Industry Developments, opportunities & Challenges

Introduction by the Association of Arctic Expedition Cruise Operators

Ilja Leo Lang, AECO Office Manager, Danmark
- Member organization founded in 2003 with the overall goal to:
  - ensure environmentally friendly, responsible and safe cruise tourism in the Arctic, and
  - advocate for the expedition cruise industry, and AECO’s members interests
- AECO currently have 46 members. 26 of which operate approximately 32 expedition cruise vessels all over the Arctic
AECO uses the same definition of the Arctic as the IMO, i.e.:

- 60 degree north, with exceptions

AECO’s guidelines applies in all areas

- AECO’s core areas are Svalbard, Jan Mayen, Greenland, Canada and the national park “Russian Arctic” (Franz Josef Land and northern Novaya Zemlya)
Cruise pattern

- Expedition cruise traffic
- Conventional cruise traffic
Cruise passengers
Svalbard, Greenland, Franz Josef Land, Canada
Conventional cruise vessels and expedition cruise vessels
Numbers include all commercial cruise traffic; passengers on small, medium and large conventional cruise vessels as well as passengers on small expedition cruise vessels.

**Sources:** Governor of Svalbard and Statistics Greenland. Numbers for Canada is an Estimate mad by researchers from University of Ottawa and Lakehaed University. Numbers from Franz Josef Land has been provide by Russian Arctic.
# Arctic cruise tourism risks

## Environment
- Oil spill
- Endangering wildlife
- Ruined vegetation (paths, marks)
- Cultural remains (wear & tear, stealing)
- Signs & markings
- Transport of non-native species
- Garbage / pollution

## Social/Cultural
- Strains on small communities
- Disrespect
- Prejudices (both ways)
- Export of banned substances
- Traditions / traditional activities at risk
- Ignorance in regard to the importance of providing local benefits

## Safety
- Remoteness
- Cold temperatures and water
- Ice
- Limited charts
- Limited search and rescue facilities
- Communication limitations
- Weather- and ice predictability limitations
Measures, Projects & Strategies

- AECO Guidelines
- AECO’s Cruise database
- Vessel tracking
- Crowd sourcing
- Clean Up Svalbard

- SAR projects
- Marine Mammal Sighting project
- Voyage Risk Assessment Tool
- Conferences
AECO guidelines

Operational guidelines
AECO’s comprehensive guidelines for cruise operators

Visitors guidelines
AECO’s guidelines for visitors to the Arctic
New animation bit.ly/1G2btW6

Wildlife guidelines
Measures to prevent disturbance of wildlife

Biosecurity guidelines
Measures to prevent introduction of alien species

Site specific guidelines
20 different site specific guidelines for Svalbard
AECO’s Cruise Database

PURPOSE

- Coordination of operations
- Sustainability
- Safety
- Generation of statistics

Alternative to other management tools
Vessel Tracking
& zodiac tracking (possibility)
Crowd sourcing of depth soundings

— Olex based solution to ‘crowd sourcing’ of historical depth soundings
Clean Up Svalbard

- Cruise industry initiative
- Collection of sea-transported garbage
- 10 years experience – hundred tons of waste
- Cooperation with the Governor of Svalbard
SAR Projects

- Arctic Zephyr table-top 2014
- Arctic Security Forces Roundtable 2015
- Sharing contingency plans with JRCC
Marine Mammal Sighting Project
Voyage Risk Assessment Tool

1. Regions
2. Time of the season
3. Landing Sites, ratings
4. Tide, Neap and Spring
5. Current expected
6. Distances to SAR facilities, to other ships
7. Ice cover and type of ice
8. Wind speed
9. Sea Conditions
10. Visibility
11. Air temperature
12. Miscellaneous factors – internal/vessel issues
AECO events, conferences & training

— Annual Arctic cruise conference
— Annual meeting (members and special invitees only)
— Industry-research workshops

— Expedition leader Conference
— Member staff seminars
— Expedition leader conferences
Thank you!