



## **Whalesafe: Presentation Of The Sperm Whale Protection Protocol Of Conduct**

July 4, 2016

### **Costa Cruises is the first shipping company to participate in the project**

*Genoa, July 4 2016* - This morning the Aquarium of Genoa played host to the presentation of the **sperm whale protection protocol of conduct developed by the partners of the Whalesafe conservation project and co-financed by the European Union through the Life+ program**, including the University of Genoa (Department of Physics and the Department of Earth Sciences, Environment and Life), Costa Edutainment, the Maritime Administration of Genoa, the Harbourmaster's Office of Savona and Softeco Sismat.

**Costa Cruises becomes the first shipping company to take part in the project**, with Alessandro Bertorello, Head of Environment Carnival Maritime, **signing the protocol** at the end of the presentation.

The protocol defines **4 colour-coded alarm levels**: **GREEN**, no sperm whales; **YELLOW**, presence of 1 or more sperm whales underwater; **ORANGE**, presence of 1 or more sperm whales on the surface without any risk of colliding with vessels; **RED**, presence of 1 or more sperm whales with imminent risk of collision.

The document also defines **3 areas when sperm whales are present on the surface**: **NO TRANSIT AREA**, within a radius of 100 metres from the sperm whale, **TRANSIT AREA**, within a radius of 500 metres from the sperm whale at a agreed upon speed of 6 knots, **ALERT AREA**, within a radius of 3 miles from where the sperm whale is recorded on the surface, and requesting ships in the area to proceed with caution and, through onboard spotters, to monitor any movements of sperm whales and thus avoid any possible disturbance or collision.

The alarm levels are defined by the Harbourmaster's Office in the Port of Savona based on data received from monitoring buoys, installed off the coast of the Savonese port last May, and transmitted by radio exclusively to ships in the area, as well as those entering or exiting the port.

The protocol, which is based on voluntary participation, does not foresee any obligations or sanctions, but does set an objective of reducing the risk of disturbance and collisions with sperm whales through wide-ranging activities to enhance the awareness of all operators involved.

This makes **Costa Cruises' participation in the project, as the first shipping company**, even more important considering the years of attention Costa has focused and continues to focus on protecting the marine environment where its ships operating. Onboard officers are trained on a regular basis (Whale Protection Training Program) to deal with this type of problem, to carry out necessary manoeuvres and to alert the local port authorities whenever required. Therefore, participating in Whalesafe is a natural continuation of a commitment that has now become part of the company's DNA.

In addition to signing the protocol, the cruise company is also involved with a project, that began last year, to enhance awareness of **adults and children through onboard play-based activities** during which participants learn how to recognise the different species of cetaceans that live in the Pelagos Sanctuary, and through an exhibition dedicated to these species **at the Palacrociere Terminal in Savona**.

These initiatives **are carried out thanks to the support of Costa Edutainment**, whose task is to enhance the general public's awareness of the project through activities that also include animated films and in-depth cetacean-oriented edutainment at the Aquarium of Genoa.

For additional information:

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