

Press release from AECO - Association of Arctic Expedition Cruise Operators (for immediate release):

New Clean Seas Guidelines for visitors to the Arctic

May 5, 2019, Longyearbyen, Svalbard

New guidelines have been released outlining the necessity of reducing plastic waste on cruise ships and bringing responsible travel to the forefront for Arctic cruise passengers.

The Association of Arctic Expedition Cruise Operators (AECO) is working with cruise operators to tackle plastic waste on board ships as well as at the remote Arctic locations they visit.

The new Clean Seas Guidelines aims to provide visitors to the Arctic with information on responsible solutions to reducing their waste and plastic footprint.

The guidelines suggest passengers prepare before the trip to ensure that they bring reusable items. During the trip important measures such as avoiding disposable items and responsibly disposing of waste are recommended and guests are encouraged to continue the effort once home by following the principles Reduce, Reuse, Recycle.

“Our members are working to broadly reduce plastic consumption on ships. These guidelines are a way of inviting guests on AECO member vessels to take part in cutting back on plastic. Often from being exposed to Arctic nature, guests are already very aware of such matters and very receptive when it comes to making more sustainable choices when they return home.” Frigg Jørgensen, Executive Director, AECO.

The new guidelines are part of AECO’s Clean Seas Project that aim at significantly cutting back on single-use plastic on Arctic expedition cruise vessels as well as enhancing cruise ship passenger’s involvement in beach clean ups and educating passengers, staff and crew in plastic reduction measures. AECO has signed an MOU with UN Environment #CleanSeas program.

This is the second guideline that has been issued. The first focuses on the Clean Up Svalbard initiative which has led to a group effort resulting in around 20 tons of waste being removed from the beaches around Svalbard each summer.

Contact: Isabelle Howells - Communications Assistant, AECO - Association of Arctic Expedition Cruise Operators | isabelle@aeco.no | +447900340563 | www.aeco.no

This guideline has been developed in collaboration with the International Association of Antarctica Tour Operators (IAATO) who will be issuing guidelines for visitors to the Antarctic. The project has been made possible with financing from the Svalbard Environmental Protection Fund and the Norwegian Environment Agency. AECO's Clean Seas initiative is also accepting donations through [1% for the Planet](#) network.

Suggested illustration photo



Photo caption: Polar bears and plastic. Photo by Kevin Morgans

High resolution illustration image can be downloaded here:
<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/z3eqfo0p10cfh3i/AAC9lgcuJPW00LRle7SFji4va?dl=0>

AECO - Association of Arctic Expedition Cruise Operators

Association of Arctic Expedition Cruise Operators is an international organization for expedition cruise operators and associates in the Arctic, dedicated to managing environmentally friendly, safe and considerate cruise tourism. With close to 70 international members – including 40 vessel operators, owners and management, and 50 expedition cruise vessels that are organized by the association – AECO represent the great majority of these operations in the Arctic. Website: www.aeco.no.

Learn more about AECO's Clean Seas efforts here: <https://www.aeco.no/clean-seas/>

The Clean Seas campaign

UN Environment launched #CleanSeas in February 2017, with the aim of engaging governments, the general public, civil society and the private sector in the fight against marine plastic litter. Over the next five years, the campaign will address the root-cause of marine litter by targeting the production and consumption of non-recoverable and single-use plastic. By connecting individuals, civil society groups, industry and governments, UN Environment aims to transform habits, practices, standards and policies around the globe to dramatically reduce marine litter and the harm it causes. Website:

<http://www.cleans seas.org/>

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