



## **Icelandic Institute of Natural History Keys to Icelandic Habitat Types**

### **I. Terrestrial habitats**

NÁTTÚRUFRAÐISTOFNUN ÍSLANDS  
[www.ni.is](http://www.ni.is)



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#### L14.6 *Anthriscus sylvestris* and related weed communities

##### Eunis-flokkun

E5.12 *Weed communities of recently abandoned urban and suburban constructions.*

##### Lýsing

Mjög gróskumikið blómlendi einkum myndað af skógarkerfli, í minna mæli spánarkerfli eða öðrum ágengum, köfnunarefnissæknum tegundum. Finnst í vaxandi mæli á friðuðu landi við þéttbýli, í vegköntum, gömlum túnnum og lúpínubreiðum þar sem jarðvegur er frjósamur og fremur rakur. Land er mjög vel gróið, gróður mjög hávaxinn, þéttur og fábreyttur.

##### Útbreiðsla

Finnst í vaxandi mæli í öllum landshlutum, útbreiðsla ekki nákvæmlega kortlögð enn.

Upplýsingar um skógarkerfil er að finna á [vef](#) Náttúrufræðistofnunar Íslands.



*Skógarkerfill í gömlum túnnum og graslendisbökkum á Mógilsá á Kjalarnesi. Ljós. Sigurður H. Magnússon, 17. júní 2003. – Cow parsley in old fields and grasslands at Mógilsá river, Kjalarnes. Photo: Sigurður H. Magnússon.*



*Breiða af skógarkerfli í Hrísey á Eyjafirði. Ljós. Borgþór Magnússon, 11. ágúst 2011. – Cow parsley in Hrísey, Eyjafjörður. Photo: Borgþór Magnússon.*

## NEW LAND TYPES – ADDITIONS 2019

### L14.5 Land reclamation grass fields

#### Eunis-flokkun

Nýr flokkur, tillaga. E5.16 *Land reclamation grass fields*.

#### Lýsing

Svæði þar sem grósum hefur verið sáð til uppgræðslu og áburði dreift, á melum, söndum, í vegköntum og öðru raski. Grös viðhaldast að jafnaði við endurtekna áburðargjöf en gisna og hverfa eftir að henni er hætt á nokkrum árum. Þar sem aðstæður eru góðar þróast gróður yfir í moslendi og mólendi er árin líða.

#### Útbreiðsla

Í einhverjum mæli um allt land en mest á mela-, sanda- og uppblásturssvæðum landsins þar sem landgræðsla er stunduð, svo sem í Árnessýslu, Rangárvallasýslu, Skaftafellssýslum, Suður-Þingeyjarsýslu og á hálendinu við Blöndulón og Háslón.



*Uppgræðslusvæði á Safnási við Blöndulón. Ljós. Járngerður Grétarsdóttir, 23. ágúst 2015. – Land reclamation grass field at Safnás, Blöndulón. Photo: Járngerður Grétarsdóttir.*



*Uppgrætt svæði við nýjan veg á Vestfjörðum. Ljós. Borgþór Magnússon, 28. ágúst 2012. – Reclamation area along a new road in the Westfjords. Photo: Borgþór Magnússon.*

## INTRODUCTION

The aim with this key is to make identification of Icelandic terrestrial habitat types easier in the field. It should be useful for mapping of habitat types and for those interested in learning more about the different types. In 2016, the Icelandic Institute of Natural History finished a description and mapping of terrestrial, freshwater and coastal habitat types in Iceland. The work is based on the European EUNIS habitat classification system, which has been widely adopted and is used in most European countries.

In the publication “*Vistgerðir á Íslandi*”<sup>1</sup> (Habitat Types of Iceland) factsheets for the different habitat types can be found. The factsheets can also be accessed on the institute’s [web site](#). Sixty-four terrestrial habitat types are listed in the publication and they are grouped into 14 habitat type classes<sup>2</sup> (e.g. heathlands, wetlands, woodlands). In this key, we have added two types, namely Land reclamation grass fields and *Anthriscus sylvestris* and related weed communities.

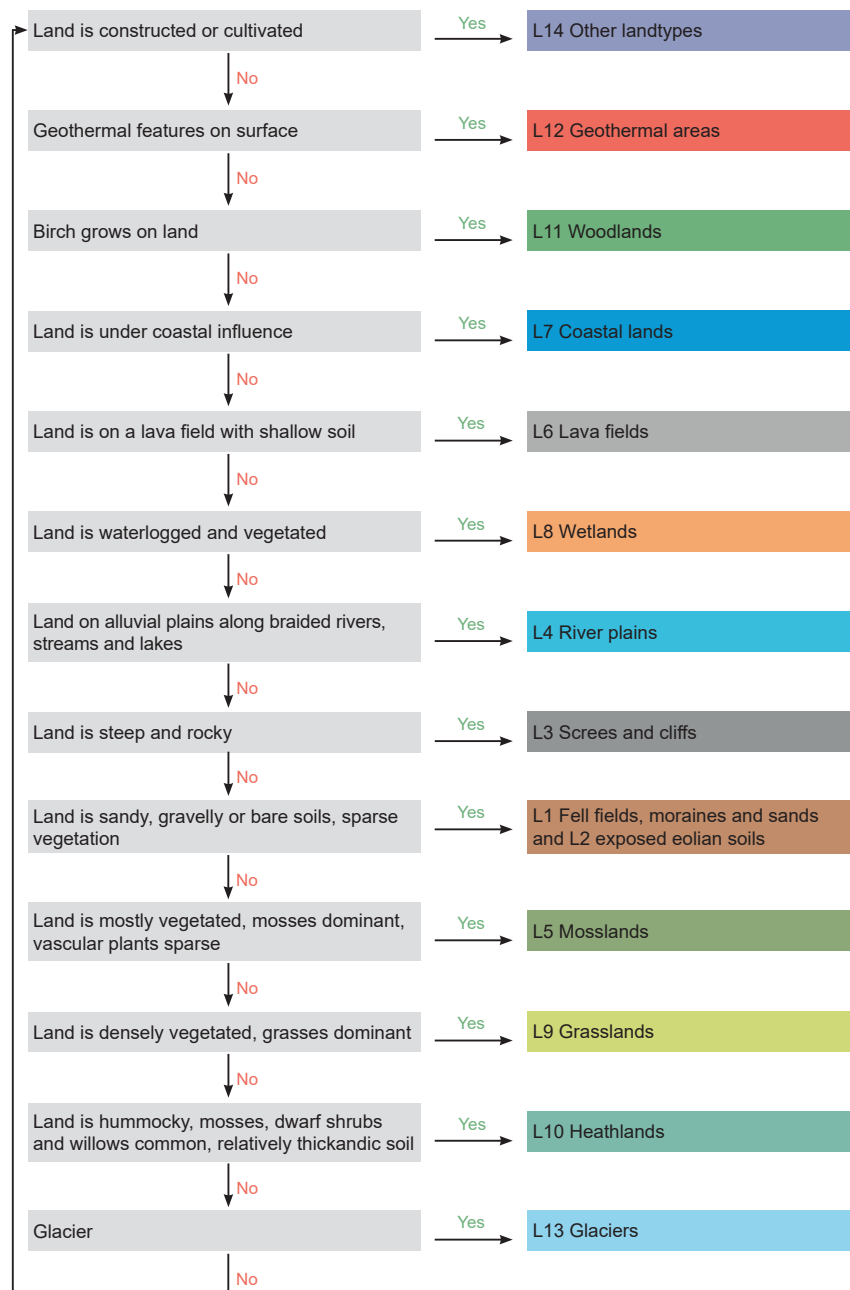
The first step in the identification of a habitat type is to find the appropriate habitat class. That is done by starting at the top of the key to habitat types (p. 6) and then through yes/no questions find the class with a description fitting the land you are in. The next step is to go further into the key and look for the right habitat type. The name of each habitat type has a link to a factsheet that can be accessed by using a laptop or smartphone in the field.

We hope that the key will be found useful. It will be revised if necessary so we are grateful for all remarks and comments that you might have after using it. They can be sent by email to [ni@ni.is](mailto:ni@ni.is).

1 Jón Gunnar Ottósson, Anna Sveinsdóttir and María Harðardóttir, editors 2016. *Vistgerðir á Íslandi*. Fjölrit Náttúrufræðistofnunar nr. 54. Garðabær: Náttúrufræðistofnun Íslands.

2 Sigurður H. Magnússon, Borgþór Magnússon, Ásrún Elmarsdóttir, Sigurður H. Magnússon and Hans H. Hansen 2016. *Vistgerðir á landi*. In Jón Gunnar Ottósson, Anna Sveinsdóttir and María Harðardóttir, editors 2016. *Vistgerðir á Íslandi*, pp. 17–169. Fjölrit Náttúrufræðistofnunar nr. 54. Garðabær: Náttúrufræðistofnun Íslands.

## KEY TO HABITAT TYPE CLASSES

**L10 Mólendi – Heathlands**

- L10.1 [Mosamóavist – Icelandic \*Racomitrium\* grass heaths](#)
- L10.2 [Flagmóavist – Arctic \*Dryas\* heaths](#)
- L10.3 [Starmóavist – Icelandic \*Carex bigelowii\* heaths](#)
- L10.4 [Grasmóavist – Icelandic \*Empetrum\*-\*Thymus\* grassland](#)
- L10.5 [Fléttumóavist – Icelandic lichen \*Racomitrium\* heaths](#)
- L10.6 [Fjalldrapamóavist – North Atlantic boreo-alpine heaths](#)
- L10.7 [Lyngmóavist á hálandi – Oroboreal moss-dwarf willow snowbed communities](#)
- L10.8 [Lyngmóavist á láglandi – North Atlantic \*Vaccinium\*-\*Empetrum\*-\*Racomitrium\* heaths](#)
- L10.9 [Viðimóavist – Icelandic \*Salix lanata\*/\*S. phylicifolia\* scrub](#)
- L10.10 [Víðikjarrvist – Oroboreal willow scrub](#)

**L11 Skóglendi – Woodlands**

- L11.1 [Kjarrskógavist – Boreo-Atlantic crowberry-bog bilberry birch woods](#)
- L11.2 [Lyngskógavist – Icelandic bog bilberry-hairgrass birch woods](#)
- L11.3 [Blómskógavist – Icelandic cranesbill birch woods](#)

**L12 Hverasvæði – Geothermal lands**

- L12.1 [Mýrahveravist – Geothermal wetlands](#)
- L12.2 [Móahveravist – Geothermal heathlands](#)
- L12.3 [Fjallahveravist – Geothermal alpine habitats](#)
- L12.4 [Hveraleirsvist – Icelandic sulfatats/Geothermal bare ground](#)

**L13 Jöklar – Glaciers**

- L13.1 [Jöklar og urðarjökklar – Glaciers, rock glaciers and unvegetated ice-dominated habitats](#)

**L14 Aðrar landgerðir – Mannert og ræktarland – Constructed and cultivated land**

- L14.1 [Þéttbýli og annað manngert land – Constructed, industrial and other artificial habitats](#)
- L14.2 [Tún og akurlendi – Cultivated agricultural, horticultural and domestic habitats](#)
- L14.3 [Skógrækt – Mixed forestry plantations](#)
- L14.4 [Alaskalúpína – Land reclamation for fields](#)
- L14.5 [Uppgræðslur – Land reclamation grass fields – new 2019 \(see page 24\)](#)
- L14.6 [Skógarkerfill – \*Anthriscus sylvestris\* and related weed communities – new 2019 \(see page 25\)](#)

**L7 Strandlendi – Coastal lands**

- L7.1 [Sandstrandarvíst – Icelandic sand beach perennial communities](#)
- L7.2 [Malarstrandarvíst – Upper shingle beaches with open vegetation](#)
- L7.3 [Strandmelhólavíst – Atlantic embryonic dunes](#)
- L7.4 [Grashólavíst – Northern fixed grey dunes](#)
- L7.5 [Sjávarfitjungs víst – Atlantic lower shore communities](#)
- L7.6 [Gulstararfitjavíst – Icelandic \*Carex lyngbyei\* salt meadows](#)
- L7.7 [Sjávarkletta- og eyjavíst – Atlantic sea-cliff communities](#)

**L8 Mýrlendi – Wetlands**

- L8.1 [Dýjavíst – \*Philonotis-Saxifraga stellaris\* springs](#)
- L8.2 [Rekjuvíst – Icelandic stiff sedge fens](#)
- L8.3 [Sandmýravíst – Cottonsedge marsh-fens](#)
- L8.4 [Hrossanálarvíst – \*Juncus arcticus\* meadows](#)
- L8.5 [Runnamýravíst á hálendi – Boreal black sedge-brown moss fens](#)
- L8.6 [Runnamýravíst á láglendi – Boreal black sedge-brown moss fens](#)
- L8.7 [Rimamýravíst – Aapa mires](#)
- L8.8 [Rústamýravíst – Palsa mires](#)
- L8.9 [Starungsmýravíst – Icelandic black sedge-brown moss fens](#)
- L8.10 [Hengistararflóavíst – Icelandic \*Carex rariflora\* alpine fens](#)
- L8.11 [Brokflóavíst – Common cotton-grass fens](#)
- L8.12 [Starungsflóavíst – Icelandic black sedge-brown moss fens](#)
- L8.13 [Tjarnastararflóavíst – Basicline bottle sedge quaking mires](#)
- L8.14 [Gulstararflóavíst – Icelandic \*Carex lyngbyei\* fens](#)

**L9 Graslandi – Grasslands**

- L9.1 [Stinnastararvíst – Icelandic \*Carex bigelowii\* grasslands](#)
- L9.2 [Finnungsvíst – Insular \*Nardus-Galium\* grasslands](#)
- L9.3 [Bugðupuntsvíst – Wavy hair-grass grasslands](#)
- L9.4 [Snarrótarvíst – Boreal tufted hairgrass meadows](#)
- L9.5 [Grasengjavíst – Icelandic \*Festuca\* grasslands](#)
- L9.6 [Língresis- og vingulsvíst – Boreo-subalpine \*Agrostis\* grasslands](#)
- L9.7 [Blómgresisvíst – Northern boreal \*Festuca\* grasslands](#)

**KEY TO HABITAT TYPES****L14 Land is constructed or cultivated**

[L14.1 Constructed, industrial and other artificial lands](#)

[L14.2 Cultivated agricultural, horticultural and domestic habitats](#)

[L14.3 Mixed forestry plantations](#)

[L14.4 Land reclamation forb fields](#)

[L14.5 Land reclamation grass fields](#) (new, see page 24)

[L14.6 \*Anthriscus sylvestris\* and related weed communities](#) (new, see page 25)

Land is neither constructed nor cultivated





**L12 Geothermal lands**

*Geothermal features are apparent.*

- Very wet to moist land and fens with hot springs, common plants are *Carex nigra*, *Agrostis stolonifera* etc. → [L12.1 Geothermal wetlands](#)
- Warm ground on dry, often concave, surfaces with steam vents, fumaroles and mud springs, plant species include *Thymus praecox*, *Agrostis stolonifera* etc. → [L12.2 Geothermal heathlands](#)
- Warm ground, dry to moist at high elevations, vegetation cover often sparse. → [L12.3 Geothermal alpine habitats](#)
- Warm ground or altered by geothermal heat, vegetation sparse, clay surfaces, sinter, tephra and mineral precipitates. → [L12.4 Icelandic sulfatats/Geothermal bare grounds](#)

Geothermal features not present

**LIST OF HABITAT TYPE CLASSES AND HABITAT TYPES****L1 Melar og sandlendi – Fell fields, morains and sands**

- L1.1 [Eyðimelavist – Sparsely- or un-vegetated habitats on mineral substrates not resulting from recent ice activity](#)
- L1.2 [Grasmelavist – Sparsely- or un-vegetated habitats on mineral substrates not resulting from recent ice activity](#)
- L1.3 [Mosamelavist – Oroboreal \*Carex bigelowii\*-\*Racomitrium\* mossheaths](#)
- L1.4 [Víðimelavist – Glacial moraines with very sparse or no vegetation](#)
- L1.5 [Sanda- og vikravist – Volcanic ash and lapilli fields](#)
- L1.6 [Landmelhólavist – Icelandic inland dunes](#)

**L2 Moldir – Exposed soils**

- L2.1 [Moldavist – Icelandic exposed andic soils](#)

**L3 Skriður og klettur – Scree slopes and cliffs**

- L3.1 [Urðarskriðuvist – Icelandic talus slopes](#)
- L3.2 [Grasvíðiskriðuvist – Icelandic \*Salix herbacea\* scree](#)
- L3.3 [Ljónslappaskriðuvist – Icelandic \*Alchemilla\* scree](#)

**L4 Eyrar – River plains**

- L4.1 [Eyrovist – Unvegetated or sparsely vegetated shores](#)
- L4.2 [Auravist – Icelandic braided river plains](#)

**L5 Moslendi – Mosslands**

- L5.1 [Hélumosavist – Boreal moss snowbed communities](#)
- L5.2 [Melagambrovist – Icelandic \*Racomitrium ericoides\* heaths](#)
- L5.3 [Hraungambrovist – Moss and lichen fjell fields](#)

**L6 Hraunlendi – Lava fields**

- L6.1 [Eyðihraunavist – Barren Icelandic lava fields](#)
- L6.2 [Fléttuhraunavist – Icelandic lava field lichen heaths](#)
- L6.3 [Mosahraunavist – Icelandic lava field lichen heaths](#)
- L6.4 [Lynghraunavist – Icelandic lava field shrub heaths](#)



**L13 Glaciers**

- [L13.1 Glaciers, rock glaciers and unvegetated ice-dominated habitats](#)

**L11 Woodlands**

*Birch* (*Betula pubescens*) grows on land, birch cover > 10% irrespective of height.

- Birch trees are scattered (< 50% cover) and of low stature (< 2 m). → [L11.1 Boreo-Atlantic crowberry-bog bilberry birch woods](#)
- Birch trees grow densely (> 50% cover) and are rather tall (> 2 m).
  - Dwarf shrubs, especially *Vaccinium uliginosum* and *V. myrtillus*, and the grass *Avenella flexuosa* dominant on forest floor. → [L11.2 Icelandic bog bilberry-hairgrass birch woods](#)
  - Forbs, especially *Geranium sylvaticum*, and grasses dominant on forest floor. → [L11.3 Icelandic cranesbill birch woods](#)

Birch does not grow on land



**L7 Coastal lands**

Land is by the coast or on coastal islands and is under the influence of rolling sea, tides, seabirds or eolian deposition from shores.

- Sand-, shingle and gravel beaches, and sand dunes somewhat inland from shoreline.
  - Strips of sand and fine gravel, sparsely vegetated with beach plants like *Honckenya peploides*, *Mertensia maritima*, *Atriplex glabriuscula*, *Cakile maritima* and *Leymus arenarius*. → [L7.1 Icelandic sand beach perennial communities](#)
  - Strips of gravel and rubble, sparsely vegetated with beach plants and grasses like *Honckenya peploides*, *Atriplex glabriuscula*, *Plantago maritima*, *Poa pratensis*, *Festuca rubra* etc. → [L7.2 Upper shingle beaches with open vegetation](#)
  - Sand dunes by and inland of shores vegetated with *Leymus arenarius*, *Festuca rubra* etc. → [L7.3 Atlantic embryonic dunes](#)
  - Relic, vegetated dunes inland from shores. → [L7.4 Northern fixed grey dunes](#)
- Nearly flat, moist to very wet meadows inundated during high tide.
  - Sandy, short growing grasslands by shores with *Puccinellia coarctata*. → [L7.5 Atlantic lower shore communities](#)
  - Wetlands by shores with apparent ground water flow from land under tidal influence with *Carex lyngbyei*, *C. nigra* etc. → [L7.6 Icelandic Carex lyngbyei salt meadows](#)
- Islands, islets and cliffs by sea influenced by saline waters and seabird activity, often with lush forb fields or grasslands, especially *Festuca rubra*, *Poa pratensis*, *Cochlearia officinalis*, *Stellaria media*, *Angelica archangelica*, *Tripleurospermum maritimum*, *Leymus arenarius* etc. → [L7.7 Atlantic sea-cliff communities](#)

Land is not by coast or is under little or no influence of rolling sea

**L10 Heathlands**

Land is dry, hummocky, rich of mosses, dwarf shrubs and willows with rather thick andic soil (> 50 cm).

- Near continuous moss cover with *Racomitrium ericoides* and *R. lanuginosum*, sparse vascular plant cover includes *Kobresia myosuroides*, *Thymus praecox*, *Carex bigelowii*, *Galium* spp., and *Festuca* spp. → [L10.1 Icelandic Racomitrium grass heaths](#)
- Eroded heathland where soils are exposed in between hummocks. → [L10.2 Arctic Dryas heaths](#)
- Grass and moss rich heathland in alpine regions and uplands with *Carex bigelowii*, *S. herbacea* etc. → [L10.3 Icelandic Carex bigelowii heaths](#)
- Grassy heathland in lowlands or uplands with *Empetrum nigrum*, *Thymus praecox*, *Festuca* spp., *Agrostis capillaris*, *Descampsia caespitosa* etc. → [L10.4 Icelandic Empetrum-Thymus grasslands](#)
- Heathland rich in lichens and mosses with *Empetrum nigrum*, *S. herbacea*, *Vaccinium uliginosum* etc. Light colored lichens (*Cladonia* spp.) prominent. → [L10.5 Icelandic lichen Racomitrium heaths](#)
- Heathland vegetation in lowlands and uplands with *Betula nana*, *Empetrum nigrum*, *Vaccinium uliginosum* etc. Rich in mosses and lichens. → [L10.6 North Atlantic boreo-alpine heaths](#)
- Low productive, mossy dwarf-shrub and willow heathland in uplands and with biological crusts, *Racomitrium* mosses, *Empetrum nigrum*, *Salix herbacea*, *S. arctica*, *Bistorta vivipara* etc. → [L10.7 Oroboreal moss-dwarf willow snowbed communities](#)
- Relatively productive heathland in lowlands and uplands with *Empetrum nigrum*, *Vaccinium uliginosum*, *Calluna vulgaris*, *Racomitrium lanuginosum* etc. → [L10.8 North Atlantic Vaccinium-Empetrum-Racomitrium heaths](#)
- Moist heathland on sandy upland plains with *Salix lanata*, *S. arctica*, *Empetrum nigrum* etc. → [L10.9 Icelandic Salix lanata/S. phylicifolia scrub](#)
- Productive willow shrubland in lowlands and sheltered upland sites, with *Salix phylicifolia*, *S. lanata*, *Empetrum nigrum* etc. → [L10.10 Oroboreal willow scrub](#)

None of above



**L9 Grasslands**

Land is fully vegetated and characterised by dense grass cover.

- Relatively low productive, moss-rich grasslands with *Carex bigelowii* dominant along with grass species. → [L9.1 Icelandic \*Carex bigelowii\* grasslands](#)
- Relatively homogenous grasslands with prolonged snow-lie on slopes and in depressions where *Nardus stricta* is dominant. → [L9.2 Insular \*Nardus-Galium\* grasslands](#)
- Relatively low productive grasslands on footslopes with thin andic soils, *Avenella flexuosa* dominant. → [L9.3 Wavy hair-grass grasslands](#)
- Lush grasslands on plains and footslopes where *Deschampsia caespitosa* is dominant. → [L9.4 Boreal tufted hairgrass meadows](#)
- Moist, lush grasslands on valley floors and on drained land with *Agrostis capillaris*, *Festuca rubra*, *Carex nigra*, *Deschampsia caespitosa*, *Salix lanata*, *S. phylicifolia* etc. → [L9.5 Icelandic \*Festuca\* grasslands](#)
- Moist to dry lush grasslands with *Agrostis capillaris*, *Festuca rubra* and other grass species on thick, fertile soil. → [L9.6 Boreo-subalpine \*Agrostis\* grasslands](#)
- Forb rich, lush grasslands or forb fields in sheltered and sunny slopes, features *Galium* spp., *Filipendula ulmaria*, *Angelica* spp., *Geranium sylvaticum*, *Agrostis capillaris* etc. → [L9.7 Northern boreal \*Festuca\* grasslands](#)

None of above

**L6 Lava fields**

Land is on a lava field, not overgrown by birch or Nootka lupin, lava rocks visible on surface, soil is thin (< 50 cm).

- Sparsely vegetated (< 20%), frequently sandy lavas with *Festuca rubra*, *Thymus praecox*, *Armeria maritima* etc. → [L6.1 Barren Icelandic lava fields](#)
- Lava is rather densely vegetated, vascular plants are sparse (< 20%) but lichens and bryophytes dominate (> 50%), lichens apparent in cover, especially *Stereocaulon* spp. → [L6.2 Icelandic lava field lichen heaths](#)
- Lava is relatively desnsely vegetated, vascular plants are sparse (< 20%) but bryophytes dominate (> 50%), the moss *Racomitrium lanuginosum* is very dominant. → [L6.3 Icelandic lava field moss heaths](#)
- Lava is relatively densely vegetated, considerable vascular plant cover (> 20%) as well as lichen and moss cover; dwarf shrubs and *R. lanuginosum* are dominant. → [L6.4 Icelandic lava field shrub heaths](#)

Land is not on lava fields, or lava fields are covered and concealed by thick soil (> 50 cm)



**L8 Wetlands**

*Land is moist or waterlogged and well vegetated.*

- Mosses dominate and characterise the land, sparse vascular plant cover (< 50%).
  - Fields of fountain mosses where springs emerge in mountain slopes and alpine landscapes. → [L8.1 \*Philonotis-Saxifraga stellaris\* springs](#)
  - Wet hummocky land in uplands, biological crusts common with *Racomitrium lanuginosum*, *Salix arctica*, *S. herbacea* etc. → [L8.2 Icelandic stiff sedge fens](#)
  - Sandy, low productive fens in depressions and on alluvial plains at high elevation, with *Racomitrium ericoides*, *Calamagrostis neglecta*, *Eriophorum angustifolium*, *Salix arctica* etc. → [L8.3 Cottonsedge marsh-fens](#)
  - Mossy fens on uplands and the central highlands with *Carex rariflora*, *Eriophorum angustifolium*, *Salix arctica* etc. → [L8.10 Icelandic \*Carex rariflora\* alpine fens](#)
  - Mossy fens in the central highlands with palsa mounds containing permafrost. → [L8.8 Palsa mires](#)
- Sedges, shrubs and rushes characterise the land, considerable vascular plant cover (> 50%).
  - Flat to gently sloping fens in lowlands and uplands with near continuous and dominant *Carex nigra*, other common species *Vaccinium uliginosum*, *Betula nana*, *Empetrum nigrum*, *Comarum palustre* etc. → [L8.9 Icelandic black sedge-brown moss fens](#)
  - Level and plain, high productive fens with *Carex nigra* along with *Festuca rubra*, *Carex lyngbyei*, *Calamagrostis neglecta* etc. → [L8.12 Icelandic black sedge-brown moss fens](#)
  - Level to gently sloping fens where *Eriophorum angustifolium* is dominant along with *Carex chordorrhiza*, *C. nigra* and *C. rariflora* in wet sites but *Vaccinium uliginosum*, *Betula nana* and *Empetrum nigrum* in drier sites. → [L8.11 Common cotton-grass fens](#)
  - Level fens with high water table on plains and depressions in lowlands and uplands where *Carex rostrata* is dominant along with *C. chordorrhiza*, *Eriophorum angustifolium* etc. → [L8.13 Basicline bottle sedge quaking mires](#)
  - Extensive, gently sloping fens in uplands traversed by strings of drier ridges and hummocks that lie perpendicular to the direction of slope. *Carex rostrata* dominant in depressions along with *Carex chordorrhiza*, *C. nigra*, *C. rariflora* but *Betula nana*, *Vaccinium uliginosum* and *Empetrum nigrum* grow on ridges. → [L8.7 Aapa mires](#)
  - Level, high productive fens along large rivers and streams with *Carex lyngbyei* and *Carex rostrata* etc. → [L8.14 \*Carex lyngbyei\* fens](#)
  - Gently to sloping, hummocky fens in lowlands, rich with shrubs and *Sphagnum* mosses in sedge fields, dominant species are *Vaccinium uliginosum*, *Betula nana*, *Empetrum nigrum*, *Carex nigra*, *C. chordorrhiza*, *Carex rostrata* etc. → [L8.6 Boreal black sedge-brown moss fens](#)

Continued on the next page →

**L5 Mosslands**

*Land is densely to fully vegetated, mosses dominant and are characteristic.*

- Alpine regions with prolonged snow-lie, dry to moist with biological crust which contains *Anthelia* spp. Among other species are *Racomitrium ericoides*, *Salix herbacea*, *S. arctica*, *Bistorta vivipara* etc. → [L5.1 Boreal moss snowbed communities](#)
- Hill- and mountain slopes receiving ample precipitation with *Racomitrium ericoides*, biological crust, *Salix herbacea* etc. → [L5.2 Icelandic \*Racomitrium ericoides\* heaths](#)
- Near continuous *Racomitrium lanuginosum* cover in lowlands and uplands with *Empetrum nigrum*, *Carex bigelowii* etc. → [L5.3 Moss and lichen fjell fields](#)

None of above



**L1 Fell fields, moraines and sands – L2 Exposed eolian soils**

Land is gently sloping (<20° gradient), sandy, gravelly or exposed soils, sparsely vegetated.

- Gravel flats, vegetation cover very sparse with *Silene acaulis*, *Festuca rubra* etc. → [L1.1 Sparsely- or un-vegetated habitats on mineral substrates not resulting from recent ice activity](#)
- Sparsely vegetated, fine gravelly, sandy surfaces with sparse cover of *Festuca rubra*, *Thymus praecox* etc. → [L1.2 Sparsely- or un-vegetated habitats on mineral substrates not resulting from recent ice activity](#)
- Partly vegetated sand and gravel flats in uplands and mountains with *Racomitrium* mosses, *S. herbacea*, *Dryas octopetala* etc. → [L1.4 Glacial moraines with very sparse or no vegetation](#)
- Partly vegetated, mossy sand and gravel flats in lowlands and uplands featuring *Racomitrium lanuginosum*, *Empetrum nigrum*, *S. herbacea* etc. → [L1.3 Oroboreal \*Carex bigelowii\*-\*Racomitrium\* moss-heaths](#)
- Sparsely vegetated land with thick volcanic tephra deposits. → [L1.5 Volcanic ash and lapilli fields](#)
- Inland sand dunes with *Leymus arenarius*. → [L1.6 Icelandic inland dunes](#)
- Sparsely to densely vegetated eroded areas, along erosion margins and erosion escarpments with exposed andic soils. → [L2.1 Icelandic exposed andic soils](#)

- Plain or gently sloping fens in uplands and alpine regions, rich of shrubs, dominant species are *Betula nana*, *Vaccinium uliginosum*, *Carex nigra*, *Eriophorum angustifolium*, *Salix arctica* etc. → [L8.5 Boreal black sedge-brown moss fens](#)
- Flat, moist and sandy land characterized by the rush *Juncus arcticus*. Dominant species are *Carex nigra*, *Empetrum nigrum*, *Salix arctica*, *Vaccinium uliginosum*, *Betula nana*, *Salix lanata*, *Juncus arcticus* etc. → [L8.4 \*Juncus arcticus\* meadows](#)

None of above



Land is not waterlogged



**L4 River plains**

*Land is gently sloping, along river paths, or on floodplains of rivers and streams.*

- Moist to dry, sparsely vegetated river plains and meltwater pathways. → [L4.1 Unvegetated or sparsely vegetated shores](#)
- Dry, rather densely vegetated river plains and deltas. → [L4.2 Icelandic braided river plains](#)

Land not on river plains or deltas

**L3 Screes and cliffs**

*Land is steep (> 20° gradient), with loose rubbly gravel, rocks and cliffs.*

- Rather stable screes of boulders and scraggs. → [L3.1 Icelandic talus slopes](#)
- Loose to rather stable basalt- and hyaloclastite scree slopes with sparse *Racomitrium* moss cover, dwarf shrubs etc. → [L3.2 Icelandic \*Salix herbacea\* screes](#)
- Unstable basalt-, hyaloclastite- and rhyolite scree slopes, very sparsely vegetated with *Alchemilla alpina*, *Thymus praecox* etc. → [L3.3 Icelandic \*Alchemilla\* screes](#)

Land is not steep and rocky

