



**St Helena  
Government**



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**MARINE TOUR OPERATOR ENVIRONMENTAL  
ACCREDITATION SCHEME (PILOT)  
FOR ST HELENA**

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**MARINE CONSERVATION SECTION OF THE  
ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT DIVISION**

**ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES DIRECTORATE  
ST HELENA GOVERNMENT**

# 1 Terminology

In this environmental accreditation licensing scheme the following words shall have the following meaning:

**Marine Tour Operator (MTO)** means an individual, or company who provides expertise and guided service by sea or coast to a paying client for the purpose of utilising the marine environment for sport or recreational activities and holds a marine environment accreditation.

**Marine conservation section (MCS)** means the marine conservation team employed as part of the Environment and Natural Resources Directorate of SHG responsible for the management of the marine environment.

**Policy** means the Environmental policy for “Whale shark (*Rhincodon typus*), Devil ray (*mobula tarapacana*) and cetacean interaction activities on St. Helena Island to minimise risk of injury and disturbance”.

**Wildlife best practise guidelines** means the best practise guidelines produced the MCS for diving tours, wildlife viewing tours and wildlife interactions.

**Posters** mean any poster produced by the MCS for wildlife interaction.

**Vessel** means the vessel/s nominated by the MTO to carry out the Operations to the appropriate tour.

**Marine training/information session** means the training course provided by the MCS for which a certificate of completion is issued for either wildlife viewing, interaction or diving tours.

**Accredited** means a Marine tour operator (MTO) who has been granted their accreditation by the MCS, under the scheme and includes all conditions on and attached to the licence.

**Operations** mean the commercial operations which may be undertaken by an operator pursuant to the Licence.

**Passenger or Visitor** means those persons who are provided operations (tours) by the MTO.

**Valid certificate** means a MCS Wildlife viewing, Interaction or Diving certificate of attendance of training, that is no more than two years old and which is relevant to the current marine training course outline. Updates or changes to the course outline will occur from time to time, which may invalidate otherwise valid certificates. Whether a certificate affected by a change in the course is deemed to be invalid or not will be subject to the discretion of the MCS, who will take into consideration, the significance of the change to the course and the remaining time the certificate has to run.

**Award certificate** means the official tour specific accreditation validation document award after successful assessment.

**Wildlife interaction tour** means any tour where an MTO interacts with either any of the said species in the policy on or above the water.

**Diving tour** means any tour that an MTO conducts on or below the water's surface i.e. scuba or snorkelling.

**Wildlife viewing tour** means any tour that is conducted from a boat or shore.

**Scheme** means the MTO environmental accreditation scheme.

**EEZ** mean St. Helena Exclusive Economic Zone 200nm from the island.

## **PART A: GENERAL**

### **2 Policy Background**

The Marine Management Plan (August 2014) for St. Helena identifies the major existing and potential pressures on the waters of St Helena. The plan specifies the management strategies that should be put in place within St Helena's waters so that its rich biodiversity and unique natural ecosystems can be conserved, protecting in particular rare, endangered, globally significant and endemic species and ensuring that the natural resources are used sustainably for aspects of commercial and recreational activities of marine tourism.

Unless tourism is managed effectively it can have damaging effects on the environment. To maintain increased tourism (and hence revenue) it is imperative to protect the product people are coming to see.

St Helena's approach to support the management of its marine tourism industry in a sustainable manner will be achieved through implementing, enforcing and monitoring a marine environmental accreditation scheme.

### **3 Legislative & Policy Background**

The Environmental Protection Ordinance (EPO) currently in drafted is expected to be enacted in 2015 and allows for the provision of safeguards for our marine environment and species. This includes proposals for prohibitions related to protected species making it illegal to hunt, collect, kill, wound, pursue or capture certain species without a licence or research permits. To that end the EPO declares the entire St Helena EEZ as an IUCN protected area management category VI: Protected area with sustainable use of natural resources. The marine management plan drafted, publicly consulted on and approved in principle (by Executive council) in August 2014 is the definitive source of all marine management initiatives.

In relation to marine tourism this scheme aims to specifically support the following goal and objective of the marine management plan:

"To manage marine tourism and construction in or near the marine environment to minimise impacts on the marine environment, especially in the face of increasing pressures with economic development."

The "Protection of Wrecks and Marine Archaeological Heritage Ordinance" (Ord 7 of 2014) will protect wrecks from people taking artefacts; from damage caused by divers penetrating the wrecks or from damage due to sand extraction and it also protects the ground fish species on the wrecks from spearfishing or fishing.

The policy requires all MTO's wishing to interact with said species obtain accreditation from the Environment and Natural Resources Directorate (ENRD) of St Helena Government.

This scheme supplements the above-mentioned legislation, policies and any regulations made under them. It does not replace them or in any way affect the operation or significance of the legislation and should be read subject to them. Some of the provisions contained in this scheme are set, or partly set, by the legislation.

Where there is any (unintended) inconsistency then the legislation will apply.

#### 4 Accreditation Purpose and Application

The purpose of this scheme is to outline how the St Helena Government, Marine conservation section, through the marine environment accreditation scheme, monitors and manages marine tourism in its EEZ to minimise unintentional disturbance to marine wildlife and ecosystems through a system of assessment.

The scheme applies to all persons wishing to engage in commercial marine tourism based activities within St Helena's EEZ.

#### 5 Accreditation Principles

Accrediting marine tourism based businesses will be built on the following overarching principles:

- Sustainable use of resources and habitat.
- Promoting accountability, pride and a sense of responsibility to protect the marine environment amongst Marine Tour Operators through their wildlife interaction management, habitat respect and marine conservation advocacy.
- To provide a baseline standard of marine environment tourism for local operators to assess themselves against and to add additional value to their marine based tourism products and services.
- St Helena's marine environment is a common property resource to be managed for the benefit of all users.
- Fostering of greater economic viability of marine tourism based activities. Supporting a quality over quantity marine tourism product.
- Collection of data to support and provide information appropriate for evidence based advice to facilitate future planning and management.

#### 6 What is the marine accreditation scheme?

The accreditation scheme is an instrument by which EMD's MCS assess a marine tourism operator as an individual, or company to quantify how they understand, comply and manage their activities/services subject to the conditions of St. Helena's marine management plan, and species specific interaction policies. This is a local accreditation that recognises that there is a need to maintain high standards in order to protect St. Helena's pristine marine environment.

This is not a permanent accreditation; it terminates in one year.

Examples of activities pertaining to St. Helena marine environment includes:

- Undertaking guided coastal or scenic tours by boat.
- Undertaking a guided coastal or scenic tour on a boat to view seabirds.

- Undertaking of tours to or on offshore islands.
- Undertaking a guided coastal or scenic tours on land in an area indentified as a seabird nesting area.
- Undertaking cetacean watching tours and interaction tours.
- Undertaking whale shark watching and interaction tours.
- Undertaking scuba diving, free diving or snorkelling tours.

The scheme is a requirement of the policy. The accreditation should not been seen as a hindrance but rather a tool that will add to the value of a marine tourism business for marketing purposes as it will allow marine tour operators to easily advertise their competency and environmental awareness to customers and future clients.

## 7 Number of Accredited Marine Tour Operators

At this time there is no limit to number of marine tour operators accredited to operate in St. Helena waters providing that each operator meets the standards set out in this accreditation scheme.

It should be noted that little information exists to determine whether the current levels of marine tourism is ecologically sustainable in the long term. Until there is better understanding of how the present level of activity is affecting marine fauna and habitats, a precautionary approach will be adopted in relation to expansion of the industry.

As more information becomes available through research and monitoring, the sustainability can be assessed and it is possible that caps will be put on the number of accredited operators allowed in St. Helena waters. It will be beneficial to all operators to work within the best practise guidelines for each activity to minimise impact.

## 8 Marine Tourism Activities That Are Not Permitted

Spear fishing between 1st January and 31st March.

Snorkelling, free diving or scuba diving with Humpback whales

Scuba diving with whale sharks

## 9 Accreditation Conditions

The MCS will write the accreditation scheme conditions and be designated as the authority of the scheme and may at any time after the approval of accreditation attach further conditions to, vary the existing conditions or remove conditions.

Accreditation is granted and assessed on tour specific categories:

- Wildlife viewing tours
- Wildlife interaction tours
- Diving tours

## General Conditions:

Accreditation will not be issued to persons under the age of 18 years to undertake marine tourism based activities to paying clientele.

Accreditation may be issued in the name of an individual or company who is able to prove their ownership, hiring or charter arrangement for the accreditation period.

Accreditation for marine tourism activities will only be issued to an individual or company providing it has been issued with a valid boat licence/s under regulation 10 of the Harbours Regulations, Cap 47, which demonstrates the Harbours Board is satisfied it is in all respects seaworthy and safe for use in St Helena waters for its intended purposes for the named vessel/s.

Accreditation is not transferable and that the Operator shall explain to prospective purchasers of the business that the prospective purchasers would be required to make an application to the MCS, to obtain a replacement accreditation to continue the Operations

### 10 Accreditation Duration

All accreditation activities under this scheme will generally be for periods of up to a maximum of 1 year in duration.

### 11 Application and granting of accreditation fees

None at this time. However this to be reviewed as the industry develops.

### 12 Issues that will cause the suspension and review of accreditation

- Failure to provide data as required.
- Failure to allow the presence of MCS spot check personnel onboard vessel.
- Regular negative spot check feedback and failure to deal with recommendation in a timely manner.
- Frequent reporting of violations of scheme from general public.
- Social media evidence that is brought to the attention of the MCS demonstrating a breach of any accreditation conditions.

### 13 Issues That Will Preclude the Award of accreditation

The MCS reserve the right not to award accreditation, including on the basis of evidence that:

- A boat owned, chartered or leased for does not have valid boat licence ensuring its compliance with regulation 10 of the Harbour Regulations CAP 47, or in the case of boats not able to be provided with a local boat licence, a seaworthiness certificate from a recognised boat certification authority, or flag state.
- A boat has been involved in illegal, unregulated or unreported (IUU) activities.
- Where an individual or company has repeatedly violated accreditation scheme conditions.

## 14 Accreditation Branding

The accreditation will be represented by the following branding:



## 15 Data and Observer Requirements

Environmental protection and conservation measures will be included in the accreditation terms and conditions and are dictated by the appropriate legislation and policies as outlined in section 3.

Data collection forms (in the form of a logbook) (annex 1) will be issued to accreditation holders and will be provided by the MCS where appropriate. Completed forms must be submitted to the marine section by the first working day each month.

SHG reserves the right under the accreditation scheme to place an MCS spot check representative on a vessel or excursion at the expense of the accreditation holder for assessment purposes.

Through the data collected by accreditation holders SHG will be able to make informed decisions about the future management of the Island's marine environment through review of this scheme.

## 16 Administration of Accreditation scheme

Procedures covering the application, review of applications and licensing process are covered below in part "B" of this document.

## 17 Accreditation Review

The accreditation scheme is not intended to be static but will be reviewed on an ongoing basis and updated as MCS deems appropriate, to reflect the protection of St. Helena's waters and the best interests of the development of the Island's marine tourism product. The MCS will provide opportunities for public review and input in the development of accreditation scheme guidelines. The MCS will consult the marine tourism industry, and other interested stakeholders on changes to the accreditation licensing scheme and on the development of new practices.

Reasonable efforts have been made by the MCS to obtain feedback from current marine users directly affected by the introduction of this scheme.



## PART B: HOW TO ACHIEVE AND MAINTAIN MARINE ENVIRONMENT ACCREDITATION STATUS AND WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS

### Overview

It is the responsibility of MCS to facilitate and to provide local MTO with the tools required to attain their accreditation. The MCS will provide the necessary training programs and materials to support the knowledge base required to undertake assessment. Assessment will be conducted via multiple choice exams, a short oral presentation, data reporting and an onsite/vessel spot checks. Assessment will cover the following topic areas:

- Species specific interaction guidelines and ecology (e.g. Whale Sharks, humpback whales etc)
- Environmental protection & legislation (Wrecks, anchoring, litter etc)
- Environmental best practices

In addition to initial assessment, the MCS will periodically undertake spot check assessments. Once the MTO or business has been accredited it is the business owner's responsibility to ensure that employees uphold and maintains the standards set to the level the business has attained. Employees who represent the MTO business during the spot check assessment will reflect on the business owner. Although not mandatory it is recommended that all MTO staff attend the relevant MCS courses and attain a valid accreditation certificate. The spot check assessment is intended as a monitoring tool to assess how MTOs are maintaining the environmental standards they pledged to uphold in accepting their accreditation licence. Feedback from spot check assessment will highlight both positive and negative observations with a view to providing additional support and assistance in maintaining the accreditation standard.

### Application

All marine tour operators will be required to submit and application to the MCS by the 31st October each year (electronically or hard copy). (See application form annex 2).

The marine section will provide receipt of application within 5 working days. Within 2 weeks the MCS will respond with a letter any outlining additional requirements, training dates and times.

### Education

Training/Information sessions on local species identification and biology such as cetaceans (whales and dolphins), whale sharks, seabirds, common invertebrates, endemic fish and other fauna (Turtle, sharks and rays) will be available (as one session) as well as tour specific sessions relating to best practice, legislation and interaction policy guidelines.

On initial application it will be a mandatory requirement for all tour operators to attend the appropriate training sessions specified by the MCS at least every two years thereafter.

All sessions will ideally be delivered within the first two weeks of November of each year.

Annex 7 lists the types of courses available.

## Assessment

After attending relevant training/information sessions marine tour operators will be required to undertake appropriate tour assessments ideally at the end of the training session/s or within two weeks of the training session/s under marine section vigilance in the following forms:

- Multiple choice questions examination for seabirds, cetaceans, whales sharks and underwater.
- 2-5 min oral demonstration of tour briefing assessed on a scoring system (content 1-5 , professionalism 1-5, species knowledge 1-5 logical presentation).

Multiple choice assessment marking will be undertaken by MCS staff and oral demonstration of tour briefing will be assessed as follows and will be undertaken by one MCS representative and two independent assessors appointed by the MCS.

You will be able to use course materials to support you during your assessment.

If applicants fail to meet the 80% mark to attain accreditation appropriate to the tour they are being assessed on the MCS will be happy to work with the relevant MTO on one to one bases to support their required reassessment.

Spot check assessments will be conducted by an appointed MCS representative via a standard assessment checklist relevant to the tour type being assessed (please see check lists below in annexes 3-6). Upon completion the MTO will receive written feedback from the MCS.

It is important to note that assessment can also derived from social media sites (such as Facebook, YouTube etc) and can be used as supporting evidence of a breach of conditions.

## Affiliation with Scheme

Marine tour operators who attain their accreditation will be issued with an accreditation official letter containing the terms and conditions (annex 8) of their accreditation which they must sign and return to the MCS. Upon receipt of which, MTO will be presented with the official accreditation tour appropriate award certificate. It is hoped that an accredited MTO will be given electronic versions of the appropriately branded tour logo and complimentary stickers for their vessels and business mobile assets.

MTO will be encouraged to display their accreditation award on their vessels and promotional materials and tools.

MTO who attain accreditation will be sited by the MCS.

Only MTO who attain accreditation will be promoted by the tourist office.



## ANNEX 1

## MARINE ENVIRONMENTAL ACCREDITATION LOGBOOK TEMPLATE



## Marine Accreditation

Operator name: \_\_\_\_\_



Please complete the following for each interaction attempt

Date			Client immigration status						Location zones/site name (diving)	Sighting information (species and number)	Encounter		No persons entering water
Type of tour	viewing		Local		Local Contractor		Tourist	Start time			End time		
		interaction		Nationality (number individuals where possible)									
		diving		British		USA							
Vessel name			French		South African								
Skipper initials			German		Other European								
Tour Guide initials			Other										
Total no. crew			Age Range (number individuals where possible)										
Total no. clients			<18		18-30		31-45						
			46-55		56-65		>65						



## ANNEX 2

**Marine Tour Operator Application Form**

Each Question should be **fully and accurately answered.**

PLEASE USE CAPITAL LETTERS

**Business details:**

Business Name

Business Type: Sole trader  Ltd Company

Other (please state)

**Owner/s details**

Title (Mr/Miss/Mrs)

**Telephone Numbers (below)**

First Names

Home  Work

Surname

Male  Female

E-mail

**Is your business**

Full Time  Part Time  Temporary

**1. What tours will your business offer? (Select box)**

Wildlife interaction tours

Wildlife viewing tours

Dive tours

**2. Please list all persons who represent your business during tours?**

Vessel Skippers (First and Surname)

**Dive Leaders (First and surname)**

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**Crew (First and surname)**

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Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## ANNEX 3



### Environment accreditation - diving assessment spot checklist

Date		
Operator business name		Vessel name
Tour guide/dive leader		Vessel skipper
		Y/N/NA
Briefing	Description of the environmental and physical features of the dive site	
	Description of the endemic and protected species rules that apply to the site	
	Techniques to minimize impact specific to the marine environment in which the diving activity is to be carried out	
	Including Buoyancy control Trailing or unsecure kit	
	Advice to photographers that the health of marine life takes precedence over any photographic activity	
	Respect all marine life - look but don't touch and don't re-locate marine life	
	Do not remove or collect empty shells as these provide homes for marine life	
	Where to place any litter or cigarette butts	
Anchoring	Only one boat anchored at the dive site	
	Operators did not anchor but drift dived	
	Operators used moorings available	



	Operators endeavoured to anchor in sand or less fragile habitats	
	An in-water assessment was performed by a crewmember after anchoring so that the anchor and/or chain can be moved if needed before the dive activity begins to ensure that damage to habitat does not occur	
Entry	Operators displayed the A (Alpha) Flag once divers had entered the water	
	Entry points and descent lines was over sand or rubble that divers can make adjustments and become neutrally buoyant before approaching the reef area	
	No more than 20 persons were at the dive site	
	Dive leader to diver ratio set at 1:10	
	Numbers were split between two dive leaders	
	Taking different routes through the dive site	
	Comments/action taken:	
Caves & swim throughs	Divers displayed good buoyancy when moving through/ around caves	
	Divers did not trail any equipment moving through/ around caves	
	All divers had a torch when entering the cave/swim through	
	Comments/ action taken:	
General	Divers respected marine life when engaging in photographic activity	
	Divers did not touch marine life	
	Divers did not re-locate marine life	
	Divers did not remove or collect empty shells	

Mega fauna Wrecks	Divers did not deliberate scuba diving with whale sharks			
	Divers did not deliberate touching, ride or feed devil rays			
	Divers did not penetrate any protected wreck, tamper with, damage or remove any part of a protected wreck, or any object formerly contained in such wreck			
	Divers did not deposit anything within a restricted area so as to fall to the sea bed which would, if it were to fall on the site of a wreck (whether it so falls or not), wholly or partly obliterate the site or obstruct access to it, or damage any part of the wreck			
	Operator did not anchor any vessel within a restricted area otherwise than at a permanent anchor point			
	Divers on wrecks were accompanied by a St Helena resident diver			
Departure	All equipment used in the tour and any food consumed during the tour or litter created as a result of this was returned to the shore and disposed of in the correct manner			
	Comments/ action taken:			

## ANNEX 4



### Environment accreditation - wildlife interaction spot checklist

Date		
Operator business name	Vessel name	
Tour Guide	Vessel skipper	
		Y/N/NA
Briefing	Description of whale sharks and their biology	
	Description of how physical aspects of the tour will work	
	What will happen when a whale shark is sighted	
	When will visitors be allowed to enter the water,	
	How many visitors will be allowed to enter the water	
	Approach and interaction limits 3 meters from the head and 4 from the tail	
	Deliberately touching or riding whale sharks is prohibited	
	The use of flash for underwater photography is prohibited	
	Health of marine life takes precedence over any photographic activity	
	Keep disturbance to a minimum when entering and exiting the water i.e. no screaming, shouting	
	Where to place any litter or cigarette butts	
Approach	Alert and watch for whale sharks at all times	
	Approach the whale shark from the side	
	Approach at no more than 2 knots per hour or at idle speed	

	Remain at least 15m away from the animal	
	Not to block the path of the whale shark(s)	
	Snorkelers should be dropped into water 15m a head of the incoming whale shark/s	
	Avoid commercial fishing vessels whilst they are fishing	
	Keep a distance of 30m away from other tour vessel during a whale shark tour	
Interaction	Tour vessels must display an A (Alpha) flag whilst snorkelers are in the water	
	Only 8 snorkelers are in the water at any time	
	Entry and exit into the water was done in a quiet manner	
	Interaction limits were maintained 3m from the whale sharks body and 4m from the whale sharks tail.	
	Snorkelers remained at the side of the whale shark at all times	
	Snorkelers did not deliberately block the path of whale sharks	
	Snorkelers did not touch or ride on whale sharks	
	Snorkelers did not use flash in any underwater photography	
	Snorkelers followed the instructions of the tour operator and returned to the vessel when instructed.	
	Operators identified signs of disturbance	
	Including: Banking or “giving you the shoulder” when nearing snorkelers Noticeably increasing its swimming speed to avoid snorkelers or the boat Moving away and rapidly diving deep	
	Took action for identified sign of disturbance	
	Action taken:	

	Total interaction time of 45 minutes	
Departure	Vessel left at speed less than 2 knots until outside the contact zone	
	All equipment used in the tour and any food consumed during the tour or litter created as a result of this was returned to the shore and disposed of in the correct manner.	
	Comments/ action taken:	

## ANNEX 5



### Environment accreditation - wildlife viewing cetacean spot checklist

Date		
Operator business name	Vessel name	
Tour Guide	Vessel skipper	
		Y/N/NA
Briefing	Description of cetaceans species that could be encountered	
	Advice to photographers that the health of marine life takes precedence over any photographic activity	
	Respect all marine life as we are visiting their environment	
	Where to place any litter or cigarette butts	
Approaching cetaceans	Alert and watching for whales and dolphins at all times	
	Alert for other tour vessels especially any that display an A (Alpha) flag	
	Approached cetaceans at a reduced speed	
	All sonar devices (depth sounders, fish finders) was switched off when a vessel is in the vicinity of whales and dolphins	
	Operators did not play any recorded sounds underwater	
	Vessel did not approach closer than 100m to any whale	
	Vessel did not approach closer than 50m to any dolphin	
	Vessel came closer than 100m to the whale, it placed its motor in neutral or move the vessel, at less than 5 knots, away from the whale until the vessel is outside the contact zone.	

Interaction	The vessel switched off the engine whilst viewing whales	
	It was not safe for the vessel to switch off the engine whilst viewing whales	
	At any time there were only two vessels within the proximity of the cetaceans	
	Where there were two vessels a distance of 60m was maintained at all times from each other	
	Vessel did not cause a whale to alter its direction or speed of travel	
	Vessel did not disperse a group of whales	
	Whale and calf was only approached when mother was between calf and vessel	
	Operators remain with cetaceans no longer than 30 minutes	
	Operator identified signs of disturbance	
	Including Attempts to leave the area or move away from the vessel quickly or slowly Regular changes in direction or speed of swimming Hasty dives Changes in breathing patterns Increased time spent diving compared to time spent on the surface Changes in acoustic behavior Aggressive behavior such as tail splashes and trumpet blows	
	Operator took action for identified sign of disturbance	
	Action taken:	

	Operators /visitors did not touch cetaceans		
	Operators /visitors did not ride on cetaceans		
	Operators /visitors did not feed cetaceans		
	Operators /visitors did not Snorkel with whales		
Departure	When leaving whales or dolphins, vessel move off at a slow (no wake) speed for at least 300m before gradually increasing speed		
	All equipment used in the tour and any food consumed during the tour or litter created as a result of this was returned to the shore and disposed of in the correct manner.		
	Comments/ action taken:		



## ANNEX 6



### Environment accreditation - wildlife viewing seabird spot checklist

Date		
Operator business name	Vessel name	
Tour Guide	Vessel skipper	
		Y/N/NA
Briefing	Description of avifauna species that could be encountered	
	Advise visitors' of possible direct and indirect impacts of people on seabirds	
	Including Hatching and fledging success rates Predation Introduction of invasives	
	Advise visitors' how to watch birds responsibly	
	Including Noise Movement	
	Advice to photographers that the health of marine life takes precedence over any photography activity	
	Respect all marine life as we are visiting their environment	
	Where to place any litter or cigarette butts	
Seabirds at sea	Alert and watching for seabirds at all times	
	Reduce vessel speed to less than 2 knots from a minimum approach distance of 50m	

	Did not go through rafts (aggregations of seabird on the water feeding or loafing) of seabirds	
	It was unavoidable; to go through a rafts (aggregations of seabird on the water feeding or loafing) of seabirds a slow speed and steady course was used.	
	Operators identified signs of disturbance	
	Including Rapid paddling Turning their heads from side to side to keep you in view Taking off in flight or Diving	
	Comments/ action taken:	
Seabirds on offshore islands and cliffs	Vessel speed was reduced to 2 knots within 200 meters of the island	
	A minimum distance of 5 meters was kept from any nesting colony on an offshore islet or cliff	
	Noise was kept to a minimum	
	Visitors did not make any sudden or sharp movements	
	Vessels approached slowly and cautiously without any sudden or sharp movements	
	Operators were sensitive to engine noise on roosting and nesting birds	
	Operators were sensitive to wind direction and engine fumes choking nesting birds	
	Operators identified signs of disturbance	
	Including A loud alarm call,	

	<p>Circling a nest site calling repeatedly</p> <p>Turning their heads from side to side to keep you in view</p> <p>Bobbing their heads</p> <p>Becoming aggressive and diving</p>	
	Comments/ action taken:	
	Only one pass of any island or cliff was made during the entire trip	
	There were multiple vessels conducting tours	
	A minimum distance of 30m between vessels	
	Observation time at any particular spot to was limited to 5 minutes	
	Observation time for any island or cliff was limited to 30 minutes	
	When leaving offshore islands or cliffs vessel move off at a slow (no wake) speed for at least 200m before gradually increasing speed	
Seabird on the mainland	No more than 14 persons were on the tour	
	Tour guide to visitor ratio set at 1:6	
	Any dogs were kept on a lead at all times and under close control	
	10m was kept from feeding or resting birds	
	A minimum distance of 50m was kept from colonies of ground nesting seabirds such as masked boobies	
	Operators /visitors were alert to the possibility that birds may have eggs or young	
	Operators /visitors did not make any sudden or sharp movements	
	Operators /visitors approached seabirds slowly and cautiously	
	Operators /visitors did not separate young from parents	
An interaction time of 5 minutes was kept for any nesting bird(s) or roosting bird(s)		

	Operators /visitors stayed on the designated footpaths and trails	
	Operators identified signs of disturbance	
	<p>Including</p> <p>A loud alarm call</p> <p>Circling a nest site calling repeatedly</p> <p>Turning their heads from side to side to keep you in view</p> <p>Bobbing their heads</p> <p>Becoming aggressive and diving</p>	
	Comments /action	
Departure	All equipment used in the tour and any food consumed during the tour or litter created as a result of this was returned to the shore and disposed of in the correct manner.	
	Comments/ action taken:	

## ANNEX 7



### Training course Outlines

To be inserted

## ANNEX 8(1)

### Accreditation official letter template and terms and conditions



**St Helena  
Government**

Mr John Smith  
No.1  
Orange Street

**Ref:** DD/1/20  
**Date:** 2/05/2013

Dear Mr Smith

#### **AWARD OF MARINE TOUR OPERATOR ENVIRONMENTAL ACCREDITATION**

We write to advise that after initial assessment you have been awarded your Marine Tour operator environmental accreditation. Attached is a copy of your award certificate, a copy of your signed accreditation scheme conditions, the appropriate wild life tour best practise guidelines and promotional stickers and materials.

You are welcome to come into the marine conservation office to collect electronic versions of the accreditation logo/s.

We would like to thank you for being a part of a system that safeguards St. Helena's marine wildlife and look forward to working with you.

Yours sincerely

*(Signature)*

XXX  
Marine Conservation Officer  
**Environmental Management**

## ANNEX 8(2)

### MARINE ENVIRONMENTAL ACCREDITATION TERMS AND CONDITIONS



**St Helena  
Government**

These conditions are subject to the “Marine Management Plan” and “Whale shark (*Rhincodon typus*), Devil ray (*mobula tarapacana*) and cetacean interaction activities on St. Helena Island to minimise risk of injury and disturbance policy”.

#### GENERAL CONDITIONS

1. The MTO shall comply with and not contravene the conditions and restrictions set out in the Tour Operator wildlife interaction best practise guidelines
2. The MTO acknowledges and agrees accreditation is not issued as of right and upon expiry the Operator acknowledges that the licence renewal may be subject to review based on performance
3. The MTO acknowledges and agrees that accreditation is not transferable and that the Operator shall explain to prospective purchasers of the business that the prospective purchasers would be required to make an application to the MCS, to obtain a replacement accreditation licence to continue the Operations.
4. Wildlife interactions authorised by this accreditation scheme are limited to daylight hours only. (Research and special licences may be considered for night hours study.)
5. The MTO acknowledges that where fishing activities are being undertaken by other vessels that no tour will be undertaken except where fishing vessel operators confirm via VHF permission to do so.

#### RECORDS OF OPERATION

1. The MTO shall ensure that accurate data is recorded into the Logbooks provided by the MCS.
2. The MTO shall present records to the MCS on first working day of each month.

## WILDLIFE INTERACTIONS

1. The MTO shall maintain throughout the term of the accreditation a wildlife interaction/wildlife viewing/ dive tour accreditation in accordance with the policy and the Wildlife best practice guidelines.
2. The MTO shall ensure that the vessel/s clearly displays a 'diver below' flag in the form of the international maritime signal flag "A" where necessary.
3. The MTO is encouraged to ensure that every boat-based employee has successfully completed the MCS Wildlife Interaction Training course within 2 months of commencing their employment with the Operator, and the Operator shall ensure that all boat-based employees continue to hold a valid certificate for the term of their boat-based employment.
4. The MTO shall display the various wildlife interaction guidelines posters on the vessel/s at all times when conducting wildlife interaction/wildlife viewing/dive tours.

## USE OF VESSELS

1. The MTO shall ensure that the vessels are under the command of an appropriately qualified skipper for the period of the accreditation.
2. The MTO shall ensure that the vessels are in possession of a valid boat licence under regulation 10 of the Harbours Regulations, Cap 47 during all accredited tour operations.

I \_\_\_\_\_ hereby agree with the above terms and conditions.

Date \_\_\_\_\_