

Press release from AECO - Association of Arctic Expedition Cruise Operators (for immediate release):

AECO includes Iceland in geographical range

The Association of Arctic Expedition Cruise Operators (AECO) has decided to include Iceland in the association's geographical range. Guidelines and other measures will be applied to ensure sustainable expedition cruise operations in Iceland.

[AECO](#) is an international association for expedition cruise operators operating in the Arctic. The association's geographical range encompasses Svalbard, Jan Mayen, Greenland, Arctic Canada and the Russian Arctic National Park, and from 2019 also Iceland. At least 25% of AECO's operating members have itineraries that already include or will include Iceland in the future.

The Association has Icelandic members and have had been involved in Iceland for some years. AECO's executive director Frigg Jørgensen is very glad AECO members have decided to include Iceland in the Association's geographical range: "Over many years, we have built beneficial cooperation with several stakeholders in Iceland. We have been watching the increase in tourism, including cruise tourism, and we believe AECO's guidelines, measures and tools can be helpful".

Together with Cruise Iceland and other partners from other North Atlantic areas, AECO has developed general [Community Guidelines](#) for visitors to North Atlantic communities. This past summer AECO entered a collaboration with local stakeholders to develop community specific guidelines for Seyðisfjörður. The guidelines are expected to be finalized later this year.

AECO is also responsible for an annual [Joint Arctic Search and Rescue \(SAR\) Tabletop Exercise \(TTX\)](#) organized in Reykjavik every April in cooperation with the Icelandic Coast Guard. The exercise gathers cruise industry and SAR entities from across the Arctic and is regarded very important for SAR in the Arctic.

The Association has developed a wide range of [guidelines](#) that the members are obliged to follow. This includes operational guidelines, wildlife guidelines, visitors' guidelines, site specific guidelines and others. AECO will assess guidelines to consider the need for local adjustments, but the guidelines will as far as possible be compulsory for members operating in Iceland.

"We look forward to gradually step up our involvement and collaboration with relevant stakeholders in Iceland in the year to come," says Frigg Jørgensen. "Anyone involved or interested in our areas of work are very welcome to contact us".

Suggested illustration photos

High resolution illustration images can be downloaded here:

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/vvw4224ifa2i08a/AABuSHTvJL78hmQLajaQl7h2a?dl=0>



Iceland in a popular destination for cruise tourists.
Photo: Pixabay.



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AECO - Association of Arctic Expedition Cruise Operators

Association of Arctic Expedition Cruise Operators is an international organization for expedition cruise operators and associates in the Arctic, dedicated to managing environmentally friendly, safe and considerate cruise tourism. With approximately 70 international members – including 40 vessel operators, owners and management, and 50 expedition cruise vessels that are organized by the association – AECO represent the great majority of these operations in the Arctic. AECO's members carried a total of 26 000 passengers to Svalbard, Greenland, Iceland, Canada, and Franz Josef Land in 2018. Cruise Iceland and the North Atlantic Agency in Iceland are members of AECO. Website:

www.aeco.no.

More information

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