***SNAPPERS INC***

***CODE OF CONDUCT 2019***

 Most underwater photographers wish to protect the environment in which they take their photos and avoid stressing marine creatures when they are taking their images. This is good for the

environment and leads to better photographs.

This code sets out ***good practices for anyone who dives and/or takes photos underwater.***

* Photographers should carefully explore the area in which they are diving and find subjects that are accessible, without threat to themselves or the environment and the organisms.

 ***No-one should attempt to take photos underwater until they are a competent diver***.

* Novice divers thrashing about with hands & fins while conscious only of the image in their viewfinder can damage fragile systems.
* Every diver, including photographers, should ***ensure all equipment is closely secured*** (gauges, regulators, torches & other equipment) so they do not trail causing damage to the environment.
* Underwater photographers should possess ***good buoyancy control skills*** to avoid damaging the fragile marine environment & its creatures. Even experienced divers & those modelling for photographers should ensure that careless or excessive fin strokes & arm movements do not damage coral or smother it in clouds of sand.
* Clownfish & many other marine animals are popular subjects but some become highly stressed when a photographer moves in to take a photo. Care should be taken to avoid stressing a subject. Be aware that fish need space and that flash photography may injury a subject.

***If a subject exhibits*** ***behaviour that indicates there is or will be stress in the subject or their environment, move on.***

* ***Night diving*** requires exceptional care because it is more difficult to be aware of your surroundings. Strong torch beams or lights can dazzle fish & cause them to harm themselves or be targeted by a predator. Others are confused & disturbed if torch beams or lights are pointed directly at them. Be prepared to keep bright lights off subjects that exhibit stressed behaviour, use ***only the edge of the beam to minimise disturbance***.
* The image in the viewfinder can be very compelling. ***Photographers should remain conscious of their position and of the marine life around them at all times.***
* Divers & photographers should never kill marine life to attract other life or to create a photographic opportunity, such as feeding sea urchins to Blue Groper. ***Creatures should never be handled or irritated to create a reaction.*** Queuing to photograph a rare subject, should be avoided.
* The number of ***shots taken by an individual subject should be kept to a minimum to ensure the safety of the marine subject.***