



# Building and operating biodiversity-friendly hotels



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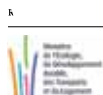
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# Biodiversity and hotels

Integrating biodiversity considerations in planning and operational decisions for hotel and resort is important not only for the continued viability and conservation of the ecosystems, but also for the long-term financial success of the hotels and resorts. The tourism industry, including the hospitality sector, depends strongly on healthy ecosystems, because those ecosystems – and the wildlife, habitats, landscapes and natural attractions that comprise them – are often the very thing that draws tourists to the destination in the first place.

Choices about the materials that will be used to construct the hotel, where those materials will come from and the total physical footprint of the hotel will also influence how significant its impacts will be in the operational stage.

- At the **construction stage**, impact is determined by the size and location of the area cleared for development and where construction activities are taking place; the choice of construction methods; the sources and amount and type of materials, water and energy used to build the hotel; the location of temporary camps for construction workers; inadequate storage facilities for construction materials; the amount of construction waste that has to be disposed of; and other types of damage, such as surface soil erosion or compaction caused by construction activities or disruption of natural water flows and drainage patterns.
- In the **operational stage**, a hotel's impact comes mainly from the energy, water, food and other resources that are consumed in running the hotel; by the solid and liquid wastes it produces; by the way its grounds are managed and by the direct impacts of its guests. In addition, regular renovation and replacement of furniture, appliances and facilities can cause impacts through purchasing choices and increased waste generation. Using energy and water more efficiently; using organic and sustainably produced food; reducing, treating and disposing of waste appropriately; making sustainable purchasing decisions and managing gardens with natural-style plantings can all help a hotel to reduce its adverse impacts on biodiversity. Similarly, a hotel's relationship with host communities not only affects the sustainable operations of the hotel but also the use of environmental resources by communities themselves.
- At the **closure stage**, a hotel's impacts come from the disposal of materials removed from the hotel to refurbish it, convert it for other uses, or demolish it, and from the work involved in these activities. It may be possible to reuse and recycle some materials, but there may also be some toxic materials, particularly from older buildings, which will require careful handling and management. A responsible hotel operator should also foresee supporting activities of ecological restoration as required.

To specifically address the biodiversity risks associated with the development and operations of hotels and resorts, IUCN has developed the *Biodiversity Principles for siting and design of hotels and resorts* and *guidelines for the sustainable use of biological resources in hotels and resorts*.

# ■ Biodiversity Principles for siting and design of hotels and resorts

IUCN has developed a set of five Biodiversity Principles to promote the integration of biodiversity considerations into decision making on the planning, siting and design of hotels and resorts. These Principles have been developed based on the outcomes of an analysis conducted by IUCN of the current threats to biodiversity in the Caribbean linked to the siting and design of hotels and other vacation accommodation. The study generated evidence of biodiversity impacts resulting from the siting and design of hotels and at the same time identified examples of positive relationships (*Impacts of hotel siting and design on biodiversity in the insular Caribbean: A situation analysis*, IUCN, 2011, not in print).



Siting and Design  
of Hotels and Resorts

Principles and Case Studies for Biodiversity Conservation



The Biodiversity Principles for siting and design of hotels and resorts focus on how biodiversity and associated social impacts can be better addressed in hotel and resort development. The Principles seek to provide guidance in the planning and construction stages of the hotel life cycle. They are targeted at all relevant stakeholders, including planning authorities, tourism development agencies, developers, investors, hotel managers and management companies, project managers and consultants, architects and construction firms. It is also expected that these Principles will be integrated into relevant policy and planning processes, including Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) procedures, National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAP), national and local management plans, tourism development plans, and the environmental management strategies of hotel corporations and developers.





*Siting and Design of Hotels and Resorts: Principles and Case Studies for Biodiversity Conservation*, including the full text of the Principles and the Case Studies, is available from [www.iucn.org/publications](http://www.iucn.org/publications).

Thirteen case studies have been developed to illustrate how these Principles can be implemented.

**Principle 1:**

- Q-Station, Australia
- Tres Rios, Mexico
- Chumbe Island, Tanzania

**Principle 2:**

- North Island, Seychelles
- Isla Palenque, Panama
- Fairmont Mayakoba, Mexico

**Principle 3:**

- Bay of Fires, Australia
- Soneva Fushi, Maldives
- Maho Bay and Concordia, U.S. Virgin Islands

**Principle 4:**

- Misool Eco Resort, Indonesia
- Campi ya Kanzi, Kenya

**Principle 5:**

- El Nido and Taytay, Philippines
- Northeast Brazil, Brazil



# Integrating biodiversity into





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*The Biodiversity Principles for siting and design of hotels and resorts.* Gillian Cooper and Yves Renard, Green Park Consultants GPC Ltd.

*Case studies illustrating the Biodiversity Principles.* Jackie and Richard Denman, The Tourism Company

*Biodiversity: My Hotel in Action – A guide to sustainable use of biological resources in the Caribbean.* Richard Tapper, Environment Business & Development Group; Frits Hesselink, HECT Consultancy; Ghislain Dubois and Marie Lootvoet, TEC – Tourisme Transports Territoires Environnement Conseil; Sue Wells, Ed Parnell and Martin Jenkins – TRAFFIC consultants; Paola Mosig, Adrian Reuter and Ulrich Malessa – TRAFFIC North America

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