



Government of Kiribati

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PHOENIX ISLANDS PROTECTED AREA
A UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE SITE

PIPA VISITOR'S GUIDELINES

INTRODUCTION - The Phoenix Islands Protected Area (PIPA) was created for the preservation of its pristine natural resources. The marine environment, especially coral reefs, is basically untouched by man. On land, the plant life includes many native species. Also, the Phoenix Islands provide a haven for sea birds that transmigrate the Pacific. These are especially critical for those bird species that nest here. There are several endangered species that live within the safety of PIPA. These include marine turtles, coconut crabs, and various species of birds. In addition, PIPA provides a bio-reserve for important medicinal plants that are now rare in the Gilbert Islands.

CONSERVATION - At present the Phoenix Islands are in excellent state of conservation due to their remoteness and isolation. Taken as a whole the marine values of the Phoenix Islands are significant on an international scale. There are few oceanic atolls in the world that can be observed in a virtually unfished state. The Phoenix Islands offers us this precious opportunity.

BIO-DIVERSITY - Biodiversity refers to the variability among living organisms from all sources including, inter alia, terrestrial, marine and other aquatic ecosystems and the ecological complexes of which they are part; this includes diversity within species, between species and of ecosystems. PIPA marine habitats are especially diverse in corals and fish species.

THREATENED OR ENDANGERED SPECIES - Threatened species are species that face increased risk of extinction. Endangered species are species which are at eminent risk of extinction. There are several species of both fish and birds that are threatened and endangered. These include many whale and turtle species, as well as bird species, such as the Phoenix petrel. With PIPA, threatened and endangered species have a safe haven to increase population sizes. As their populations grow, their status as threatened or endangered can be adjusted.

BIO-RESERVE - The PIPA is home to several endemic species of plants and animals. In addition, there are several species of medicinal plants there. These medicinal plants are becoming rare in the Gilbert Islands. The PIPA is providing a natural reserve or bank for these important genetic materials. Therefore, biosecurity is enhanced by PIPA.

SUMMARY OF RULES AND REGULATIONS

Zoning

1. In the area within 12 nautical miles around each of the Phoenix Islands, except Abariringa, all fishing is banned, except for catch and release of bonefish by rod and reel. However, a visitor should obtain a permit to conduct this type of activity. .
2. The area between 12 nautical miles and the outer boundary of the PIPA is designated a no-take zone. All fishing is banned.

3. The area within 12 nautical miles of any of the eight Phoenix Islands and Winslow and Carondelet reefs are designed areas to avoid. Vessels that are solely transiting the PIPA area are to avoid these areas, However, a visitor can obtain a permit for recreational activities.
4. The area within 12 nautical miles of any of the eight Phoenix Islands are designed no discharge of ballast or sewage water, or rubbish

Living and non-living resources

1. No activity shall take place within the PIPA that harms or creates the risk of harm to any organism or the ecosystem within the protected area, except as is consistent with an environmental license as specified in the Environment (Amendment) Act 2007, Section 31.
2. No activity is permitted within the PIPA that creates the risk of harm or damage to any archaeological artefact.
3. No collection or harvest of living or non-living resources is permitted without a permit.
4. Vessels and individuals are not allowed to approach within 50 m of any species of whale in the PIPA. If they observe a whale within 50 m, the vessel or individual must back off to at least 50 m away.
5. In order to minimize disturbance of bird populations, aircraft are not allowed within 460 m (1,500 ft) elevation or 1,000 m laterally of any island in the Phoenix Islands, except in designated areas. Helicopter landings and take-offs should occur only during day light hours and only at the edge of an island, with approach from sea and landing site at least 300 m from any surface-nesting seabirds. Special permission is required for landing any aircraft in the PIPA, with the exception of the airfield at Abariringa (Kanton).

Visitors

1. Kiribati immigration requirements apply to all visitors to the PIPA
2. PIPA visitors must comply with the PIPA requirement for visitor permits.
3. PIPA visitors must comply with surveillance requirements (reporting of vessels including yachts sighted in PIPA fishing. Reporting to be made to PIPA Office (email:tukabuttravel@yahoo.com). It is not the responsibility of the visitor to apprehend
4. PIPA visitors must pay a fee when engaged in recreational activities in accordance with PIPA Permit Fees tariff prevailing from time to time. Permit can only be issued upon payment of the prescribed fees.

VISITOR DO'S

When visiting the Phoenix Islands, please take special care of our natural resources.

1. Please enjoy the wildlife and marine species in this globally important marine protected area.
2. Please take the time to learn about the importance of the Phoenix Islands for conservation, biodiversity, threatened or endangered species, and its role as a bio-reserve.
3. Please obtain the appropriate permit for the activities you plan in the PIPA (visitor, diving, and fishing permit).
4. If you fish, please ensure that you follow the PIPA fishing regulations.
5. Please pick up your trash and deposit it in an appropriate receptacle.
6. If you operate any type of aircraft, please take extra care not to interfere or harm local bird populations. Please follow the PIPA aircraft operations rules and regulations.
7. If you operate a vessel, please ensure that you follow the PIPA vessel rules and regulations.

VISITOR DON'TS

1. Please do not litter. Litter can damage the delicate eco-system and kill marine life such as turtles.
2. Please do not touch, damage, harm, harvest or interfere with wildlife or marine species as well as archaeological sites.
3. Please do not collect souvenirs such as shells, pieces of coral, or historic artifacts.
4. Please do not approach within 50 m of any species of whale in the PIPA area. If whales are observed within 50 m, please back away.

VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION IN THE PIPA MONITORING PROGRAMME.

- Observation on corals (for signs of bleaching – need to develop appropriate questionnaire)
- Observation on important marine species (humphead wrasse, turtles, sharks – need to develop appropriate questionnaire)
- Observation on terrestrial species (coconut crabs, rats, cats, - need to develop appropriate questionnaire)

Finally, please help us protect the PIPA by reporting any sightings of individuals or vessels within the PIPA area or of any unusual activities within the PIPA area. PIPA is the largest marine protected area in the world. YOUR CARE AND SUPPORT ARE CRITICAL TO THE SUCCESS OF PIPA.

KIRIBATI OBSERVER

As part of the permit conditions, the operator will meet the return airfare and associated costs for the placement of a Kiribati observer on the boat.

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