



# DIVISION OF COASTAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

Bureau of Environmental & Coastal Quality

# BMP

# GUIDE

Best Management Practices  
for a Sustainable CNMI



**The Mariana Islands are home to many robust and biologically diverse coastal ecosystems. From ancient limestone forests to vibrant coral reefs, our natural resources are an irreplaceable legacy passed down through generations and shared with all who visit. It is everyone's responsibility to take care of our natural and cultural resources from tãno (land) to tãsi (sea).**

In this guide, you will learn Best Management Practices (BMPs) that you can observe while enjoying the rich resources of the CNMI's coastline.

What you do on our coastline can significantly impact our marine ecosystems which provide food sources, protect us from natural disasters, and boost our economy. You can help conserve our coastal resources by following some of these suggestions.

## ON THE SHORE

- **Pack your trash and pick-up litter whenever you see it.** Land-based trash can become marine debris when improperly disposed. If trash bins are unavailable, remember to bring your trash home with you.
- **Pack a zero-waste bento bag.** Practice using reusable bags, food containers, and utensils while visiting the beach to reduce your plastic consumption.
- **Don't drive on the beach!** You can disturb sea turtle nesting areas or harm shoreline vegetation.
- **Volunteer and help plant native tree species along our shorelines.** They can provide shade and help protect our shores from eroding.
- **Speak up** if you see something wrong and help educate others!

# IN WATER

- **Don't touch, break, step on, or remove coral.** Coral reefs are fragile living structures that provide wildlife habitat and play a crucial role in reducing wave energy.
- **Enjoy from afar.** Observe marine life from a distance. Don't take or remove starfish, seashells, or other wildlife from the beach.
- **Purchase eco-friendly or reef-safe sunscreen.** Some sunscreen contain chemicals, like oxybenzone, that can contribute to coral bleaching, damage coral larvae, or disrupt fish development.
- **Observe responsible fishing practices.** Over-fishing can deplete reef species and damage coral habitat.
- **Don't feed the fish!** Fish feeding can increase nutrient levels in the water which then increases the growth of harmful algae.
- **Use moorings or anchor in sandy areas while kayaking.** Never anchor on coral reefs or in seagrass beds as it can cause severe damage to wildlife habitats.

# BOATING

- **Remain at least 100 yards (300 ft.) away from all marine wildlife.** If wildlife approaches you, reduce speed and put engine on neutral to ensure safety of both parties.
- **Anchor only on sandy surfaces.** Anchoring on seagrass beds or coral reefs are particularly destructive to marine ecosystems.
- **Perform routine engine maintenance** to optimize fuel efficiency and to protect water quality. Do not conduct in-water maintenance.

# WETLANDS & STREAMS

- **Maintain a vegetated buffer.** Native plants will stabilize stream banks, filter pollutants, and improve the health of wetlands.
- **Minimize fertilizer and pesticide usage.** Excessive chemicals can make it's way into stormwater runoff and degrade water quality.
- **Avoid planting non-native species.** Most non-native species can become invasive and have potential to alter wetland functions.

# MARINE SPORTS OPERATORS

It is DCRM's goal to avoid direct and significant adverse impacts on the Commonwealth's coastal resources and, whenever possible, to mitigate foreseeable impacts. Here are some steps you can take to ensure your Marine Sport Operation is in compliance:

- All personnel must be informed of permit conditions
- Inform DCRM of any changes to your contact information
- Obtain and maintain all necessary permits
- Inform clients whether or not insurance coverage is available in times of accident
- Maintain a clean project site at all times
- Retain DCRM operations card with you during operations
- Alcohol and illegal substances are prohibited during operations
- Avoid blocking or impeding the shoreline access
- Refrain from discharging trash and/or other contaminants into coastal waters
- Avoid refueling and/or conducting in-water maintenance
- Do not park and/or drive on the beach

# See a Problem?

# REPORT IT!



Scan this QR code to visit DCRM's website and submit a reef report!

Snap a photo of the problem, map your location, and tell DCRM what you see.

**ANYTHING YOU SEE FROM THE MOUNTAIN TO  
THE SEA CAN BE A REEF REPORT!**

For more information, contact DCRM's Enforcement Team at [enforcement@dcrm.gov.mp](mailto:enforcement@dcrm.gov.mp). For immediate assistance, call the Enforcement field phone at (670) 588-2925.

# For more information on Best Management Practices (BMPs) or how to implement BMPs, contact DCRM.

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