

# WHALE WATCHING

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THE ANIMAL FUND



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- ECONOMIC VALUE
- FACTS ON WHALE WATCHING
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- WHALE WATCHING CERTIFICATE
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# WHALES AND THEIR ROLES...

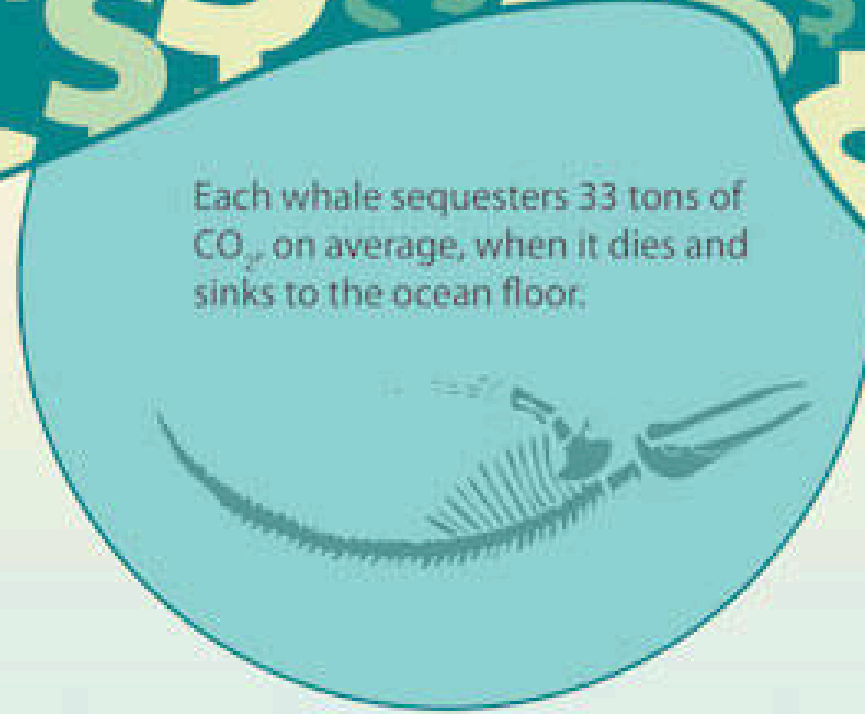
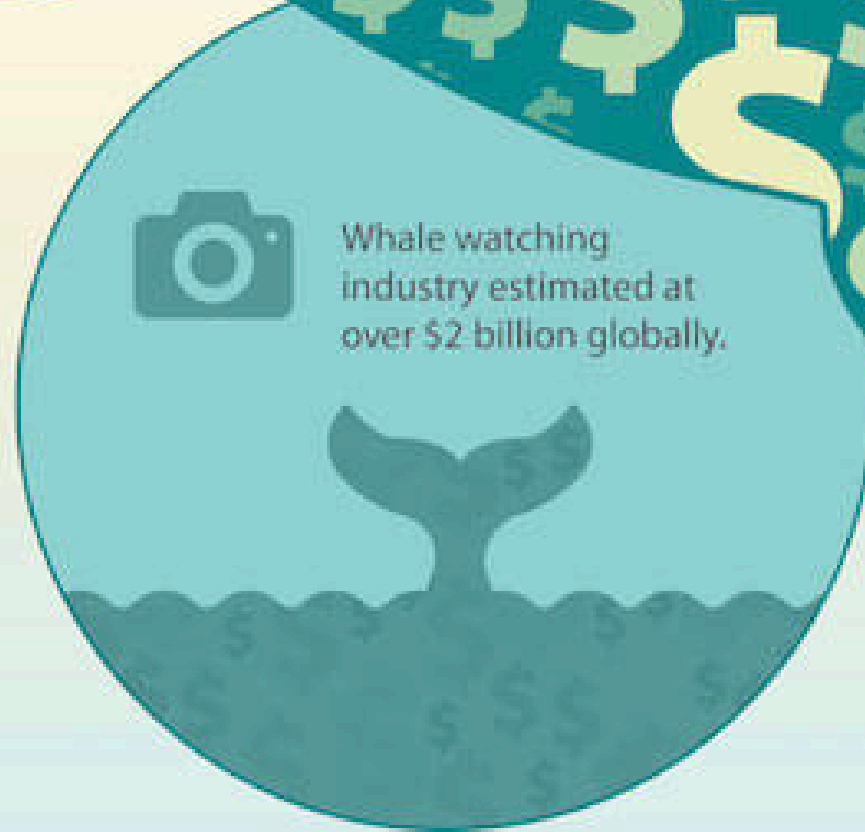
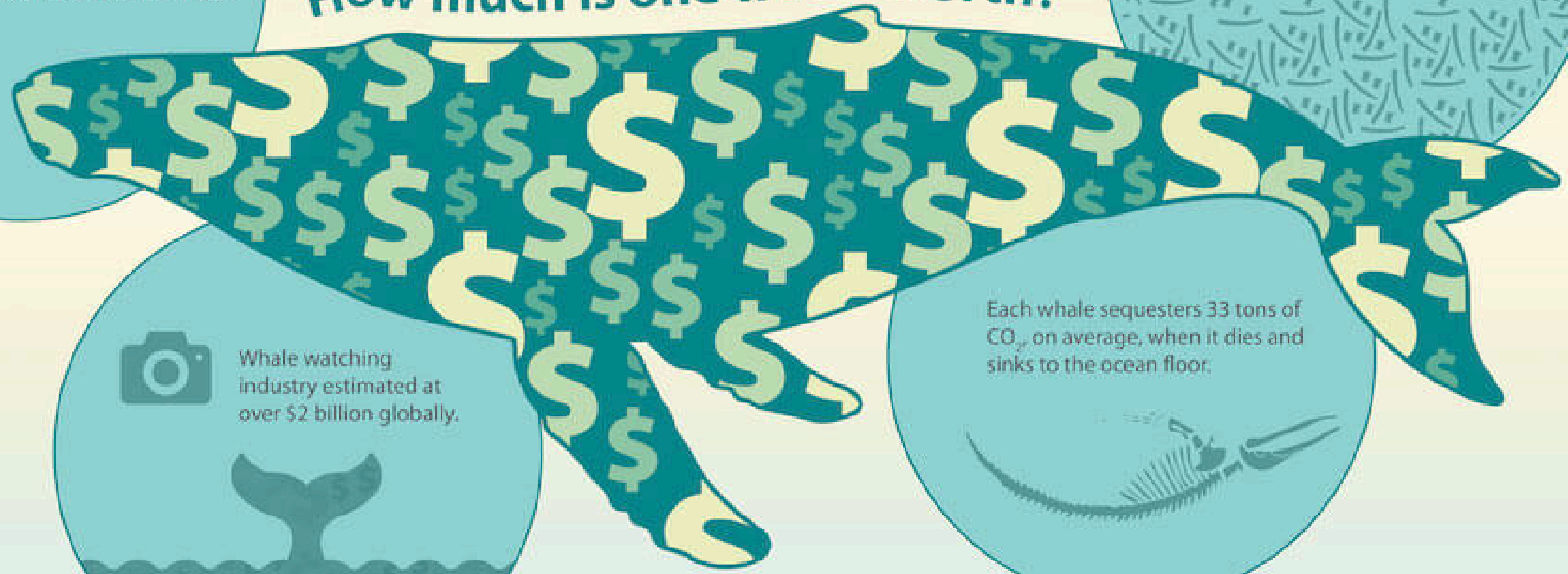
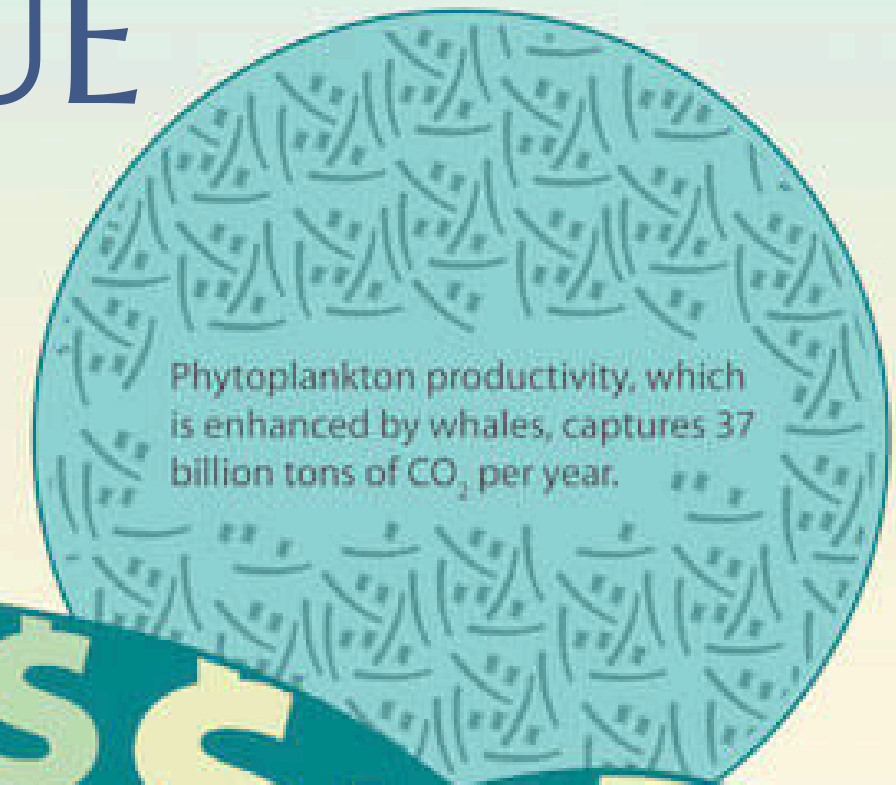
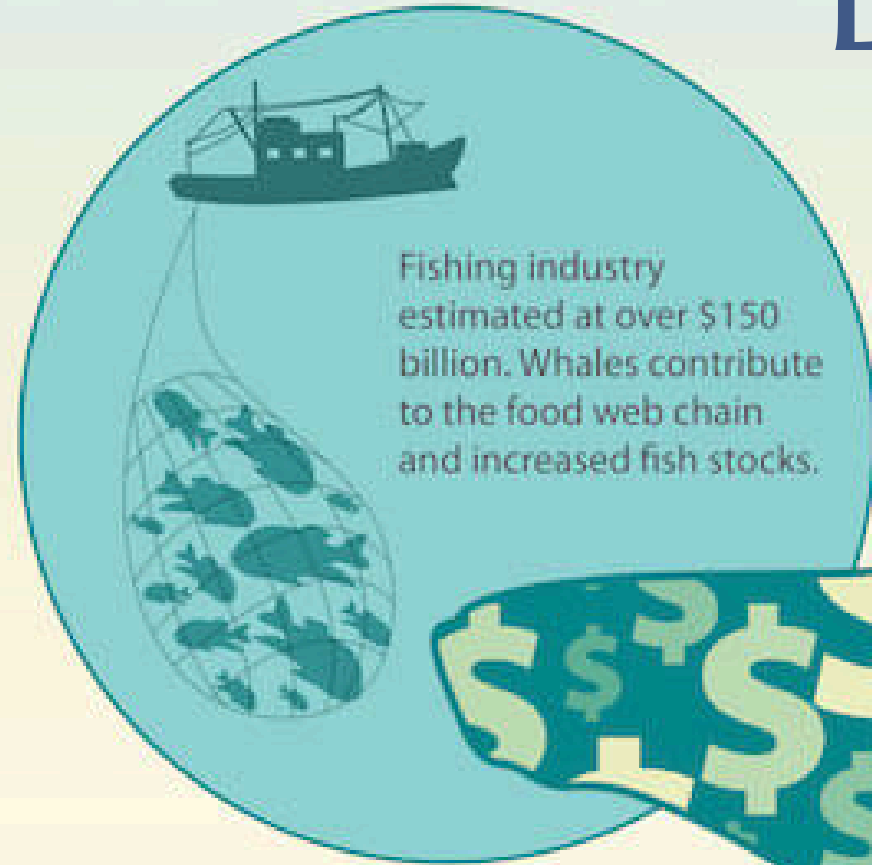


# WHY MUST WE PROTECT WHALES?

- Whales play a crucial role in combating climate change. When they die, their bodies sink to the ocean floor, creating a “whale fall” that transports stored carbon to the deep sea. This process not only supports deep-sea ecosystems but also helps sequester carbon in ocean sediments.
- Additionally, whales act as ecosystem engineers, contributing to the stability of the marine food web. A single blue whale can consume up to 40 million krill daily—around 8,000 pounds—helping to regulate oceanic balance and sustain marine biodiversity.

# ECONOMIC VALUE

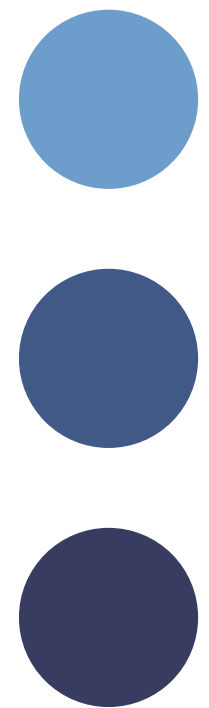
How much is one whale worth?

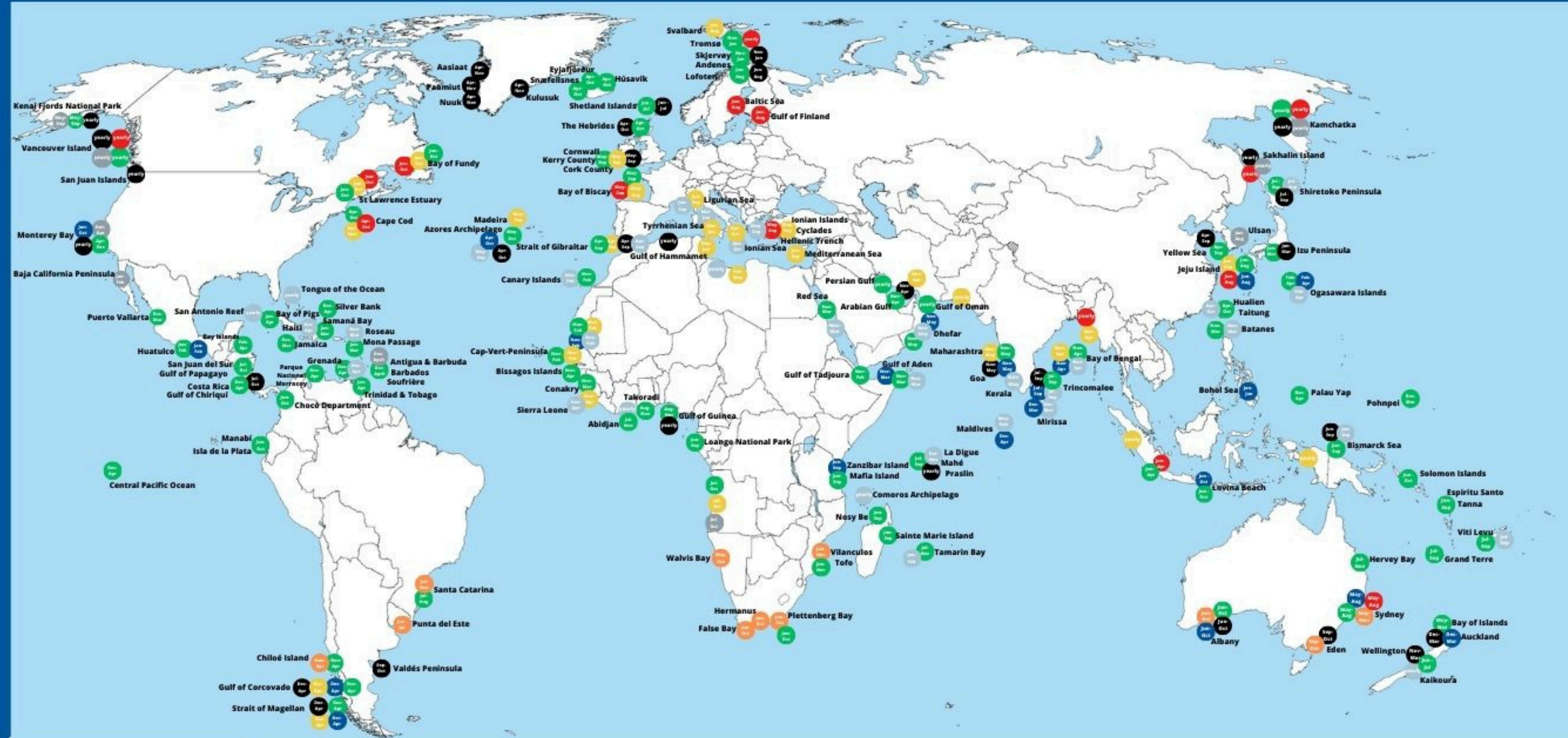




# FACTS ON WHALE WATCHING

- Terms such as 'ecotours' and 'ecotourism' are often used by the whale watching industry to lure in costumers at the cost of marine life safety.
- The Whale Watching industry is extremely profitable, with an international industry valued at 2 to 3 billion dollars.
- More than 14 million people around the world go whale watching every year.





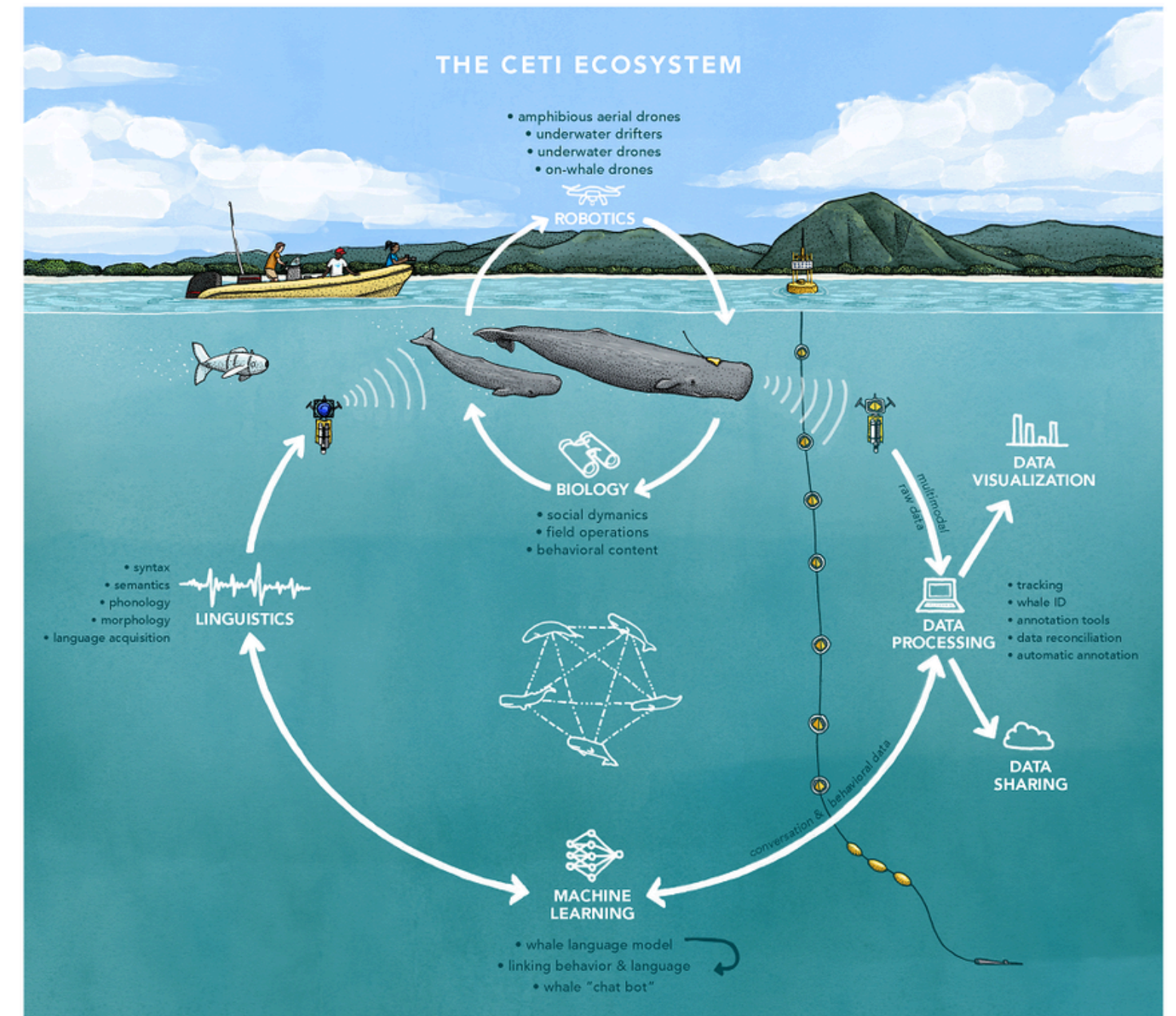
- *Humpback whale*
- *Orca whale*
- *Minke whale*
- *Southern Right whale*
- *Sperm whale*
- *Gray whale*
- *Blue whale*
- *Fin whale*

**WHALE spotting !**  
Find out where and when

# UNDERSTANDING THE SCIENCE

## DOCUMENTED BEHAVIORAL CHANGE

- Several studies have documented the effect of noise from boats effecting the swimming speed of different whale species. The severity of the phenomena increases with proximity and concentration of boats in the immediate area.
- Like other mammals, whales exhibit strong stress responses. The presence of boats elevates their stress levels, leading to increased heart rates, higher blood pressure, and a rise in stress hormones.



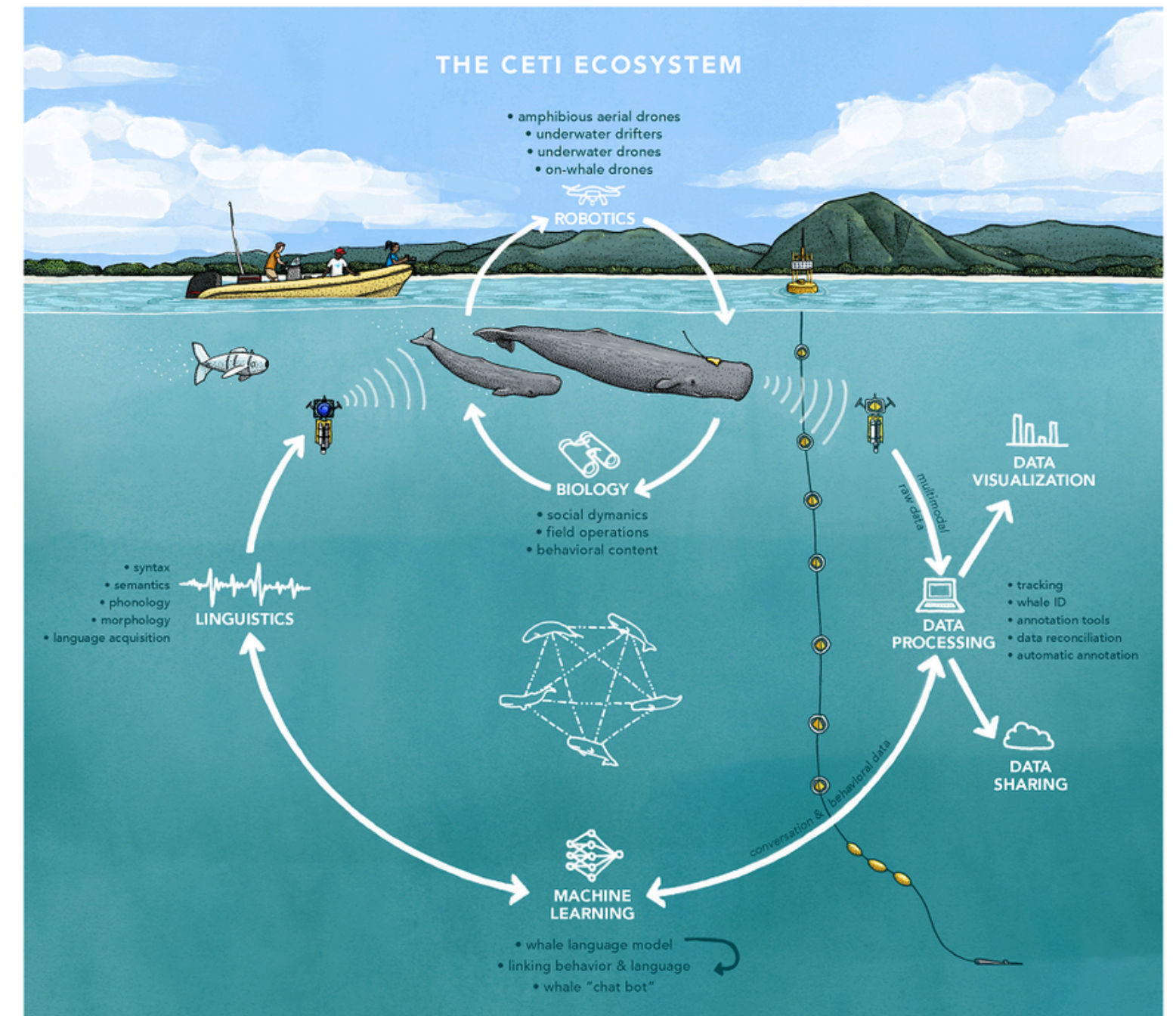


# UNDERSTANDING THE SCIENCE



## COMMUNICATION CHANNELS

- Unlike humans, whales rely more on hearing than sight, making their communication channels essential. However, prolonged exposure to overlapping noise from multiple boats, a growing issue, can lead to permanent hearing damage.
- This presents a serious threat to a species that depends on sound and echolocation for feeding and social interactions.



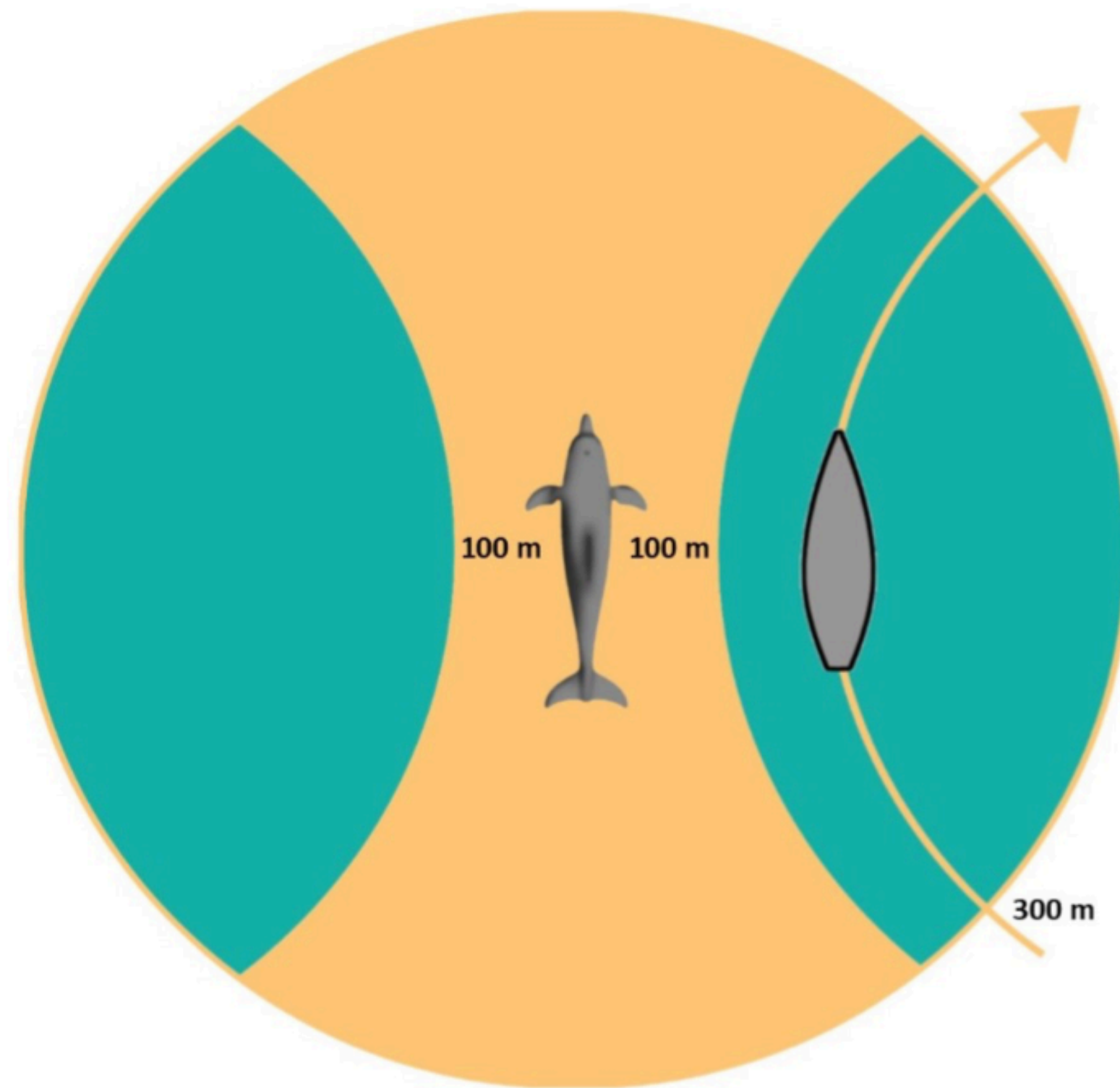
# WHALE WATCHING CERTIFICATES: WHAT TO LOOK FOR?

- Sources that outlines good code of conduct for viewing different marine wild life from boats, planes, and on land
  - NOAA's Marine Life Viewing Guidelines
  - International Whaling Commission Handbook
- Notable Certifications
  - World Cetacean Alliance (WCA) Certification
  - The High Quality Whale Watching Certificate by the Agreement on the Conservation of the Black Sea, Mediterranean Sea and contiguous Atlantic area (ACCOBAMS)





## ***GOOD CODE OF CONDUCT***



Keep a slow pace and calm and constant progress from the moment cetaceans are spotted, particularly within the 300 m zone.

No approach nearer than 100 m for any cetacean.

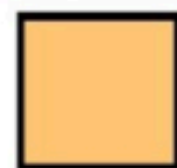
Only one boat within the 300 m zone.

The observation time is limited to 30 min or to 15 min if other boats are waiting.

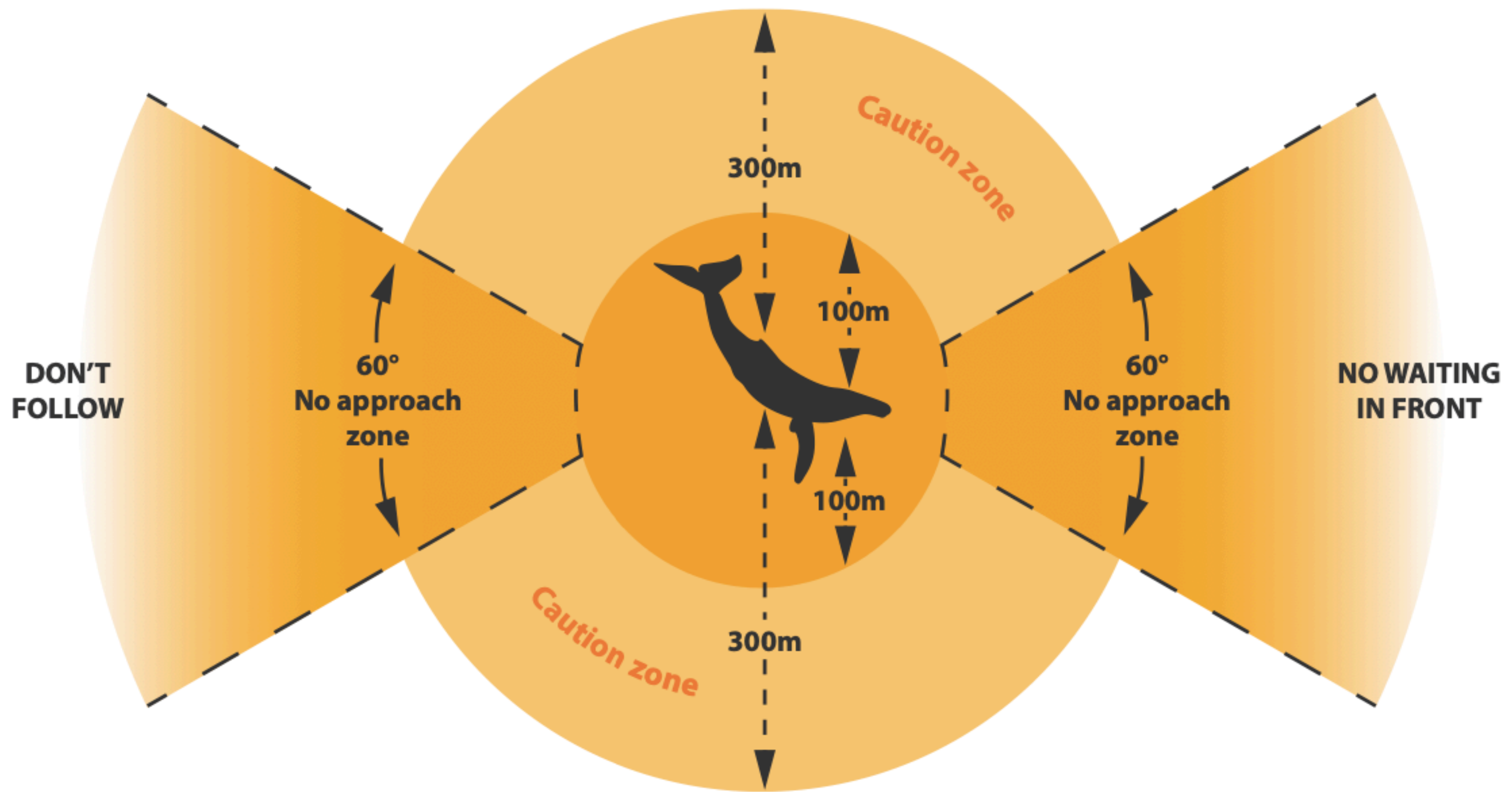
Never try to touch, feed or swim with a cetacean.



Area of vigilance



Forbidden area



# SOLUTIONS AND ACTIONS





# CHOOSING CERTIFIED AND ECO-FRIENDLY OPERATORS

- Tourists must opt for companies with environmental certifications (e.g., Azores labels).
- Certifications ensure minimum viewing distances, the presence of marine biologists, and the use of hybrid-electric boats.
- Supporting responsible operators reduces stress for whales and promotes sustainable tourism.



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# STRONGER REGULATIONS AND CONSERVATION COMMITMENTS

- Many operators prioritize profits, causing overcrowding, noise pollution, and harassment of cetaceans.
- Stricter conditions can be enforced through licensing systems with mandatory ecological training and regular audits.
- Incentives like tax breaks and subsidies for eco-friendly boats can promote ethical practices.

Sustainable whale-watching benefits both marine life and local communities by ensuring long-term tourism income.



# RESPONSIBILITY OF TOURISM INDUSTRY STAKEHOLDERS

- Travel agencies, cruise lines, and booking platforms influence consumer choices and must highlight eco-certified operators.
- Public accountability campaigns can pressure companies to avoid unethical partnerships.
- Visible certification badges on platforms can help tourists choose sustainable options.
- Governments must adopt internationally recommended policies (e.g., IWC guidelines) through petitions and NGO collaborations.





# THE ROLE OF RESEARCH AND EDUCATION

- Non-invasive technologies (drones, acoustic tagging) allow scientists to monitor whale stress without disturbance. Scientific data can help adjust management policies, such as limiting boat numbers and observation times.
- Education is the key: Marine Conservation must be included in school curriculums. Awareness campaigns, documentaries, interactive exhibitions, and community events can spread knowledge about ethical whale-watching.



EVERY EFFORT  
COUNTS, AND  
TOGETHER, WE  
CAN ENSURE A  
HEALTHY OCEAN  
FOR FUTURE  
GENERATIONS.



# THANK YOU

Let Us Unite For Protecting Our Ocean!

