

Code of Conduct for Sustainable Tourism

This code of conduct outlines the best practices require for all users. Boaters, hikers, tour operators, divers and general public al have a role to play. The adherence to these guidelines is a vital contribution to the collective effort of protecting Erimitis peninsula.

Article 1. Marine habitats

1.1. Anchoring and mooring: Irresponsible anchoring causes damage to the seagrass meadows, affecting the integrity of the habitats.

- Mooring buoys: Whenever available, you must use the official environmentally friendly mooring buoy provided by the LMMA.
- No anchoring on seagrass: Anchoring on Posidonia meadows should be avoid. When is possible visually confirm you are dropping anchor on a sandy bottom.
- Anchor handle: Lower your anchor vertically (do not drop it while moving) and pick it up vertically to avoid dragging.

1.2. Responsible boating

- Speed limit: Keep speed limits accordingly with the LMMA management plan, to protect wildlife.
- Minimize Noise: Avoid excessive noise from engines or music, to prevent disturbances to wildlife.

Article 2. Preserving Coastal and terrestrial habitats

2.1. Respecting landscape

- Designated Trails: When hiking or exploring, you should stay on marked paths. Being off trail causes soil erosion, damages rare and endemic plants, and could potentially disturb wildlife.
- Leave nature as you find it: Do not pick wildflowers, herbs or any plants. Leave rocks, pebbles, and shells in their natural place. You should not alter the landscape; this includes building stone stacks.
- Cultural heritage: Do not touch, move, or vandal archaeological ruins, stone walls, or other ancient artifacts.

2.2. Fire prevention

- No open fires: The use and/or creation of campfires, bonfires or BBQs (disposables and permanent) should be avoided outside of official designated areas.
- No fireworks or flying lanterns: The use of fireworks or sky lanterns is banned.
- Cigarettes: Never discard cigarettes butts on the ground. Ensure is completely off and pack it out with your rubbish.

- Report smoke: If you see any sing of smoke or fire. Call immediately the Fire brigade at number 199.

Article 3. Wildlife interaction

3.1. Marine life

- Mediterranean Monk seal (*Monachus monachus*):
 - **Do not enter sea caves**, which are vital for pupping sites.
 - Maintain a minimum distance of 30 meters from any seal.
 - Move away cautiously if the animals show signs of disturbance (sudden change in behavior).
 - Avoid making noise in the presence of a seal on land and if at sea put your engine in neutral.
 - Refrain from feeding, touching, or swimming with monk seals, and keep pets at a distance, as they might be carriers of dangerous diseases to the seal.
- Sea turtles
 - In water, slow your vessel and allow turtles to pass.
 - On nesting season (May-September), do not use bright lights at night, and never disturb marked nets.
- Dolphins and Whales
 - Approach slowly and parallel, never head-on.
 - Stay back 100 meters
 - Always put your engine in neutral when cetaceans are near.
 - Refrain from feeding, touching, or swimming with wild dolphins or whales.

3.2. Terrestrial and coastal wildlife

- Do not feed animals: Feeding animals makes them dependent, alters their behavior, and can harm their health.
- Give animals space: You should observe reptiles, birds and mammals from a respectable distance. Do not disturb dens, nets, or burrows.
- Bird colonies: Avoid approaching nesting colonies or nests, especially during spring. Keep noise to a minimum when close to nests.

Article 4. Waste and pollution, “Leave no trace” commitment

4.1. Solid waste management

- Take it with you: All waste (including food scraps, packaging, and cigarettes butts) should be taken with you for disposal in designated bins.
- Nothing left behind: Don’t throw, bury, or leave any form of waste in the sea or on land. This includes organic waste like fruit peels.

4.2. Pollution prevention

- Vessels: you should use only biodegradable cleaning products
- On land: use designated toilets facilities.
- Sunscreen: Avoid using sunscreens containing oxybenzone and octinoxate.