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**SUBJECT : GUIDELINES ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF
ENVIRONMENTAL STANDARDS FOR DIVING AND
SNORKELLING**

Pursuant to Section 9 of DENR Administrative Order No. 2016-26 on the Guidelines for the Implementation of the Coastal and Marine Ecosystems Management Program (CMEMP), the attached "Guidelines on the Implementation of Environmental Standards for Diving and Snorkelling in support of Social Marketing and Mobilization and Capacity Building Component of CMEMP.

This Technical Bulletin is circulated for the information and guidance of all concerned.

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GUIDELINES ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL STANDARDS FOR DIVING AND SNORKELLING

INTRODUCTION

Pursuant to the implementation of the DENR Administrative Order No. 2016-16, in Coastal and Marine Ecosystems Management Program (CMEMP), DENR Administrative Order No. 2013-19 (Guidelines for Ecotourism Development in the Philippines), Republic Act No. 7586 (National Integrated Protected Areas System Act of 1992), Executive Order No. 111 (Guidelines for Ecotourism Development in the Philippines), Executive Order No. 533 (Integrated Coastal Management Policy) and other relevant issuances, the Green Fins Approach is hereby issued as the environmental standards for diving and snorkeling.

The Guidelines aims to provide the Protected Area Superintendents and designated Green Fins Focal Persons and field implementers a standardized method of assessing and monitoring the impact of the snorkelling and diving industry in conservation activities within the protected areas and critical habitats. The diving and snorkelling tourism industry are economic drivers on a local and large-scale and a positive force for the protection of marine life through facilitating information exchange to raise awareness and by providing volunteers for environmental activities such as beach and reef clean-ups and reef monitoring.

The implementation of these Guidelines shall apply primarily to the diving and snorkeling industry in protected areas under NIPAS and critical habitats.

This will also apply to local communities and industries utilizing resources or benefitting from the protected areas.

Locally-managed marine protected areas and local communities and industries utilizing resources or benefitting from the protected areas are encouraged to adopt the approach and utilize this guidelines.

GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

- I. **The Green Fins Approach.** The Green Fins Approach is a set of standards for environmentally sustainable dive and snorkeling tourism activities. The Green Fins Approach includes a robust system of assessment criteria to identify high-risk practices both above and below the water and is proven to reduce these threats.

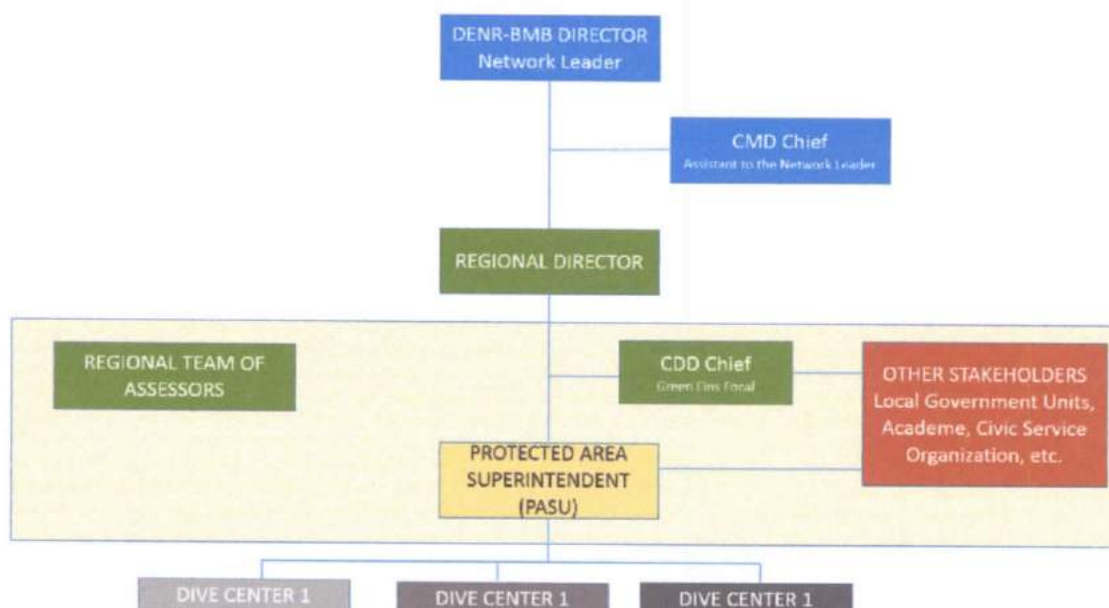
The Green Fins Approach is guided by the following Code of Conduct:

1. Adopt the Green Fins Mission that is “to protect and conserve coral reefs by establishing and implementing environment-friendly guidelines to promote a sustainable diving and snorkeling tourism industry”.
2. Display the adopted Green Fins Agreement and IEC materials (**ANNEX A**) for the public to see
3. Adhere to the “Green Fins” Friendly Diving and Snorkeling Guidelines and act as a responsible role model for guests
4. Participate in regular underwater cleanup at dive operator selected sites
5. Participate in the development and implementation of a mooring buoy program and actively use moorings, drift or hand place anchors for boats

6. Prohibit the sales of corals and other marine life at the dive operation
7. Participate in regular coral reef monitoring and report coral reef monitoring data to a regional coral reef database
8. Provide adequate garbage facility on board facility's vessel and deal with responsibly;
9. Operate under a "minimum discharge" policy;
10. Abide by all local, regional and national and international environmental laws, regulations and customs;
11. Provide guests with an explanation of Green Fins Friendly Diving and Snorkelling Guidelines in pre-dive briefings;
12. Provide training, briefing or literature for employees and guests regarding good environmental practices for snorkeling, diving, boating, marine wildlife interaction and other marine recreational activities;
13. Provide staff and guests with public awareness and environmental materials (ID books, pamphlets, etc.);
14. Provide guests with information on NIPAS marine protected areas, local MPAs environmental rules and regulations;
15. Promote a strict "No Touch" policy for all reef diving and snorkeling

II. Management and Implementation Structure

The Green Fins Approach shall be guided by the following management structure and implementation framework:



The following roles and responsibilities shall be performed by the following:

1. Network Leader
 - Signatory of Member Certificate
 - Provision of country level direction (institutionalization/leveraging support and resources)
2. Assistant to the Network Leader
 - Management of country level emails
 - Production of Green Fins materials
 - Supervision of Assessor Team and assessment activities
 - Management of Green Fins awareness-raising activities (staff training, environmental activities (reef monitoring, cleanups), identifying solutions to environmental threats)
 - Distribution of Green Fins materials

- Management of capacity-building trainings and other technical assistance to Regional Offices
- Monitoring and evaluation of Green Fins activities
- 3. Regional Director
 - Designation of Green Fins Focal Person in the Regional Office
 - Provision of budget allocation and utilization in the implementation of GF activities
- 4. CDD Chief/Green Fins Focal
 - Creation and management of a pool of regional team of Green Fins Assessors and Coordinators
 - Submission of periodic reports to the Network Leader on the implementation of Green Fins activities within their respective areas
 - Coordination with local stakeholders in the implementation of Green Fins
 - Monitoring and evaluation of compliance to Green Fins Code of Conduct
 - Conduct of awareness-raising activities (staff training, environmental activities (reef monitoring, cleanups), identifying solutions to environmental threats
 - Production of Green Fins materials
- 5. Protected Area Superintendent
 - Conduct of awareness-raising activities (staff training, environmental activities (reef monitoring, cleanups), identifying solutions to environmental threats
 - Monitoring and evaluation of compliance to Green Fins Code of Conduct
- 6. Regional Team of Assessor
 - Monitor and conduct of yearly assessment to evaluate status of membership

Green Fins Assessors are selected and recommended for training by the Regional Director but must meet certain skill requirements before being accepted onto the training course. These are:

1. Recognized diver certification
2. Minimum 50 dive experience
3. Speaks good English and local languages(s)
4. Has good communication skills

III. **Components and Strategies.** The implementation of Green Fins Approach shall consist of the following components and strategies:

1. **Capacity Building** – This shall be the training of concerned staff at the national and regional/field offices to develop skills and expertise required to manage coral reefs and marine tourism activities through Green Fins.
2. **Assessment and Mapping** - this shall include among others, inventory of dive and snorkeling shops and boat operators directly involved in NIPAS sites and industries utilizing resources and benefitting from protected areas. The inventory format is provided for in **ANNEX B**.
3. **Technical Assistance** – The capacity-building trainings received by the DENR personnel shall cascade to the dive shop and snorkeling operators and partners in the field. The DENR may engage the services of a third party to provide assistance with regards to the trainings for the concerned stakeholders.
4. **Knowledge Management** – a knowledge management platform developed within the CMEMP shall be allocated to serve as repository of all data and information on Green Fins Approach-related activities.

5. **Social marketing and Mobilization** – a well-designed communication framework, strategies and approaches shall be developed and implemented to promote public awareness, instill social and environmental consciousness and effect behavior change with regards to sound practices in the diving and snorkeling tourism industry.
6. **Monitoring and Evaluation.** – The Coastal Marine Division of CMD in collaboration with the Regional Office shall conduct periodic monitoring and assessment of the implementation of the Green Fins Approach.

Member dive shops shall be assessed to determine the status of membership under the categories:

- **Active** – this member has been trained to follow the Green Fins Code of Conduct and has been assessed within the last 18 months. They have successfully reduced their environmental impact and score or maintained the same as last year but have not increased their environmental impact or threat
 - **Inactive** – This member has previously been trained on the Green Fins Approach and assessed in the last 18 months. This could be due to lack of cooperation on their part, change in management, or a lack of resources to enable a Green Fins Assessor to access them.
 - **Interested** – This member has filled out a membership form but has not been assessed or trained
 - **Suspended** – This member has not managed to effectively reduce their threat to the marine environment in line with the Code of Conduct within 2 years, or has not been involved in an activity that is seen as seriously detrimental to the marine environment
7. **Reporting.** The PASU shall prepare through the Conservation and Development Division, to the DENR Regional Director for endorsement to the BMB Director. The following diagram illustrates the reporting and process flow:



8. **Fund Allocation.** The DENR shall allocate funds to support the implementation of this Guidelines.

ANNEX A.

Green Fins Toolkit (free and available for download at [www.](http://greenfins.net/en/downloads)

<http://greenfins.net/en/downloads>)

1. Green Fins Guide
2. Green Fins Brand Book
3. Green Fins Beach Cleanup Guide
4. Green Fins Brochure
5. Green Fins Coastal Cleanup Guidelines for Organizations
6. Green Fins Code of Conduct
7. Green Fins Crown of Thorns Cleanup Guidelines
8. Green Fins Environmental Briefing Cards
9. Green Fins Environmental Briefing Guidelines
10. Green Fins Guidelines to the Code of Conduct
11. Green Fins Guidelines to the Code of Conduct - Combined
12. Green Fins Guidelines to the Code of Conduct - Diver
13. Green Fins Icons
14. Green Fins Posters
15. Green Fins Membership Form
16. Green Fins Membership Process Flow Chart
17. Green Fins Train your staff presentation
18. Green Fins Underwater Clean-up Guidelines
19. Green Fins Underwater Photography Guidelines
20. Green Fins Wallpapers
21. Reef Watch Guidelines

Member Promotional materials (Bag, Flag, Save our Reef Stickers, Stencil, T-shirts)

Dive Center Inventory (Location, Region)

[illegible]

CONSOLIDATED COMMENTS ON THE DRAFT TECHNICAL BULLETIN ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL STANDARDS FOR DIVING AND SNORKELING

Comments/Recommendations March 14, 2017 BMB TRC Review	CMD Response/Action
1. On BMB TB, it seems that there is something missing between "...Diving and Snorkeling" and "in support of Social Marketing..."	
2. On the Introduction 2nd paragraph, 2nd sentence, insert "and critical habitats" aside from protected areas 2nd paragraph, 2nd sentence, replace "as" with "by" to read as "...to raise awareness and <i>by</i> providing..." 3rd paragraph, restate as "The Implementation of these Guidelines shall apply...protected areas under NIPAS <i>and critical habitats</i>." 5th paragraph, revise "this" into "these"	- revised as recommended - revised as recommended - revised as recommended - revised as recommended
3. On General Consideration: - Delete "the" on the Code of the Conduct" - Include the following as additional guidance on the Green Fins Approach: "15. Limit diving activities and wildlife interaction in Strict Protection Zone of PA. 16. Designate areas for no diving and snorkeling zone such as shallow branching reef. 17. Designate sites/areas for diving and snorkeling must be provided with anchorage and mooring buoy"	- revised as recommended The 15 Code of Conduct is the Core of Green Fins. The 3 items recommended for inclusion to the first 15 codes are, in essence already embedded in the 15 codes. Please note: - No. 5 for mooring buoys - No. 12 for wildlife interactions - No. 14 on zoning
4. Observe consistency between verbs and noun on the roles and responsibility of Green Fins Approach Management Structure. Examples: - Instead "Provides country level", replace it with "Provision of country level..." "Conducts assessment" to "Conducts of assessment" "Conducts capacity building..." to "Conducts of capacity building trainings and provision of other technical assistance to Regional Offices"	Revised as recommended
5. On the role of CDD Chief, observe the consistency of the form of verb as singular or	Revised as recommended

plural. Examples: "submit" to "submits" and "Coordinate" to "Coordinates"	
6. Delete "of and add s" on the "Regional Team of Assessor" and "Regional Team Coordinators". However, is it really called or termed "Regional Team Assessor/Coordinator" or any other applicable term?	Deletion of Regional team of coordinators but retain Regional Team of Assessors and presented in the revised diagram
7. On the skill requirements of Green Fins Assessor, numbers 3 and 4 items are the same. Also, item 3 can be rephrased as "Proficient in English and local..."	Revised as recommended