



Svalbard

**Global Seed Vault**

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**10 YEARS** 2008–2018

Safeguarding seeds for the future

# Program and practical information

Longyearbyen, Svalbard

February 25-27  
2018

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# 1. Welcome

In the 10 years since the Norwegian Prime Minister **Jens Stoltenberg** together with the late Nobel Prize Laureate **Dr. Wangari Maathai** carried the first box of seeds into Svalbard Global Seed Vault, gene banks from all over the world have chosen to send their seeds for safe and secure long-term storage here.

Looking towards the future, the genetic diversity of these seeds will play a vital role in enabling agriculture to cope with climate change in the years to come, and thus ensuring our future food security.

The genetic diversity of our past is indeed essential for our common future.

By the Seed Vault Summit, a 10 Year Anniversary Deposit and a dance performance inspired by the Seed Vault, we gather depositors and partners from all over the world for the celebrations of Svalbard Global Seed Vault.

We hope that you will enjoy your visit to Longyearbyen and that your participation in these events will be rewarding.

Welcome!

Jon Georg Dale

Minister of Agriculture  
and Food, Norway



Norwegian Ministry  
of Agriculture and Food

Lise Lykke Steffensen

Executive director  
NordGen



NordGen

Marie Haga

Executive director,  
Crop Trust



CROP  
TRUST

## 2. Introduction

The main activities for the anniversary participants will take place on Monday February 26, but the media program extends for some of the participants until Wednesday the 28<sup>th</sup>.

The program will be described more in detail on the following pages. However, the program in large is planned as follows:

### **Monday, February 26**

9.00 - 9.30

Foundation Stone Ceremony at the University Center in Svalbard (UNIS)

9.30 - 15.00

Seed Vault Summit at UNIS

16.00 - 17.00

10 Years Anniversary Deposit at Svalbard Global Seed Vault

20.00 - 20.45

"Frozen Songs" - music and dance performance produced by Zero Visibility Corp, Hålogaland teater/The Arctic Theatre and Ibsen International at Longyearbyen Kulturhus.

### **Tuesday, February 27**

10.00-11.30

Opportunity to partake in a lecture at UNIS, held by International Director at the Norwegian Polar Institute Kim Holmén, concerning climate change in the Arctic.

12.30 - 14.30

Visit to Mine 3 for a guided tour on the former working conditions of the coal mine workers. The mine was used as backup space for storage of Nordic seeds before the Seed Vault was built and now houses the 100 Year Trial.

### **Tuesday evening and Wednesday the 28<sup>th</sup>**

Planned visits to Svalbard Global Seed Vault.  
Time slot communicated individually.

# 3. Accreditation

NordGen will crew a meeting room at the Radisson Blu Polar Hotel, serving as accreditation office. The accreditation office can be found close to the reception area. Here, you will be given your accreditation card as well as some written information.

**Please note:**

**All participants are to wear their accreditation card visibly when taking part in an event.**

The opening hours of the accreditation office are:

Saturday, February 24

**13.00 - 14.00**

Sunday, February 25

**14.00 - 20.00**

Monday, February 26

**08.00-10.00**

Tuesday, February 27

**08.30-09.30**



# 4. Interview requests

As we have an intense program with many participants as well as lots of media representatives, we would highly appreciate if you informed us of who you are interested in interviewing. Either by the previously sent formula or by e-mail to [sara.landqvist@nordgen.org](mailto:sara.landqvist@nordgen.org).

Apart from the participants contributing to the Seed Vault Summit, we can offer interviews with the following people:

**Jon Georg Dale**, Norwegian Minister of Agriculture and Food, will also be available for interviews. See program on the opposite side.

Contact Heidi Eriksen Riise, Head of Communications, for interview requests and more information.

[Heidi-Eriksen.Riise@lmd.dep.no](mailto:Heidi-Eriksen.Riise@lmd.dep.no)

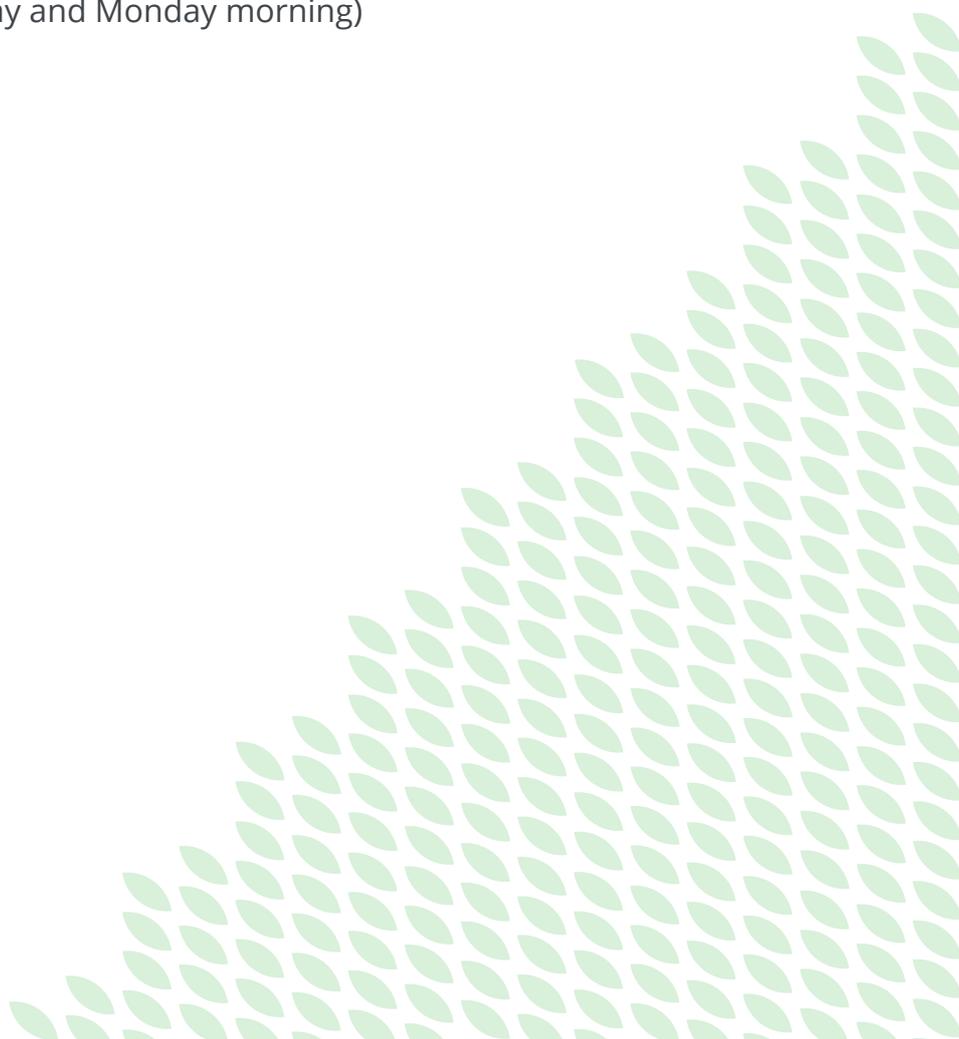
+47 975 17 227

**Lise Lykke Steffensen**, Executive Director, and Åsmund Asdal, Seed Vault Coordinator, [NordGen](#) (primarily during Seed Vault visits)

**Marie Haga**, Executive Director, [Crop Trust](#).

Contact [cierra.martin@croptrust.org](mailto:cierra.martin@croptrust.org) for more information.

**Synnøve Lyssand Sandberg**, Director, Project Development and Construction (EVP), [Statsbygg](#) (primarily Sunday and Monday morning)



# 5. Program of the Norwegian Minister of Agriculture and Food

Sunday, February 25

09.55-14.00 Oslo (OSL) - Svalbard Airport (LYR)

14.30 Svalbard Airport – Radisson hotel

16.00 Meeting with Kjersti Askholt, Governor

18.00 Inspection Svalbard Global Seed Vault -  
*guided tour with Jon Georg Dale,  
the Minister of Agriculture and Food*

19.00 Introduction to Svalbard at Svalbard Museum

Monday, February 26

09.00- 09:30 The Seed Vault Foundation Stone Ceremony

*Gene banks are invited to add seeds to the Seed Vault Foundation Stone, a glass cylinder that was filled with seeds to commemorate the 2006 decision to build the Seed Vault and is now housed at the Svalbard Museum.*

10.00-13.30 Field Trip to the Longyearbreen Glacier.  
*Presentation of the latest scientific data on arctic and climate related studies*

14.30 Screening of seed boxes at Svalbard Airport

16.00-17.00 10 Years Anniversary Deposit of Seeds  
*More than 20 gene banks will carry their seeds inside the Seed Vault*

18.30- 19.45 10 Years Anniversary Reception hosted by the Norwegian Minister of Agriculture and Food, Jon Georg Dale

20.00 -21.00 "Frozen Songs" - music and dance performance inspired by the Seed Vault  
*Produced by Zero Visibility Corp, Hålogaland teater/The Arctic Theatre and Ibsen International*

Tuesday, February 27

9.00-10.00 Available for media interviews/Visit to Longyearbyen Brewery

10.00-12.00 Visit to Adventsdalen with Sysselmannen (the Governor of Svalbard)

Contact [Heidi-Eriksen.Riise@lmd.dep.no](mailto:Heidi-Eriksen.Riise@lmd.dep.no) (+47 975 17 227) for registration and more info.

# 6.1 Seed Vault Summit

“Towards rational conservation and sustainable use of plant genetic resources”

**Monday February 26, 2018**

**09.00 - 15.00**

**University Centre in Svalbard (UNIS),  
Longyearbyen**

*While the Svalbard Global Seed Vault offers facilities for security copies of seeds conserved in gene banks, this ex situ conservation is only one of several methods for conserving plant genetic resources for food and agriculture.*

*The Seed Vault Summit invites different players involved in the different methods for conservation and sustainable use of crop germplasm to discuss how to strengthen the links and the complementarity of these conservation strategies – in order to optimize the conservation efforts and, at the same time, encourage sustainable use of these resources.*

Please register in advance for your participation.

**09.00:** Welcome by **Jon Georg Dale**, Norwegian Minister of Agriculture and Food

**09.10:** Foundation Stone Ceremony

*Gene banks are invited to add seeds to the Seed Vault Foundation Stone, a glass cylinder that was filled with seeds to commemorate the 2006 decision to build the Seed Vault and is now housed at the Svalbard Museum.*

An area close to the stage will be made available for photographers.

**09.30:** Introduction by moderators **Lise Lykke Steffensen**, NordGen and **Jonathan Drori**, The Eden Project

## **I: Interactions between conservation methods and systems**

**09.40:** Which steps will FAO take to strengthen the links and complementarity between ex situ and in situ conservation?

**Irene Hoffman**

FAO, Secretariat of the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture

**10.00:** Snapshots of farmers' biodiverse seed systems: re-visioning in situ and ex situ conservation strategies in the framework of food sovereignty.

**Patrick Mulvany**

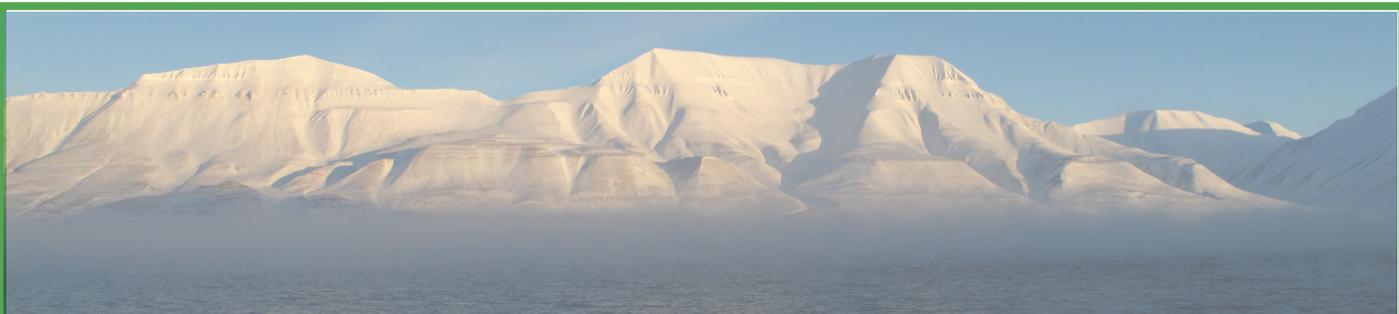
Practical Action

**10.20:** Strengthening the continuum between conservation and use of genetic resources for adaptation to climate change.

**Ahmed Amri**

ICARDA

**10.40:** Break, refreshments



**11.10:** The state of cryo conservation and possible interactions with programs using other PGR conservation methods.

**Ann Tutwiler**

Bioversity

**11.30:** How Embrapa combines different conservation approaches to optimize conservation and use of PGR in Brazil.

**Arthur da Silva Mariane**

Embrapa

## **II: How to adapt conservation systems to users' preferences**

**11.50:** Steps the Treaty's Governing Body wishes to take in supporting countries' efforts to provide access to PGRFA for researchers, plant breeders and farmers.

**Kent Nnadozie**

International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture, FAO

**12.10:** PGR material used by plant breeders and researchers, and how conservation systems can facilitate increased use.

**Kristin Børresen**

Graminor

**12.30:** Lunch at UNIS Canteen (voucher needed)

**13.30:** Conservation and utilization of agricultural biodiversity by farmer communities in Nepal: lessons learned.

**Pitambar Shrestha**

LI-BIRD

**13.45:** Interaction of farmers and gene banks, example of aromatic and medicinal plants in Switzerland.

**Jean-Marc Genevay**

Bassins Distillery

## **III: Discussion and summing up**

**14.00:** Panel: How to feed a growing population in a changing climate by improving plant genetic resource conservation and use. Moderated by **Jonathan Drori**, The Eden Project

**14.45–15.00:** Summing up and presentation of findings by representatives of the Norwegian Ministry of Agriculture and Food, Crop Trust and NordGen.

**15.45:** Bus departs from UNIS entrance to Svalbard Global Seed Vault for the 10 Year Anniversary Deposit.

## 6.2 10 Year Anniversary Deposit

**Monday February 26, 2018**

**16.00 - 17.00**

**Svalbard Global Seed Vault**

*It is important that you bring warm winter clothes to the 10 Year Anniversary Deposit taking place outside the Seed Vault. You need to have equipment that will keep you warm for an hour outdoors. In worst case it could be down to -15C and heavy wind. You can check weather forecast for Longyearbyen at [www.yr.no](http://www.yr.no).*

At the 10 Year Anniversary Deposit, representatives from more than 20 different gene banks around the world gather outside Svalbard Global Seed Vault. Their seed boxes have been scanned at Longyearbyen airport and brought to the Seed Vault by a vehicle from where the gene bank representatives carry their boxes to the doors of the Seed Vault.

Jon Georg Dale, the Norwegian Minister of Agriculture and Food, will hold a short speech and a male choir, "Store Norske Mandskor", will sing during the 10 Year Anniversary Deposit.

If you drive yourself to the 10 Year Anniversary Deposit, please make sure that you don't park too close to the road towards the entrance of the Seed Vault as several buses need room to drop of and pick up participants of the event.

## 6.3 Music and dance performance

**Monday February 26, 2018**

**19.45 - 20.45**

**Longyearbyen Kulturhus**

Monday evening, the Norwegian Minister of Agriculture and Food invites the participants to a reception at Longyearbyen Kulturhus. Unfortunately, this activity cannot accommodate media representatives due to lack of space.

However, media are welcome to join afterwards to the music and dance performance called "Frozen Songs" by Zero Visibility Corp, The Arctic Theatre/Hålogaland Teater and Ibsen International. Participation is to be registered in advance through the e-mail formular sent out in advance.

The doors open at 19.45 and the performance commence at 20.00.

The music and dance performance is open also to the public of Longyearbyen.

# "Frozen Songs"

*Deep within the cold and dark inside  
The Global Seed Vault at Svalbard,  
the origin of life is being stored.*

This scenario forms the backdrop of the production Frozen Songs by celebrated Norwegian choreographer Ina Christel Johannessen. Joining her are dancers from her ensemble Zero Visibility Corp, the Chinese video artists Feng Jiangzhou and Zhang Lin, and Belgian musical duo Stray Dogs.

In this performance Norwegian and international artists come together on stage, as part of an international tour, to create a unique artistic experience centred around one very important and current question; survival.



NORDLYS



ITROMSØ



**Choreography** Ina Christel Johannessen  
**Multimedia** Feng Jiangzhou and Zhang Lin, Sifenlv New Media  
**Music** Frederik Meulyzer and Koenraad Ecker, Stray Dogs  
**Scenography** Kristin Torp, Graa Hverdag AS  
**Costume design** Kathrine Tolo, Norsk Kunststoff AS  
**Light Design** Nico Benz  
**Dancers** Line Tørmoen, Pia Elton Hammer, Ole Kristian Tangen, Valtteri Raekallio, Daniel Whiley, Fan Luo, Anton Borgström  
**Text** Oda Fiskum  
**Singer** Aksel Rykkvin  
**Photographer film sequence/photos** Yaniv Cohen  
**Video technique** Magnar Mork  
**Sound** Morten Pettersen  
**Executive producer** Kirsti Ulvestad  
**Production team** Kirsti Ulvestad, Inger Buresund, Fabrizio Massini

**Original idea** Inger Buresund, Artistic director, The Arctic Theatre  
**Produced by** Zero Visibility Corp, The Arctic Theatre, Ibsen International  
**Co-produced by** Dansens Hus, Oslo, La Briqueterie, Paris, Arts Printing House, Vilnius  
**International relations** Lene Bang, Zero Visibility Corp.  
**Zero Visibility Corp** is supported by the Norwegian Arts Council.

**The Arctic theatre** is supported by the Norwegian Cultural Department, Tromsø city council, counties of Troms and Finnmark.

**Ibsen International** is supported by the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

## 6.4 Interview slots

**Tuesday February 27, 2018**

**9.00 - 10.00**

**Radisson Blu Polar Hotel**

During Tuesday morning, we have a time slot free for media interviews. At this time, the members of the International Advisory Panel (IAP), the lecturers and representatives of the organizations behind Svalbard Global Seed Vault will be available for interviews. However, we still ask you to register your interview requests in advance.

## 6.5 Lectures at UNIS

**Tuesday February 27, 2018**

**10.00 - 11.30**

**University Center of Svalbard (UNIS)**

Due to significant interest and many questions, the University Centre in Svalbard (UNIS) and the Norwegian Polar Institute offer lectures for media at UNIS Tuesday February 27.

10.00–10.20: UNIS and Longyearbyen

Fred Skancke Hansen, Director of HSE and infrastructure, UNIS

10:20–10:40: Permafrost

Hanne H. Christiansen, Professor in Physical Geography, UNIS

10:40–11:00: Space Physics

Lisa Baddeley, Associate Professor in Space Physics, UNIS

Short break

11:10–11:30: Climate change

Kim Holmén, International Director, Norwegian Polar Institute

11:30–11:50: Adaptive climate-impact monitoring of terrestrial food-webs in Svalbard

Åshild Ø. Pedersen, Terrestrial Ecologist, Norwegian Polar Institute

Please contact Kim Holmén ([kim.holmen@npolar.no](mailto:kim.holmen@npolar.no)) for further information.

## 6.6 Visit to Mine 3 and the 100 Year Trial

**Tuesday 27th of February 2018**

**12.15 - 14.45**

**Mine 3**

Transportation is offered for media pre-registered for this event.

**The bus departs Radisson Blu Polar Hotel at 12.15.**

The last century, the coal industry has dominated Svalbard. Join us on a guided tour through narrow passages and learn more about history of Longyearbyen and the strives of the coal mine workers.

The Nordic countries has since the 1980's used Svalbard and Mine 3 as a back-up layer for seed samples. In a dark tunnel, in the end of the guided tour, we find our container with wooden boxes and dates carved into the sides. Every fifth year we collect a box and test the germination of the seeds that have been sealed in glass tubes for more than 30 years. Seed Vault Coordinator **Åsmund Asdal** tells more about the trials and some of the results gathered.

## 6.7 Seed Vault visits

As part of the 10 Year Anniversary events, media representatives are invited to visit Svalbard Global Seed Vault. Time slot for your visit will be communicated individually.

During these days, many people are to visit the Seed Vault. The time at the Seed Vault is therefore restricted to one hour from entrance to departure. The possibility for footage and longer interviews is limited.

Upon arrival to the Seed Vault you must be able to show proof of identification as well as your accreditation card.

Transportation to and from the Seed Vault, situated some 5 kilometres from Longyearbyen, is at your own arrangement.

For security and logistical reasons, always follow the instructions of your host and the NordGen and Statsbygg personnel, whilst visiting the Seed Vault.

## 7. Transportation

Media is responsible for their own transportation during the anniversary events. The exception is the visit to Mine 3. A bus departing Radisson Blu Polar Hotel at **12.15** will take media who have registered for this visit to the mine and back again afterwards.

There are [public shuttle buses](#) between the airport and the hotels. Hotel staff can inform about times. The fee is 75 NOK and you should be able to pay with a credit card.

The distance between the airport and Longyearbyen is about 5 kilometres, but as the area is not polar bear secured, we do not recommend you walking this section.

The need for transportation is primary needed (if taking the bus from the airport) for visits to Svalbard Global Seed Vault. The Seed Vault is situated close to the airport, a couple of kilometres up the hillside.

### **Walking distances**

Within Longyearbyen it is safe to walk, unless you're told otherwise.

- Between UNIS (summit), Radisson Blu Hotel and Longyearbyen Kulturhus (reception & performance) is 5-10 minutes.

- From Funken Lodge to Kulturhuset, Radisson SAS and UNIS (in that order) takes 20-25 minutes.

Be aware that snow and ice cover can cause slippery roads.

Restaurants, shops, tourist information, bank with ATM etc. are located in the area close to Kulturhuset.

Svalbard Museum is located in the same building as UNIS.

# 8. Practical information

## Food

Meals are to be organized by yourself.

Places to eat (other than the hotels) are located in the main (and nearly only) street, close to Kulturhuset. When in Svalbard, you could expect “normal” western food with a Norwegian flair. There should be ample choices for vegetarians.

The water is safe to drink from the tap.

## Climate

The weather varies; you can check daily temperatures in Longyearbyen on [www.yr.no](http://www.yr.no). The mean temperature in February is -16C, however, warmer periods between -2 and -8 have become more frequent over the last years.

By the end of February, the days are still quite short but you may see the sun shining on the mountain tops around Longyearbyen a couple of hours during the middle of the day.

The skies will be beautifully coloured unless overcast. You may see the Northern Lights, also from the centre of Longyearbyen, which can be spectacular (there is a northern lights research centre just outside Longyearbyen).

There is often a cold stiff wind in Svalbard. This means that it can feel about ten degrees colder than the indicated temperature. February is also a month in which it typically snows the most. Buildings, including your hotel, are well heated, and you will not have to endure the outside temperatures much unless you want to.

Unless you want to have some walking tours, you will be transported to the event locations, except for short walks between Radisson Blu hotel, UNIS and Longyearbyen Kulturhus. The visit inside the Seed Vault is the exception in that it is not heated inside.

It will be about -4C in the areas where we stop and talk. In the vault room itself however, where the seeds are stored, it will be about -18C, but you won't stay there long.

The 10-year anniversary deposit taking place at the entrance of the Seed Vault on Monday the 26th at 16.00 can be a cold experience. For this event you should bring your warmest clothes and shoes.

## Clothes

Our recommendation: Bring the warmest clothes you own for walking outside. Dress in layers. Long woollen undergarments are one of the best things you can bring. Sweaters – light for inside; heavy for outside – a good winter coat and warm boots are essential. Don't forget gloves and a warm cap or hat, a scarf, and thick socks and boots or heavy shoes. You will appreciate having something to protect your ears.

It is customary in Svalbard to remove your shoes when entering buildings (including the hotels). This keeps the floors clean and dry. You may wish to bring a pair of slippers, or light shoes to change into for this purpose.

Svalbard has shops selling some of the world's best cold-weather clothing, and there are small shops in the hotels selling hats, gloves, scarves, sweaters, jackets, etc. Such items are expensive in Svalbard, but very effective.

The dress code in Svalbard is informal, meaning that you do not need to bring dress or coat and tie. Be comfortable and dress "effectively" for the climate and culture.

### **Health & Safety**

The air is very dry in Svalbard – it's actually an Arctic desert. You may wish to bring a skin moisturizer. There is a pharmacy as well as a small hospital in Longyearbyen.

Much is made of the presence of polar bears. Indeed, they can be found anywhere any-time in Svalbard. They are not commonly seen in or around the village of Longyearbyen, but they can be there and every year some visit. They are extremely fast and dangerous. Under no circumstances should you venture outside the village without being accompanied by someone with a gun. Walking within the village center is considered safe unless you are informed otherwise. The Governor of Svalbard pay close attention to any presence of polar bears and inform about any need for precautions. You may also see reindeer and Arctic fox while in Svalbard. These are not dangerous.

### **Currency**

The currency in use in Svalbard is the Norwegian krone (crown). You can get this at the bank or ATM machine at Oslo airport, or at the bank in Longyearbyen. Credit cards are accepted in resaurants, shops etc.

### **Language**

You can assume that everyone you meet in Oslo and Svalbard speaks English (in addition to Norwegian, of course).

### **Time**

Oslo and Svalbard are at GMT+1, one hour ahead of London, and the same time as Rome and Berlin, for example. Note that events in Norway begin "on time" when the schedule indicates. "Fashionably late" is not a particularly familiar practice.

### **Electricity**

220V, AC. The standard European plugs are used.

### **Other**

If you want to engage in tourist activities, there are several possibilities including dog sled and snow-scooter trips. We advise to visit the Tourist information office or visit their website: <http://www.spitsbergentravel.no/eng/>

# 9. Brief history of Svalbard



*Longyearbyen is named after John Munro Longyear, who ran the Arctic Coal Company here from 1905-1916.*

**Legend has it**, that already the Vikings found "Svalbard", but for this there is no hard evidence. It is likely that Pomors, hunters and fishermen from the White Sea coast of Russia, knew Spitsbergen as a good hunting ground already before it was 'officially' discovered by the Dutchman Willem Barentsz in 1596. Soon after Barentsz' famous journey, the first phase of whaling started in Spitsbergen's nearshore waters.

**In the 19th century**, explorers and scientists discovered Spitsbergen as an interesting playground. After the Pomors had disappeared from Spitsbergen, Norwegian trappers started to hunt polar bears, foxes and other Arctic wildlife in the late 19th century. This time saw also the advent of adventurers/explorers who tried to reach the pole, starting from Spitsbergen, and increased attempts to make some money with mining.

**Until the First World War**, Spitsbergen was still no man's land, but in 1920, a treaty was signed in Paris which put Spitsbergen under Norwegian administration and sovereignty, but guaranteed free access for citizens of all signatory nations as well as demilitarisation. The Spitsbergen Treaty came into force in 1925 and remains valid.

**Name confusion:** Svalbard is the name for the archipelago, and Spitsbergen the main island. The name Svalbard appeared for the first time in 1194, although it remains uncertain what exactly it referred to. Since Barentsz' discovery in 1596, the name Spitsbergen commonly was used. In England, Spitsbergen was often called Greenland in the 17th and 18th centuries, due to the supposition that Spitsbergen and the real Greenland were linked somewhere in the north. The true reason may actually also have been that the Dutch name Spitsbergen was not accepted. The term Svalbard has been re-introduced by Norway when the Spitsbergen Treaty was in force. There are good practical reasons for having two different names for the largest island (Spitsbergen) and the whole archipelago (Svalbard), but it may be fair to say that the historical base for the use of the name Svalbard is rather weak.

**The 1920s** also brought new attempts to reach the pole. Roald Amundsen and Umberto Nobile made their now legendary attempts from Ny Ålesund, with the well-known, dramatic results. Russians and Norwegians have always been living near each other in Spitsbergen, both before and after the war, with good cooperation and various contacts taking place nowadays.

**As anywhere else** in the world, the Second World War was an important and dramatic milestone for all activities in Spitsbergen. In recent years, science has increased and is done by a number of nations, and so have tourism and service industries, whereas mining is slowly losing importance.

**Text: Rolf Stange**

[www.spitsbergen-svalbard.com](http://www.spitsbergen-svalbard.com)

# 10. Contact information

Should any questions arise regarding the program or other practicalities, don't hesitate to contact anyone in our staff:

## Åsmund Asdal

Seed Vault Coordinator  
+47 91365166  
asmund.asdal@nordgen.org

## Sara Landqvist

Communications manager  
+46 763 033 388  
sara.landqvist@nordgen.org

# 11. Social Media

**Social Media:** We fondly welcome you to post photos and updates of your participation during these days. Hashtags: #SeedVault10 and #SeedVaultSummit.

And if you don't already do it, feel free to follow the accounts of Svalbard Global Seed Vault:



[Svalbard Global Seed Vault](#)



[svalbard\\_global\\_seed\\_vault](#)



[@GlobalSeedVault](#)

We also encourage you to follow:



Norwegian Ministry  
of Agriculture and Food



NordGen



[Landbruks- og  
matdepartementet](#)



[Global Crop Diversity Trust](#)



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