



ASCENT
Promoting Sustainable Access
to Uplands & Natural Environments

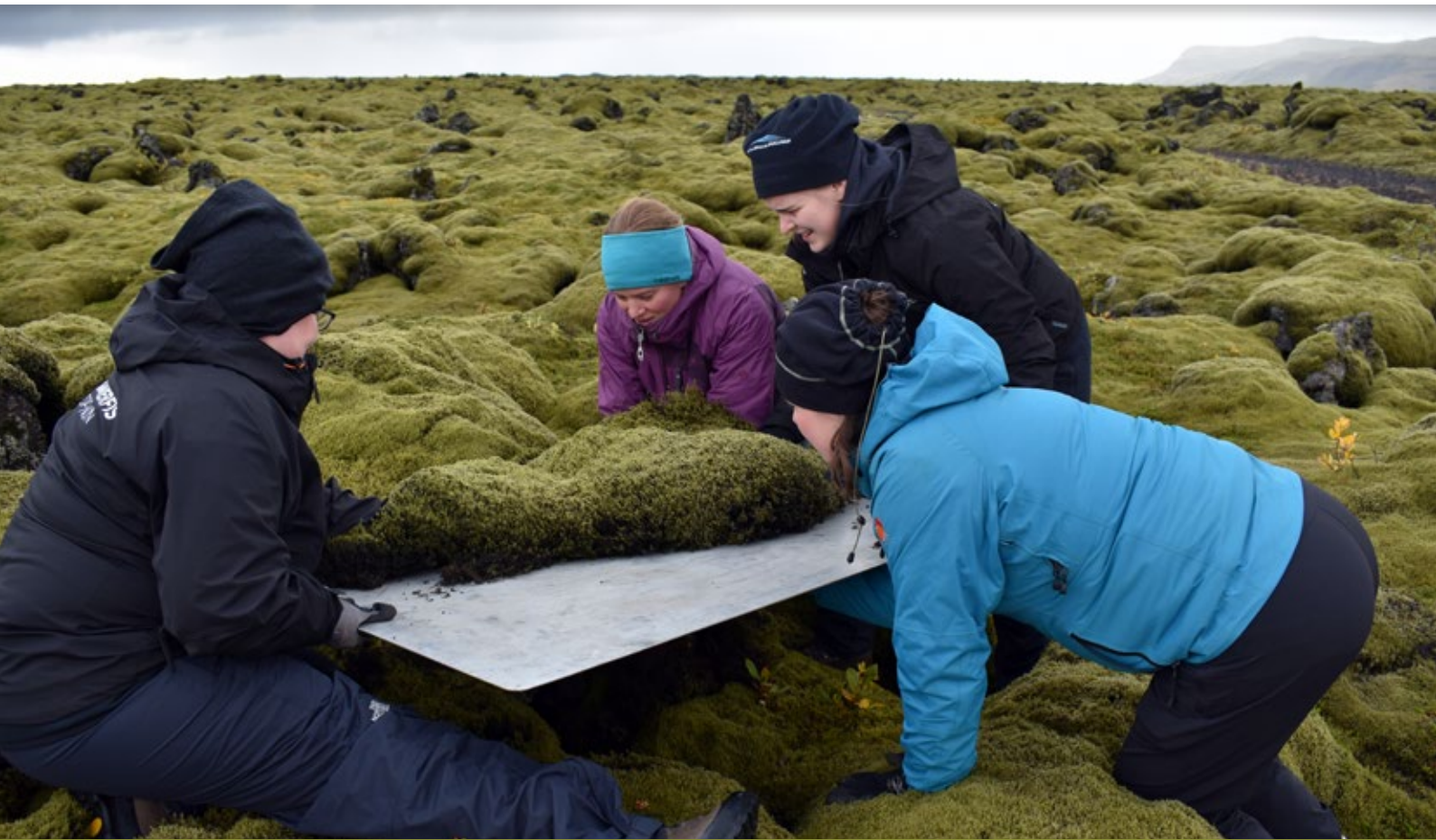


**Northern Periphery and
Arctic Programme**
2014–2020



EUROPEAN UNION

Investing in your future
European Regional Development Fund



ASCENT Output

**Five sustainable management toolkits for balancing tourism, cultural
and economic interests with environmental needs**

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ASCENT
Research report
Output 2:
Five sustainable management toolkits for balancing tourism, cultural and economic interest with environmental needs
Soil Conservation Service of Iceland.

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Introduction

This report documents the progress made to develop 5 site specific sustainable management solution and community participation for upland area to determine the best approaches to management planning. It describes how the following targets of the project were reached by various contribution from of each of the 5 partners at each of the 7 ASCENT sites resulting in 5 individual toolkits, including:

- The development of management plan
- The adaptation of approved standardized method for assessment of upland path conditions
- The adaptation of program for reporting indicators using ICT based tool
- Development of an upskilling programme on path building
- Collation of existing material and development of new educational/upskilling resources
- The adaptation and modification of indicators for sustainable recreation and tourism.

The approaches taken by participants were different, due to different social, natural and cultural conditions in each of the participant's countries, although the objective was the same - ensuring natural quality of each of the 7 ASCENT, as well as ensuring the accessibility to the sites.

The report describes the process of making a management plan and what kind of data and what kind of surveys need to be processed, and what kind of stakeholders need to settle, for a successful outcome. What kind of action needs to be taken in assessing the state of paths and habitat, what methods can be used, how to gather information by modification of indicators for recreation and tourism, and how information technology can be used for that purpose? Also, the development of upskilling seminars for path workers and designers, and collation of new and existing educational and upskilling material.

The toolbox's are not in any way perfect or complete. No two sites are the same, and what might work at one site may not work at another site. Therefore, a management plans and appropriate measures will always be site specific. However, the toolbox's should be taken as inspiration and a good guide to the actions that are important to take in dealing with common challenges, although the path to solutions can be varied.

The report is divide as follows: The Introduction briefly describes the work packages, its progress and main challenges in achieving the targets. Next chapter details the 5 toolkits based on contribution from each partner.

Total of 27 reports and other material, mainly videos, were produced and are included as an Appendix to this summary, and constitute the detailed body of the research report. The records will all be stored permanently in drop box and in the archive of SCSi, and made available on the official website of the ASCENT project <https://www.ascent-project.eu/> .



5 Sustainable toolkits

Toolkit 1: Donegal County Council (DCC)

Toolkit 1 includes the contribution of DCC. An executive summary for an Integrated Management Plan for Errigal describing the planning control and planning process. An integrated Management Plan for Errigal. And, an awareness video made by DCC promoting responsible recreation at Errigal.

Integrated Management Plan (executive summary)

In the context of Ireland development by a Local Authority is exempted development within its own functional area and does not require planning permission. However certain prescribed developments must go through a statutory part 8 process, consisting of public consultation and presentation of a Chief Executives report to a plenary Council meeting for consideration by the Elected Members. However, if a Local Authority development requires Appropriate Assessment (AA) it may not proceed in this manner. In Ireland where appropriate assessment is required in respect of a Local Authority's own development, then a Natura Impact Statement shall be prepared and the Local Authority shall apply to An Bord Pleanála for approval.

As Errigal is located within, or within the zone of influence of, the Natura 2000 sites: Cloghernagore Bog and Glenveagh National Park SAC, Fawnboy bog / Lough Nacung SAC and the Glendowan Mountain SPA, formal consideration of the requirement to carry out AA was necessary. Appropriate Assessment (AA) is the key protection mechanism and process by which the possible effects of a plan or project on a Natura 2000 sites are considered. Of note is the provision that plans or projects that are directly connected to or necessary for the management of a Natura 2000 site do does not require AA.

To determine the appropriate consent process ecological report was prepared for Errigal, which determined that the restoration works involved in the ASCENT Project on Errigal are necessary by nature conservation management of the designated site and therefore do not require AA, but that is sustainable access on Errigal required screening for Appropriate Assessment. As a result of the ecologically informed and carefully considered approach to the restoration and sustainable access proposals for Errigal the subsequent AA screening process determined that the risk of likely significant effects on a Natura 2000 site could be excluded and accordingly AA was not required for habitat restoration or sustainable access on Errigal.

This allowed the project to proceed as a Part 8 development to a Plenary Council meeting, with the approval of the Elected Members confirmed on 24th April, 2019.

Through ASCENT, the approach taken at Errigal created a model to inform national upland path policy and established competent evidence based reference material guiding Local Authorities and others in their approach to what can be a complex nature conservation and development consent process. A process of patient and deliberate engagement with stakeholders, competent experts, research, study and shared learning has enabled DCC to negotiate the onset processes, formulate appropriate site specific interventions and establish an exemplar for habitat restoration and sustainable access on one of Ireland's most sensitive and important natural environments.

Management plan

An Integrated Management Plan was delivered 2019, to assist and guide the Errigal Stakeholders Committee, the local community and DCC in promoting sustainable management, maintenance and promotion of Errigal Mountain, in a considered and balanced way.

In its core objective of the management of the resource, that is Errigal, the 7-year Plan was developed through a participatory process involving the Errigal Stakeholders Committee, DCC and all relevant bodies, with specific regard for the agreed shared vision to facilitate the responsible enjoyment of Errigal in a way that protects the mountains special qualities and benefits the local community. The Integrated Management Plan will steer the work of the stakeholders and examine the relationship between Errigal and the village of Dunlewey and will generate an ASCENT project legacy in the management capacity of the Errigal Stakeholders in addressing on-going and meeting future needs and challenges.

Promoting Responsible Recreation at Errigal (video)

DCC developed a video called Promoting responsible recreation at Errigal to encourage the responsible use when visiting and climbing, to communicate the sensitivity of the natural environment here and to advise of the measures adopted through the ASCENT project to address those. The documentary style video conveys the high conservation value of Errigal, located in a special protected area using imagery and drone footage with participation from the local community, the stakeholders group and the project team.

The 5:05 m video was published on youtube.com February 4, 2019 and can be found on the following link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_7ne-xtdpn0

In the text that accompanies the video says: „*The measures & activities adopted through the ASCENT project encourage responsible use when visiting and climbing Errigal, for the continued public enjoyment and long-term conservation of County Donegal's highest and iconic mountain.* “

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On September 5, 2019 the video had received 609 views.



Toolkit 2: Hordaland County Council (HCC)

The management of the natural area between Skjeggedal and the viewpoint of Trolltunga, including the trail, parking facilities and access road was originally under the management of the ground owner Statkrarft. Odda Municipality originally carried out maintenance by annual agreement with the landowner. Following negotiations, a long term agreement was reached with the landowner with Odda municipality maintaining this area and the revenue generated from the parking. Odda municipality created a limited company, Trolltunga AS, which is 100% owned by the municipality, with responsibility for all strategic planning, maintenance and management of the access road, parking with facilities and trail between Skjeggedal and Trolltunga. Trolltunga AS is dedicated to completing all criteria supplied by the Norwegian directorate for nature management to become certified as a Norwegian Scenic Hike. This includes the production of a Visitor Strategy, which was completed in the spring of 2019. As part of the agreement a regulation plan will also be developed for the area.

Toolkit 2 includes the contribution of HCC. Norwegian Scenic Hike criteria is fundamental for future funding of path work at Trolltunga. Visitor management plan with the aim of balancing visitor experience and conservation. Vulnerability analysis of nature and wildlife. Awareness video highlighting responsible hiking and visitor safety. And new approach in changing behaviour by the use of mountain guards.

Norwegian Scenic Hike (criteria)

Criteria for destinations wishing to become certified as a Norwegian Scenic Hike (NSH). Done by a working group run by the Directorate of nature management. The criteria have to be fulfilled by all destinations who wish to apply for status as NSH and Trolltunga has decided to do so. HCC used ASCENT as a vehicle for to get them as far that path as possible. Being certified as a NSH will ensure them government funding and follow-up in the future along with national support network.

Visitor management plan

The Visitor Strategy for Trolltunga is a long term strategy for the best possible management and maintenance of the tourist attraction Trolltunga. The aim of the strategy is to create positive experience for the visitors and encourage local added economic value whilst protecting the natural qualities of the landscape. The Visitor Strategy was procured by Hordaland County Council and is financed by ASCENT. The aim of the project is to protect vulnerable landscapes through the building, monitoring and maintenance of footpaths in sensitive nature.

Vulnerability analysis

The Vulnerability analysis is an assessment and evaluation of vulnerable nature and wildlife along the Trolltunga path, from Mågelitopp to Reinaskori. The visitor numbers to Trolltunga has increased from 20 thousand in 2013 to 88 thousand in 2018. Trolltunga AS with the support from Hordaland County Council and ASCENT project have commissioned the report. The consultant for the report has been Norconsult AS and the field work and the report were completed in August 2019. The work was varied out in close partnership with Trolltunga AS. The contribution of the Trolltunga Mountain Guards with their local knowledge and experience during field work must be acknowledged.

ASCENT project Trolltunga, Norway (video)

HCC produced ASCENT Project Trolltunga which highlighting the challenges on site and ASCENTs approach to possible solutions. They also advised Visit Norway for key messages for their Safety First video featuring a nature guide explaining to hikers the importance of suitable clothing, sticking to paths and using local guide services. Distributed worldwide, this video had a positive impact.

The 5:29 m video was published on youtube.com August 31, 2018 and can be found on the following link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VBVKjADLVQ0>

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On September 6, 2019 the video had received 55 views.

Mountain guards

Mountain guards: an approach to changing hiker behaviour and monitoring the landscape, resulting in a dramatic drop in need for rescue operations, a dramatic reduction in amount of litter dropped and a better opportunity monitor areas of concern both regarding natural qualities and human issues.



Toolkit 3: Newry Mourne and Down District Council (NMDDC)

Toolkit 3 includes the contribution of NMDDC. A Management plan framework for Slieve Donard and Slieve Guillion. A path review project for Slieve Donard using the established Amber and Red surveys. And educational and upskilling material in 5 different videos on different path work techniques and accessories.

Management plan framework for Slieve Donard

The management plan for Slieve Donard is a framework for the various landowners and stakeholders to develop a joined up approach and action plan over the incoming years. The varying and disconnected nature of landownership, management and use of Slieve Donard meant that the challenge for ASCENT was to identify issues and explore possibilities for taking forward a cohesive plan to achieve buy-in. The aim was to consolidate the existing management approaches and underlying plans for both sites and inform a broader vision. To that end, ASCENT generated site reports, developed site activity through Path Team work, supported volunteers and partner rangers and provided training, and facilitated stakeholder site visits and the November 2017 Upland Path Principles Workshop.

Through this, The National Trust (NT) has emerged within the various interested parties as a champion for Slieve Donard and the outline ASCENT management plan is based on its initial 2year Mourne Project (2019-2021; £250k delivering two mountain rangers, surveys, user engagement, and erosion control works), which provides the focus for dialogue with other landowners and stakeholders towards a more strategic and joined up plan and activities.

Management plan framework for Slieve Guillion

The management plan for Slieve Gullion is a framework for the various landowners and stakeholders to develop a joined up approach and action plan over the incoming years. The varying and disconnected nature of land ownership, management and use of Slieve Gullion, meant that the challenge for ASCENT was to identify issues and explore possibilities for taking forward a cohesive plan to achieve buy-in. The aim was to consolidate the existing management approaches and underlying plans for both sites and inform a broader vision. To that end, ASCENT generated site reports, developed site activity through Path Team work, supported volunteers and partner rangers and provided training, and facilitated stakeholder site visits and the November 2017 Upland Path Principles Workshop.

Our vision is one to raise awareness and encourage a focus on the landscape - the beauty and distinctiveness of its natural features and cultural heritage, the opportunities to derive benefit from this landscape and its capacity to accommodate change. The Slieve Gullion landscape will be improved, restored and more fully appreciated through positive landscape management. To achieve our vision, management will work with and commit to engage with our statutory, farming, community, commercial, recreational and environmental partners who live and work in and around the site using the management framework described above.

Amber and red surveys for Slieve Donard

To undertake a strategic programme of work for upland path sites and for an indicative estimate of the cost of repair work, information is required on the scale of path erosion. The partnership referred to the use of the Scottish standardized surveys developed to assess path condition and to inform the need for repairs: Green, Amber and Red survey.

- *Area (Green) survey:* Mainly desk based and consists of analyzing maps and photographic records.
- *Condition (Amber) survey:* Field-based and particularly useful when surveying the condition of several paths and projected path condition.
- *Specification (Red) survey:* Detailed survey, uses site sketches showing the required work referenced to a bill of quantities.

The Amber survey was used effectively by the National Trust to determine path erosion on Slieve Donard along the main access corridor and for the estimation of cost of repair in 2018, and a Red survey was undertaken at Slieve Guillion in 2018 for the approach path and summit path.

An Amber survey was carried out on Errigal in 2015 and repeated in 2017 to assess the level of change over time, while the Red survey was commissioned by an upland path expert, for detailed specification showing each section of the proposed route and the condition and the works required for restoration of damaged habitats. That Red survey supported the planning application for habitat restoration and sustainable access.

Educational and upskilling material - videos

Branch and aggregate technique on Slieve Donard (video)

MHT and the ASCENT Path Team made a video demonstrating an innovative repair technique on the path along the Glen River leading to Slieve Donard. User impact had exposed tree roots and rocks, making walking difficult, particularly in wet conditions, and when traveling downhill, causing users to find easier line, which in turn caused wider erosion. The focus was on finding a way to provide a sustainable surface across the tree roots, without damaging the trees. The team proposed a way of laying large branches on top of the roots and backfilling with aggregate; the idea was that the use of curved branches would mimic the naturally exposed tree roots which often formed 'steps' with mineral soil trapped between. Moreover, the team were inspired to try the technique after visiting Finland in September 2017 where timber has been used for path work for generations.

The video 3:14 m was published on vimeo.com September 2019 and can be found on the following link: <https://vimeo.com/359505866/40b704fbf4>

On October 3, 2019 the video had received 4 views.

Repairing Paths - Stonework & Landscaping

The video demonstrates how poor maintenance of footpaths causes erosion on boggy land when hikers avoid damaged pitched path. Also how with the help of helicopters, and stonework, landscaping and habitat restoration, paths and land can be restored.

The video 4:52 m was published on vimeo.com September 2019 and can be found on the following link: <https://vimeo.com/359509386>

On October 12, 2019 the video had received 5 views.

Path repair on boggy ground - Using sheep wool

The video demonstrates the use of sheep wool to strengthen the under layer of foot paths in boggy ground to avoid erosion. An original and natural technique as a counterbalance to the usual way of using Geo textile.



The video 3:06 m was published on vimeo.com September 2019 and can be found on the following link: <https://vimeo.com/359507116/97219a21a9>

On October 12, 2019 the video had received 7 views.

Moving material for path work - Slipes & Winches

The video demonstrates the construction of a slipe and the use of slipes and winches to help for easily and save move of material for path work.

The video 3:35 m was published on vimeo.com September 2019 and can be found on the following link: <https://vimeo.com/359504903/db45e53b28>

On October 12, 2019 the video had received 7 views.

Path repair & construction - using machinery 5 tonne excavators

The video demonstrates how two diggers work together with path workers on erosion control on Binnian/Lamagan Col.

The video 4:04 m was published on vimeo.com September 2019 and can be found on the following link: <https://vimeo.com/359806995/54bb4576e4>

On October 12, 2019 the video had received 4 views.

Toolkit 4: Parks and Wildlife Finland (PWF)

Toolkit 4 includes the contribution of PWF. Hossa National Park Management Plan in Finnish and in English. Indicators for monitoring sustainability and limits of acceptable change - LAC method. And ICT based tool for managing information on structures on sites - PAVE.

Hossa management plan

A management plan for Hossa National Park was drafted during 2018 and 2019. Long term management plans are required by law for all National Parks in Finland, usually for periods of 10 to 15 years. Metsähallitus PWF is responsible for the management of state-owned protected areas and formed a group of specialists to work on the plan. Stakeholders, such as municipalities, environmental agencies and NGOs were engaged in the process and the wider public was invited to comment and discuss the plan as also.

The management plan includes a description of the current status covering nature conservation and the state of species and habitats, cultural heritage, nature tourism and other activities. The core values of the national park are discussed, as well as the main threats and how to tackle them. The plan guides PWF in its work in the implementation of the planned actions on the site. In addition, a code of conduct has been drafted providing detailed guidelines on the use of the national park. Both documents will be ratified by the ministry of the environment.

Limits of Acceptable Change - LAC: Indicators for monitoring sustainability

PWF developed a set of principles and measures for the evaluation of the sustainability of recreation and tourism. The measures were applied through sustainable nature tourism management strategies and / or management plans and carried out using GIS based software. The planning framework is based on the concept of Limits of Acceptable Change (LAC). An essential aspect in drafting strategies and management plans is initially setting standards, i.e. limits of acceptable change for selected sustainable recreation and nature tourism criteria by means of participatory planning.

LAC is based on a selected range of applicable criteria, which is connected to the principles of sustainable tourism. A targeted evaluation and selection of several criteria is decided upon.

Indicators specifically suitable for Hossa National Park were decided to measure sustainability of recreation and tourism. It was evident that visitor surveys were important sources of data to provide baseline information to several LAC indicators. Challenges arise with the frequency of surveys for monitoring purposes, since data across indicators may date from different time periods. Experience from the pilot phase assisted in the further development of the LAC ICT tool. As such, the connection between management planning and monitoring is intrinsically linked and incorporating them into a single system is well justified.

Pave: GIS based digital tool for managing information on structures on sites

Developed by PWF, PAVE is a GIS based digital tool for managing information on buildings, structures, paths and archaeological sites on protected areas and other state-owned land. Launched in 2018, more than 200 PWF staff attended a nationwide upskilling programs. The upskilling programs was carried out in modules targeted to the specific needs of different user groups. The ultimate aim of the upskilling programs was to make the transition from make the old system as smooth as possible and make the most of new features through knowledgeable staff. Therefore, training was practical and based on existing projects and tasks in the GIS environment.



Toolkit 5: Soil Conservation Service of Iceland (SCSI)

Toolkit 5 includes the contribution of SCSI. A Management plan proposal for Eldhraun lava field in Skaftarhreppur and Úlfarsfell mountain Mosfellsbær. Also, an account of development and conduction upskilling seminars for path workers and designers. Then an effort in the form of video promoting responsible behaviour and encouraging the visitors of Vatnajökull National Park to not step on the vulnerable moss in Eldhraun.

Management plan proposal for Eldhraun

A management plan was completed for Eldhraun in collaboration with Skaftárhreppur Municipality and Vatnajökull National Park. A visitor survey indicated a preference for the use of local material and traditional crafts in the path design and associated infrastructure. The plan included eight proposals with various interconnected 'pop-up' spots along the national highway, focusing mainly on the most popular pocket. The plan also included guidelines and techniques for designing and constructing path network, using the unique indigenous material.

Management plan proposal for Úlfarsfell

A management plan was developed for Úlfarsfell in cooperation with the municipality of Mosfellsbær and based on the research report on the impact of unregulated access on the mountain. To complement the plan, was a survey on visitor perception completed and involved collaboration with various stake holders. The plan addressed the matrix of paths and categorized those in accordance with recreational use, with reference to the Recreational Opportunity Spectrum (ROS) and in the context of local, regional plans and policies and the master plan for Reykjavík. It also included different guidelines for recommended path construction techniques.

The Big 4 upskilling seminar

In collaboration with the Agricultural University of Iceland (AUI), SCSI developed four seminars on design and construction techniques on upland path work. Those included combination of theory based lectures and on site learning, with emphasis on hands-on work in the ASCENT site Eldhraun, Mt. Vífilfell (capital area) and Reykir Ölfusi (AUI vocational training facility).

Target included rangers, local authorities, relevant organizations and institutions, volunteer leaders, contractors and those with general interested in path work. Participant's sectors determined the focus of each course, whether it was habitat restoration, local material use and traditional crafts, paths and viewpoints, design and construction, and recreation and tourist sites.

The seminars were tailored for ASCENT purposes, however they were devised in such a way that they were transferable, to rural and protected areas. The outcome was a four series upskilling programme, named with the working title of *The Big 4*. Courses were conducted over a period of two years, two days at a time, from fall 2017 to spring 2019, the last course being held in fall 2019.

I. *Habitat restoration (Eldhraun Skaftarhreppur and Mt. Vífilfell, autumn 2017)*

Emphasis: Fundamental theories and methods of habitat restoration.

Target groups: Rangers, caretakers of land, local authorities staff, volunteers.

II. *Local material use and traditional crafts (Reykir Ölfusi, spring 2018)*

Emphasis: Introduction of new solutions based on traditional style of work.

Target Groups: Contractors and machine workers, caretakers of land, local authorities, volunteers, organizations and staff of national heritage institutions.

III. *Design and construction of upland footpaths (Reykir Ölfusi, Spring 2019)*

Emphasis: Traditional footpath work and the importance of the quality of handwork for the protection of the natural landscape.

Target group: Contractors, rangers, caretakers of land, local authorities, volunteers, organizations and institutions.

IV. *Constructions on recreation and tourist sites (autumn 2019)*

Emphasis: Machine work in construction of upland sites and the importance of protection of the natural landscape.

Target groups: Contractors, rangers and local authorities.

The seminars covered most of the main principles of footpath work - design, construction, habitat restoration and machine work. Despite the fact that the main target groups for the seminars were fairly obvious, general citizens being interested in the courses should be expected. Also, hands-on work is a key component of courses and in fact the reason why participants register for the courses. Therefore, practical work must be a priority and participants given a real opportunity to get dirty and try themselves at hack and shovel work.

The cooperation with the UAI has been successful and the courses have been fully booked and well received. This has led to the Environmental Ministry of Iceland to decide to adapt the structure and main focus of the courses (with minor adaptations and emphases) as part of the educational aspects of the National Scheme for Infrastructure in tourism. It will secure funding for the courses for the coming years and keep the legacy of the ASCENT project alive in an appropriate place.

Mr. MOSS (video)

Moss is characteristic for the great Elhraun lava field in Iceland. The Moss takes hundreds of years to grow and is very vulnerable for the footfall, even with gentle footfall. Vatnajökull National Park, in cooperation with Visit Klaustur, produced a short computer animation, directed at children as well as adult's, advocating for visitors not to step on the moss. The video is displayed at the park's visitor centre as was distributed widely as possible on information screens, and when this is written, effort was made to include the national and local airlines.

The video 1:40 m was published on youtube April 30, 2019 and can be found on the following link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iL7YITJdLMo&t=2s>

In the text that accompanies the video says: „Mr. MOSS is the voice and face of all Icelandic moss. Is a funny, entertaining and an educational animated short movie which shows Mr. Moss advising on how we - human beings - should change our behaviours in order to protect and respect his life. A wake up call to all the people visiting and staying in Iceland as well reflection about our responsibility over the Icelandic nature & heritage. “

Followed by the following hashtag: #iceland, #niceland, #travel, #nature, #icelandtravel, #Icelandicmoss, #icelandicpledge, #mrmosstheboss

On September 6, 2019 the video had received 3,147 views.



Summary

For long-term sustainable management of upland areas and natural environments, designing adaptable management is fundamental. For each of the ASCENT sites the work was carried out in such a way that the partner's did their own field work and research on site. In some cases, the partners did the research themselves, while in other cases, the work was done by experts, or used established accessible data. Although the plans were designed separately, they are inevitably influenced by the ongoing knowledge sharing throughout the collaboration.

The research work consisted mainly of path review surveys, and visitor surveys. Path review surveys included examining the condition of paths, maintenance needs, and/or the need for new constructions or the mitigation of footpaths. It's not always necessary to invent the wheel for established methods have already been developed. The Green/Amber/Red path review survey has proven itself as highly adaptable and reliable method. Same goes for the LAC, as a guideline for appropriate intervention for sites. And, simple visitor surveys should be conducted regularly, to gain insight into guest's ideas and suggestions, and to get a view over experience and needs of visitors, such as paths and other structures. Such surveys can thus become strategic.

Other review important for considerations were descriptions of nature and wildlife, cultural and social status, and administrative status. In this context, cooperation with key stakeholders was crucial, such as local and regional government, landowners, environmental and natural authorities, national parks, forestry services, hiker's unions, and other organizations. Also, those with the economic benefits of the place such as the tourism sector, local commerce and trade.

The planning process was never the same at each location. It is colored by the different geographical, administrative, economic, cultural and natural status of each location. At the same time, it is also colored by the nature, ability and status - general capacity and experience - of each participant and their associates to accomplish such tasks, as well as to ensure that it is successful and approved. Then, local authorities in each place is different and it takes different time to process and approve matters. In addition, it was not always possible to reach an agreement between associates about the management plans and its emphasis so that it could be realized before the project end. However, it was not a project target. This was particularly evident when partners did not really have the authority or power to implement the planning, and had to rely on associates who either did not have the will or the ability realize the plan. All of this meant that the work took different speeds and by now, at the end of the project, each of the plans are in a different place in the process and not all of them have been fully developed or realized.

The management plans are all unique in their own way, differ in shape and size, based on what has been mentioned above. Nevertheless, they all share the same overarching aims of protecting the natural quality, ensuring sustained access and in addressing and balancing environmental, social, tourism and cultural challenges.

Other measures taken are beneficial for management planning and management plans. Upskilling of path workers is very important for successful path work and path management. Key learning from the development of the Big 4 seminar's is that participants sign up for hands on work, although lectures are also an important.

Upskilling in other field of work is also important. GIS based digital tools for managing information on buildings, structures, path and archaeological sites on protected areas can be very efficient and time saving in planning and managing sites. For people already working day jobs, seminars in the use of programs like PAVE, carried out in modules and targeted to the specific needs of different users, can be a good arrangement.

Other educational and upskilling material such as awareness videos and digital tools were produced to inform, educate and involve the target audience, visitors and stakeholders, in preserving access in sustainable manner. The message in videos and movies can involve different agenda individually, such as encouraging responsible use when visiting and climbing sites, to communicate clearly the sensitivity of the natural environment, using imagery and drone footage.

Awareness video promoting responsible recreation, safety first, importance of suitable clothing, sticking to paths and using local guide services, is a clear and simple effort. Short movies advocating for visitors not to unnecessarily step on step on vulnerable habitat, directed at children as well as adults, is also an effort worth committing to promote visitor responsibility and to educate. The key point is to distribute the content in the widest and the right places. More tangible and personalized method is locating a Mountain guard by popular paths and has proven a highly efficient initiative, sending straight messages and offering service to hikers. As with management planning, then there is no one propaganda way that is more correct than the other, but working with the natural, social and cultural environment at every place, and developing methods and solutions that are suitable for each place.

Appendix

ASCENT Documents produced under *T2 Design* constituting Management plans for each of the ASCENT sites delivered by partners, assessment toolkit adaptation, upskilling programmes development, collation of produced and existing educational material on upland path management, as well as adaptation and modification of indicators for sustainable recreation and tourism. Combined it contributes to and enhances knowledge and appreciation of the issues affecting the seven ASCENT sites, as well as similar locations.

Toolkit:	No. :	Pp. :	Name:	Type :	Lang.:
1. - DCC	1.	4	ASCENT Errigal Management Plan executive summary	Doc	Eng.
	2.	54	Errigal Integrated Management Plan	Doc	Eng.
	3.		Promoting responsible recreation at Errigal	Link	Eng.
2. - HCC	4.	4	Criteria authorization Norwegian scenic paths	Doc	Eng.
	5.	55	Visitor strategy for Trolltunga	Doc	Nor.
	6.	2	Visitor strategy intro and abstract (appendix)	Doc	Eng.
	7.	58	Vulnerability analysis Trolltunga	Doc.	Nor.
	8.	2	Vulnerability analysis for Trolltunga path (appendix)	Doc.	Eng.
	9.		ASCENT project Trolltunga, Norway	Link	Eng.
	10.	2	Case study Trolltunga changing behavior: Mountain guards	Doc.	Eng.
	11.	3	Slieve Donard Management Plan framework	Doc.	Eng.
	12.	2	Slieve Guillion Forrest Park Management framework	Doc.	Eng.
3. - NMDDC	13.	37	Slieve Donard Path review project - Amber survey	Doc.	Eng.
	14.		Slieve Donard Path review project - Red survey	Doc.	Eng.
	15.		Repairing paths in woodland - Branch and Aggregate	Link	Eng.
	16.		Repairing paths - Stonework and Landscaping	Link	Eng.
	17.		Path repair on boggy ground - Using sheep wool	Link	Eng.
	18.		Moving materials for path work - Slipes and Winches	Link	Eng.
	19.		Path repair and Constructions - Using machinery	Link	Eng.
	20.	87	Hossa national Park management plan	Doc.	Fin.
4. PWF					

	21.	7	Hossa national Park management plan	Doc.	Eng.
	22.	2	Limits of Acceptable Change (LAC) - Analysing impact	Doc.	Eng.
	23.	2	Upskilling Programme (PAVE) - GIS skills up!	Doc.	Eng.
5. SCSI	24.	14	Path management proposal for Eldhraun	Doc.	Eng.
	25.	28	Path management proposal for Ulfarsfell	Doc.	Eng.
	26.	5	The big 4 - Upskilling seminar	Doc.	Eng.
	27.		Mr. Moss	Link	Eng.

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