

Final Report Site guidelines 12/70

AECO has successfully completed project 12/70 - Site guidelines for Svalbard.

The results have been published on www.aeco.no/guidelines and includes 11 new site guidelines and one wildlife guideline, for:

- Eolusneset
- Crozierpynten
- Nordre Russøya
- Purchasneset
- Chermsideøya
- Isflakbukta
- Andrèneset
- Sundneset
- Kapp Lee
- Andrètangen
- Alkhornet/Trygghamna

- Walrus

The guidelines have been developed by a project group:

- archeologist Kristin Prestvold,
- biologist Georg Bangjord
- biologist Sveinn Are Hanssen, NINA
- botanist Dagmar Hagen, NINA
- biologist and expedition leader Ko de Korte, Oceanwide Expeditions
- expedition leader, Lisa Strøm, Polar Quest Expeditions
- consultant/expedition leader Jørn Henriksen, Hurtigruten
- project manager Frigg Jørgensen, AECO

The project group inspected all sites using the chartered vessel "MS Stockholm" for 10 days in August 2012.

The project has based the site assessment on a methodology developed by NINA (The Norwegian Institute for Nature Research) and NIKU (The Norwegian Institute for Cultural Heritage Research), a project also financed by Svalbard Environmental Protection Fund. Dagmar Hagen from NINA has been in charge of the assessments. Reports from each site are available.

"Svalbard Site Guideline's" design and web-idea has been developed by TANK – Tromsø, while GNIST has developed present web-site.

Svalbard Site Guidelines” gives information about specific sites and advice on how to behave on these sites in order to minimize negative impact on the environment when visiting. Members of AECO adapted the new site guidelines in October 2012.

In AECO’s opinion site specific guidelines is an excellent tool and way of managing tourism both in regards to avoiding negative impact on the nature environment and cultural heritage, but also in regards to education of the tourism industry and the public on environmental issues and the history of Svalbard.

This has also been acknowledged by the authorities who points to site specific guidelines as part of the proposed new management regime for Eastern Svalbard nature reserves. The draft management plan propose making specific sites guidelines compulsory on five sites.

AECO’s plan was to include all five sites in the inspection, but due to weather conditions two of them where inaccessible. The reason for making site guidelines compulsory on these sites are however, walrus sites only –according to the vulnerability study done prior to the management plan. AECO therefore developed a guideline for walrus which can be used on these sites, and all other sites with walrus haul outs – and in all encounters with walrus.

The site guidelines project had a budget of 900 000,- and has been completed in accordance with the budget.

With the new 11 site guidelines, 20 site guidelines have so far been developed and adopted by AECO, all available on www.aeco.no/guidelines/