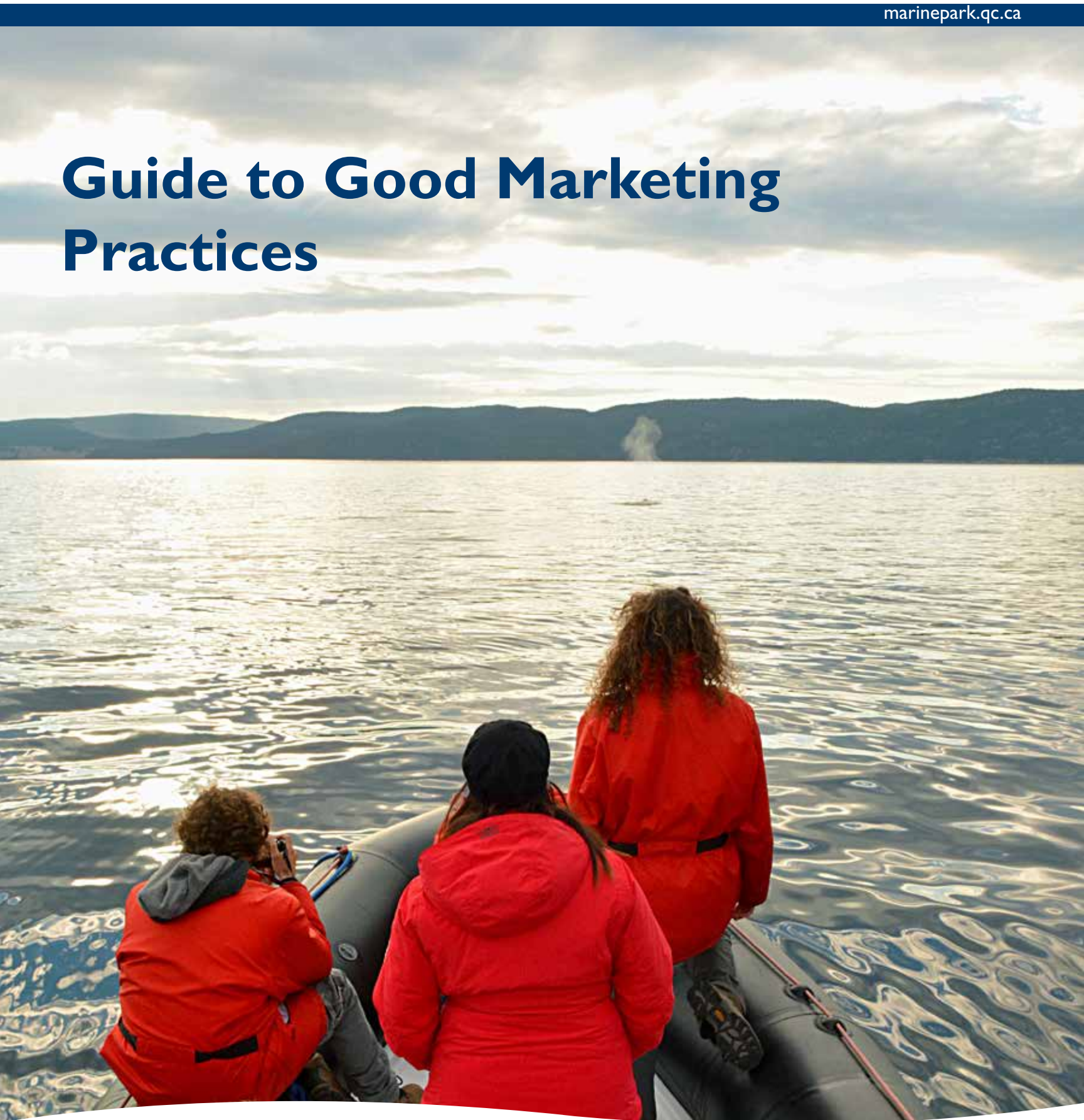




SAGUENAY-ST. LAWRENCE  
**MARINE PARK**

[marinepark.qc.ca](http://marinepark.qc.ca)

# Guide to Good Marketing Practices

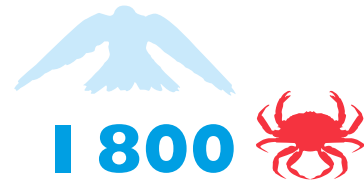
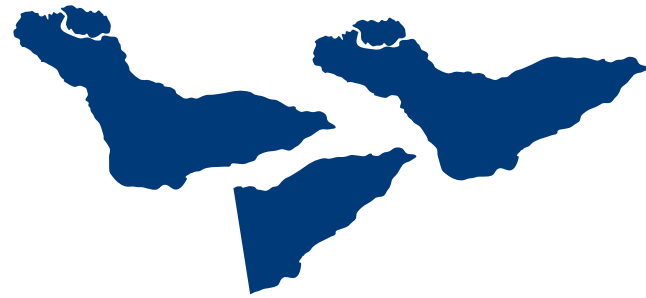




If you promote activities on land or at sea that take place in the Saguenay–St-Lawrence Marine Park, then this guide is for you! Within these pages you will find practical ways to design the promotion of your product in a way that is realistic, authentic and respectful of this precious and protected environment.

**1 245 km<sup>2</sup>**

Total area of the Marine Park  
2.5 x the island of Montreal



**1 800**

Animal and plant species observed in the Saguenay–St. Lawrence Marine Park



Co-managed since

**1 998**

Canada Québec



**8000 YEARS**

Human presence in the region

**1 000 000**

Number of visits to the Marine Park per year (at sea and on the coast)



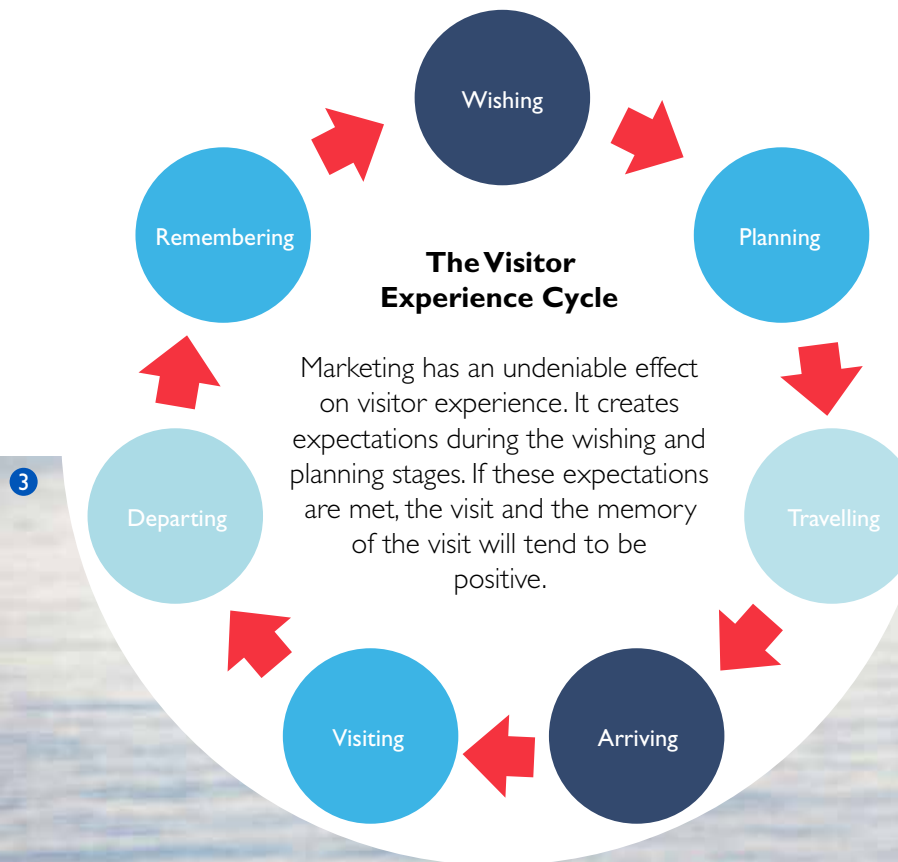
**889** Belugas belonging to the St. Lawrence population

## THIS GUIDE IS YOUR TOOL

By following the guidelines and good practices proposed in this guide, you are helping to make sure that this marine protected area remains a rich exceptional place for whales, seals, sea birds, and visitors alike for years to come. **If you require advice or support to implement the principles contained in this guide, feel free to reach out to us at [pc.infossl@canada.ca](mailto:pc.infossl@canada.ca) or 418 235-4703.**

For many people, advertising and images that circulate on social and traditional media are their first contact with the Marine Park. **You can support efforts for the protection of whales and their habitat by creating promotional materials that:**

- respond to growing expectations of sustainable tourism that respects nature and the environment;
- increase visitor satisfaction by bridging the gap between dream and reality;
- foster the perception of a privileged experience in the heart of the Marine Park;
- lower the risk of pressure on captains, tour guides and whales.

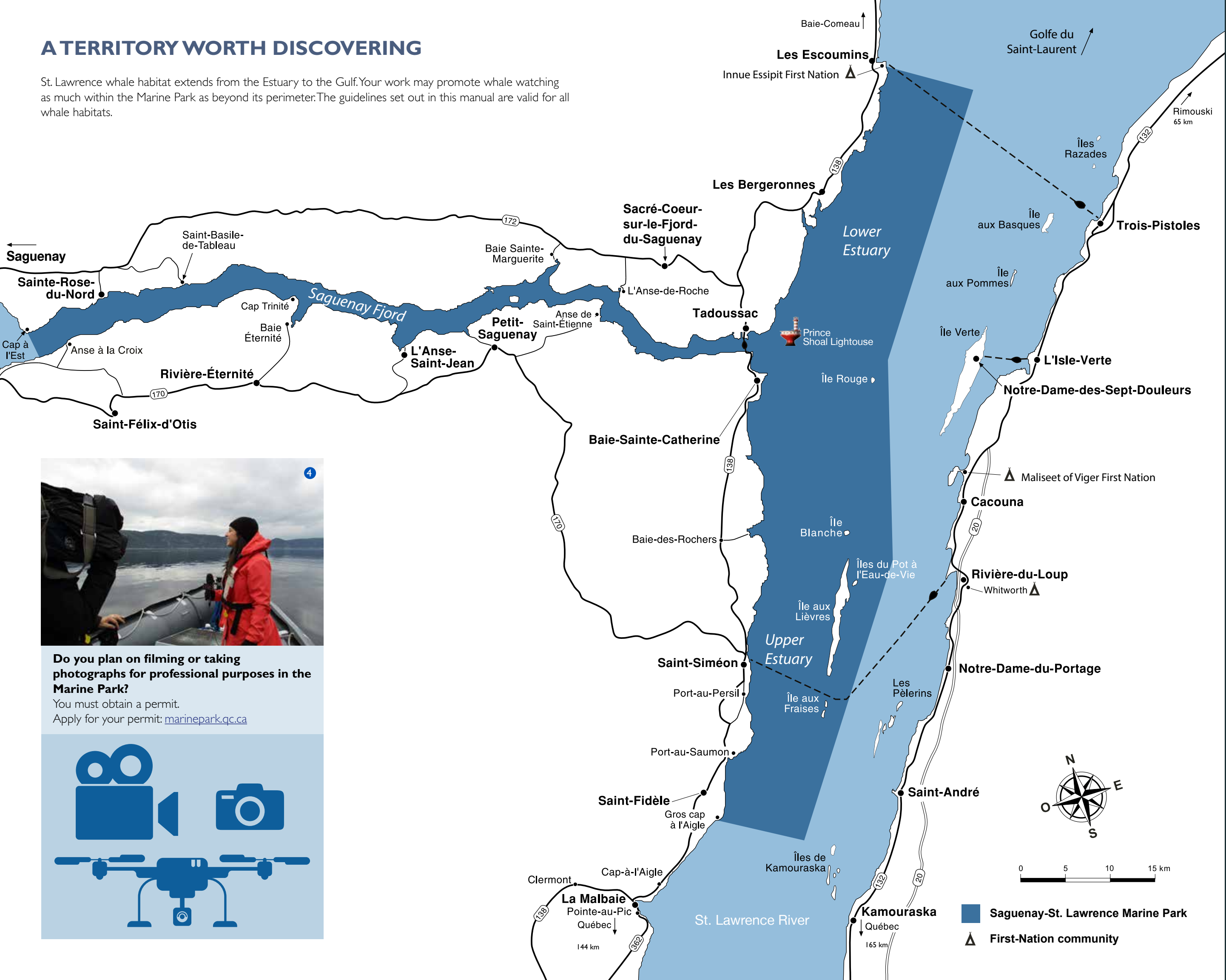


RESPECT  
AUTHENTICITY  
REALITY



## A TERRITORY WORTH DISCOVERING

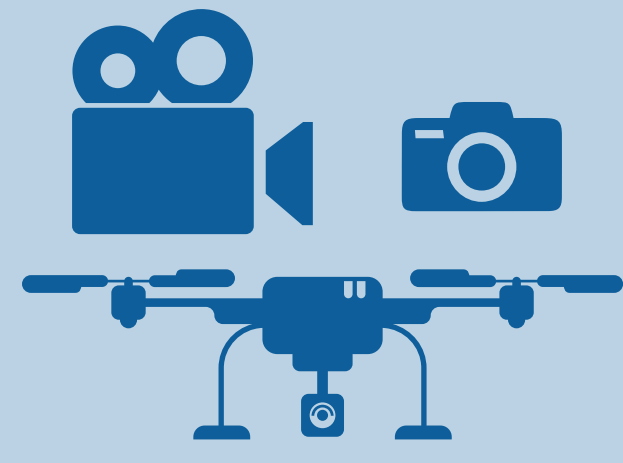
St. Lawrence whale habitat extends from the Estuary to the Gulf. Your work may promote whale watching as much within the Marine Park as beyond its perimeter. The guidelines set out in this manual are valid for all whale habitats.



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### Do you plan on filming or taking photographs for professional purposes in the Marine Park?

You must obtain a permit.  
Apply for your permit: [marinepark.qc.ca](http://marinepark.qc.ca)



REALITY  
AUTHENTICITY  
RESPECT



# Guidelines for Ecologically Responsible Marketing

Respectful

by reflecting the measures in place to reduce wildlife disturbance

Authentic

by creating a sense of privilege to be visiting a unique and distinctive Marine Park

Realistic

by bridging dream and reality, thus increasing visitor satisfaction

## RESPECT

Respectful and responsible promotion of a natural environment also respects the measures in place to protect it.

### Established Rules to Respect Whales

Activities in the Marine Park must be respectful of whales and their habitat. A permit system, speed limits and approach distances are some of the ways this environment is protected under the Marine Activities in the Saguenay–St-Lawrence Marine Park Regulations. By being aware and respectful of the Regulations in your promotional material, you contribute to greater protection and the long-term sustainability of the park and the activities that take place there, including tourism.

*A summary of the Regulations is listed on the back of this guide.*

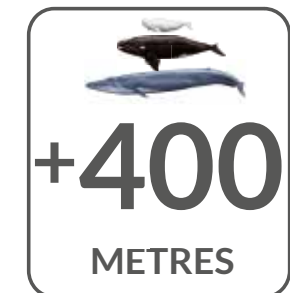


*Do not hesitate to display the Eco-Whale Alliance logo if the company for which you are producing promotional material is a member!*

## ENDANGERED SPECIES

### Caution! Fragile!

The beluga whale and the blue whale are endangered species that **may not be sought out during offshore excursions**. A minimum distance of 400 m must be maintained, no matter the type of vessel. Furthermore, a motorboat or a sailboat may not remain stationary less than a ½ nautical mile (926 m) from a beluga whale.



### The Tone of the Text and the Presentation

The description of a potential experience can be perceived as a promise, thereby creating unrealistic expectations. Exercise caution in your choice of words when referring to beluga whales or blue whales.

### An Image is Worth a Thousand Words

Images have a considerable impact on your audience; choose them carefully. While it may conjure up the dream, a photograph of a beluga whale or a blue whale may also suggest that the activity will target these species.

#### To be emphasised

“in beluga-whale country”  
 “in the home of the beluga whale”  
 “in beluga-whale habitat”

#### To be avoided

“in the company of beluga whales”  
 “paddling with beluga whales”  
 “heading out to meet beluga whales/blue whales”  
 “will beluga whales accompany us?”

### Are you using images that highlight beluga whales or blue whales?

Make sure:

- that you accompany them with a conservation message (see examples in the following pages);
- that there are no vessels in sight and that the image does not give the impression of human interaction;
- that they show the animal in its natural habitat: the St. Lawrence River;
- if applicable, to promote land-based beluga whale observation.

RESPECT

AUTHENTICITY

REALITY



## RESPECT

### Realistic Expectations

The blue whale and the beluga whale are fragile species that must not be sought out or targeted for observation at sea. Did you know that only 15% of blue whales in the St. Lawrence raise their tails above the surface? Since this whale species is only an occasional park visitor, it is all the more exceptional to see its tail. It is therefore more realistic to observe its back and its dorsal fin.



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### Human-wildlife encounters

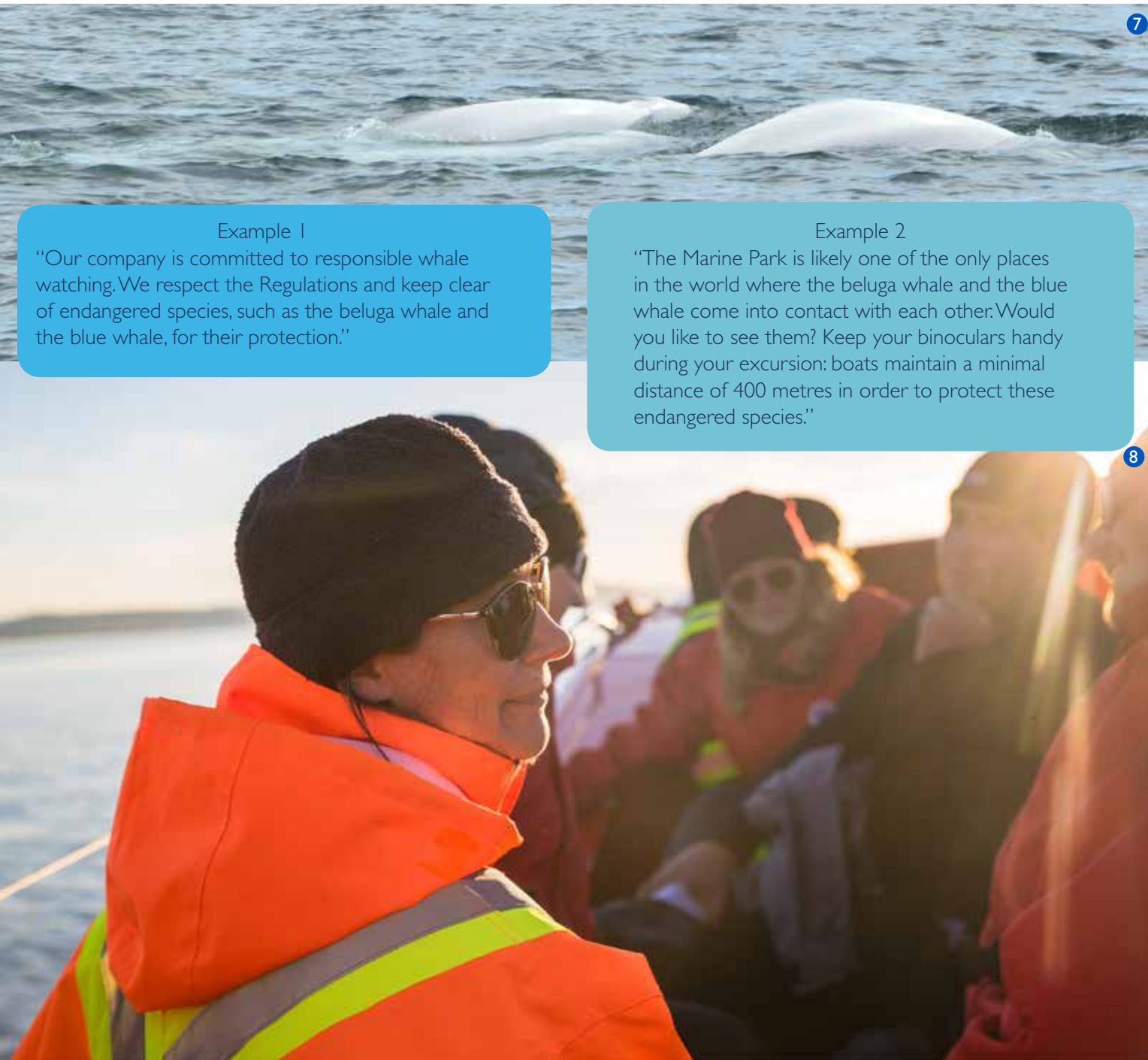
Show respect by portraying human-wildlife encounters from a distance. If endangered species appear in a photo with people or boats, you could be giving an impression of proximity that is illegal in the Marine Park.

Here are a few examples to be **avoided**:

- ⊘ An image simultaneously showing a boat (kayak, sailboat, motor vessel) and a beluga whale (photo 19)
- ⊘ Video of interaction between beluga whales and the operator or the passengers of a vessel

### Integrated Conservation Message

When using beluga whale or blue whale images, incorporate an educational message about endangered species protection. Here are five examples:



Example 1

"Our company is committed to responsible whale watching. We respect the Regulations and keep clear of endangered species, such as the beluga whale and the blue whale, for their protection."

Example 2

"The Marine Park is likely one of the only places in the world where the beluga whale and the blue whale come into contact with each other. Would you like to see them? Keep your binoculars handy during your excursion: boats maintain a minimal distance of 400 metres in order to protect these endangered species."

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## AUTHENTICITY

Present an authentic, unique and distinctive Marine Park

### Exceptional Natural Wealth

The Saguenay–St. Lawrence Marine Park protects a marine region that contains exceptional plant and animal diversity. The Marine Park is one of the best places in the world to watch whales. Whale watching can be carried out from a boat or from land. To visit this marine protected area is to have the privilege of gaining access to a natural setting where wild animals feed, rest and raise their offspring.

### Referring to the Marine Park

Making reference to the Saguenay–St. Lawrence Marine Park gives you the added value of the park's notoriety. You demonstrate that you are committed to its mission and participate in its protection.

### A Variety of Marine Mammals

There are up to three species of seals and six species of whales in the Marine Park. Other species may be observed on rare occasions. By presenting regularly observed species you ensure visitors will have realistic expectations that your products will be able to satisfy.

### Species Regularly Observed in the Marine Park:



Example 3

"To respect their tranquility, we do not head out to encounter beluga whales during our excursions. If you would like to learn more about beluga whales, the naturalist-captain will gladly fill you in."

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Example 4

"To give them the space that they need, no vessel may remain stationary within 1/2 of a nautical mile of beluga whales. Our captains respect this distance."

Example 5

"At sea, we maintain a minimum distance of 400 metres between our vessels and beluga whales or blue whales to allow them to go about their natural activities. However, you can see them closer up from several locations along the shore of the Marine Park."





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Portray realistic images  
of the Marine Park to  
satisfy visitors by bridging  
the gap between dream  
and reality.



## REALITY

### EXAMPLES OF IMAGES TO BE EMPHASIZED

#### Vessel and Whale (photo 11)

Here the promoter relies on an impression of intimacy and respect for the animal. The distance complies with the Regulations.

#### Breach or Whale Tail (photos 12 and 15)

The minke whale is a common Marine Park species and to see one breaching is not rare. The same can be said for the humpback whale that typically brings its tail above the surface as it dives.

#### Minke Whale Seen from Shore (photo 13)

This is a good representation of the reality of the Marine Park. This species of whale is frequently encountered and can be seen at sea and near the shore!

#### Biodiversity and Scenery (photos 5 and 14)

Showing a seal, a harbour porpoise or a flock of seabirds is a great way to evoke the area's biological diversity. Local landscapes are renowned for their beauty and are unique to the Marine Park.

#### ACCESS TO NATURAL WHALE HABITAT IS A PRIVILEGE

Visitors discover a habitat that is important for whale survival, especially the St. Lawrence beluga whale. The protection of these marine mammals and their habitat is part of the Marine Park's mandate.







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## EXAMPLES OF IMAGES TO BE AVOIDED

### Images from Other Countries or Places

Avoid shots of other regions of the world. Scenery should portray the Marine Park, its shores, its waters and its biodiversity.

### Whale and Vessel Proximity (photo 16)

The whale appears to be within a radius of 100 m of a moving vessel. This image may create unrealistic expectations with respect to the proximity of whales. In the Marine Park, whales (other than threatened or endangered species) may be observed from a distance of 200 m and, in certain situations, 100 m.



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### An Exceptional Fortuitous Encounter (photo 17)

It is possible to experience this type of chance encounter during an excursion without contravening the Regulations. However, using an image like this one for promotional purposes gives visitors the impression that they could see whales this close. This may spoil the reputation of the whale-watching industry in the Marine Park, which aims to be respectful, and may cause fear among potential clients.

### Whale Watching from a Kayak (photo 18)

It is possible to see whales during a kayak excursion, but companies are not authorised to approach them. Thus, the promotion of guided kayak activities should not suggest this type of experience.



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### Editing

Exercise caution when editing. Edited footage could portray an illegal situation. Make sure the final product is realistic and respects the Regulations.

### Underwater Images Obtained Elsewhere

Underwater images shot in aquariums or elsewhere in the world do not represent the reality of the rich, cold waters of the Marine Park. They may also give the impression of a close-up experience that is unrealistic, or even illegal. The Regulations prohibit entering the water with the intention of interacting with marine mammals.



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### Beluga Whales (photo 19)

An image or a video depicting an endangered species and a vessel may represent a violation of the Regulations. A minimum distance of 400 m must be maintained, regardless of the type of vessel.

## SOCIAL MEDIA

Promote your good practices on social media platforms. Don't hesitate to identify the Marine Park!



#beluga400m  
#SharingTheWaters  
#SpeciesAtRisk  
#SSLMarinePark  
#MarineParkMoment

#beluga400m  
#MieuxCohabiter  
#EspècesEnPéril  
#ParcMarinSSL  
#MomentParcMarin



@SaguenayStLawrenceMP @parcmarinSSL  
@ParksCanada @ParcsCanada  
@reseaupeaq



## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### Kayaks and sailboats make little noise: can they disturb beluga whales?

Disturbance is not only acoustic. The presence of a boat or a kayak in beluga whale habitat can divert their attention and reduce the time that they spend taking care of their offspring, feeding and resting. The accumulation of interactions may have a serious effect on their chances of survival. Beluga whales require space and tranquility. Keep your distance.

### Which boats get closer to whales?

Small or large, all whale-watching tour boats must respect the same distances. Under certain circumstances, they may have the privilege of approaching to a distance of 100 metres of a whale. Otherwise, they maintain a distance of 200 metres (400 metres if it is a threatened or endangered species). Kayak tour companies are not authorised to approach whales.

### Are beluga whales curious? They approach boats of their own volition!

By affirming that beluga whales are curious, we transpose human sentiments that they do not necessarily experience. We do not know why beluga whales approach boats, which is why this expression should not be used to describe beluga whale behaviour. Keep in mind that we navigate in their natural habitat and that we are the visitors in their habitat. In the Saguenay Fjord and the St. Lawrence Estuary don't forget to maintain a minimum distance of 400 m between your vessel and beluga whales.

### How does the whale-watching industry affect whales?

The presence of tour boats can affect whales in various ways. Notably, there are increased risks of collision and injury, as well as potential disturbance due to noise or proximity. This industry is controlled by Regulations in order to minimize these effects and encourage the protection of whales.



## Self-assessment Tool

Does your advertising respect the good practices presented in this guide?



### You use images that were shot in the Marine Park

- Mention the Marine Park in your published material
- Absence of prohibited activities: jet-skis, motorized water traction sports, flying drones

### You wish to shoot images within Marine Park boundaries

- Completed permit application and authorisation obtained from Parks Canada
- Final editing complies with permit conditions

### You use an image that shows a beluga whale and/or a blue whale

- Conservation message present that does not use the term "curious" to describe beluga whale behaviour
- Absence of boat on the image
- The message does not encourage the observation of beluga whales or blue whales

### You use an image of a whale that is neither threatened or endangered (humpback whale, minke whale, fin whale)

- The whale is in its natural habitat
- If it has been edited, it remains realistic
- If a whale-watching tour company boat is present:
  - It is not in the path of the whale
  - It is at a distance of at least 100 metres from the whale
  - The boat appears to be moving at a slow speed (no waves in its wake)
  - If several boats are present, they do not appear to be surrounding the whale
- If a pleasure craft is present:
  - It is a distance of more than 200 metres from the whale
  - It is not cutting off the whale's trajectory

### If you would like to promote an activity other than whale-watching tours

(kayaking, diving, sailing school, pleasure boating, fishing, etc.):

- No whale is visible near the boat
- No message encourages approaching whales

### You use several whale images:

- The final product presents a good balance between spectacular images (ex: breaches) and more common images (whale backs at the surface and humpback whale tails)
- The final product promotes the observation of the six whale species and three seal species most commonly observed, not uncommon species

#### Photo credits :

Parks Canada / M. Loiselle :	9,11,13,14
Parks Canada / M. I. Rochon :	2, 3, 5, 8, 21
Parks Canada / S. Roy :	4
Parks Canada / F. Deland :	6
Parks Canada / L. Levesque :	7,10,18,19, 22
Parks Canada / N. Boivert :	12
Parks Canada / L. Falardeau :	20

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## IN BRIEF

Marine Activities in the Saguenay–St. Lawrence Marine Park Regulations

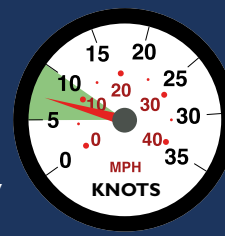
### SPEEDS



Maximum speed of 25 knots within the limits of the Marine Park.



From May 1 to October 31 the maximum speed in the mouth of the Saguenay River, i.e., the area between buoys S7 and S8 and the ferries, is 15 knots.



A boat that is less than a half nautical mile from a beluga cannot remain stationary and must navigate at a constant speed of at least 5 knots and no more than 10 knots.

### DISTANCES TO BE RESPECTED

# 400 METRES

For endangered or threatened whale species, such as the beluga whale or the blue whale, a distance of at least 400 metres must be maintained between the vessel and the animal.

# 200 METRES

A boat may approach a whale that is not endangered or threatened to a distance of 200 metres.



Placing one's vessel in the path of a whale in such a manner that the whale passes within 200 metres of the boat, 400 metres if it is a threatened or endangered whale, is prohibited.



It is forbidden to use the action of wind, waves or current to approach within less than the specified distances.

### PROHIBITED ACTIVITIES



Use of jet skis or hovercraft is prohibited.



It is prohibited to fly over the park at an altitude of less than 609.6 metres (2,000 ft), and to land in or take off from the park in an aircraft unless you are the holder of a permit.



The use of drones for recreational purposes is prohibited over the water; as in all National Parks.



Conducting a water sport activity using a vessel or any other motorized system as a method of traction is prohibited. Offering commercial services associated with migratory bird hunting is also prohibited.