



## PRESS RELEASE

No: 400/2016

Date: 2nd August 2016

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### **Cetacean Protocol**

The Department of the Environment and Climate Change would like to remind anglers who practice sports fishing, as well as recreational boat users, of the need to adhere to the Cetacean Protocol. The Department's Environmental Protection & Research Unit will be closely monitoring vessel activity over the coming weeks, particularly sports fishermen employing 'popping' techniques, to ensure that the requirements of the Protocol are met.

Anglers targeting Bluefin tuna are advised that casting any lines close to dolphins may cause them serious injury. Several species of dolphin use the Bay as feeding and calving grounds. Gibraltar is responsible for their protection in British Gibraltar Territorial Waters (BGTW), and they are in fact protected by law in Gibraltar and internationally under ACCOBAMS (Agreement on the Conservation of Cetaceans in the Black Sea Mediterranean Sea and Contiguous Atlantic Area). Anglers are reminded that popping in dolphin pods in a manner that can cause injury may result in their fishing licenses being revoked.

The Cetacean Protocol was introduced in 2014 as part of the Marine Protection Regulations and its objective is to protect dolphins and whales in BGTW. Vessels are required to maintain a minimum distance of 60 metres from any dolphin or whale whilst navigating in BGTW. The Protocol also establishes a 500 metre radius from the animals within which vessels must travel at a constant speed of no more than 4 knots or no greater than the slowest animal in the group.

For further information on the Cetacean Protocol or to report any breaches of the Protocol please contact the Department's Environmental Protection and Research Unit on 58009620.

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