

GUIDELINES

FOR SWIMMING, SNORKELING OR DIVING WITH DUGONGS



Please help keep Vanuatu dugongs friendly. Make sure *every* encounter with a dugong is a positive experience *for the dugong* as well as for you.

- DO NOT swim towards a dugong when you see one. Stay where you are and let the dugong come to you if it wants to.
- Swim calmly, slowly and minimise excess noise and splashing.
- There should be no more than 5 people within 10m of a dugong.
- If you see a mother with her calf keep at least 5 meters away.
- Make sure no person or watercraft gets between a mother and her calf at any point.
- Never get between a dugong and the surface of the water.
- When swimming with a dugong that has approached you, stay at least 2 metres away from the tail.
- If a dugong shows any signs of distress or disturbance stop and move at least 50 meters away.
- Do not feed dugongs and do not disturb feeding dugongs.
- Please make sure that when you are taking photos or filming the dugongs you adhere to the guideline. Protecting the dugongs and yourself from harm is more important that getting the perfect image or “selfie”.
- Touching dugongs might cause them harm and they might carry diseases that could infect you. It is best not to touch.
- Never attempt to “ride” a dugong or prod or poke a dugong.
- Do not touch calves (baby dugongs). Remember to keep at least 5 meters away from mothers and calves.
- Never try to touch a dugong on the head, flippers or tail.

Remember dugongs
are protected by law
in Vanuatu.



The full guideline and information about dugongs are available on the VESS website:
www.vanuatuconservation.org



Fisheries Department of Vanuatu