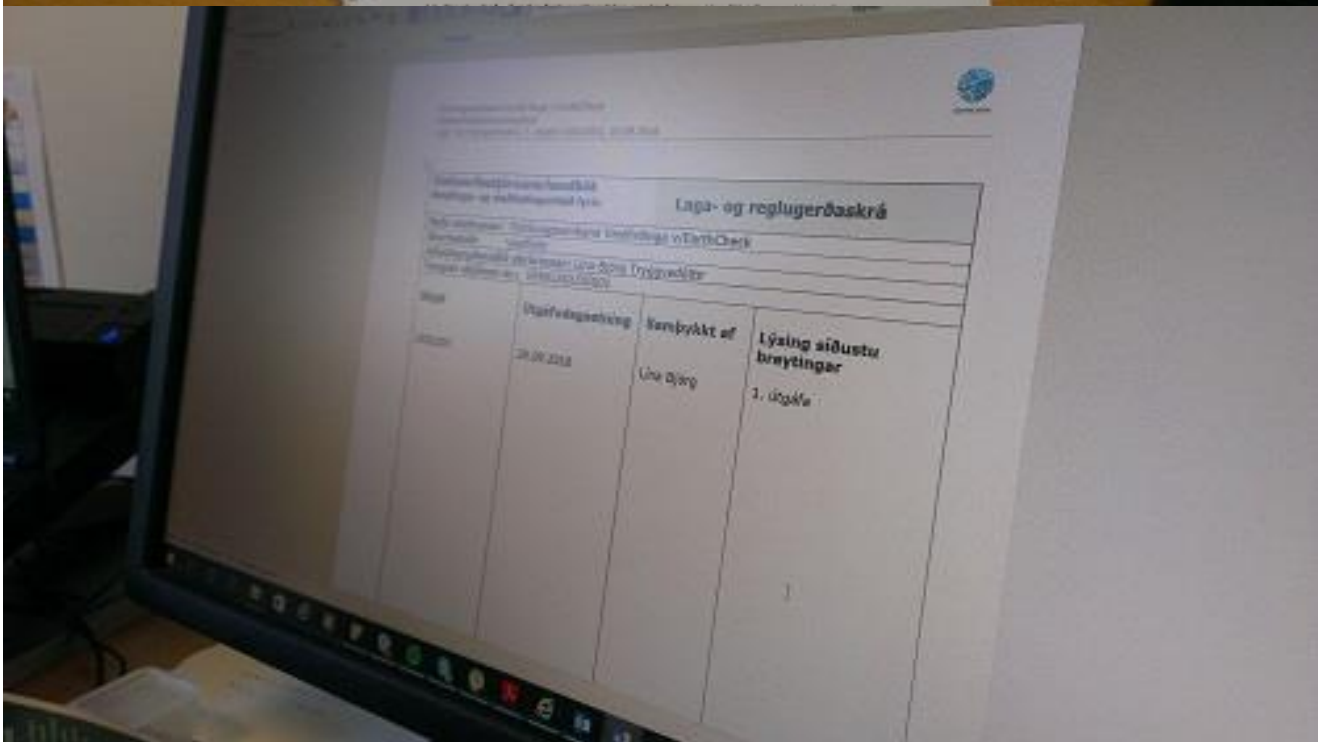
## AUDIT PHOTOGRAPHS











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**NB: The below section is for the use of the EarthCheck Authorities only:**

## EARTHCHECK AUTHORISATION

- Certification Authorised
- Conditional Certification Authorised
- Certification Not Authorised

## CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

- Revised Benchmarking Assessment
- Progress Review of Corrective Action Requests
- Onsite Certification Audit 1 Year

EarthCheck Authorising Officer Name: Melinda Watt, Vice President Relationship Management

Signature: 

Date: 10 November 2016