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# Data Collection and Reporting on Yachting Activity in Antarctica in 2025-26



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**Working Paper submitted by the United Kingdom, Argentina, Chile and Spain, in conjunction with the International Association of Antarctica Tour Operators (IAATO)**

## **Summary**

This paper consolidates information from the United Kingdom, Argentina, Spain and IAATO relating to yachts sighted in Antarctica, or indicating an intention to travel to Antarctica, during the 2025-26 season. In light of the continuation in the high number of seemingly unauthorised yachts visiting Antarctica last season, the proponents recommend that the ATCM continues discussions of what further actions might be appropriate to try to address this trend.

## **Background**

The ATCM has previously welcomed information about yachts sighted in, or planning to travel to, Antarctica. This has enabled Parties to consider the overall volume of yachts known to be visiting the continent, and to confirm whether appropriate authorisations for such activities had been obtained.

Since 2010, the United Kingdom and IAATO have provided reports to the ATCM about the number of yachts sighted in the Antarctic during each previous season, while Argentina has provided reports detailing yachts travelling to Antarctica via Ushuaia. From 2016 to 2021 Chile, Argentina, the United Kingdom and IAATO presented a joint paper (ATCM XXXIX/WP34, ATCM XL/WP19, ATCM XLI/IP55, ATCM XLII/IP107 and ATCM XLIII/IP054). In 2022 and 2023 Chile, Argentina, the United Kingdom, IAATO and the United States presented joint papers (ATCM XLIV/IP080 rev.1 and ATCM XLV/IP040), and Spain joined for the 2024 paper (ATCM 46/IP084 rev.1) and 2025 paper (ATCM 47/WP043 rev.2).

As in previous years, this paper includes information collected as part of a wider visitor monitoring programme (for all visitors and vessels) at the UK-operated base Port Lockroy; information from Argentina on yachts travelling to Antarctica via Ushuaia and yachts observed from Brown Station; incidental sightings recorded by IAATO members and other vessels in Antarctica; and information from Spain on yachts observed entering into Port Foster, Deception Island. It would be helpful if Parties could provide any supplementary material, which adds to or verifies this information, including any sightings in areas of Antarctica besides the Antarctic Peninsula.

A total of 47 yachts were sighted in, or reported an intention to sail to, Antarctica during the 2025-26 season. This is the same as the number reported in the 2024-2025 season. 14 of these were IAATO members (table 1); 23 were non-IAATO members but had Party authorisation to travel to Antarctica (table 2); and 10 yachts appear to the cosponsors to be unauthorised yachts (table 3). This represents a continuation of the high number of unauthorised yachts reported, following the 12 reported during the 2024-2025 season, and highlights the continued activity of yachts that have been operating in the region without authorisation from a Treaty Party for multiple seasons. It also highlights that over two thirds of the yachts sighted in Antarctica were not IAATO members.

During the 2025-2026 season, several examples of concerning behaviour from non-IAATO yachts and non-IAATO yachts without, or unable to present, authorisation from a Treaty Party, were observed.

- Individuals on a non-IAATO yacht were observed water-skiing into Port Lockroy. There were also sightings of kite-surfing and wake boarding in other areas.

- Several non-IAATO yachts that have operated in Antarctica for multiple seasons without authorisation from a Treaty Party were observed to have changed their names during the season.
- Many yachts entering Port Foster did not have their AIS on.

Whilst the attached list is not exhaustive, the United Kingdom, Argentina, Spain and IAATO believe that it is important that the ATCM continues to monitor the level of yachting activities in Antarctica.

The examples of concerning behaviour observed demonstrate the importance of monitoring whether visits and activities carried out by yachts in Antarctica are carried out in accordance with the Antarctic Treaty, its Protocol on Environmental Protection, and relevant Measures, Decisions and Resolutions adopted at ATCMs, and whether visits are authorised and meet the requirements of the relevant National Competent Authority.

Parties are reminded that the EIES contains a summarised reporting tool, which can generate a complete list of all vessels included in pre-season information as having obtained authorisation to operate in Antarctica (<https://www.ats.aq/devAS/InformationExchange/SummarizedReports?lang=e>). This facility makes it much easier to determine whether a yacht is authorised, and consequently, this may be a useful tool for use in-season to expedite the verification of the authorisation status of any sighted yachts.

### **Recommendations**

The ATCM should continue to monitor the level of yachting activities in Antarctica, as well as compliance of yachting activities with the Antarctic Treaty and Environmental Protocol, and with the authorisation issued by the National Competent Authority.

Parties should consider investigating those vessels with their flag, travelling to Antarctica which are non-authorised and thus not fulfilling the Antarctic Treaty requirements.

Parties should ensure that the EIES is updated regularly to include all authorised tourism vessels through the EIES Pre-Season Information facility and via the post visit site reports, in line with Resolution 10 (2021). All Parties should also proactively add yacht authorisations in-season.

Asks the Secretariat to publish a list of authorised yachts at the start of each season.

The ATCM should continue to discuss the matter of how National Competent Authorities can improve cooperation to address unauthorised yachts, including how best to share information about suspected unauthorised yachts during the season; how to further education and information through the yachting community on the requirement to obtain authorisation; and potential engagement with non-Treaty Parties whose registered yachts and/or nationals have travelled previously to Antarctica.

## List of yachts observed in Antarctica during the 2024-25 season

**Table 1: IAATO members, with authorisation from a Treaty Party**

Name of Yacht	Flag State	Authorising Party
M/V Argus	Denmark	Australia
MY Hans Hansson	St Vincent and the Grenadines	United States
MY Hanse Explorer	Antigua and Barbuda	United States
Aqua Lares (Formerly Legend)	Marshall Islands	United States
SOLA	Vanuatu	Australia
S/V Australis	Cook Islands	Australia
S/Y Amundsen	United Kingdom Overseas Territory	United Kingdom
S/V Ocean Tramp	Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	United States
S/V Podorange	Poland	France
S/V Selma Expeditions	Poland	Poland
S/Y Firebird	United Kingdom	Australia
Tecla	Netherlands	Netherlands
Ugly Betty	Marshall Islands	United States
Vinson of Antarctica	United Kingdom Overseas Territory	United Kingdom

(Total: 14)

**Table 2: Non-IAATO members, with authorisation from a Treaty Party**

Name of Yacht	Flag State	Authorising Party
Icebird	St Vincents and the Grenadines	Australia
Kotik	Antigua and Barbuda	Brazil / France
Marama	Antigua and Barbuda	France
Shaima	Jamaica	Argentina
Why	France	France
YPake II	United States	Argentina
El Dorado	Malaysia	Russian Federation
Malizia Explorer	France	France
Admiral Lazarev (Previously Bazileus)	Estonia	Estonia
Hayat	France	Canada
Mars	France	France
Kalista	Marshall Islands	United States
Amazone	Finland	Russia
Pould'o	France	France
Boulard	France	France
Zamma	Belgium	Belgium
Madogwy	France	France
Cajou	France	France
Moli	United States	United States

<b>Name of Yacht</b>	<b>Flag State</b>	<b>Authorising Party</b>
Gringo	United States	United States
Milagro	France	France
Ti Kamak	France	France
Velero Club	Argentina	Argentina

(Total: 23)

**Table 3: Yachts without, or unable to present, authorisation from a Treaty Party**

<b>Name of Yacht</b>	<b>Flag State</b>	<b>IAATO Member</b>
Mon Coeur	Latvia	No
S/V Vaihere	Belgium	No
Rusarc Aurora	Malta	No
Ruach Love (Previously Elsi)	Malaysia	No
JR Tolkien	Netherlands	No
Picomole	San Marino	No
Pionero	Argentina	No
Peruche	Unknown	No
Bailey	Unknown	No
Mustamajja	Czechia	No

(Total 10)