

GUIDELINES: DOLPHIN AND WHALE WATCHING

"HAVE A GOOD LOOK BUT KEEP YOUR DISTANCE"

INTRODUCTION

Dolphin and whale watching is a major tourist attraction worldwide. In Mauritius such attraction helps to diversify our tourist product and create business opportunities for the local community. However, it has been noted that the activities are carried out in an unsustainable manner thus tainting the image of our destination as a caring one.

Present practice of dolphin and whale watching cannot be continued. With a view to protecting the mammals, these guidelines should be strictly adhered to. Any harassment of the dolphins and breach of these guidelines will entail the suspension, revocation or cancellation of the skipper or pleasure craft licence by the Tourism Authority.

When in sight of dolphins and whales

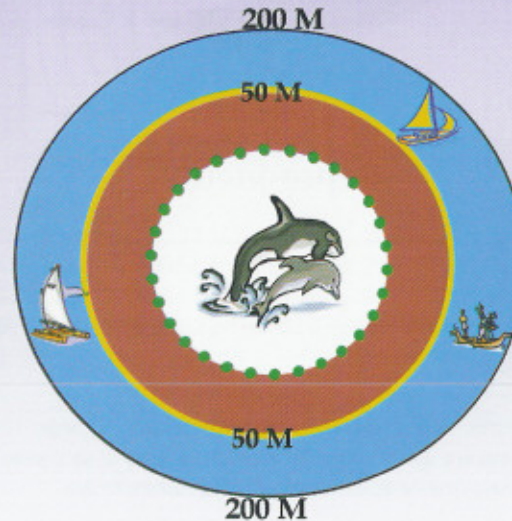
The following operational procedures are intended to avoid harassment and possible injury to mammals commonly seen by crafts engaged in Dolphin and whale watching. The following guidelines can help protect you and the dolphins you wish to watch:

How to approach

- a) Approach zone within a range of 50 mts to 200 mts of the mammals
- (i) Moving craft is to be kept at no wake speed.
- (ii) Avoid sudden changes in speed and direction.

- (iii) Craft shall stay on the side of the dolphins or the whales and follow a parallel course.
- (iv) Intentional noise to attract the mammals is prohibited.
- (v) Never cross in front of the mammals or drive into or over a pod.
- (vi) The engine or any other propeller device is to be kept in neutral gear during the viewing period.

- (b) No Approach Zone: 50 mts from the mammals
 - **DO NOT APPROACH WITHIN 50 METRES OF DOLPHINS OR WHALES**



- (c) Departure Procedure
 - All crafts shall leave the mammals following the same speed and distance procedures described above.
 - In order for vessels to be clear of mammals before dark, crafts shall cease dolphin and whale watching an hour before sunset.

Dolphins or whales within 50 metres of the craft

In case a mammal approaches within 50 metres of

your craft, put engines in neutral and do not re-engage propulsion until dolphins or whales are observed clear of harm's way from your craft.

Bow-Riding

Any action to solicit or encourage dolphins or whales to bow-ride is prohibited.

In case dolphins or whales choose to bow ride, crafts shall maintain their course or speed.

Feeding

Never feed marine mammals

Littering

Do not dispose any rubbish, litter or contaminants at sea.

Information/Awareness

Operators shall inform their clients about the habitat and behaviours of dolphins and whales and the content of these guidelines.

Skipper

No skipper shall operate a pleasure craft for dolphin or whale watching activity unless he has been certified to do so.

Pleasure Craft

No pleasure craft shall be engaged in the dolphin or whale watching activity without the prior written authorization of the Tourism Authority.

Reporting

Any reports of and activity that appears to be an intentional or negligent action leading to collision and harassment incident shall be reported to the Tourism Authority on phone number 213 1740 or National Coast Guard Posts.