



## **Earthwatch Scientific SCUBA Diving Standards**

Earthwatch diving policy governs the diving of all project staff, PIs, and participants.

- No diving below 20 meters/65 ft during the project. No exceptions are given. This includes diving on project recreational days. Participants are advised to do their deeper diving before or after their EW team.
- Participants will have a check-out dive by the project Divemaster prior to diving. Their equipment will be checked for proper fit and function and basic skills should be reviewed. This check out dive should be in a protected, shallow location. The Divemaster or PI have the right to restrict or modify a participant's activities based upon their assessment of a participant's abilities or require they rent appropriate gear at the participants' expense.
- The decision to dive is that of the diver. A diver may refuse to dive, without fear of penalty, whenever he/she feels it is unsafe for them to make the dive.
- The ultimate responsibility for safety rests with the individual diver. It is the diver's responsibility and duty to refuse to dive if, in his/her judgment, conditions are unsafe or unfavorable, or if he/she would be violating the precepts of his/her training or any part of this policy.
- No solo diving. All divers must work in assigned buddy pairs on every dive. Buddy pairs must stay in visual contact with each other. Buddy pairs must descend and ascend at the same times, no one returns to the boat alone.
- If only one of the buddy pair has a computer then the pair must both dive to the tables. If both using computers then the most conservative should be followed.
- No more than 4 dives per day (including a night dive) may be done, regardless of length, and no more than 4 days of diving may be done in a row before a dry day must be taken.

- To participate in an EW Diving Project, a person must:
  - Provide proof of diving certification and DAN (or equivalent) insurance.
  - Meet the minimum dive certification level of the project. The minimum certification for any diver on an Earthwatch project is NAUI Scuba Diver or PADI or SSI Open Water Diver or equivalent.
  - Have logged at least 10 dives post certification.
  - Have completed at least 1 dive within 1 year prior to the project, or complete a refresher course or skills check-out from a certifying agency or instructor. Divers with 100+ logged dives may have a skills check-out, divers with under 100 dives must take a refresher course.
  - Have good buoyancy control and be completely comfortable underwater.
  - Send Earthwatch the most recent 3-5 dives from their dive log (NOT the entire log), and bring the log to the field for the project Divemaster to check.
  - Undergo a medical exam and have the EW SCUBA medical form signed by a diving doctor prior to the project.
  - Undergo a check-out dive by the DM of the project who will have the right to modify their activities if needed.
  - Bring own mask, snorkel, fins, BC (buoyancy compensator: an inflatable vest that helps regulate their depth in the water), weight belt (not weights), wetsuit/skin, regulator, computer, booties, light, etc.
  - Divers do not need to bring tanks/air. No need to bring a weight belt if dive suit had pockets in it for weights.
  - Have their regulator serviced within 1 year prior to the team start date, and dive with that equipment immediately prior to arriving on the project in order to test its use.
  - State in writing that he/she agrees to adhere to EW diving policies.
  - State in writing that he/she understand the inherent risks of scuba diving and agree to release EW from liability in case of a diving accident.