



Antarctica Tour Operators Pledge to Turn Tide on Plastics with New Waste-Reduction Guidelines

Measures are part of the International Association of Antarctica Tour Operators' commitment to the UN Environment Clean Seas campaign to reduce plastic use and waste across their operations

Kingstown, Rhode Island, USA: The International Association of Antarctica Tour Operators (IAATO) has pledged to turn the tide on plastics with new guidelines set to reduce single-use plastic use among visitors to the white continent.

The measures were introduced at IAATO's annual meeting in Cape Town, South Africa on May 3 as part of IAATO's commitment to the UN Environment Clean Seas campaign to reduce plastic use and waste across their operations.

The [new guidelines](#), announced on World Environment Day (June 5), encourage visitors to prepare for their journey by avoiding the use of disposable items, such as wet wipes, bottles and razors, cosmetics containing microbeads, and to continue environmental efforts on their return home.

The new guidelines will be available to visitors this summer, ahead of the Antarctic travel season, which begins in October. IAATO member operators were encouraged to distribute the guidelines, presented at the meeting, to guests as part of their pre-departure packs.

Amanda Lynnes, IAATO Head of Environment and Communications, said: "IAATO members have been striving to reduce plastic consumption across their operations, from eliminating plastic straws to adding special filters to onboard washing facilities to stop microplastics from ending up in waste water. These guidelines are a way of inviting guests to join our efforts, and include plenty of information on ways they can take those positive actions home with them.

"Visitors to Antarctica can't fail to be inspired by its pristine landscape and often ask our member operators what they can do to support our environmental efforts. We are thrilled to be able to create something that supports the involvement of our guests in plastic-reduction both during their expedition and at home and to share this exciting news on World Environment Day, the United Nations day for encouraging worldwide awareness and action to protect our environment



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IAATO is a member organization founded in 1991 to advocate and promote the practice of safe and environmentally responsible private-sector travel to the Antarctic.

“While the individual steps within the new guidelines may seem small, they have the potential to create a big impact on our environment.”

Every year, members set aside competitive interests to have open and candid discussions on safety, environmental protection and self-regulation. Decision-making is supported by recommendations developed by IAATO's many dedicated committees and working groups throughout the year. The meetings conclude annually with the voting in of new policies on best practice which support our mission of promoting and advocating safe and environmentally responsible travel to Antarctica

The new guidelines are part of IAATO's joint UN Environment Clean Seas Project with northern counterpart the Association of Arctic Expedition Cruise Operators, aimed at significantly reducing single-use plastic during Antarctic and Arctic operations as well as enhancing guest involvement in plastic reduction both during their expeditions and at home.

UN Environment launched Clean Seas in February 2017, with the aim of engaging governments, the general public and the private sector in the fight against marine plastic pollution.

Amanda added: “Traveling to Antarctica is a privilege and we hope that by taking guests there they return as ambassadors for its ongoing preservation and protection.”

Ends

Issued by the International Association of Antarctica Tour Operators.

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Notes for Editors:

[The Reducing Waste Visitor Guidelines can be found here](#)

In addition to its own bylaws and requirements for membership, IAATO requires its members to abide by the Antarctic Treaty System and other international regulations.

About IAATO

IAATO is a member organization founded in 1991 to advocate and promote the practice of safe and environmentally responsible private-sector travel to the Antarctic. IAATO Members work together to develop, adopt and implement operational standards that mitigate potential environmental impacts. These standards have proved to be successful including but



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are not limited to: Antarctic site-specific guidelines, site selection criteria, passenger to staff ratios, limiting numbers of passengers ashore, boot washing guidelines and the prevention of the transmission of alien organisms, wilderness etiquette, ship scheduling and vessel communication procedures, emergency medical evacuation procedures, emergency contingency plans, reporting procedures, marine wildlife watching guidelines, station visitation policies and much more. IAATO has a global network of over 100 members.

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