



A Guide for Researchers

FIG Environment Unit

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1. Introduction

This guide is for researchers wishing to conduct research on natural or physical environmental science in the Falklands. It outlines the process for applying for a research permit, as well as it advising on some practical aspects of conducting environmental research on the Falkland Islands. Depending on your research permit, this may be evaluated in slightly different ways and can take anywhere from 2 weeks to 2 months to process. A Research Permit is needed to capture all research projects on natural and physical environmental science carried out onshore and at sea within the Falkland Islands' 200 nautical mile Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ). Please allow sufficient time for this ahead of your planned trip.

The Environment Unit of the Falkland Islands Government is responsible for processing your application and issuing your permit. When applying for a permit you will also be asked to agree with the submission of metadata, and a data agreement, should this be necessary. Following this, information about your research permit is shared with the IMS-GIS Data Centre who will be in touch with you regarding your research's metadata and a data agreement should there need to be one.

The research permit process also enables us to capture your research within the national Information Management Service and Geographic Information System Data Centre, hosted at the South Atlantic Environmental Research Institute. The Data Centre curates all metadata for data collected on the Falkland Islands and works towards ensuring that your research projects provide a benefit for the Falkland Islands and future researchers on the Islands.

In this guide you will find information about the application process, what you need to submit, how the nature of your research will impact the permitting process, what to consider about your research in the Falkland Islands and about submitting data, metadata and your rights over the data.

2. The Application Process

Researchers wishing to undertake research on physical or natural environmental science or wishing make collections for educational purposes in the Falkland Islands must obtain a Research Permit before travelling to the Falkland Islands. Depending on the nature of your research, you may also be required to submit additional information. A basic research permit application is required, regardless of the nature of your research.

All forms and this guide can be found on the website of the FIG Environment Unit and SAERI:

FIG: <http://fig.gov.fk/policy/environment/licences-permits>

SAERI: <https://www.south-atlantic-research.org/research/data-science/check-list-before-arriving-to-the-falklands/>

If you do have any questions or queries during the application process please do not hesitate to contact the Environmental Officer, Denise Blake, at environmental.officer@sec.gov.fk

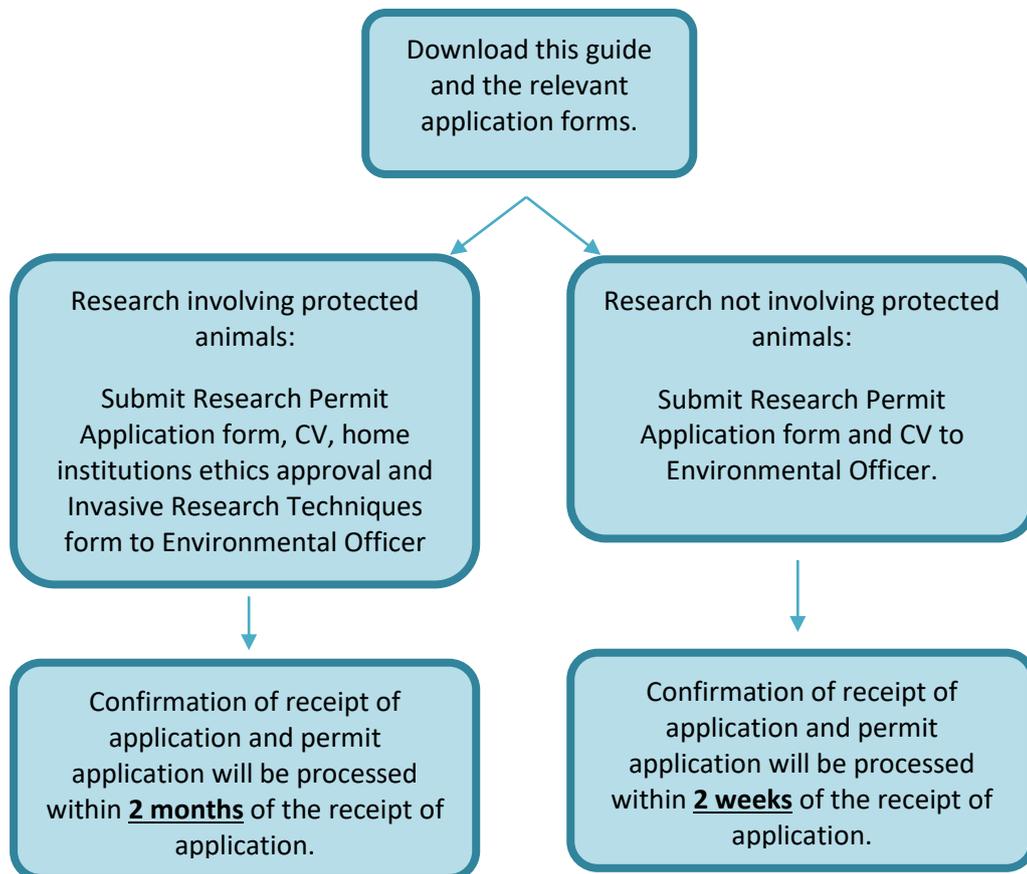
For undertaking environmental research of any nature in the Falkland Islands, you will need to complete the Research Application Form. Once this is signed and dated, please submit this along with an up-to-date CV (max. 2 pages) to the FIG Environmental Officer at environmental.officer@sec.gov.fk. Electronic submission is preferred. If you are submitting the

application by post, please allow at least 4 weeks for the application to be received. You will receive a confirmation of your permit application once this has been received.

We aim to process research applications for environmental studies that do not affect nationally protected animal and plant species within 2 working weeks of receipt.

If you are undertaking research which involves handling protected plants or animals or you are considering studying nationally protect animals, we aim to process your application within 2 working months of receipt. Permits of this nature will be considered by the Environmental Committee, which meets every 2 months. An expedited process for these permits is not available. In addition to completing the research permit application and submitting a CV, we also ask that researchers complete the Invasive Research Techniques form and submit their home institution's ethics approval. Protected plants and animals are listed below.

Once we have received your permit application, the FIG Environment Unit will begin processing this. Please note that your application may be approved, deferred (and more information requested) or not approved. The reasons for the assessment will be outlined to you.



3. Protected Animals and Plants

The following list is correct as of November 2019 and includes all protected plant and animal species in accordance with Falkland Islands law. If you have any queries and for a more up-to-date list please contact the environmental officer.

Protected Animals:

- All wild birds including seabirds and penguins.
- All marine mammals, including cetaceans and pinnipeds.
- All species of butterfly
- Trout (*Salmo trutta*)
- Falkland Islands Trout (*Aplochiton zebra*)

Protected Plants:

- Adders Tongue (*Ophioglossum crotalophoroides*)
- Dusen's Moonwort (*Botrychium dusenii*)
- Chilean Maidenhair Fern (*Adiantum chilense*)
- Feltons Flower (*Calandrinia feltonii*)
- Shrubby Seablite (*Suaeda argentinensis*)
- Falkland Rock Cress (*Phlebotobium maclovianum*)
- Fuegian Saxifrage (*Saxifraga magellanica*)
- Native Yellow Violet (*Viola maculata*)
- Yellow Lady's Slipper (*Calceolaria dichotoma*)
- Falklands False Plantain (*Nastanthus falklandicus*)
- Hairy Daisy (*Erigeron incertus*)
- Falkland Pondweed (*Potamogeton linguatus*)
- Yellow Pale Maiden (*Sisyrinchium chilense*)
- Pale Yellow Orchid (*Gavilea australis*)
- Yellow Orchid (*Gavilea littoralis*)
- Gaudichaud's Orchid (*Chlorae gaudichaudii*)
- Fir Clubmoss (*Huperzia selago*)
- Comb Fern (*Schizaea fistulosa*)
- Leathery Shield Fern (*Rumohra adiantiformis*)

4. Guidance notes for completing the forms:

4.1. Research Permit Application Form:

The Research Permit Application form must be completed, in English, by the lead researcher. Please provide the title of the research that you are planning on undertaking on the front of the form in the field requested.

Section 1-2: Applicant details

The application should be in the name of the lead researcher. Affiliation, position, postal address, phone number and e-mail address are required and should be provided. Where necessary please provide your address at your institution and phone number at your institution. Assistant's details are requested in Section 2. Please provide their name, affiliation, role in the research and country.

This information is required and your permit will not be processed without it.

Section 3: Organisation/partner point of reference in the Falkland Islands

Please provide the detail of the local partner(s) that are involved during the fieldwork. Though it is not compulsory, this can be beneficial and we would always recommend that you get in touch with a local organisation.

Section 4: Purpose of research

Please provide a concise statement of the purpose of your research. This should include the research aims and objectives, and why your research is valuable to the Falkland Islands and/or the global scientific community. Please limit your response to 200 words and avoid putting in any references. The purpose of your research should be outlined in a non-technical format. Applicants should flag up any practical ways in which the outcomes of their proposed research can benefit the local environment.

Section 5: Research procedure

Please describe the methodology that will be used in non-technical terms so that they are easy to follow. Where multiple methods are used these should be outlined separately. Misleading statements about proposed methods may result in future applications being rejected. Where an existing established protocol is followed this may be referenced.

Note also that applications are assessed based on not only scientific relevance but also potential environmental impact. Your research procedures should make reference to any mitigation measures you plan to put in place to minimise any adverse impacts of your research on the local environment.

Section 6: Ethics Statement

Please outline how your research meets ethical guidelines produced by your home institution or in accordance with international best practice. If you have been issued with an ethics permit from your home institution, please note this here and include it in your permit application submission.

Section 7: Qualifications of research team members.

Please ensure that you attach the CV of the lead researcher to the permit application. For other members of the research team please list their name and their qualifications and experience relevant to the work that is being carried out. Failure to do this may result in your permit being revoked. CVs should be in English and 2 pages maximum in length.

Section 8: Date of field work

Please provide the dates of your planned field work in the Falkland Islands. Please note that a research permit can be issued for multiple field seasons and visits where the methodology and fieldwork remains in line with the original application. Where the aim and methodology of research change, a new research licence will be required.

Section 9 - 10: Location of the field work and Landowner permission

To avoid delays, applicants should provide a full list of locations where they intend to work. Access to land for the intended work should be checked with the relevant landowners prior to the application of the permit. If landowners consent has been given this may be cross-referenced with landowners during permit processing.

The FIG Environmental Unit and SAERI can provide assistance in the identification of the relevant landowners.

Section 11: Insurance

Please state whether all individuals or the entire group has any of the following types of insurance: medical, personal accident, public liability, professional indemnity, and travel.

All people entering the Falkland Islands must have medical insurance that covers medical evacuation.

Section 12: Protected wildlife research licence

Any person wishing to carry out scientific research that involves handling protected species is required to complete this section. Protected species can take up to 2 working months to process. Please note that this permit application does not constitute a permit to export any biological matter or biological by-products out of the Falkland Islands nor the ability to carry out research on land without landowner's permission.

Section 12.1 Purpose of research and research methodology: This section is not a duplication of section 4. Applicants should describe how their research will benefit the conservation of the species or the habitat this species is found in. If they haven't already done so, applicants should provide a sample size and justification of this. Where invasive techniques are used this should be justified here. Applicants are also asked to justify the use of any invasive or destructive methods, both in terms of potential outcomes and lack of non-invasive alternatives, and keep sample sizes to the minimum needed to achieve the stated aims of the research.

Section 12.2 Principal workers Applicants should name the individuals who will be responsible for carrying out the invasive procedures described in this permit.

Section 12.3 Precautions and mitigations Applicants should provide evidence of any precautions and mitigations they are employing to ensure that all reasonable precautions to minimise disturbance, harm or suffering to protected species have been taken in the study design, both at an individual and population level.

Section 13.0 Topic category Applicants should opt for one or more the topic category in which their research best fit.

Section 14.0 Fees A charge is levied against research licence applications of £250 per application where this is appropriate.

Fees may be waived where applications are made:

- by Charities
- by Government departments

- for Educational visits
- for Management actions approved by the Head of Environmental Planning
- for Research which is non-commercial.

4.2. Invasive Research Techniques Form:

The completion of this form is necessary where your research involves handling of any protected species including plants and any parts of protected species. If your research involves more than one species, please use the same form but indicate clearly which species is referred to.

Section 1: Relevance to the Islands:

This section is about establishing the benefit that your research will have to the Falkland Islands and the species' conservation in the Falkland Islands and/or globally.

Section 1.1: The species:

We will ask whether the species is listed either as globally threatened, locally threatened or under the Biodiversity Framework 2016-2030 as a priority species. Please use the Framework to indicate whether a species is listed and under which category. Where a species is not listed, note this and outline the reason on why data needs to be collected from the species with the above general aim of improving conservation practices in mind.

Section 1.2: The Research Question:

This section is about how data collection will inform the research question. It asks about whether the information gathered through the use of invasive techniques will outweigh the harm caused during the research. The focus here should be around why an invasive technique is necessary instead of other non-invasive techniques. Please explain your answers. The second part of this section asks whether the data collected will substantially enrich the field of study. Here please explain how it will do this. Answers to these questions of either "yes" or "no" will mean you are unlikely to receive a permit.

Section 2: The Researcher:

This section is about assessing the applicant's capabilities to safely conduct the invasive technique research. Please focus on all aspects of your methodology and describe in the various sections, how you have the relevant experience to undertake the research. Please list all relevant certificates and qualifications that you have in undertaking the prescribed technique. Techniques are species specific, so please also note which species your expertise is in.

Section 3: Alternatives to the Invasive Technique:

Please provide what other approaches are available as alternatives to the invasive technique. Focus on all parts of your methodology and state what other alternatives are available and why the chosen technique was used.

5. Research in the Falkland Islands

5.1. Capacity Building

Our aim is to ensure that the best result from your research can be achieved for the benefit of the Falkland Islands and the researcher alike. Though not all research projects will present opportunities for local capacity building, we encourage all visiting researchers to consider ways in which their research can be shared with the local community. Sharing your research benefits the development of skills and knowledge of the environment in our community. Researchers are encouraged to communicate results from their work to the local community and non-specialist audiences, for

example delivering a public talk at the end of the field work season, posting a blog to the website of one organisation partner, or writing an article in the local newspaper.

Where your research crosses over with an area of interest from local organisations, we will also encourage you to meet with them and discuss future opportunities. This is also true for the government's Environment Unit. You can arrange a time to meet with us via e-mail.

To ensure that your research remains helpful in informing the state of the local environment, your research licence is issued subject to the following conditions:

- A report is sent to the Environmental Unit at the end of the fieldwork. This report should detail the preliminary results of the field season, fieldwork activities, sampling undertaken, samples collected and any other relevant information.
- That metadata in a pre-specified form is completed and submitted to the IMS-GIS Data Centre in a timely manner following your research. This form is available via the SAERI IMS-GIS Data Centre website. Questions around metadata should be directed to the IMS-GIS Data Centre manager. Please see the section below for more information about this process.
- Any scientific papers and reports arising from your research in the Falkland Islands should be shared with the FIG Environment Unit once this becomes available. These should be in English and ideally in electronic format. Please note that all published material will be archived as a resource for the Government, the local community and other researchers.

5.2. Practical Considerations

Import of Equipment:

Poor biosecurity practices pose a serious level of risk to the natural environment of the Falkland Islands. Risks of spreading of any invasive animals, plants, bacteria and virus are a serious threat.

The importation of biological and mineral material may be possible but must be declared prior to entry. Passengers arriving on planes and via ship are required to fill out a Prohibited/Restricted Goods Declaration and certain products (including all animal and plant products and by-products) can only be brought in with an import permit. More information is available at <http://fig.gov.fk/agriculture/biosecurity> and queries can be sent by email to FIG's Biosecurity team at biosecurity@doa.gov.fk. All equipment previously used in the field, *must* be cleaned before importation. Contaminated equipment (and clothing) is a major entry route for pathogens and non-native species.

Many carriers have restrictions on chemicals which may be transported and the quantities, advice should be sought on what is permitted through your home institution or travel agent. It may be possible to source chemicals locally but researchers should not rely on this, unless the work is being carried out in conjunction with a local organisation. If chemicals are obtained locally then it is usual for a charge to be made.

Export of samples:

Biological and mineral samples (soil, etc) may be exported, but researchers should be aware of procedures adopted by the relevant importing country as well as the Falkland Islands. Where you

require a phytosanitary certificate to fall in line with import requirements, please contact the Department of Agriculture's Biosecurity team. Note that in order to issue phytosanitary certificates samples may need to be treated. If you have any queries or concerns regarding this please contact the Biosecurity team.

Mineral samples (including rocks, fossils and sediment cores) that are to be exported from the Falkland Islands should be cleared through the Falkland Islands Government Department of Mineral Resources (DMR). Attempting to export samples without a valid permit is a violation of the research agreement and may result in future research being denied. Please contact DMR if you require an export permit or have any queries (info@mineralresources.gov.fk).

Various international conventions and agreements including the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) apply to the Falkland Islands. Prior to the export of any of biological material, all intended exports should be declared to Falkland Islands Government Customs & Immigration Service (C&IS) who will provide advice on permit requirements and supporting documentation (mfloyd@customs.gov.fk).

Biosecurity:

All precautions should be made by researchers with regards to their local biosecurity practices whilst working out in the field from planning their fieldwork to best practices when in the field.

When planning your field work we ask that you visit sites that have no known invasive species prior to visiting sites that do. If this is not possible, ensure that you check, clean and dry any equipment in between. Ideally, drying periods should be a minimum of 48 hours. Any equipment you are bringing with you should be cleaned prior to starting your first field session. Remember to implement the below cleaning process:

Check: pockets, zippers, laces or creases in any layers of clothing, luggage or equipment. Check for small animals or insects and any vegetative matter.

Clean: Clean anything you find and clean your field equipment in either Virkon or, where this is unavailable, dishwashing liquid.

Dry: After washing your equipment, make sure this has at least 48 hours to dry. This can be expedited by placing it next to a heater in a dry environment.

If you see any new or previously unreported invasive, even if you are not sure, please report this to the FIG Environment Unit immediately.

Local Logistical Support:

Researchers can generally find logistical support from local partners and contact organisations. Advanced planning is recommended and arrangements with local partners in the preliminary phase of the research plan should be made. Accommodation, rental cars and internet access can all be arranged through the local partner. Advice on appropriate timings and locations for research and study design can be obtained if requested. It is worth mentioning that logistical support in terms of vehicles or use of office space not always is possible as resources on the Islands are limited. Government accommodation and vehicles will not be available to visiting researchers. We

recommend that if you have not made contact with a Falkland Islands based partner organisation yet, that you contact the South Atlantic Environmental Research Institute at info@saeri.ac.fk.

5.3. Data Management and Sharing

The IMS-GIS data centre, at the Falkland Islands-based South Atlantic Environmental Research Institute (SAERI), acts as a hub for archiving and managing environmental data collected across the South Atlantic UK Overseas Territories (SAUKOTs). This is also the national environmental data repository for the Falkland Islands.

We ask that all researchers, as part of their licence conditions complete a metadata record for inclusion in the data centre. Metadata records are readily available through the Falkland Islands data portal and ensure that your research efforts are not duplicated. Metadata are stored in accordance with the ISO 19115. If you require further information or assistance with this process, please contact the Data Centre Manager at: datamanager@saeri.org.

Data are managed through a central repository which ensures secure access and storage. It is recognised that some data may also need post-processing to contextualise them. Researchers should agree terms and a timeline for depositing datasets with the Data Centre before leaving the Island.

We also ask that all researchers leave a copy of the data that they collect on the islands with the data centre where this is not deposited into an alternative equivalent. Where researchers opt to deposit their data with the IMS-GIS Data Centre, researchers will always remain the owners of data, even after depositing the data. Datasets deposited by researchers will never be published (either in full or summarised form) or released to third parties without the written agreement of the researcher. Data collected by the researchers on the islands are valuable for informing decisions about the local environment. The re-use of data coming for research projects is regulated through an agreement, "Data Submission Agreement", signed between the involved parties and the South Atlantic Environmental Research Institute; allowing the researcher to remain in control of the fate of their data.

6. Contacts

The principal point of contact over research licencing is:

FIG Environment Unit

Stanley

Falkland Islands

FIQQ 1ZZ

Tel.: + 500 28427

E-mail: environmental.officer@sec.gov.fk

The principal point of contact over data management is:

SAERI

Stanley

Falkland Islands

FIQQ 1ZZ

Tel.: + 500 27374

E-mail: datamanager@saeri.org