

GUIDE TO DOLPHIN-WATCHING IN HONG KONG

Value of dolphin-watching activities

- *Educational value:* Participants can experience first-hand and learn about the daily life of dolphins, especially the threats they face in their diminishing habitat. They can also learn a great deal from on-board tour guides, who are always willing to share their wealth of knowledge on dolphin conservation and effects on the marine environment.
- *Research value:* Dolphin-watching boats can serve as good research platforms for researchers to collect valuable scientific information on the dolphins.
- *Socio-economic value:* Revenue generated from dolphin-watching activities can benefit the eco-tourism industry through employment of more experienced tour guides, increasing boat rentals, catering services and other tourism resources.



Negative impacts from dolphin-watching activities...



- Underwater sound generated by dolphin-watching boats can affect the dolphins' communication and their ability to detect prey
- Dolphin groups may be broken up if they are being actively chased or pursued
- Dolphins may show signs of distress (e.g. tail slapping, longer dives) when being watched for a prolonged time

Where to watch in Hong Kong...

The best places to observe wild Chinese white dolphins are in the western waters of Hong Kong, as well as locations in Tai O, Peaked Hill in West Lantau, Lung Kwu Chau, Black Point and the Brothers Islands off North Lantau.

What to wear / bring...

- Comfortable, light clothing and shoes
- Windbreaker or coat under cold and windy conditions; raincoat under rainy weather
- Sea-sickness pills to treat motion sickness (take 30 minutes before boarding)
- Sun-block and hat to avoid sunburn; sunglasses to protect eyes from UV rays and sea water reflection

Useful tips...

- Choose a responsible dolphin-watching operator with good practices and ample experience
- Be familiar with code-of-conduct suggested by AFCD
- On the boat, firmly hold onto handrails as the boat may rock back and forth in turbulent waters
- Be open-minded, patient, wait and observe, as dolphins are wild animals and the chance of seeing them depends on a number of natural factors
- Instead of constant pursuit, be considerate and let the dolphins decide whether to approach or stay away from dolphin-watching boats



Code-of-conduct for dolphin-watching



- Basic principle: observe from a distance, do not seek to contact, touch, feed or harm wild dolphins
- Maintain forward progress at a slow and steady speed; stop with no sudden course change when dolphins are sighted
- Limit boat speed to be under 120 knots
- Approach dolphin group at an angle; slowly maneuver boat to be parallel to their course
- Limit one dolphin-watching vessel within 500 metres of a dolphin group at any one time
- Never chase or cut across their course, and cause separation of the mother-calf pairs
- For more details, please click [this link to AFCD website](#)