



INTERNATIONAL  
GUIDELINES  
FOR RESPONSIBLE  
DIVER

# INTERNATIONAL GUIDELINES FOR RESPONSIBLE DIVER

When adventure calls ! Become the diving ambassadors  
of the Third Millennium...

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« Dear Diver,

You are going to visit beautiful coral reefs, rub shoulders with sharks, meet whales, and discover the Ocean universe.

To do this you are going to spend a few days in a country where fishermen, farmers and tradesmen live all year round. Their traditions are different from yours. The natural resources on which they survive are often in short supply. Fresh water, in particular, is rare and priceless.

The life of the country is not just the hotel you are staying at, however pleasant. Why not use your spare time between dives to meet the locals and listen to their stories? You may be astonished by their cultural heritage and hospitality.

Your purchasing power is, very often, much higher than theirs. Do not push them to damage the sea and, in the long run, impoverish the fishermen by buying sad souvenirs like shark teeth, shells, corals and tortoiseshells. Firmly refuse shark fin and tortoise soups, scandalously raped from the sea. These animals could disappear.

Under the water, you will be visiting a living, splendid but fragile world. Collisions and shocks crush and kill the fixed animals which do such much to enchant the seascapes you came to admire. All disturbances can frighten fish which protect their eggs, leaving their fry for the predators. Please do not feed the fish as this disturbs the balance between species and changes their natural behavior.

You will expect to find all the treasures of the wild marine universe as wonderful in the future as during your visit today. You would like to share these joys with your friends and your children, so be curious about everything but remain discrete and attentive and watch out for clumsiness ! Your behavior today will ensure that future generations of divers can enjoy this marvelous world and the thrills of meeting sharks and whales in an underwater adventure as colorful as yours.»

François Sarano  
Founder of LONGITUDE 181



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## Guidelines for responsible divers.

*This charter proposes guidelines and not a list of restrictions!  
Apply the suggestions case by case since diving spots and situations change from place to place. The basic idea is to get people to think about how to optimize diving conditions to protect and ensure fair sharing of the Oceans' treasures.*

### 1 - Prepare your journey.

Not all travel agencies and diving centers offer the same services. Some try to protect the environment they help you explore and share natural resources more fairly with host country inhabitants. This may cost them money and make your trip more expensive but together you will contribute to the sustainable development of our planet. The cost per dive should not be your only selection criterion.

- **Choose a travel agency which has agreed to respect ethical guidelines**
- **Prefer Responsible Diving Centers** which are concerned with the protection of sea-beds (treatment of solid and liquid wastes, use of mooring buoys etc.) and have invested in local development projects
- **Find out about the marine ecosystems** you will be exploring...
- **Find out about the inhabitants** of the country you are visiting : their traditions, economy and resources



### 2 - Before diving.

- **Get fit.** If you have not dived for a long time, train yourself to manage your buoyancy : lung-ballast, weight jacket, optimized ballasting, etc..
- **Find out about the dive spot** you are exploring before you go. You will enjoy your dives so much more as you will not just be a passive witness in a world in which you cannot speak the language. Learn to read the first pages of the big marine life book. If you can identify the animals, and know how they behave, you will know where to find them. Much of this incredible fauna is hidden.
- **Ask your diving center to give you a presentation** of the local ecosystem
- **Ask for the list of threatened species**, the list of protected species and all relevant regulations
- **Ask about what the diving center does to protect the sea** (mooring buoys, etc.)



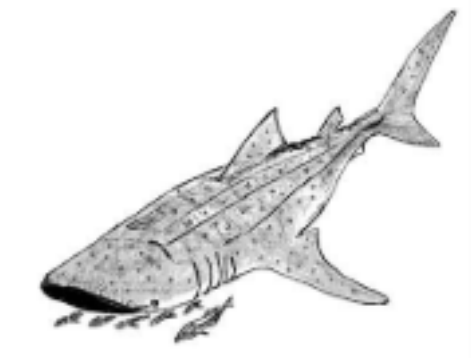
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### 3 - On the boat

- **Never throw anything overboard**
- **Refuse plastic plates and cups** which take scores of years to break down..
- **Ask for dustbins on the deck for** (if you absolutely need to smoke) cigarette butts (they take months to break down) plastic waste, aluminum foil, etc...
- **Take care to attach spare air valves**, consoles and pressure gauges firmly fixed so they do not dangle and damage fixed flora and the fauna.
- **Use short, recreational, flippers.**

### 4 - When diving

- **As soon as you enter the water, check your weights** and adjust if necessary.
- **Use your flippers gently**, so as not to collide with fixed marine life
- **Avoid contact with fixed plants and animals.** They are fragile and can be destroyed by repeated shocks.
- **Do not bring anything back except pictures.**
- **Do not bother the animals.** If they take refuge in their hiding-place, do not force them out – they are already stressed enough. Wait without moving until they calm down and come out again.
- **Do not feed the fish.** You change their behavior and unbalance the ecosystem





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### 5 - After diving

- **Save fresh water.** It is the most valuable commodity on Earth.
- **Ask for equipment designed to conserve fresh water** like equipment wash tanks and controlled flow showers.

### 6 - During your holidays

- **Try to get outside your diving center or hotel.** There is a world out there waiting to meet you !
- **Do not buy souvenirs ripped from the sea** like shark teeth, tortoiseshells, starfish, sea horses and other dried fish, coral and shells.
- **Boycott restaurants which serve shark fin soup**, tortoise meat, cetaceans and fish caught by destructive means like dynamite, cyanide, etc.
- **Ask restaurants how the sea fare they propose is fished** and what agreements they have with local fishermen

