

The Laws:

Fisheries Administrative Order (FAO) no. 185-1: Ban on the taking or catching, selling, purchasing, possessing, transporting and exporting of Dolphins, Whales and Porpoises.

Republic Act No. 9147: Wildlife Resources Conservation and Protection Act

DOT and DA Joint Administrative Order No. 1: Guidelines to Govern the Conduct of People Interaction with Cetaceans

Provincial Ordinance No. 09-2003: Ordinance Declaring the Humpback Whales as Protected Species Within the Territorial Jurisdiction in the Province of Cagayan and Providing Penalties for the Violation thereof.

What is a disturbance?

Disturbance is when we interfere with an animal's ability to hunt, feed, communicate, socialize, rest, breed, or care for its young. These are critical life processes, necessary for healthy marine wildlife populations.

To report a marine mammal disturbance or harassment:

Department of Agriculture - Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (DA-BFAR)

Philippine Coconut Authority (PCA) Building, Elliptical Road, Diliman, Quezon City, Philippines
Tel. No. +63(2)929.9597; 929.8074
Email: info@bfar.da.gov.ph

Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR)

Central Office: Visayas Avenue, Diliman, 1100 Quezon City, Philippines
Tel. No. +63(2)929.6626
Email: web@denr.gov.ph

Department of Tourism (DOT)

Office of the Secretary
T.M. Kalaw, Malate, Manila, Philippines
Email: webmaster@tourism.gov.ph

World Wide Fund for Nature - Philippines (WWF-Philippines)

105th Floor JFD Plaza #65 Mindanao Avenue
Borromeo, Bagong Pag-asa, Quezon City 1105 Philippines
Tel. No. +63(2)920.7923/26/31
Email: akp@wwf.org.ph

To report marine mammal sightings:

BFAR, DENR, WWF

Need more information?

Center for Rural Empowerment and the Environment (CREE)
<http://www.conservationforpeople.org>
Email: Info@conservationforpeople.org

WWF-Philippines
<http://www.wwf.org.ph>

Ocean Park Conservation Foundation, Hong Kong
Ocean Park Aberdeen Hong Kong
<http://www.opcf.org.hk>
Email: opcf@oceanpark.com.hk



ALL ZONES

- No aircraft flying below 300m altitude
- No jetskis or wave runners
- No playback of sounds or music
- No swimming
- No throwing or dumping of trash
- No feeding of cetaceans

STAND-BY ZONE

- No sudden change in speed or direction

CAUTION ZONE

- Maximum of 2 vessels
- No wake speed
- Speed no faster than slowest cetacean
- Boats should coordinate with each other
- No dropping of anchors
- 20 minutes maximum interaction
- No touching of cetaceans

NO APPROACH ZONE*

- No boats should be in this zone

* Minimum distance:

For whales, 100m

For small cetaceans, 50m

BE WHALE WISE



Cetacean Interaction Guidelines for Boaters, Paddlers and Viewers





Seeing whales and other marine wildlife in their natural environment can be a thrilling experience.

In our excitement, we sometimes forget that our presence has an effect on wildlife and their habitat. Just like us, marine animals need space to find food, choose mates, raise young, socialize and rest.

When we get too close, approach too fast or make too much noise, we may be disrupting these activities and causing the animals unnecessary stress. In some cases, we may be threatening their lives. Set an example for others, and help protect our spectacular marine resources.

Be Whale Wise – Follow these guidelines in the presence of whales and dolphins.

Why do we need guidelines?

The diversity and complexity of marine life in the coastal waters off Cagayan and the entire Philippines is truly extraordinary. It is a fragile world. Pollution, global climate change and other impacts are taking their toll at all levels of the coastal food web. Many species of marine wildlife, such as the humpback whales are showing signs of vulnerability.

Meanwhile, vessel traffic in our waters is steadily increasing, placing added pressures on marine animals and their habitats.

We need to minimize our impact.

These guidelines are designed to help you enjoy your wildlife encounter, and reduce the risk of disturbing marine wildlife.

Guidelines:

1. **BE CAUTIOUS and COURTEOUS:** approach areas of known or suspected marine wildlife activity with extreme caution. Look in all directions before planning your approach or departure.
2. **SLOW DOWN:** reduce speed to less than 7 knots when within 400 meters/yards of the nearest whale. Avoid abrupt course changes.
3. **KEEP CLEAR of the whales' path.** If whales are approaching you, cautiously move out of the way.
4. **DO NOT APPROACH** whales from the front or from behind. Always approach and depart whales from the side, moving in a direction parallel to the direction of the whales.
5. **DO NOT APPROACH or position your vessel closer than 100 meters (330 feet) to any whale.**
6. If your vessel is not in compliance with the 100 meters approach guideline (#5), place engine in neutral and allow whales to pass.
7. No other vessel shall approach within 300 meters (1000 feet) of any cetaceans if two (2) or more other vessels are already positioned to watch the cetaceans.
8. **STAY** on the **OFFSHORE** side of the whales when they are traveling close to shore.
9. **DO NOT** drop or lower overboard an anchor from your vessel within 300 meters of a cetacean.

10. **LIMIT** your viewing time to a recommended maximum of 20 minutes. This will minimize the cumulative impact of many vessels and give consideration to other viewers.
11. **DO NOT** swim with, touch or feed whales and dolphins.
12. **DO NOT** play back any sound or recording of any kind underwater.

Bow and stern-riding dolphins:

1. **DO NOT** drive through groups of dolphins to encourage bow or stern-riding.
2. Should dolphins choose to ride the bow wave of your vessel, avoid sudden course changes. Hold course and speed or reduce speed gradually.

Special consideration for cetacean mother and calf groups:

1. **DO NOT** pursue mother and calf groups of any species of whale.
2. **DO NOT** approach within 200 meters of any whale that is accompanied by a calf or calves.
3. If a mother and calf group approaches a vessel that is stopped or proceeding at minimal speed, the vessel **SHOULD NOT** make any sudden or repeated changes in speed or direction while near or among the mother and calf group, except in an emergency.

Marine Protected Areas, Sanctuaries and Parks:

1. **CHECK** your nautical charts for the location of various protected areas.
2. **ABIDE** by signboard restrictions or contact a local authority for further information.