CETACEAN PROTECTION MEASURES

How to sail in the presence of cetaceans

Source: CIRCE

ROYAL DECREE 1727/2007, of December 21, 2007, which establishes measures for the protection of the cetacean
For whale watching activities, an administrative authorization issued by MITECO is required (article 3.4 Law 41/2010, of December 29 and article 61 Law 42/2007)

Bans

Without whale watching authorization:
Approaching less than 500 m (1.600 ft) from the cetaceans

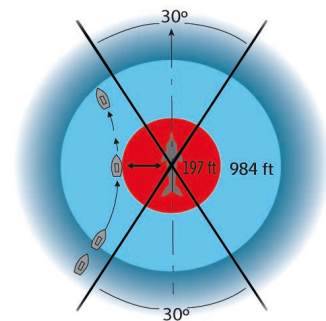| With whale watching activity authorization: |
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| Accessing or remaining into the Exclusion Zone except in case of emergency or urgent need. |
| Swimming or diving with cetaceans. |
| Making any kind of physical contact with cetaceans. |
| Feeding cetaceans, throwing litter into the sea, or any other type of dumping. |
| To disturb, impede free movement intercept its trajectory. To cross or disperse a group, and especially, to come between an adult and its calf. |
| To produce loud or shrill noises and sounds to attract or drive them away, including the emission of sounds underwater. |
| Reversing or circling. |
| Overflying with aircraft at an altitude of less than 500 m (1,000 feet). |

- 🟥 Exclusion Zone from 0 to 197 ft
- 🟦 Restricted stay zone from 197 to 984 ft
- 🟦 Approach zone from 984 to 1640 ft

Good practices

- Approach smoothly, converging with the animals swimming direction at an angle of approximately 30º, and no faster than 4 knots.

- If cetaceans approach within 60 meters (200 ft) of the boat, put it in neutral or disengage the engine. Stop the engine if necessary.

- In the case of dolphins and porpoises approaching, you are allowed to continue sailing, maintaining speed and course.

- Changes of speed or engine revolutions have to be progressive and slow.

- In case of finding an injured or dead animal, **call 112.**

Sanctions

Law 42/2007, of December 13, 2007, on Natural Heritage and Biodiversity.

- Fines from € 100 to € 2.000.000

*The most common groups of cetaceans along the Spanish coasts are: whales (fin whales), pilot whales, porpoises, dolphins, beaked whales, killer whales and sperm whales.