



# Go east, with plan

*Revised management plan adds off-limits areas to protect wildlife*

**By MARK SABBATINI**  
Editor

It may still be complex and confusing, but at least now it's in English.

A series of changes increasing environmental protections, including limiting or banning on access to many areas, is detailed in a newly revised proposal updating the East Svalbard Management Plan. The deadline for comments on the plan, prepared by the governor's office at the directive of Norway's Ministry of

the Environment, is Oct. 10.

Work on the revision started in 2009 and has received extensive feedback – and criticism – from interests ranging from science researchers to cruise ship operators. The new draft accounts for that input, plus a desire from

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TOM BØRSLID / FLICKR



ARBEIDERNES UNGDOMSFYLKING



## One year later...

A liturgy observing the first anniversary of the July 22, 2011, attacks in Oslo and Utøya that killed 77 people is scheduled at 11 a.m. Sunday at Svalbard Church. A gathering for Longyearbyen's youths, featuring a broadcast of a memorial concert on NRK, is scheduled at 7:30 p.m. at Ungdomshuset.

Most of Longyearbyen's leaders, along with survivors and those close to the five local youths at the summer camp on Utøya during the attack, will be at memorial events in Oslo and on the island, seen in the background at top and from above at the lower left.

Among the youngest victims at the youth camp was Johannes Buø, 14, lower right, who spent the last three years of his life in Longyearbyen with his family. Also shot and injured critically was Viljar Hanssen, 18, a Longyearbyen resident who lost an eye and is still recovering from other impairments.

A donated sculpture by Nico Widerberg honoring victims of the tragedy will be unveiled outside Svalbard Church this fall, when most residents have returned from summer holidays, according to a statement from city officials.

## Thai heat meets Arctic chill



MARK SABBATINI / ICEPEOPLE

Martin Styhre, right, pays Elite Regato for lunch as the first customer at Taste of Thai, which opened Saturday in Lompensentret.

*New eatery finally offers cuisine of Svalbard's biggest foreign bloc, with local tastes in mind*

**By MARK SABBATINI**  
Editor

Martin Styhre waited a long time for this and on opening day he was first in line. When told there would be yet one more wait of an hour he was unfazed, making sure he was back quickly enough to be the first customer at Longyearbyen's new Thai restaurant.

"I've been back five times in four days," he

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## Who's to blame and how to express your wrath

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*Icepeople* is published weekly (or thereabouts) on Tuesdays (or thereabouts), with printed copies available free on a limited basis in Longyearbyen. Additional printed copies are available locally and by mail upon request. Charges are on an "at cost" basis.

## Copyright stuff

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## Corrections policy

When we screw up you'll know about it – on the front page. One of the big complaints about newspapers is they tend to bury corrections and clarifications deep inside where few people who read the original article see them. If we need to fix something, an alert box on the front page will state what story is in error and where the full correction is printed.

## Submitting material

Letters, columns, photos and other material are welcome, but we can't offer pay for published items since nobody here is getting paid at the moment. Submissions in electronic form (text, Word documents, JPEGs, etc.) are highly preferred, although typing and/or scanning of items will be considered on a per-case basis. We reserve the right to edit submissions for length, clarity, accuracy, libel and other reasons, but we will also make every reasonable effort to contact the author about any changes prior to publication.



GREENPEACE

Players guide Diana G., militant environmentalist and glandular freak, across glaciers and sea ice planting flags on oil ships in "Arctic Defender," a free iOS game by Greenpeace.

# Greenpeace fouls up 'Arctic'

*Review: Anti-oil game's flaws and absurdities enough to get players saying 'drill, baby, drill'*

By MARK SABBATINI  
Editor

On the plus side, Greenpeace fans can take comfort knowing very little of their donations were apparently spent developing this video game. Or promoting it – with barely a whisper at their website – so few are likely to play it.

Polar bears are harmless and the slightest contact with boat railings fatal for the mutantly buxom heroine of Arctic Defender, a new iOS game reaching for the highest levels of unplayability and absurd propaganda.

Arctic Defender is another of those endless platformers wildly popular on mobile devices at the moment. The goal is to guide Diana G. and her breasts (basically a vegan Laura Croft wearing a jacket that looks suspiciously like leather) across ice-covered seas planting flags on ships while avoiding anything – and I mean anything – man-made.

The list of irritations and follies is lengthy, but the immediate deal-breaker for non-Greenie gamers is simple: The touch-screen swipe controls are horribly unresponsive, so jumping and ducking when necessary is mostly a random proposition.

At least it's free, although you'll constantly be urged to donate and join the cause.

The game is part of the "Save the Arctic" campaign by Greenpeace, whose members are currently in Svalbard helping compile a first-ever 3D map of the sea ice using the same ship it used to stage a blockade of Svea coal mine a few years ago. (Now *that*, along with their numerous other disruptive protests designed to get media attention, would be a cool concept.)

The most fun part of Arctic Defender may be the instructions – the first time through, anyhow – where aspiring Greenies learn "the

animals will not hurt you" and planting flags on those evil oil ships will somehow thwart their drilling ambitions. As propaganda to sway undecided minds, it's roughly the mirror image of the lesson plans Exxon snuck into schools showing wildlife happy and thriving shortly after the *Valdez* oil spill in Alaska.

Diana G. runs at constant speed across the scrolling landscape, with player control limited to jumping crevasses and obstacles such as oil slicks, ducking under deadly objects such as bulldozers, and planting those flags. A bar at the top right indicates her energy level, which drops sharply if she makes a misstep, which also forces her to rerun the terrain.

Games of this genre tend to be very quick, but far more so here because the controls make covering any meaningful distance impossible. Among the other screw-ups even mediocre programmers learned long ago to avoid:

- There's no adjustment of any settings, even for near-universal things like sound volume, let alone anything affecting gameplay such as your starting energy level or control sensitivity (better yet, how about offering simple virtual buttons instead of because-it-can-be-done swipes?)
- You need to endure the slideshow of instructions at the start of every game, with no touch-to-skip option.

- There's no quick restart at the end of a game. Instead you have to navigate past a "join us" screen to the main menu before waiting out another unavoidable slideshow.

Signing up as a supporter makes you eligible to win a free t-shirt, another indicator Greenpeace isn't exactly going all out on this one (there's been zero news and blog coverage to date). But the organization promises this is "just the beginning," and future games will allow players to experience all the wonders of militant environmentalism. So there's hope.

**There's more! Visit [www.icepeople.net](http://www.icepeople.net) for the complete story.**

## Icesheet

*Random bits of the week's weirdness:*

We're ignorant and gullible about any number of things, so a bit of overheard chatter at the office (a.k.a. Fruene, to give them a free shameless plug), had our editor reaching for his notebook to capture a fascinating untold exclusive. A seeming old-timer was telling his younger companions homeless people are liv-

ing in the ruins of Mine 2 which, after recent reports of tourists finding a way into the forbidden space, didn't seem impossible. Turns out our mild-mannered muckracker was the only person within hearing range who didn't know the somber-toned sourdough was joking. Just for that, we're waiting even longer to reveal our real list of possible transient hideouts.



ESPEN STOKKE / SYSSELMANNEN

Protecting walrus, such as those seen here in Nordaustlandet, is one of the primary changes in a revised proposed management plan for east Svalbard. The plan would close such areas, which are also highly populated bird nesting grounds, to human traffic between May 15 and Aug. 15.

# Revised plan increases banned areas

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the ministry the governor take a more aggressive stance on protection.

The main change in the new revision increases the areas where all human traffic is banned during warmer months.

"A traffic prohibition is proposed in two areas, Tusenøyane and the west side of Lågøy, between May 15 and Aug. 15, in order to protect vulnerable and rare species of birds and walrus with calves," the governor's office wrote in a prepared statement. "These account for 1.5 percent of the reserves. No new traffic restrictions are proposed in other parts of the reserves."

A 77,000-square kilometer region of east Svalbard was established as a reserve in 1973. The revised management plan classifies specific locations into one of five zones with various levels of restrictions. Some, for instance, are open to researchers but not tourists, while others are entirely off-limits for environmental or heritage reasons.

"We have tried to find a good balance between conservation and limited use to tourists, locals and researchers," said Guri Tveito, head of environmental operations for the governor's office, in an interview published by *Kvinnheringen*.

Some of the strongest objections have come from the tourist industry, with cruise ship operators saying restrictions such as a ban on heavy oil will make voyages too costly to continue. Another proposed restriction requires guides in eastern Svalbard to be certificated as



SYSSELMANNEN

A map depicts the five protection zones in east Svalbard as proposed in a revised management plan for the area. Areas designated Zone A are limited to research, Zone B are closed from May 15 to Aug. 15 to protect wildlife habitats, Zone C are often visited for cultural and sightseeing purposes, Zone D are heritage sites closed to traffic, and Zone E are closed in the interests of the polar bear population.

experts about the Arctic setting.

English-language versions of the plan, maps and other material are available at [www.sysselmannen.no/hoved.aspx?m=44365&amid=3182719](http://www.sysselmannen.no/hoved.aspx?m=44365&amid=3182719).

**There's more! Visit [www.icepeople.net](http://www.icepeople.net) for the complete story.**

## HEADLINES STOLEN FROM SVALBARDPOSTEN

VERDENS NORDLIGSTE AVIS

### Children playing in sewage due to pipe leak, father says

Green grass is thriving at a playground on Vei 238, apparently due to being fertilized by a sewage leak, according to a parent who reported his observations to the city. "A stream flows through during a great part of the summer," said Tore Hoem, a father of two. "Children love the water, so they splash into the mixture of sewage and water." He said the leaks occur when the air channel on the sewage pipes are blocked, which forces clearly visible waste matter through leaks to the surface. Kjersti Holte, the city's director of technical infrastructure, said it appears to best remedy is creating a ditch next to the playground to capture water drainoff.

### Gov.: No pepper spray to stop bears, change gun laws

Rejecting pepper spray as a polar bear deterrent and changing Svalbard's firearms laws are being advocated by Gov. Odd Olsen Ingerø. The recommendation against pepper spray follows winter tests where the effective range was only five meters. "It is not desirable for people to put themselves in a situation where polar bears can come so close," the governor wrote in a statement. A flare gun is preferable because "it works regardless of weather and wind, and requires little training." Ingerø is also proposing a requirement that shooting clubs keep diaries of their members because handguns are being taken by non-members into the field for polar bear protection, which is a violation of the Firearms Act. Also proposed is limiting firearms licenses for polar bear protection to three years instead of indefinitely because people are illegally bringing weapons to the mainland when they move.

### Man hospitalized after falling off plane during maintenance

A man was hospitalized today after falling off an airplane while performing maintenance work at Svalbard Airport. The man, who works for Luftransports, fell about a meter onto the concrete floor of a hanger, said Dag Einar Aas of the Svalbard governor's office. The man sustained moderate fractures and was flown to Tromsø for further treatment.

## Weather forecast for Longyearbyen

Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Partly cloudy. Variable winds to 11 km/h. High 6C (6C wind chill), low 4C (1C wind chill).	Partly cloudy. W winds to 15 km/h. High 6C (6C wind chill), low 5C (2C wind chill).	Partly cloudy. NE winds to 7 km/h. High 2C (0C wind chill), low 1C (0C wind chill).	Partly cloudy. NE winds at 11 km/h. High 3C (0C wind chill), low 1C (-1C wind chill).
24-hour daylight	24-hour daylight	24-hour daylight	24-hour daylight
<b>Extended forecast:</b> Sunday, p. cloudy, 3C (1C), 2C (-1C), light 24:00h; Monday, cloudy, 3C (1C), 2C (0C), light 24:00h; Tuesday, cloudy, 3C (1C), 2C (0C), light 24:00h; Wednesday, cloudy, 3C (1C), 2C (0C), light 24:00h			

Data provided by yr.no



MARK SABBATINI / ICEPEOPLE

Workers remove the last boards blocking the entrance to Taste of Thai on Friday evening in Lompensentret as the new restaurant prepares for its debut the following day.

## Feeling heat beyond the kitchen

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said. "I've been waiting for something like this that's different. I'm tired of beef and fries."

He was among about a half-dozen people waiting at the entrance when Taste of Thai opened at 1 p.m. Saturday in Lompensentret. While the extra hour might have had customers chomping at the bit, that's nothing compared to the wait owners and staff went through as construction and shipping problems delayed the originally scheduled opening date by two months.

Styhre, a three-year Longyearbyen resident who works at Svalbar, said most local restaurants offer the same dishes believing there isn't enough interest among residents and tourists in more exotic alternatives. He said he hopes the new Thai place – and a sushi restaurant scheduled to open in October – proves such thinking wrong.

His assessment was similar to the collective opinion of numerous diners interviewed: good entree choices with authentic flavors and friendly service, but portions are a bit small and some dishes might benefit from more spice. Nobody said they were disappointed by the experience.

One unique suggestion by Styhre was an all-you-can eat option, perhaps for 199 kroner compared to the 89-89 kroner single-dish prices, for those seeking a more filling and diverse meal.

"There's a lot of tastes," he said. "I like to try them all."

Rung-Arun Sianglam, co-owner of the restaurant with her husband, Wiggo Lund, said the food is mostly from her hometown of Bangkok with some additional dishes from northeast Thailand. She said the selection and spice levels are based on what seem to be the most popular in numerous Western countries she researched online.

The restaurant is opened from 11 a.m. to 8 p.m. every day except Sunday, but her sched-

ule is far more grueling. She said she usually comes in at 8:30 a.m. and goes home at about 11:30 p.m.

"Yesterday I brought things home to cook, so I didn't get to bed until 5 a.m.," she said.

The restaurant serves about a half-dozen entries cafeteria style rather than the sit-down service some locals were expecting. Sianglam said that decision was made to ensure customers have a realistic perspective of the dishes and their quality.

Selections will rotate from among about 30 dishes, although Sianglam said for now she is mostly sticking with those proving most popular.

Sianglam said she worked for many years in Thai restaurants as a server, not a chef. But when it comes to Thailand "we all can cook."

Taste of Thai is in part of a space long occupied by Kafé Busen until it closed in 2009. An extensive remodeling of the center was largely responsible for the delay in opening the restaurant, which Sianglam and her husband signed a contract for last September.

Among the major delays were a new concrete foundation for the relocated kitchen area and the failure of some equipment to be shipped as scheduled, said Stian Indsetviken, a manager at the restaurant.

"In the beginning it's a little stressful," he said. "Hopefully it will be better."

As with most restaurants, the opening days offer insight into what works and what needs improvement. Indsetviken said one concern is making sure they can handle the volume of diners during peak periods.

"When there are big waves there can be a queue, so we need to figure out a way to get food out quickly," he said.

The restaurant is averaging about 50 customers a day so far, but Sianglam said they will need about 75 to stay in business.

**There's more! Visit [www.icepeople.net](http://www.icepeople.net) for the complete story.**

## What's up

### July 1 - Aug. 5

Movie theater at Kulturhuset closed for renovations.

### July 22

11 a.m.: Memorial liturgy for victims of July 22, 2011, attacks in Oslo and Utøya. Svalbard Church.

### Aug. 19

8 p.m.: Movie: "The Dark Knight Rises," U.S./British action, ages 15 and up. Kulturhuset.

### Aug. 26

6 p.m.: Movie: "Madagascar 3," U.S. animated/family film dubbed in Norwegian, no age limit determined. Kulturhuset.

8 p.m.: Movie: "Kon-Tiki," Norwegian dram, no age limit specified. Kulturhuset.

### Aug. 28

6-8 p.m.: Activity fair. Demonstrations and signups for Longyearbyen's recreational clubs. Svalbardhallen. More information at [svalbardturn.no](http://svalbardturn.no).

### Aug. 29

6 p.m.: Movie: "Ice Age: Continental Drift" (3D), U.S. animated/comedy, all ages. Kulturhuset.

### Aug. 31

6 p.m.: Movie: "Til Ungdommen," Norwegian documentary about youth activism in the summer of 2011, premier screening, no age limit determined. Kulturhuset.

### Sept. 2

6 p.m.: Movie: "Til Ungdommen," Norwegian documentary about youth activism in the summer of 2011, no age limit determined. Kulturhuset.

8 p.m.: Movie: "Albert Nobbs," U.S. drama/romance, no age limit specified. Kulturhuset.

### Sept. 9

6 p.m.: Movie: "Brave" (3D), U.S. fantasy, no age limit determined. Kulturhuset.

## What's online

**Icepeople.net** provides daily updates of news about Svalbard and the world's polar regions, plus extras for articles from the print edition. Among the latest news:

- *Freak weather likely the 'new normal'*
- *Huge Greenland ice break from warming*
- *Google Street Maps captures Antarctica*
- *Dump iron in ocean, fix global warming?*