

## 5 GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR MARINE MAMMAL CRITICAL AREAS

The Federal Department of Fisheries and Oceans is responsible for ensuring the protection and conservation of marine mammals.

The *Fisheries Act* prohibits any form of harassment of cetaceans, including repeated attempts to pursue, disperse, herd whales and any repeated intentional act or negligence resulting in the disruption of their normal behaviour.

Individuals who contravene the *Marine Mammal Regulations* are guilty of an offence and liable to a fine not exceeding \$500,000 and twenty four (24) months imprisonment (*Fisheries Act sec. 78*).

Harassing whales changes or interferes with their behaviour, forces them away from their habitat at critical times in their annual reproduction and feeding cycles and may cause them injury.

### Summary of Guidelines

- Do not hunt, chase, follow, disperse, drive, herd or encircle whales.
- Avoid any sudden changes of course or speed.
- Avoid heading directly toward a whale.
- If in an area known to be frequented by whales, be on the lookout to avoid collisions.
- Travel parallel to whales.
- The mammals may wish to come closer to you; if they do, do not chase them and be wary of any individual that appears tame. Keep clear of flukes.
- If you are operating a sailing vessel with an auxiliary motor, leave it in idle or turn on the echo sounder to signal your presence.
- If it is impossible to detour around a whale or a pod of whales, slow down immediately and wait until you are more than 400 metres away before resuming speed.

### East Coast Whale Sanctuaries

In order to assist mariners avoid disturbing marine mammals (whales, porpoise, and dolphins), the following guidelines have been provided for your information.

#### Whale Sanctuary #1: Grand Manan Basin

Coordinates: NW	44°45'N, 66°35'W
NE	44°45'N, 66°18'W
SW	44°30'N, 66°35'W
SE	44°30'N, 66°18'W

Species: Right Whales.

Status: endangered.

Threats: Collision with ships, entanglement with fishing gear.

Characteristics: V shaped blow, no dorsal fin, deeply notched flukes, callosities (growths on the head).

Guidelines: (July-November).

1. Avoid this area if possible. Due to a large portion of this habitat interfering with the main shipping channel to Saint John, this may not be possible.
2. Decrease vessel speed, post a lookout, and manoeuvre around any marine mammal activity.
3. Report any sightings or collisions to the Department of Fisheries and Oceans via any Marine Communications Traffic Services Centre (MCTS), or fax at 902-426-2698.

## **Whale Sanctuary #2: Roseway Basin**

Coordinates: NW 43°05'N, 65°40'W  
NE 43°05'N, 65°03'W  
SW 42°45'N, 65°40'W  
SE 42°45'N, 65°03'W

Species: Right Whales.

Status: endangered.

Threats: Collision with ships.

Characteristics: V shaped blow, no dorsal fin, deeply notched flukes, callosities (growths on the head).

Guidelines: (July-November).

1. Avoid passage through this area. This area can easily be bypassed.
2. If passage through the area is mandatory, then decrease vessel speed, post a lookout, and manoeuvre around any marine mammal activity.
3. Report any sightings or collisions to the Department of Fisheries and Oceans via any Marine Communications and Traffic Services Centre (MCTS), or fax at 902-426-2698

Authority: Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO)

