

Svalbard (Norway)

Cross border travel

- People

- Depending on your citizenship, you may need a visa to enter Svalbard.
- The Norwegian authorities do not require a special visa for entering Svalbard, but you may need a permit for entering mainland Norway /the Schengen Area, if you travel via Norway/the Schengen Area on your way to or from Svalbard.
- It's important to ensure that you get a double-entry visa to Norway so you can return to the Schengen Area (mainland Norway) after your stay in Svalbard!
- More information can be found on the Norwegian directorate of immigration's website: <https://www.udi.no/en/>
- Find more information about entering Svalbard on the website of the Governor of Svalbard: <https://www.sysselmannen.no/en/visas-and-immigration/>
- Note that a fee needs to be paid for all visa applications.

Covid-19

You can find general information and links to relevant COVID-19 related information here:

<https://www.sysselmannen.no/en/corona-and-svalbard/>

Note that any mandatory quarantine must be taken in mainland Norway, not on Svalbard! Find more information and quarantine (hotels) here: https://www.regjeringen.no/en/topics/koronavirus-covid-19/the-corona-situation-more-information-about-quarantine-hotels/id2784377/?fbclid=IwAR0CA4Rm7edxNhpaksTgxqrAHVXyJcsDBEZrtbaB-t51JTss5wBVz_NUzoQ

You can find further information regarding the temporary travel restrictions here:

<https://nyalesundresearch.no/covid-info/>

- Instrumentation (import/export)

- In general, it is recommended to use a shipping/transport agency.
- Note that due to limited air cargo capacity to and from Ny-Ålesund, cargo related to research activity should preferably be sent by cargo ship. Kings Bay AS provides logistical support. Find more information here: <https://nyalesundresearch.no/infrastructures/logistics/>

- Samples (import/export)

- Exporting fauna and flora requires permission from the Norwegian Environment Agency (<https://www.environmentagency.no/>).
- The Norwegian Environment Agency processes applications for the export of parts from CITES-listed species such as polar bears.
- You do not require permission to export plant material from Svalbard to Norway if the plants are native to Svalbard. For other plants, you should contact The Governor of Svalbard.

- For further transport to other countries, please contact the customs authority in the destination country.
- Importing fauna and flora to Svalbard also requires permission from the Norwegian Environment Agency (Section 26 of the Svalbard Environment Protection Act - <https://www.environmentagency.no/>).
- Chemicals (import/export)
 - In general, it is recommended to use a shipping/transport agency, in order to reassure compliance with the complex set of regulations.

Access to specific areas

- When applying to carry out science in Svalbard, you must apply via the Research in Svalbard (RiS) portal (<https://www.researchinsvalbard.no/>), here you must declare what areas you would like to work in and hence also functions an application to work in protected areas.
Enter the location of your fieldwork in the RiS database. Be as precise as possible. If you are going to carry out fieldwork at multiple locations, make sure each one is registered.
- Notification and insurance: Visitors travelling outside Management Area 10 must comply with The Governor of Svalbard's notification and insurance requirements. Find more information here: <https://www.sysselmannen.no/en/tilreisende/notification-insurance-and-reporting-obligations/>
- Remote areas
See 'Access to specific areas' above
- Protected areas
 - Transportation and fieldwork in protected areas usually requires permission from The Governor, and you must apply for an exemption from specific provisions and justify why the work must be done in the protected area. Projects that can equally well be carried out outside protected areas shall be restricted to non-protected areas
 - A map of areas with access restrictions can be found here: <https://www.sysselmannen.no/siteassets/kart/temakart/ferdselsrestriksjoner/ferdselsrestriksjoner-2020-engelsk.pdf>
- Restricted areas
 - See 'Access to specific areas' and 'Protected areas' above

Fieldwork and sample collection

- Svalbard-specific Norwegian legislation, notably the Svalbard Environmental Protection Act (2001) (<https://www.regjeringen.no/en/dokumenter/svalbard-environmental-protection-act/id173945/>) and regulations, is highly relevant to all field research in the archipelago.
Note that, as a rule, most field activities will require permission from The Governor of Svalbard ("Sysselmannen").
The Governor of Svalbard requires that all research application and reports are submitted via the Research in Svalbard (RiS) portal (<https://www.researchinsvalbard.no/>).
Note that the processing time can takes at least four weeks, often more

- Find information for researchers here:
<https://www.sysselmannen.no/en/researchers/>
 - A list of relevant bodies and contact information for research permissions can be found here: <https://www.forskningsradet.no/en/svalbard-science-forum/svalbard-research-planning/research-permissions/research-permissions--relevant-bodies/>
 - The guidelines for researchers in Svalbard provide many relevant information and a good overview on regulations. It can be found here:
(<https://www.sysselmannen.no/contentassets/f2f72d4c32ae4eb8af7de2bda7bebc83/guidelines.pdf>) or here:
<https://www.sysselmannen.no/en/researchers/guidelines-for-researchers-in-svalbard/>
 - Find more information on research permission at the website of the Svalbard Science Forum: <https://www.forskningsradet.no/en/svalbard-science-forum/svalbard-research-planning/research-permissions/>
- Permit to conduct research (observations, handling and sampling within all disciplines, incl. collection of genetic resources)
- Fauna: The rules concerning the disturbance of wildlife are very strict and also cover handling and collection.
All disturbance of fauna requires permission from The Governor (Section 30 of the Svalbard Environmental Protection Act). Avoid causing any unnecessary disturbance!
The handling, marking and monitoring of animals must be approved by the Norwegian Food Safety Authority
(https://www.mattilsynet.no/dyr_og_dyrehold/dyrevelferd/forsoksdyr/hvilke_forsk_maa_du_soke_om.19638) (in Norwegian) before the application is sent to The Governor. The processing time at the Norwegian Food Safety Authority can be long, so make sure you allow good time for this. (email: postmottak@mattilsynet.no)
 - Flora: It is forbidden to damage or pick plants in Svalbard (Section 28 of the Svalbard Environmental Protection Act). The collection of plants for research or teaching is permitted if this does not significantly impact the plant population at the site. For all collection of flora that may have a significant impact on the plant population at the site, you must have permission from The Governor of Svalbard (Section 29 of the Svalbard Environmental Protection Act).
You do not require permission to collect fungi and seaweed.
 - Geology: In general, no separate permits are required for the collection of loose stones and fossils. This does not apply to all protected areas. Therefore, it is necessary to check regulations for the relevant protected areas.
 - For geological work that involves physical alteration to the terrain, you must have permission from The Governor of Svalbard (Section 57 in the Svalbard Environmental Protection Act).
 - Cultural heritage: The regulations governing cultural heritage are very strict (cf. Chapter V in the Svalbard Environmental Protection Act).
Here are some general regulations: All fixed and loose cultural monuments and objects dating from before 1946 are automatically protected. This includes all traces of human activity such as buildings and structures as well as all kinds of objects made by humans. Evidence of human graves of all kinds are protected regardless of

their age. The same applies to skeletal remains at slaughter sites for walruses and whales and skeletal remains from polar bears in connection with self-shooting traps. The protection zone around fixed cultural monuments is 100 meters. Therefore, you must stay outside this zone if setting up camp or lighting a bonfire. It is forbidden to move automatically protected cultural monuments and objects even if they are found on the coast or in other exposed areas. If in doubt, assume that the object is protected.

- Soil, ice, snow and water samples: You do not require permission for taking soil samples or extracting ice cores from glaciers. You also do not require permission for taking snow samples and water samples (salt and fresh water)

Field Instrumentation

- Find an online map tool for land use plans here:
<https://geokart.npolar.no/Html5Viewer/index.html?viewer=Svalbardkartet>
- Area allotment for instrumentation
 - If you are planning to set up installations, you need permission from The Governor of Svalbard and possibly local planning authorities.
 - In areas with a Land Use Plan (areas around the five largest settlements Longyearbyen, Ny-Ålesund, Sveagruva, Pyramidene and Barentsburg) you need permission from The Governor of Svalbard and maybe also from the local planning authority. Therefore, first assess if the project complies with the current land-use plan and then submit a notification or application to the planning authority. Remember to specify the exact location on a map. Find an online map tool here: <https://geokart.npolar.no/Html5Viewer/index.html?viewer=Svalbardkartet>
Find the land-use plan for Ny-Ålesund here: <https://kingsbay.no/ny-alesund/land-use-plan>

If you are in doubt, contact:

 - The Governor of Svalbard (<https://www.sysselmannen.no/>)
 - Longyearbyen Community Council in Longyearbyen (<https://www.lokalstyre.no/>)
 - Kings Bay AS in Ny-Ålesund (<https://kingsbay.no/>)
 - Store Norske Spitsbergen Kulkompani in Sveagruva (<https://www.snsk.no/>)
 - Trust Arktikugolis for projects in Barentsburg (<https://www.arcticugol.ru/>)
 - In areas without a Land Use Plan you need permission from the Governor of Svalbard. Remember to specify the exact location on a map.
 - Installations and other projects also require permission from the landowner.
- Drone use
 - All pilots flying a drone that has a camera or is heavier than 250g, needs to register themselves at Flydrone (<https://flydrone.no/register>).
 - It is forbidden to fly drones in a zone with a radius of five kilometres from the airports in Longyearbyen and Svea. Ny-Ålesund also has a zone of 20 km around the city with radio silence and drone ban. This means that in practice there is a ban on flying drones in Ny-Ålesund and throughout Kongsfjorden.
 - Find more rules and regulations and information on prohibition zones (no-fly-zones) here: <https://www.sysselmannen.no/en/drones-on-svalbard/>

Safety related permits

It is strongly recommended that you familiarise yourself with potential hazards in Svalbard and appropriate preventive safety measures.

- Weapon
 - Please note that when renting rifles, you need to have a Norwegian Firearms Certificate, European Weapon Passport or other documentation proving that the person is authorised or permitted to carry a firearm in his or her home country. Persons who do not have a firearm certificate, must apply to The Governor of Svalbard for the right to rent a firearm.
 - UNIS, NPI, KingsBay AS and some other logistics providers offer safety courses and weapon rental.

- Radio permits
 - Visitors travelling outside Management Area 10 must comply with The Governor of Svalbard's notification and insurance requirements. This includes being accompanied by an emergency beacon and The Governor of Svalbard must know the identity of the transmitter. Find more information on permission and notification here: <https://www.sysselmannen.no/en/tilreisende/notification-insurance-and-reporting-obligations/>
 - See also 'Regional/local level permits' for more information in radio regulation!

Regional/local level permits

- Ny-Ålesund is a radio silent area, where the electromagnetic radiation activity should be kept at an absolute minimum. There are several scientific instruments in Ny-Ålesund that take advantage of the radio silence in Ny-Ålesund. Use of wireless equipment within the frequency band 2-32 GHz (which includes both Wi-Fi and Bluetooth) is on a general basis forbidden in Ny-Ålesund itself, and in the area inside a radius of 20 km from Ny-Ålesund. Read more about restrictions and how to apply for permission for scientific and safety reasons here: <https://nyalesundresearch.no/research-and-monitoring/researchers-guide/using-radio-frequencies/>
- There is a web portal for the research village Ny-Ålesund with more information on research permission and applications: <https://nyalesundresearch.no/research-and-monitoring/researchers-guide/research-permissions/>
- A guide that is designed to help researchers who are considering going to Ny-Ålesund can be accessed here: <https://nyalesundresearch.no/research-and-monitoring/researchers-guide/>

Additional information of relevance

- Sysselmannen på Svalbard – <https://www.sysselmannen.no/>
- The University Centre in Svalbard (UNIS) offers safety courses which address Arctic and Svalbard-relevant risks and challenges – <https://www.unis.no/>
- Norwegian Polar Institute – <https://www.npolar.no/en/>
- Svalbard Science Forum – <https://www.forskningsradet.no/en/svalbard-science-forum/>