

Environmental Impacts

The proposed activities for any shore visit could include guided walking/hiking, boating, kayaking, photography and observation. Zodiac boats will be used for landing on shore and launching kayaks. Below are a list of potential impacts and their proposed mitigation.

Potential Impact: Disturbance to nesting sites causing seabirds to expend unnecessary energy or abandon their young and expose chicks to predation or lethal effects of the elements.

Proposed Mitigation:

- The cruise ship will keep the recommended distances of 5.5km away from Prince Leopold Island and 1km away from other migratory bird sanctuaries and bird colonies. Approaches closer than this will be undertaken by Zodiac boat and kayak.
- Maintain a minimum distance of at least 100 metres from all bird nesting areas when traveling by Zodiac or kayak
- Zodiac boats will travel at steady speeds when close to seabird colonies, moving parallel to the shore, rather than approaching the colony directly.
- Sharp or loud noises will be avoided, ship horns will not be sounded and engines will maintain constant noise levels
- Seabirds will not be pursued while swimming on the water surface and large concentrations will be avoided
- No waste will be dumped overboard.
- Shore landings may be necessary to launch kayaks and/or drop passengers off for walking/hiking activities. In this case, shore landings and hikes will take place away from nesting colonies.

Potential Impact: Destruction of fragile arctic vegetation from hiking activities.

Proposed Mitigation: Expedition leaders and field staff will keep passengers on the same paths for hiking activities and limit the areas of exploration to keep disturbance at a minimum.

Potential Impact: Wildlife disturbance - marine mammals (whales, seals, walrus and polar bears)

Proposed Mitigation:

- The cruise ship will not alter its course to approach marine mammals. Slowing down or stopping to view mammals already in the area would be acceptable.
- Whales will be approached from the side, never from the front or rear
- Marine mammal viewing by Zodiac boat or kayak will approach no closer than 100m and motors will be put in neutral

-Noise levels will be kept to a minimum (no horns, whistles, or racing of motors; acceleration will be done gradually)

-Changes in animal behaviour such as rapid movements or erratic swimming in the opposite direction will be considered a disturbance and boats will leave the area.

For full guidelines that Lindblad Expeditions follows, please see attached document entitled: Operational Guidelines for Approaching Marine Mammals

Potential Impact: Wildlife disturbance - terrestrial animals

Proposed Mitigation: Polar bear denning areas and caribou calving and migratory grounds will be avoided. No animals will be chased or corralled. Shore landings where polar bears are present in the vicinity so as to pose a threat to passengers will be avoided.

For full guidelines that Lindblad Expeditions follows, please see attached document entitled: Operational Guidelines for Approaching Marine Mammals

Potential Impact: Introduction of foreign material

Proposed Mitigation: Any waste generated by passengers on shore will be packed out. Waste generated by the ship will not be disposed of in or near any protected area and will disposal will take place following the guidelines listed below.