

## Environmental Permit

Environment Protection Act (CAP. 549)

Permit number:

**NP 0226/20**

Approved documents

**NP 0226/20/2B/31A**

The Environment and Resources Authority (hereinafter the Authority; the Competent Authority or ERA) in exercise of its powers under the Environment Protection Act (CAP. 549), hereby authorises:

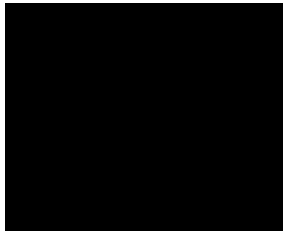
Mr. Alexei Zammit obo Ambjent Malta (hereinafter "the Permit Holder"),  
Of / Whose Registered Office (or principal place of business) is at

**Ambjent Malta,  
Ta' Qali Park,  
Ta' Qali.**

to carry out activities related to the removal of alien invasive species from

**Selmunett islands**

The validity of this permit is **one (1) year** from the granted date below. An application for renewal of this permit is to be submitted at least **one (1) month** prior to expiry of this permit.

Signed	Date
 <p>Aimee Brincat Deputy Director, Environment and Resources F/ Director Environment and Resources</p>	<p>Permit Granted: 01/09/ 2020</p>

**Authorised to sign on behalf of the Competent Authority**

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## Conditions

### Introductory Note

The permit is granted in accordance with the provisions of the Environment Protection Act and Regulation 18(2) of the Flora, Fauna and Natural Habitats Protection Regulations, 2006 (S.L. 549.44), hereinafter referred to as the Regulations, for the purpose of the activities that shall be carried out within the Special Area of Conservation (SAC) of il-Gżejjer ta' San Pawl (Selmunett) – MT0000022 and in accordance with Regulation 4(2) of the Selmunett Islands Nature Reserve Regulations, S.L. 549.03.

This permit is also granted in line with the II – Gżejjer ta' San Pawl (Selmunett) Conservation Order G.N.1378 of 2016.

The activity shall, subject to the conditions of this Permit, be managed, controlled and carried out as described in the NP Application, approved documents, and/or as otherwise previously agreed in writing by the Authority.

### Status Log

Detail	Date
<i>Application NP 0226/20</i>	26/05/2020
<i>Permit Issued</i>	27/08/2020

### Pre-Commencement of activities/ work

1. The Permit Holder shall advise of the dates of works at least seven (7) days prior to the commencement on [ced.nature@era.org.mt](mailto:ced.nature@era.org.mt) and shall also notify ERA of the details of the vessel/s including name and IMO used to access the island. In the case of change of date or the vessel, the permit holder is to inform ERA of such a change at least two (2) days in advance. In the case of short-term cancellation of the activity (especially outside office hours), the Authority should be contacted on 9921 0404.

### Permitted Activities

2. The Permit Holder is authorised to carry out the activities and the associated activities specified in Table 1:

Activity	Description of specified activity	Limits of specified activity
Removal of Invasive Alien Species	As described in NP 0226/20/2B	(i) Removal of alien species – <i>Opuntia ficus indica</i> and <i>Agave spp</i> by hand

### Site

3. The activities authorised under condition 2 shall be affected in the location as marked on the approved method statement NP0226/20/2B.

### Conditions of Activity/Work

4. Activities are to be held according to the approved Project Description Statement NP0226/20/2B.
5. All activities shall be carried out between sunrise and sunset.
6. This permit also covers the transportation of the Permit Holder and any personnel to and from Selmunett islands on board of the vessel.

During the visits to Selmunett Islands the following conditions shall also be abided to:

- a. Berthing of the vessel at Selmunett is only permitted against the present quay.  
Anchoring around the island is prohibited;
7. The Permit Holder and any person acting on his behalf shall follow these guidelines:
    - a. Any footwear to be used shall be clean from soil prior to stepping on the Islands;
    - b. Prior to departure from the mainland, any bags and equipment shall be free from rodents and any other species prior to ascending on the islands. The introduction or carrying of any food items on the islands is strictly prohibited;
    - c. Littering, dumping or discarding of any material on the islands is strictly prohibited.
  8. Removal of alien species of flora shall be carried out in accordance with the methodology described in the approved method statement NP0226/20/2B and in accordance with the methodology on the "Guidelines on managing non-native plant invaders and restoring native plant communities in terrestrial settings in the Maltese Islands" found at <https://era.org.mt/en/Documents/PlantInvaders-RestorationGuidelines-MEPA-2013.pdf>.

Removed alien species shall be left on the sites identified in NP 0226/20/31A to deteriorate in a natural manner, and shall be monitored for any re-sprouting at regular intervals. Any re-sprouted shoots shall be uprooted accordingly.
  9. Monitoring of the re-growth of the species along the islands shall be carried out at regular intervals over a period of two(2) years and any re-growth shall be addressed accordingly.
  10. All reasonable precautions are to be taken to keep the SAC clean and sites are to be restored to their original condition without causing any harm to the environment. Any waste generated during the activities, other than the alien invasive species plant material, is to be collected immediately and disposed of accordingly in accordance with the Waste Management (Activity Registration) Regulations 2007 (S.L. 549.45) and the Waste Regulations, 2011, (S.L. 549.63).
  11. The permit holder shall ensure that disturbance of any specimen of any species is kept to a minimum. It is the responsibility of the permit holder to ensure that no harm is caused to the environment either intentionally or accidentally. Attention must also be afforded to the whole of the environment of the SAC in view of the protection status of SAC.
  12. Access to the protected sites shall be solely on foot and any motorised equipment for any transportation is prohibited.

## **General Conditions**

13. The 'Permit Holder', is responsible to ensure that all reasonable precautions are taken so that the activity conforms to the conditions in this Permit and the procedures outlined within the Permit application.
14. The permit holder shall keep in his possession a copy of the Nature Permits at any time during each session involving the removal of IAS.
15. The activities covered by this permit are restricted to the Permit Holder, employees and/or volunteers and contracted parties commissioned for such activities/works under his supervision and direction, who shall all be made aware of this Permit and the contents within.
16. The following activities are strictly prohibited:
  - a. the deliberate picking, collection, taking, cutting, uprooting, harming, destroying or damaging deliberately destroying, keeping, transporting, selling, buying exchanging, offering for sale or for exchange, importing or exporting in any way of any specimen of wild flora, except for those species permitted through this permit;
  - b. the deliberate hunting, killing, capturing, taking, harming, disturbance particularly during periods of breeding, rearing, hibernation and migration, destruction and deterioration of breeding sites or resting places, pursuing, taking or attempting to take, deliberately killing or attempting to kill, deliberately destroying, keeping, transporting, selling, buying exchanging, offering for sale or for exchange, importing or exporting any specimen of any specimen of wild fauna;
  - c. cutting or damaging of reeds, tree branches etc;
  - d. planting of vegetation, shrubs and/or trees or the introduction of any flora or fauna into the site or its environs;
  - e. introduction, removal, significant movement and re-engineering, and/or collection of sand, shingle, stone, soil and/or sediment;
  - f. excavation works and any physical modification of the vegetation cover, the ground and landform of the site and its surroundings;
  - g. generation of excessive noise, including extremely loud music or the use of noisy generators, or light pollution through the use of floodlights;
  - h. disposal, discharge or spillage of oil, fuel, paint or other pollutants, or of solid waste, ash or combustibles;
  - i. lighting of fires.
17. ERA may request updates and/or further information on the activity in question as deemed necessary.
18. The conditions imposed shall be adhered to throughout all the activities. Failure to do so may result in enforcement action and cessation of any related works or activities.
19. ERA may impose other additional rules or conditions, or may amend one or more of the listed rules or conditions, as it deems necessary for the proper conservation of a protected site or area, biodiversity and the environment in general, and to ensure public safety.
20. The Permit Holder may apply for a variation of the Permit and shall seek the Authority's written agreement prior to any operational changes, by sending to the Authority:

- a. Written notice of the details of the proposed change, including an assessment of its possible effects or risks to the environment from the approved activity;
  - b. Any relevant supporting information;
  - c. Any relevant supporting assessments and drawings, and;
  - d. The proposed implementation date.
21. Any such change shall only be implemented following the issue of a variation of the permit by the Authority.
22. In accordance with Regulation 46(4) of S.L. 549.44, a brief report with photos of the activities held, including any publications as a result of the activity, is to be provided to ERA by the Permit Holder within one month of the expiry of the permit, and is to be submitted to [nature.permitting@era.org.mt](mailto:nature.permitting@era.org.mt). Information that should be treated as confidential as outlined in Regulation 48(4) of S.L. 549.44 shall be specified.
23. A template for the report is available at <http://era.org.mt/en/Documents/Activity%20Report%20template.doc>
24. This permit is granted saving third party rights. The Permit holder is not exempt from any other legislation or regulations, codes of practice, conditions or requirements imposed by any other competent authorities, including the obtaining of permits, licenses, or clearances including from site owners.
25. Any accidental handling, capture or collection of specimens or part thereof, whether dead or alive, of species listed within Schedule V and VI, and endemic species not listed in Schedule X of the Flora, Fauna and Natural Habitats Protection Regulations (S.L. 549.44) shall be reported on [nature.permitting@era.org.mt](mailto:nature.permitting@era.org.mt) within seven (7) days of sampling of the specimen provided that the permit holder may only keep such specimen or part thereof for scientific research purposes. The Authority may request additional information from the permit holder, including but not limited to, an application for authorisation for the keeping of such specimens or samples.
26. The Authority may suspend or revoke this Environmental Permit in line with the provisions of CAP 549.
27. The Permit Holder shall notify the following matters to the Authority in writing at least 10 working days prior to their occurrence:
  - a. Any change in the Permit Holder's trading name, registered name or registered office address;
  - b. Any change to particulars of the Permit Holder's corporate identity.
28. Upon the joint application of a Permit Holder and a proposed transferee, the Permit Holder may request to transfer an environment permit. The permit shall not be transferred from the Permit Holder without prior approval from the Authority. Upon the Authority's decision to transfer the permit to the transferee, all rights, obligations, liabilities shall subsist onto the transferee.
29. In accordance with Regulation 47 of S.L. 549.44, details of the Permit Holder together with the details of conditions imposed in this Permit shall be maintained by the Authority in a register available for public inspection or maintained in electronic form.

30. The Authority may carry out regular pre-set or unannounced compliance or monitoring checks that vary in frequency according to the site's compliance with the permit conditions and safeguarding of natural assets. Any checks or audits carried out by the Authority may be made at the Permit Holder's financial expense at rate and arrangement communicated by ERA's Compliance and Enforcement Directorate. ERA may also appoint other on-site monitors at the expense of the Permit Holder to act as an on-site liaison between the Permit Holder and ERA if the case arises.
31. The Authority's representatives may inspect and photograph any part of the site/ activity and ask for any closed or locked areas to be opened and may demand to be provided with any proof, documentation, plans, receipts or any other records.
32. This Permit including any Variation Notices or amendments to it shall be made available for any inspection by ERA officials at all times, or any legally recognised compliance and enforcement officials, when requested.
33. Whenever there is a conflict between the conditions of this Permit and approved documents, the conditions of the Permit shall prevail.
34. ERA shall not be held liable for any accidents or injuries which may occur during the activities being permitted through this Permit. It is the responsibility of the Permit Holder to ensure that all safety measures are taken.
35. This permit is without prejudice to any liability of the Permit Holder under the Act and to any punitive measures the Authority may wish to take with respect to works already carried out without permit.
36. The validity of this permit is until for a period of one (1) year. The Permit Holder may apply for a renewal to this Permit expressing his/her intention at least four (4) weeks prior to the expiry of this permit. Request for renewals shall only be considered upon confirmation of compliance with Permit conditions and fulfilment of documentation as requested by this Permit.
37. Any aggrieved party may appeal from this decision to the Environment and Planning Review Tribunal in accordance with Article 63 of the Environment Protection Act and with the provisions of the Environment and Planning Review Tribunal Act.

## Attachment 2 – Selmunett alien species removal

### 3.3 Project Description:

#### 1. Aim of Project;

The Natura 2000 Conservation Order for Selmunett requires the removal of alien species and specifically states that : *Existing ruderal and invasive alien species affecting the habitats will be removed and the site monitored to ensure against their re-emergence.* This nature application is to start implementing this measure.

#### 2. Justification for project. What is the value of the project in scientific and educational terms?;

The removal of Agave species and Opuntia species eliminates competition between these alien species and native ones. Such a measure considerably favours the indigenous species.

#### 3. Brief project outline;

Removal of large Agave and Opuntia individuals making use of hand held tools.

#### 4. Starting date and estimated duration of project including dates[s] and time[s]. When is/are the handling/collection planned? If possible, provide month[s] and date[s];

Start date: as soon as practicably possible. ERA would be informed on commencement date. Due to the large number of Opuntia individuals, no timeframe for complete removal is being envisaged at this stage.

#### 5. The site/geographic area of the activity. (Attachment 1)





**6. How many persons are involved per visit?;**

Five Ambjent Malta personnel with hand held tools.

**7. How will be the site be accessed?**

Site (as marked on plan in point 5) would be accessed by foot, undertaking the works by hand held tools. The Agave is all in one clump (Red circle in plan), whilst the Opuntia species is sparse all around as per blue boundary in plan.

**8. Description of the method to be used for the project;**

The method to be used is in line with the Guidelines on managing plant invaders and restoring Native Plant Communities. Hand held tools shall be used to remove the Agave clump and Opuntia individuals.

Uprooting only, would encourage further dispersal and hence the aliens would all be collected in one area and left to deteriorate. In this manner monitoring which is to be undertaken once every six months would be facilitated.

**9. Safety equipment available, in case of emergency;**

Standard safety equipment used by Ambjent Malta personnel when making use of such hand held tools.

**10. Any additional information deemed necessary;**

NP0226/20/21A

