

Code of Ethics for Cetacean Watching in the Azores

- Do not exceed the speed of the Cetaceans by more than 2 knots and keep to a constant speed
- Avoid sudden changes of direction when approaching an animal
- Maintain a parallel course slightly to the rear of the animals, maintaining an open field of 180 degrees in front of those animals
- Avoid making any noises which disturb or attract the animals
- Once the observation time has ended, or if the animals show signs of being disturbed, the vessels must return to beyond the approach area to the rear of the animals
- Do not approach closer than 50m to any cetacean
- Do not approach closer than 500m to any animal or group of animals seen to be motionless, resting or giving birth
- Do not drive through a group of animals separating them, especially isolating the calves from the adults
- When observing calves or whales accompanied by young calves, boats must maintain a distance of 100m or greater
- If three or more vessels are observing one group of cetaceans, boats must maintain a distance of 300m or more if dolphins are present and 500m or greater when observing whales
- Observations of one group of cetaceans must not exceed 30 minutes
- Sailing boats may only approach the cetaceans under engine power
- The use of sonar is not allowed, even outside of the observation area
- The use of underwater motorised vehicles is not permitted within the proximity of the cetaceans
- Do not chase the cetaceans
- Do not feed whales or dolphins
- Swimming with whales is not allowed
- Do not throw litter or other waste into the water