

New regulations for Svalbard 2025**3 June 2024**

We would like to let our guests know about some changes to wildlife viewing in Svalbard. For the last two years (2023 and 2024) the Norwegian Government has been discussing new regulations for tourism and its effects on the wildlife in Svalbard.

These regulations, released on 25th May 2024 which take effect as of 1 January 2025 have been put into place for the preservation of Svalbard's fauna and flora and affects our expedition as follows:

- Withing the jurisdiction of Svalbard, all vessels will only be able to view polar bears from 500m.
Zodiacs will no longer be able to approach polar bears for close-up photography.
Should a polar bear approach a Zodiac, the Zodiac will slowly need to move away.
The vessel can no longer anchor in the fjord ice as it will not be able to move away safely and quickly enough if a polar bear approaches.
- A maximum speed of 5 knots and distance of 300m must be kept by the vessel when walruses are on land and 5 knots and 150 m by the Zodiac.
- Drones are banned in Svalbard National Parks however drones will still be able to fly in unrestricted areas.
- There will only be 43 landing sites for vessels within the National Parks.

How will C4 operate, given these restrictions:

- With this being our 9th expedition to Svalbard, we have a good amount of experience of how to operate on the islands. The vessel we are using, has been sailing in these waters for over 25 years and they too, understand how to operate. We will make some adjustment to the operations to ensure our guests have an excellent time.
- There is a lot of resistance by the local operators to these restrictions and there is a strong lobby to reduce the limitations. This may affect the viewing distances positively.
- Outside of the 12 nautical mile range – 2 hours sailing- of Svalbard, these limits do not apply. We plan to spend a few days in the pack ice – the real home of the polar bear and spend time looking for and finding polar bears. We will do this in a responsible manner and as not to affect the bears in any biased way possible- ensuring a great experience for everyone.
- The Landing restriction will not affect us greatly- as we do most activities from Zodiacs.

We are confident that, using our experience, these above workarounds and good planning, we will deliver an exceptional experience for all our guests. I want to reiterate that the best polar bear experiences are out on the pack ice – which is where we will spend a good amount of time. Additionally, Svalbard is a lot more about the bears only. We have selected early July to maximize the wildlife spectacle that will be on offer in the form of multitudes of birdlife, walruses, foxes, reindeer and of course, the incredible Svalbard wildlife.

Sincerely,
Shem Compion