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ECOLOGICAL RESTORATION PLAN FOR THE MOUNTAINOUS LANDSCAPE OF ICELAND

A Case Study at the Næfurholt site in Iceland

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ABSTRACT

This report is about the preparation of a restoration plan for an ecosystem site in Iceland, based on analysing several crucial aspects such as disturbances, barriers, socioeconomic and other ecological aspects of the study site. The study site is situated in the southern part of Iceland, in Næfurholt, 35 km north of Gunnarsholt, and its size is about 91 ha. It is privately owned territory which belongs to the local farmers who use the site mainly for grazing. The proposed ecological restoration strategies and approaches were based on recommendations of SER Standards: “Standard practices for planning and implementing ecological restoration projects”. Information was collected from satellite images, field visits, interviewing stakeholders, existing data of Soil Conservation Service of Iceland, and conducted research on the site and surrounding sites. Vegetation, soil and erosion maps were developed which categorized the area into different classes based on the level of degradation experienced. Ecological restoration approaches and methods in this report were based on the principle of addressing the root of the degradation problem rather than their symptoms. The different measures or modifications were

suggested considering the rate of degradation in each polygon. The project emphasized on a stakeholder involvement approach for achieving sustainability of the restoration activity. Monitoring and evaluation factors are increasingly important in the implementation steps of the project. At the end, after describing the restoration methods for the Næfurholt site, the report also describes the possibility of using the same approach on planification of ecological restoration in ecosystems in Tajikistan.

Key words: Næfurholt, land degradation, stakeholder's engagement, drivers of degradation, restoration, sustainability,