

Public Participation in Environmental Decision-making in Iceland



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*Arnika's Conference
Prague, December 10th, 2015.*

Content

1. About Landvernd
2. Public participation; legal framework; tools
3. Examples involving the public to a different extend
4. Obstacles and opportunities

Landvernd

Protecting Icelandic nature since 1969

5000



2012

2013

2014

2015 f M

2015 e M



Landvernd's focus

Nature Conservation



Environmental Education



Environment



We try to involve people as much as possible in all undertakings

- Centres
- Mývatn
- Soil and water
- Large waterfalls
- Geothermal areas
- Tourism

- Kindergardens
- Prim/sec schools
- High schools
- Universities
- Beaches
- Marinas
- Geothermal areas
- Tourists

- Beaches
- Marinas
- Companies
- Municipalities / climate

Three main methods applied



LANDVERND
ICELANDIC ENVIRONMENT ASSOCIATION

November 1st 2013.

1. Participation in EDM

Ramsar Secretariat
c/o Tobias Salathé
Gland
Switzerland

SUBJECT: A Review on Draft Mission Report for Mývatn-Laxá Region, Ramsar Site N°167, 19-23 August, 2013 by Tobias Salathé.

2. Getting the message across



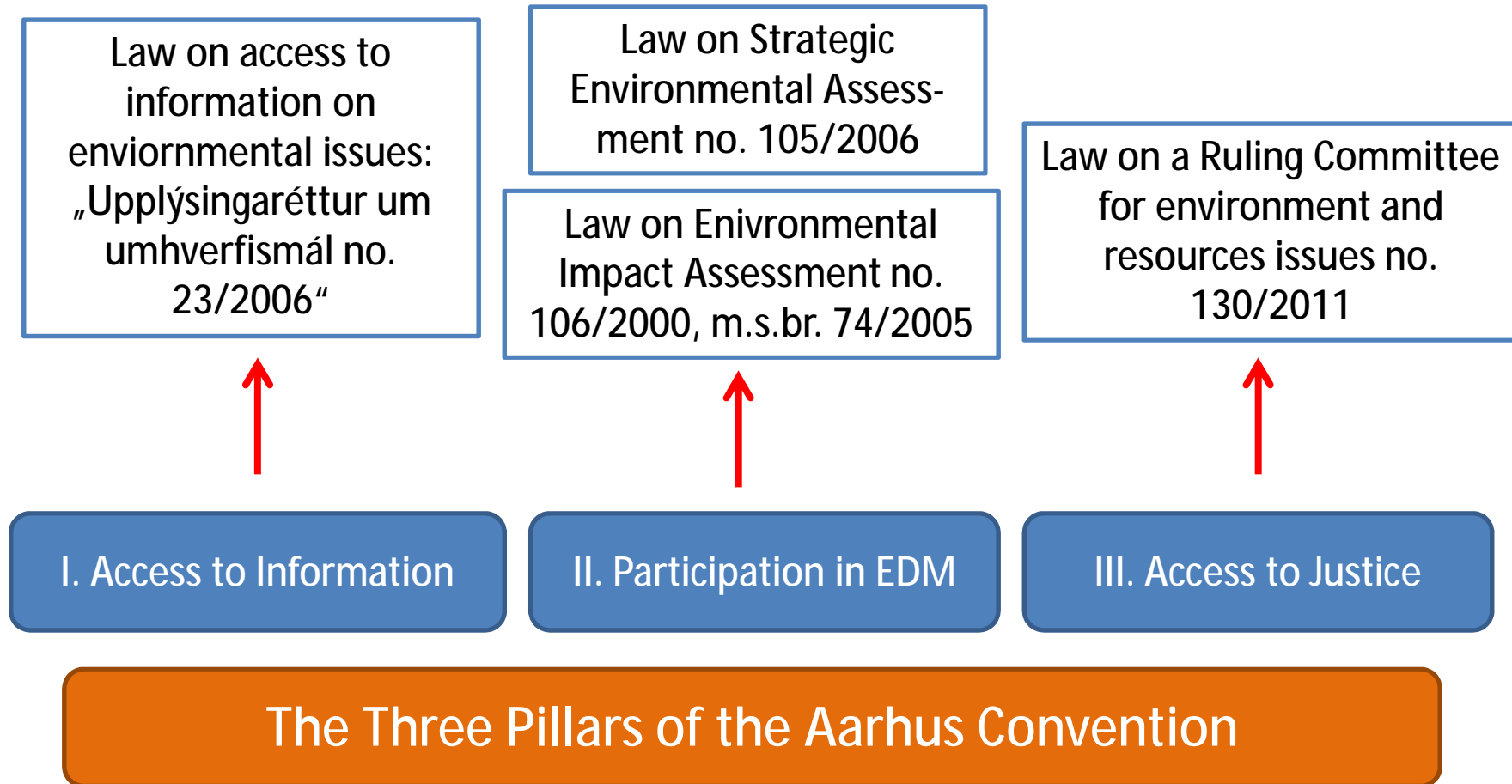
3. Action and educational based projects



Public Participation in EDM



Legal environment: Aarhus Convention, European Directives etc



Tools in Public Participation

Reviews

...of law bills, strategic plans, EIAs, policies, etc

Appeals

...of public decisions

Assisting

...individuals and other NGOs

Protesting

...policy, certain decisions, projects, lack of action, etc

Meetings

...for the public on various issues (discussions)

Campaigning

...on various issues

Petitions

...raising awareness, protesting...

Lobbying

...with government, interest groups, etc

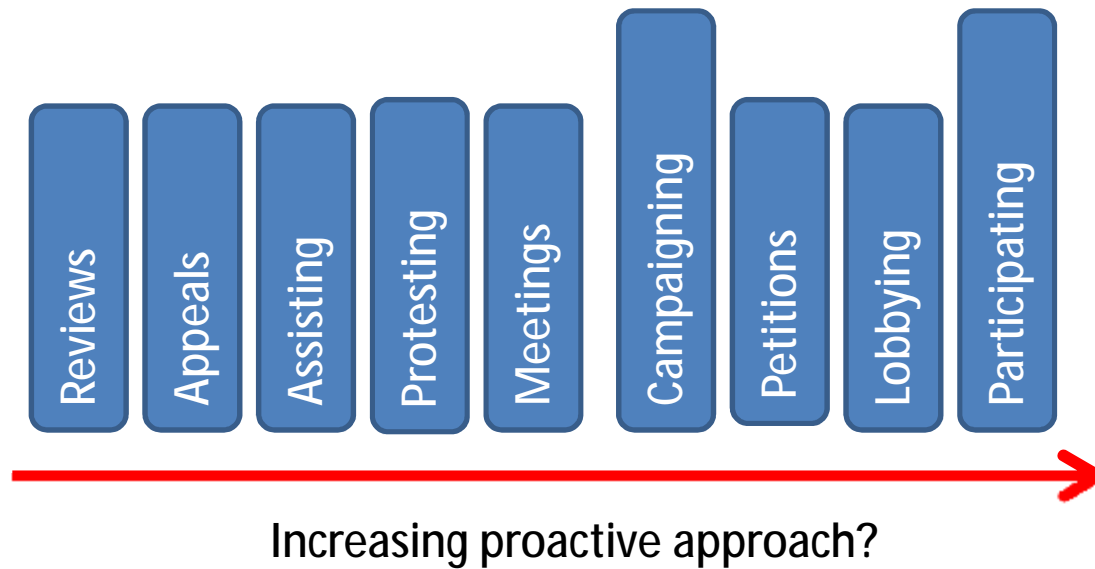
Participating

...in legislative work, sitting on committees

Social Media

...conveying the message and discussion

Reactive vs. proactive participation



„The discourses on participation in the context of environment have been focused too much on processes and procedures, and too little attention has been given to their purposes and outcome effectiveness in policy making“

(Pohjola & Tuomisto, 2011).

Examples of Landvernd's participation

2. Increasing number of appeals, including court cases

Appeals

| Mál - staða 25. júní 2015 | Ákvörðun | Gegn | Úrskurðaraðili | Kært | Úrskurður |
|--|------------------------------|------------------|----------------|--------|-------------------------|
| Frárennslisþípa frá Svartengi til sjávar við Grindavík | Matsskylda MÁU | Skipulagsstofnun | ÚUA | jan.13 | Ákvörðun Skipó staðfest |
| Suðurnesjalína 2 - reising og rekstur | Leyfisveiting: reisa og reka | Orkustofnun | ÚUA | des.13 | Úrskurðar beðið |
| Kerfisáætlun 2014-2023 | Samþykkt Landsnets | Landsnet | Dómstólar | jan.15 | Fyrirtöku og dóms beðið |
| Kröflulína 4: Endurupptaka MÁU | Beiðni um endurupptöku | Skipulagsstofnun | Skipulagsstfn | ágú.15 | Ákvörðunar beðið |
| Suðurnesjalína 2 | Framkvæmdaleyfi | Svfél Vogar | ÚUA | maí.15 | Úrskurðar beðið |
| Suðurnesjalína 2 | Framkvæmdaleyfi | Grindavíkurbær | ÚUA | maí.15 | Úrskurðar beðið |
| Ensk útgáfa jarðstrengjaskýrslu LN | Beiðni um gögn | Landsneti | Úuppl. | apr.15 | Úrskurðar beðið |
| Samningur Landsnets og PCC Bakka | Beiðni um gögn | Landsneti | Úuppl. | jún.15 | Úrskurðar beðið |
| Hótelbygging í Kerlingarfjöllum | Matsskylda MÁU | Skipulagsstofnun | ÚUA | ág.15 | Úrskurðar beðið |

3. Public Engagement: Green Parade 2013

Mayday 2013: Minimum 5,000 people

Protesting

Campaigning

Social Media



4. Online Petitions: Mývatn Geothermal Power Plant

Reviews

Campaigning

Petitions

Social Media

- Preparation starts in 2012 by Landsvirkjun
- Landvernd draws attention of the media
- A complaint sent to the Ramsar Convention Secretariat
 - delegation comes to Iceland
- Online petition (8,000 people signed)
- Landsvirkjun puts a hold on further development and supports to redo the EIA for the site
- Planning Agency decides that EIA needs to be done again
- Landsvirkjun appeals that decision to the Ruling Committee on Environmental and Natural Resources Matters (december 2014)
- Ruling Committee still working on it

- Public pressure can make a difference

Petition: Rejecting a plan for an EIA of a HV overhead power line in the central highland

Ég skora á Landsnet að falla frá áformum um Sprengisandslínu og krefst þess að Skipulagsstofnun hafni áætlun fyrirtækisins um umhverfismat línunnar

NAFN *

EFTIRNAFN *

NETFANG *

STAÐFESTA NETFANG *

KENNITALA (BIRTIST EKKI OPINBERLEGA)

 NAFN MITT MÁ BIRTA Á OPINBERUM LISTUM[Senda áskorun](#)

2,884 undirskriftir

Deildu boðskapnum með vinum þínum:

[facebook](#)

Landsnet hf. hefur lagt fram tillögu sína að matsáætlun fyrir umhverfismat 220 kV háspennulínu yfir Sprengisand (Sprengisandslínu). Skipulagsstofnun hefur tillöguna nú til umfjöllunar og hefur óskað eftir athugasemdum við hana í síðasta lagi 17. nóvember n.k.

Með því að skrifa undir hér til hliðar, tekur þú undir meginkröfu Landsnet og nýttir lýðræðislegan rétt þinn til áhrifa á ákvarðanatöku í samfélaginu. Með því að skrifa undir þetta hefur þú falli frá áformum um Sprengisandslínu og að Skipulagsstofnun hafni áætlun fyrirtækisins.

Áskorunin er eftirfarandi:

[Reviews](#)[Campaigning](#)[Petitions](#)[Social Media](#)

Ég skora á Landsnet hf. að falla þegar í stað frá áformum fyrirtækisins um Sprengisandslínu og krefst þess að Skipulagsstofnun hafni áætlun þess um umhverfismat línunnar.

Sprengisandslína myndi kljúfa landslagsheildir og viðerni miðhálandisins í tvennt, skerða upplifun ferðamanna og möguleika á útivist og ferðaþjónustu. Hálandið eins og við þekkjum það í dag, myndi tilheyra fortíðinni. Mun fleiri eru andvígir Sprengisandslínu (43%) en fylgjandi (25%) samkvæmt könnun Gallup í mars 2015. Kanna ber einnig aðrar línuleiðir en um Sprengisand.

Falli Landsnet ekki frá áformum sínum er það krafa mín að Skipulagsstofnun hafni

Áskorun til Alþingismanna um að hafna breytingartillögu meirihluta atvinnuveganefndar Alþingis.
Undir áskorunina skrifuðu rétt tæp 2250 manns í febrúar 2015.

Kæri Alþingismaður!

Ég skora á þig að hafna tillögu meirihluta atvinnuveganefndar Alþingis um breytingartillögu meirihluta atvinnuveganefndar Alþingis um virkjanahugmyndir og vinnuáætlingar á Hagavatni (norræn nafn) og umhverfi þess. Þetta er aðför að lýðræðislegum og reglugerðum Alþingis um orkuskipti.

Með tillögunni er sekið á orkuskipti og virkjanahugmyndir á Hagavatni og umhverfi þess. Þetta er ófriði um virkjanahugmyndir hér á landi. Þú ert lagd fram hvaða tillögu sem er og þú ert ófriður sem þú vilt sjá í kringum þetta.

Ég vil ekki láta geðpottaálvarðanir um orkuskipti og virkjanahugmyndir og vinnuáætlingar á Hagavatni og umhverfi þess. Þú ert pingmaður góður, sért saumur og þú ert góður. Þegar hún kemur til kasta Alþingis. Í húfi er leikreglur hennar.

Virðingarfyllt

Reviews

Campaigning

Petitions

Social Media

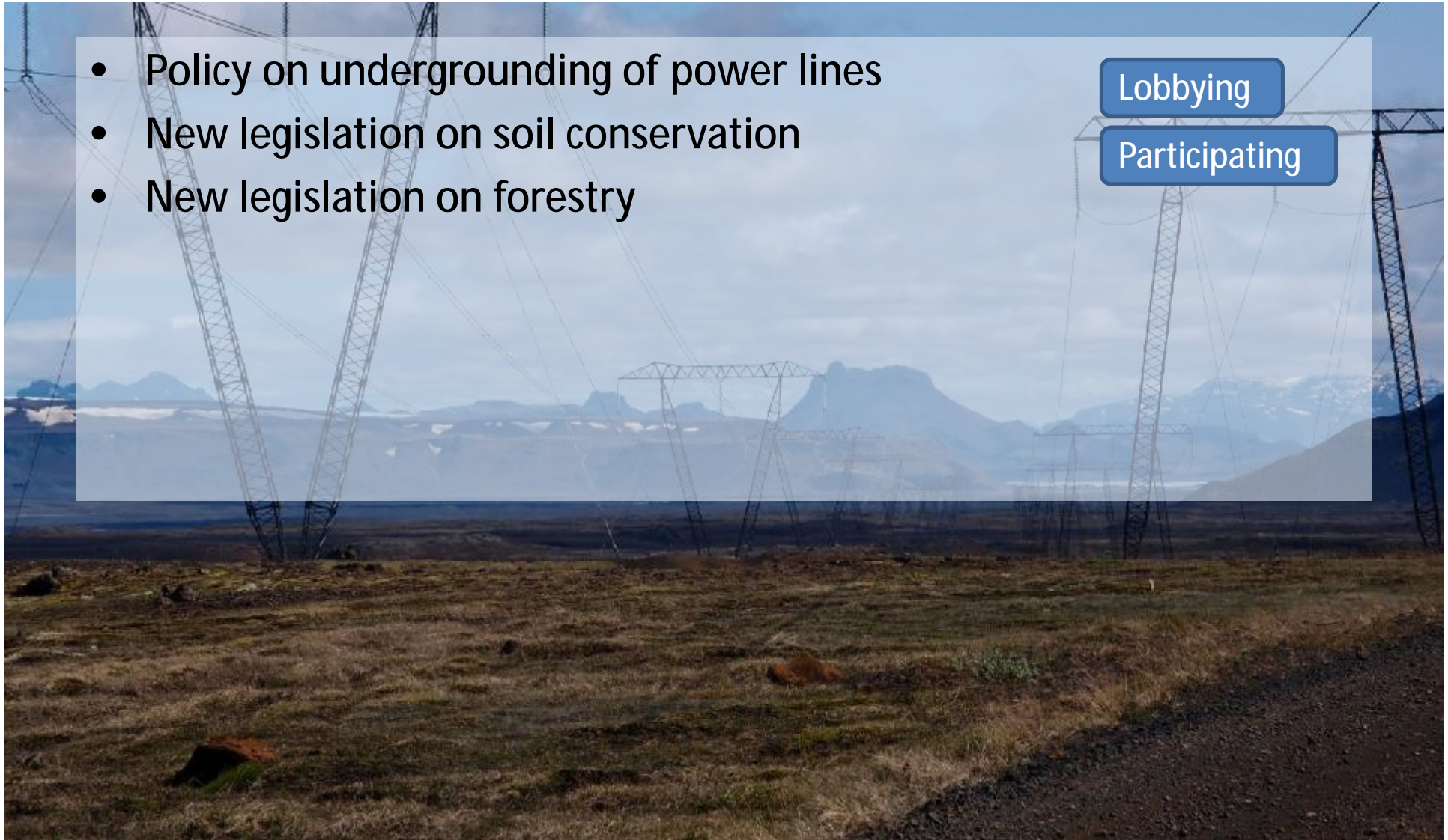


5. Participation on committees:

- Policy on undergrounding of power lines
- New legislation on soil conservation
- New legislation on forestry

Lobbying

Participating



6. Legal Expertise Work



- Alternative report to Iceland's first periodic report to the Aarhus Convention
- Landvernd criticized the AC implementation, in particular issues regarding the third pillar:
 - NGOs have been denied access to an administrative review: lack of sufficient legal interest
 - Access to courts are very limited

Reviews

Participating

Landvernd

Report to the Compliance Committee of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe on Iceland's Implementation of the Aarhus Convention

Alternative Report to Iceland's 1st Periodic Report

Landvernd uses these all these tools

Reviews

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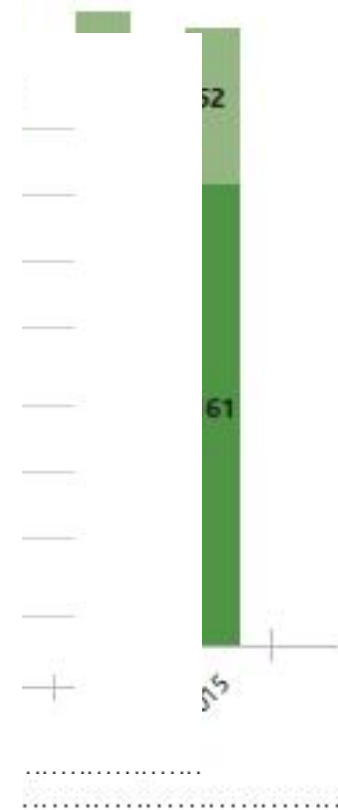
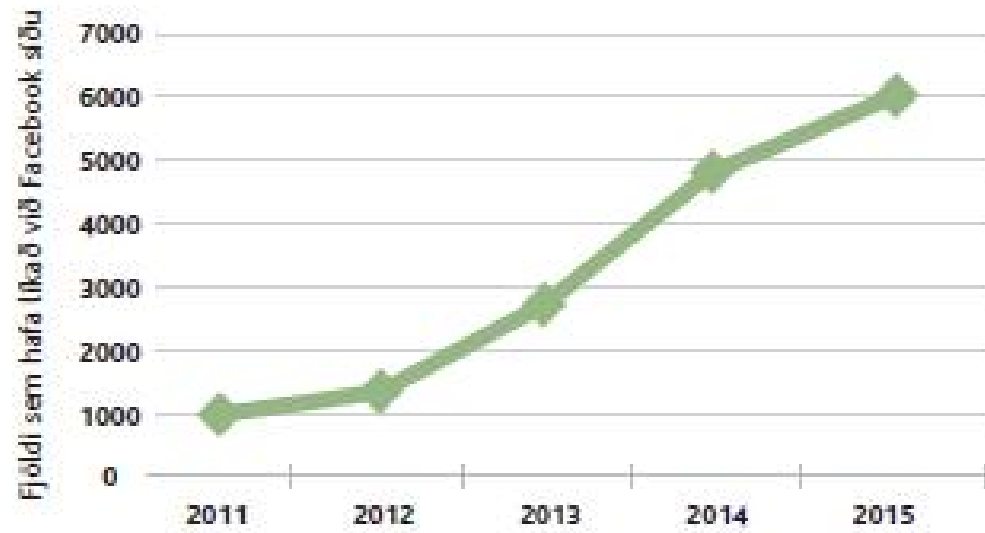
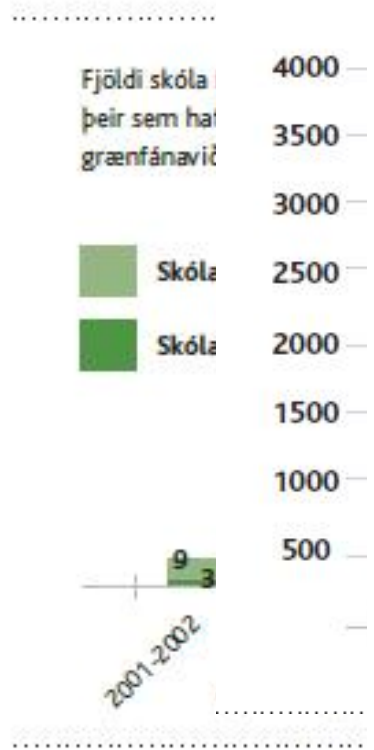
Social Media

...conveying the message and discussion

Lessons learned...

- Parades, petitions and discussion with people show us that people want to participate
- Public participation can be difficult because of the complexity of the rule of the game
- Role of NGOs to engage people, assist them in participating
- Some promising signs of increased interest of people, but we need to harvest that interest

skráðir til leiks og flöggðu



Obstacles and Opportunities

How to increase influence by CC?

- What is needed?
- What are the main obstacles?
- How can we improve involvement?

How to increase influence by CC?

- What is needed?
 - *Capacity* to screen all relevant legislative acts, planning strategies of municipalities, EIAs, SEA, etc
 - EIAs and SEAs be carried out by an *independent third party*
 - Finding ways to *increase public involvement* in the work of NGOs
 - *Proactive* rather than reactive involvement
 - *Extended involvement and co-operation* rather than feedback and consultation
 - *Cultural change* within many power structures

How to increase influence by CC?

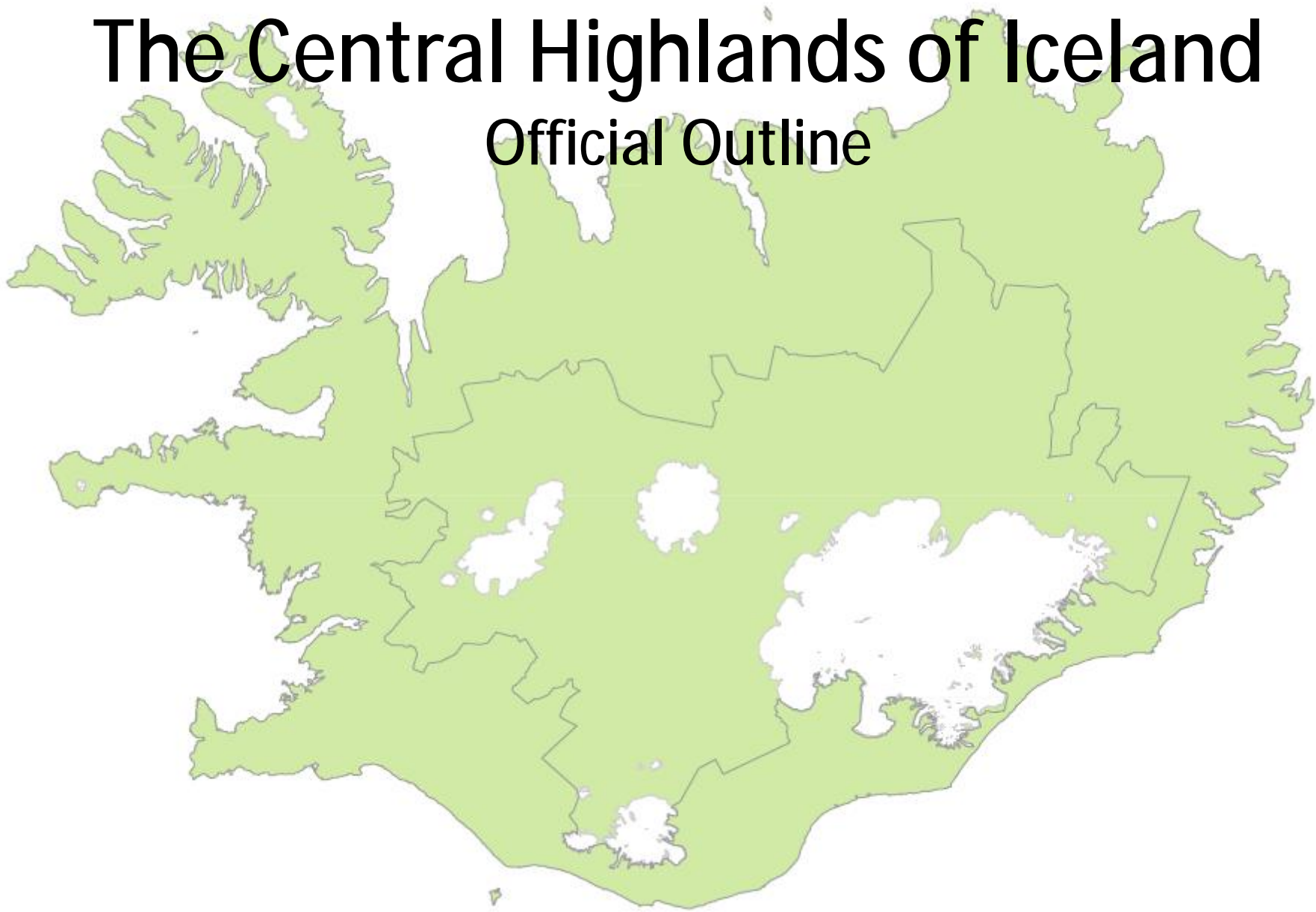
- Main obstacles to improvement:
 - Lack of capacity of NGOs, i.e. lack of manpower and money
 - Lack of more meaningful ways to engage the public
 - Culture of power; fear of power structures to involve civil society

How to increase influence by CC?

- How can we improve civil society's involvement and influence?
 - *Early participation* in EDM, before decision are made is urgently needed
 - Governments and private entities could *initiate a forum* for discussion and input early on
 - Governments can *increase the involvement* of NGOs on *formal committees* and working groups
 - *NGOs need* to actively seek out possibilities to influence EDM and *lead the change if necessary*
 - Increased *financial capacity* to carry out our work

The Central Highlands of Iceland

Official Outline



Ongoing campaigning: National park in the central highlands

Power plants, power lines

National Park



The Central Highland: heartoficeland.org

Awareness raising campaign

Wide co-operation

Online petition:

- heartoficeland.org /
- hjartalandsins.is

Various other activities to be seen in the coming years

