



## **PAPUA NEW GUINEA DIVERS ASSOCIATION ENVIRONMENTAL CODE OF ETHICS**

At a time when coral reefs worldwide are under threat, the PNGDA recognizes the exceptional quality and condition of Papua New Guinea's natural marine resources and their importance for both village life and the nation, and pledges that the Association will do everything in its power to ensure these resources, including the sea bed, reefs, wrecks and the marine life that lives on them and in the waters surrounding them, will be conserved.

Members of the Papua New Guinea Divers Association will:

Promote the fact that the economic and social benefits of dive tourism are greater than those achieved by unsustainable commercial harvesting of the coral reef resources.

Ensure that divers in their care are made aware of the importance of careful dive practices to avoid damage to, and harassment of marine life.

Ensure that divers in their care are advised to assist each other to follow careful dive practices. The use of the 'V' signal is recommended so that divers can indicate to each other that they are damaging or harassing the marine life.

Allow dive sites showing any signs of damage, from whatever cause, to be allowed time to recover before divers revisit the site, rotation of dive sites is encouraged.

Promote the use of moorings and/or designated anchoring sites on sand and rubble patches adjacent to the diving area, for regularly dived sites.

Recognize the traditional rights of villagers and not engage in any fishing or collecting activities on dive sites except for approved scientific purposes and with approval from the local villagers.

Recognize and respect members' experience in their local areas, and liaise with these operators regarding use of sites with regard to conservation.

Recognize the importance of consulting with village people and promote education in the conservation of the local marine resources, the activities of tourist divers, and the benefits that they may gain through tourists visiting the area.

Encourage government bodies to recognize areas of special importance to the dive tourism industry with a view to their conservation.

Consult with and provide support for the appropriate government agencies and industry members to ensure ecologically sound industry growth. In particular, the Association wishes to ensure that new locations are used for growth to avoid over-use and degradation of dive sites, as has occurred in other parts of the world.

Assist in the establishment of a database of marine life in Papua New Guinea and notify the PNGDA if significant changes in marine life are observed in their areas, particularly those that are damaging the eco-system.