



XLI ANTARCTIC TREATY
CONSULTATIVE MEETING
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ENG

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Presented by: United Kingdom,
Argentina,
IAATO, ASOC
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Review of Guidelines for Visitor Sites in the Antarctic Peninsula: New and Amended Guidelines

Attachments:

- Atcm41_att037_e.doc: Revised Site Guideline Devil Island
- Atcm41_att038_e.doc: Revised Site Guideline Devil Island (tracked)
- Atcm41_att039_e.doc: Revised Site Guideline Brown Bluff
- Atcm41_att040_e.doc: Revised Site Guideline Brown Bluff (tracked)
- Atcm41_att041_e.doc: New Site Guidelines Portal Point
- Atcm41_att042_e.doc: New Site Guideline Astrolabe Island
- Atcm41_att043_e.doc: New Site Guideline Georges Point, Rongé Island

Review of Guidelines for Visitor Sites in the Antarctic Peninsula: New and Amended Guidelines

Working Paper submitted by the United Kingdom and Argentina (in conjunction with the International Association of Antarctica Tour Operators and Antarctic Southern Ocean Coalition)

1. Summary

This paper proposes the amendment of two Site Guidelines to ensure that they are brought up to date and can continue to be an effective tool for visitor management. The sites involved are: Brown Bluff¹ and Devil Island. The paper also seeks approval for three new site Guidelines. These cover: Astrolabe Island, Georges Point, Rongé Island and Portal Point.

2. Background

As set out in *ATCM XLI WP 32 Review of Site Guidelines for Visitors* representatives of the United Kingdom, Argentina, IAATO and ASOC visited 11 sites across the Antarctic Peninsula and South Shetland Islands. The team subsequently recommended revising the guidelines for six sites and suggested producing new guidelines for three more. The three sites on Deception Island are being proposed under *ATCM XLI WP33 Proposed Amendment for Antarctic Treaty Site Guidelines for Visitors Pendulum Cove, Telefon Bay and Whalers Bay, Deception Island*, while the revised guidelines for Paulet Island are being proposed under *ATCM XLI WP34 Review of Guidelines for Visitor Sites in the Antarctic Peninsula: Revised Guidelines for Paulet Island*.

Whilst recognising that each visit could only necessarily be a snapshot of a location at a particular time of the season and under particular weather and site conditions (for example snow cover, wildlife presence and other variable factors) the team believe that each visit, and the discussion that followed, presented an important opportunity to assess the Site Guidelines against their objectives.

3. New Guidelines

The sites proposed in this paper for new site guidelines for visitors are:

- *Astrolabe Island*
- *Georges Point, Rongé Island*
- *Portal Point*.

The beach on the northern shore of Astrolabe Island (Latitude 63°28'00''S, Longitude, 58°77'00''W) off the North West Coast of Antarctic Peninsula is becoming a more popular visitor site. The long crescent shaped gravelly beach provides for a good landing site when free from fur seals. From the beach, it is a short walk to a large Chinstrap penguin colony on the rocks behind. A small fractured boulders field is present at the site and should be avoided on walks to the penguin colony. In 2016-17, the site received 1071 visitors (IAATO figures).

Georges Point is located at the northern end of Rongé Island, (Latitude W64° 67' S, Longitude, -62° 67' W). From the small rocky beach there is a rocky and snow covered path up to viewing spot for glacial and ice scenery. The site contains a significant Gentoo penguin colony, with chinstrap penguins also present. In 2016-17, the site received 1797 visitors (IAATO figures).

Portal Point (Latitude 64°30'S, Longitude, 61°46'W) is located on a narrow point in the northeast part of Reclus Peninsula. After a gradual climb from the rocky landing beach up the snow covered slope it provides an excellent viewing spot looking across the entrance to Charlotte Bay. There is minimal fauna and no flora present at the site. The site includes the foundations of a former British hut. In 2016-17, the site received 5911 visitors, the 29th most visited site in that season (IAATO figures).

4. Revised Site Guidelines

The sites with proposed revision to their guidelines for visitors are:

- *Brown Bluff*¹
- *Devil Island, Vega Island*

The committee will wish to note the extension of the closed area at Brown Bluff to enclose the whole of the Adélie penguin colony and the clarification of the route of the glacial walk.

For Devil Island, the substantive changes relate to the clarification of the landing area and increased warnings relating to the hazards of the approach to the beach.

Versions of the revised guidelines with tracked changes are available on request.

Annotated photographs and revised or new maps are currently in production and will be included within the new Site Guidelines prior to publication.

Recommendation

The United Kingdom and Argentina recommend that:

- i) the CEP submit the attached Site Guidelines for Astrolabe Island, Georges Point, Rongé Island and Portal Point for adoption by the ATCM.**
- ii) the CEP adopt the revisions to the Site Guidelines for Brown Bluff¹ and Devil Island (provided as attachments) and advise the ATCM accordingly; and**
- iii) the Secretariat replace the versions currently on the Antarctic Treaty Secretariat's website with the revised versions.**

¹ Monte Bardas Coloradas, for the Argentine toponymy.