



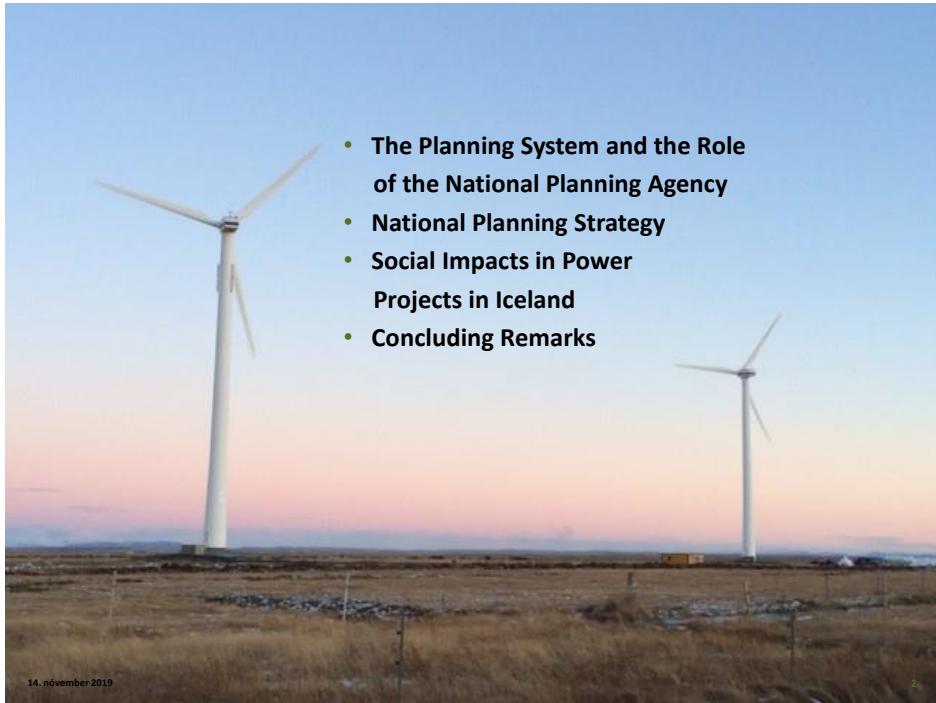
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Environmental Impact Assessment of Power Plants: Social Impacts

Birna Björk Árnadóttir,
National Planning
Agency 12.11.2019



Skipulagsstofnun



- **The Planning System and the Role of the National Planning Agency**
- **National Planning Strategy**
- **Social Impacts in Power Projects in Iceland**
- **Concluding Remarks**

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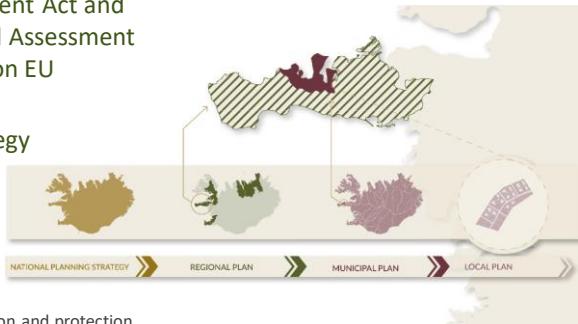
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The Role of the National Planning Agency



- Planning Act
- Environmental Assessment Act and Strategic Environmental Assessment Act, legislations based on EU directives
- National Planning Strategy

Planning instruments

**Planning:**

- ✓ To designate land for various utilisation and protection
- ✓ To ensure a long term perspective, integration of differing views based on sustainable development
- ✓ A key element: Consulting the public and other stakeholders in the process, and applying relevant assessment tools while designing the plan in order to assess different alternatives and the impacts of the planning proposals on the environment and society
- ✓ Permits for buildings and developments must be in accordance with the relevant plan.

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National Planning Strategy 2015-2026



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Planning objectives regarding:

- Central Highland
- Rural areas - rural development/ settlement arrangements
- Urban areas
- Marine and coastal areas

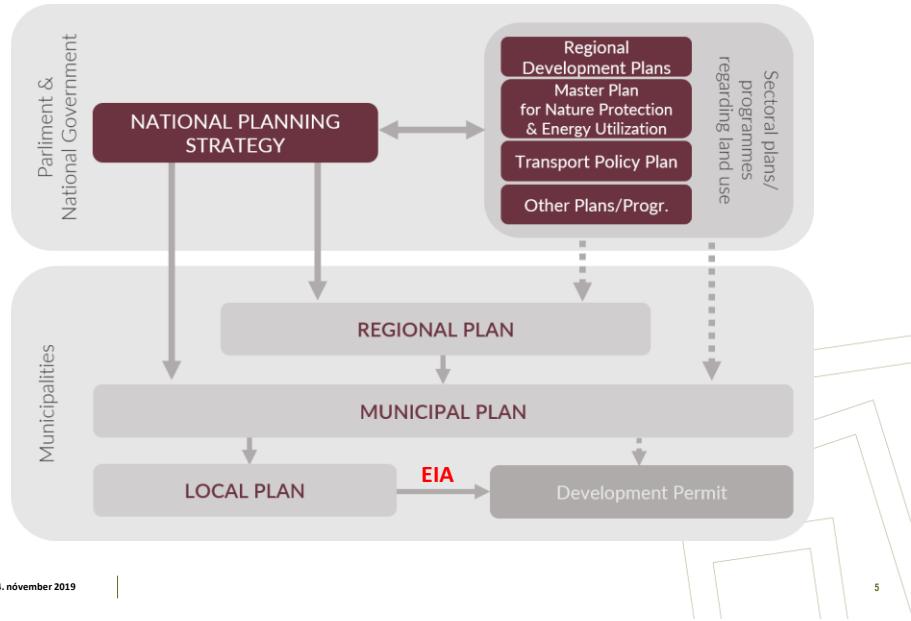
Guidelines and development projects:

Mapping the wilderness, landscape classification, conditions for wind-energy utilisation, climate change mitigation and adaptation, rural areas, planning with respect to public health.

Supplementary strategy /annex with a focus on **climate, landscape and public health** due in 2020

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National Planning Strategy and other Plans/Programmes



Power Projects Subject to EIA



- **Mandatory EIA:** Large scale developments always subject to EIA
 - Power installation **10 MW or more** – same criterion for the Master Plan
- **Screening:** Smaller projects which may have substantial effects on the environment
 - Hydro power with wattage from 200 kw to 9,9 MW,
 - Wind power from 2 MW to 9,9 MW
 - Geothermal power 2500 kw – 9,9 MW
- Other installations are screened by the relevant municipality.

EIA Act: Environmental Factors

Population and human health,
biodiversity, species and habitats,
Land, soil, wilderness, geological formation, soil, water, air and climate,
material assets, cultural heritage,
sensitivity of the development to the risk of disasters and natural hazard,
the interaction between these factors.

Similar in the SEA Act.

Social impacts in EIA for power projects



- **Access to electricity** and electricity safety for households and businesses
- **Population changes**
- **Tourism and recreation**, popular tourist destinations and outdoor activities due to impacts on wilderness, landscape/visual impacts and nature. Usually the most researched social factor
- **Land use**, e.g. farmland, grazing land, land under protection
- **Property value**
- **Fringe benefits or perks**, fishing in rivers and lakes and hunting
- **Employment**, during the construction phase and during operation of the power plant
- **Income tax**
- **Employment** in other sectors
- **Property tax** – depending on the structure
- **Public health**, pollution, noise, odour – usually mitigation measures and a monitoring scheme
- **Cultural heritage**
- *The spirit in the community*

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Observations – Social Impacts Prior to Construction

- Hvalárvirkjun, Ófeigsfjörður, hydro power plant, 55 MW
- Small hydro power plants in the north (< 10 MW)

- „Íbúar Þingeyjarsýslu eiga fullan rétt á að vita til hvers orkan úr fljótinu er hugsuð ef hana á að virkja?“
- „...bega um framkvæmd er að ræða þar sem utanaðkomandi einkaaðili kemur inn í lítið byggðalag, skapar þar verðmæti sem eru hugsu til til að fleyta beinri út af svæðinu með litlum hagnaði sem verður eftir, þá er hætta á að það gangi á samfélagslega samheldni á svæðinu.“
- „Neikvæðar afleiðingar falla á almenning og ósnortna náttúruna (á jörd sem er meira að segja í eigu ríkisins) en ávinnungurinn er í þágu örfárra einstaklinga í leit að ávöxtun eigin fjármuna.“
- „Hverjir eru almannahagsmunir við Svartárvirkjun út frá Bárðadal/nærseitinni?“
- „...verulega neikvæð áhrif á samfélagið, bau skipa fólk i fylkingar, og eru ekki til þess fallin að auka lífsgæði, byggja upp hæfn, þekkingu og/eða reynslu. Þá byggja fyrirætlanirnar ekki undir mikilvægi og fjölbreytni menningar og menningararfs í Bárðardal, sem er samfönn staðaranda og byggðasögu.“
- „Áætlunin er ekki unnin í samstarfi við íbúa Bárðardals og byggir ekki á samtali og þátttöku íbúa í dalnum eða sýn beirra um móturn framtíðar. Hins vegar er öllum almenningi boðið upp á að gera athugasemd við rúmlega hundrað síðna skýslu verkfræðistofu.“

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- What is the objective of enhanced electricity production?
- At what scale (few large, many small?) and where?
- What are the societal benefits and for whom?
- Study and analyse physical, social and economic variables associated with existing power projects.

