

ERASMUS+ PECUS
CASE STUDY SHEET

CS code	<i>IS-02</i>	CS Title	<i>Shielings in South- and North-Iceland, AD850–: Some Comparative Landscape Pointers</i>
GENERAL INFORMATION			
Type of case study	<input type="checkbox"/> National or regional level policy/plan/strategy <input type="checkbox"/> Local level policy/plan/strategy <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Study/research <input type="checkbox"/> Project <input type="checkbox"/> Other		
Responsible body/Promoter	Háskóli Íslands		
Location (region, locality)	South-Iceland: Blikdalur, Grímsneshreppur, and Hrunamannahreppur		
Geographical area covered	The proposed research area is composed of three areas in South Iceland, ie Blikdalur (a grassy valley) c 6 x 2,5 km in size; Grímsneshreppur (flatland), c 20 x 20 km in size and Hrunamannahreppur ('flatlandish') c 25 x 10 km in size.		
Year	1998 and onwards		
Summary description	<p>Since the beginning of the systematic archaeological surveys in South-Iceland 'flatlands' in the 2000s, rich information on shielings has been gathered, demonstrating that there is no shortage of information regarding their layout and location. Overall, c 41 shielings have been identified so far in case study area (Blikdalur, Grímsneshr and Hrunamannahr). Still, there remains a burning issue to understand the character of the sheilings as well as examining the differences and similarities in structure, and location between sheilings in South- and North-Iceland. Much is thus to be learned about the character of the sheilings in the southern region, and by combing archaeological and historical studies it opens up a research of considerable potential to compare and contrast sheilings in North and South-Iceland.</p> <p>The study would make use of existing walkover surveys and sheiling research in North-Iceland (see case IS-01) coring to obtain crucial information of dating as well as geoarchaeological methods. Crucial part will be to use map making through GIS (predictive modelling and spatial analysis). Such a holistic study of the sheilings in South-Iceland would help built a hypothesis of the role of the transhumance in the southern areas. It would also enhance our understanding of sheilings in the south 'flatlands' and identify potential gaps in knowledge regarding the nature of sheilings in North- and South-Iceland.</p>		
Link with laws/regulations and with other policies/plans/strategies (if any)	This case study is research based but is connected to the cultural heritage law in Iceland no 80/2012 of classifying and researching sheilings. The project's result would greatly assist us in learning about the preservation and the nature of sheilings in South-Iceland. Such knowledge is of great importance for the planning authorities as well as the local cultural heritage offices so they can attempt to safeguard the heritage, either by protecting them or to ensure that their importance is stored in some other way – such as through journal articles, GIS-database etc.		



PROBLEMS AND NEEDS TARGETED		
Problems	Whilst there has been considerable attention given to transhumance in Iceland recently, such as in archaeology and history, our knowledge of sheilings in South-Iceland is still pitifully inadequate and has not increased greatly from the otherwise great study by E. Hitzler. Studies of transhumance in Iceland have therefore been more concerned about the research potential of sheilings in South-Iceland rather than the reality of the archaeology and the history of the sheilings. This study opens up a long-needed interrogation of sheilings in South-Iceland, it will identify gaps in the literature, and more importantly: It will explore the difference and similarities between sheilings in South- and North-Iceland.	
Needs	The needs identified especially pertain to the research on transhumance in Iceland. There is a need of a research project aimed at clarifying the problems brought forward in the archaeological walkover surveys, historical research, and other research already available.	
Quantitative data	All statistic, such as size, land usage, farm value etc, is either found in <i>Jarðabók Árna Magnússonar and Páls Vídalíns</i> from 1703 or Ísleif, the database of the Institute of Archaeology, Iceland. Due to their monumental size, figures will not be presents here - but those crucial numbers can easily be accessed when needed.	
FOCUS, OBJECTIVES AND OUTPUTS		
Themes	Does the case study address this theme? (YES/NO)	If yes, how? (max 750 characters for each theme)
Spatial planning	yes	The value of the existing remains of the medieval and post-medieval agricultural systems as a part of the cultural heritage of the area should be taken into consideration during spatial planning of the area.
Protection of landscape/environment (e.g. biodiversity, water, geomorphology, soil, scenic views, historic landscapes, etc.)	yes	Sheilings in South-Iceland should, in most cases, be protected, as it is potentially a very valuable resource for reconstruction of past land use and the formation of local communities.
Protection/enhancement of tangible cultural heritage (e.g. archaeological sites, historical routes, architecture...)	yes	Same as above. Indeed, they are, formally, but in practice this is overlooked, even by official institutions.
Protection/enhancement of intangible cultural heritage (e.g. folklore, food, music...)	yes	There are possibilities involved in restoring and reinventing the old culture of transhumance in relation to food culture. For example, the Icelandic skyr has gained foothold in most countries in the Atlantic world and beyond in the last two decades. Skyr was originally produced at the shielings.
Slow mobility (cycling routes, trekking paths, etc.)	yes	Cycling routes and trekking paths could be organised around the visible remains, especially at Blikdalur, which is situated less than a half hour driving distance from the city of Reykjavík. The sheiling system form a crucial part of Icelandic agricultural history. Still it is often overlooked, making pathways and other routes an ideal way to presents knowledge about this important heritage to local communities via information boards.
Economic development of mountain & rural areas (e.g. tourism,	yes	This study hopefully creates new knowledge that can be used by the tourist industry, such as through apps or information boards near cycling routes as mentioned above. In more general terms, the study will create incentives for

agro-food production, agriculture, livestock breeding...)		local communities to safeguard their heritage and present it to tourists.
INVOLVEMENT OF STAKEHOLDERS		
Actors involved	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The National Museum of Iceland is the centre for the preservation of and research on artefacts. 2. The Cultural Heritage Agency of Iceland are the official body of the intangible and tangible cultural heritage in Iceland, as well as issuing permits for and supporting research Icelandic heritage. 3. The Institute of Archaeology, Iceland is a private research company (non-profit), specialising in walkover survey in Iceland and excavations, and has surveyed and researched cultural heritage in all of Iceland – including South of Iceland. 4. The University of Iceland. Provides research and education on archaeology, and the history of Iceland. 	
Involvement procedures	<p>Research on the shieling system has been carried out in following steps:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Surveying and documenting the extent of shieling remains in the Icelandic cultural landscape. This step has been undertaken by the Institute of Archaeology, working on behalf of local government authorities. The work is still ongoing in Hrunamannahreppur. 2. Research on this system of transhumance and its place in the medieval agricultural economy in North-Iceland was carried out at the National Museum of Iceland during 2015–2017. Further research has been carried out with archaeological research in Eyjafjörður during 2018–2019 by the Institute of Archaeology and the University of Iceland, Faculty of Humanities. 3. A third step is necessary, archaeological research on shieling remains, determining the dates of shieling remains and the longevity or duration of the transhumance operation in the area. At present, work on this system is carried out with the support of a hypothesis supported by research presently available. 	
Problems and challenges	<i>If relevant, please explain the problems (either potential or actually encountered) affecting the involvement of the above-mentioned actors in the elaboration and/or implementation of the case study (max 3,000 characters)</i>	
EXPECTED OR ACHIEVED EFFECTS		
Type of effect	Description (max 750 characters for each type)	
Environmental/landscape (e.g. restoration of habitats, effective protection of historic landscapes...)	The project is expected to shed light on a massive transhumance system in South-Iceland ‘flatlands’ and challenging our ‘romantic’ view that shielings are primarily situated in mountainous regions.	
Cultural (e.g. restoration of historic artefacts, promotion of folkloric assets...)	The discovery of a system of transhumance is expected to alter the interpretation of the agricultural system in South-Iceland. It will present us, to a certain degree, a different view of the sheilings system than the system in the north. It is therefore expected to challenge the ‘uniformity’ attitude of the sheiling system in Iceland.	
Social/economic (e.g. new jobs, new enterprises...)		
IMPLEMENTATION ISSUES		
Financial resources	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The surveying of the archaeology was funded by the various local governments according to national law which came into effect 1993 and revised in 2012. 2. Research into the survey in North-Iceland was carried out at the Dr Kristján Eldjárn fellowship at the University of Iceland 2015–2017. This fellowship is funded by the Icelandic ministry for culture. Further, relevant archaeological research in the area has been funded by the Cultural Heritage Agency of Iceland, RANNÍS and NSF. 	

	3. Funding is currently being sought from various research grants, such as Icelandic one (Fornminjasjóður) and British (Post-Medieval Archaeological Research). Deadlines are either in September 2020 or January 2021. The grants applications are centred on coring and excavations at sheilings to determine their date, and possible geoarchaeological methods to finds new sheiling sites based on the findings from the Predictive Modelling results.
Implementation procedures	
SUPPORTING INFORMATION	
Images (pictures, graphics, maps, charts, etc.)	
References (including web links)	<p>Archaeological walkover survey at Grímsneshreppur, Hrunamannahreppur (1998–), The Institute of Archaeology, Iceland. – see fornleif.is and https://www.researchgate.net/publication/338886314_Adalskraning_fornminja_i_Hrunamannahreppi</p> <p>Archaeological walkover survey at Blikdalur (2011), Minjasafn Reykjavíkur (Now, Borgarsögusafn Reykjavíkur). Egon Hitzler (1979), “Sel”, Untersuchungen zur Gesichte des isländischen Sennwesens seit der Landnahmezeit. Oslo, Universitetsforlaget. Árni Daníel Júlíusson (2016), <i>Miðaldir í skuggsjá Svarfaðardals</i>. Reykjavík, Þjóðminjasafn. Árni Daníel Júlíusson (2019) <i>A Tale of Two Valleys in Medieval Iceland. Settlement, land use and landownership</i>. Research Report. Reykjavík, The National Museum of Iceland. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/340862874_A_Tale_of_Two_Valleys Accessible map of vegetation types in Iceland http://lbhi.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=227b358de2ec4738b9d51c8e86457c0d Accessible map of farm boundaries in Iceland https://www.map.is/base/</p>

