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Biodiversity: My hotel in action

A guide to sustainable use of biological resources

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The development of this guide was made possible thanks to the contributions of many committed individuals

Andrew Hurd, IUCN Marine Programme

Sandrine Porteron, Global Marketing, Ibis

Christophe Quevremont, Accor Group Procurement Department

Mohammad Rafiq, IUCN Business and Biodiversity Programme

Pedro Rosabal, IUCN Protected Areas Programme

Jerome Sanchez, Etap Hotel Aubervilliers

Juergen E. Seidel, Six Senses Resorts & Spas

Deidre Shurland, Caribbean Alliance for Sustainable Tourism (CAST)

François Simard, IUCN Mediterranean Programme

Anna Spencely, Species Survival Commission

Jamie Sweeting, Royal Caribbean Cruises, Ltd.

Richard Thomas, TRAFFIC

Judith Voermans, IUCN Netherlands Committee

Paul Warmeant, Integrated Development Solutions

The Testimonials:

Eduardo Bagnoli, Owner, Manary Praia Hotel

Daniel Cunin, Manager, Novotel Limoges le Lac

Elisabeth Dissauer, Manager of Mercure Wien City & Accor Austria Sustainable Development Manager

Laurent Guerre-Genton, Manager, Ibis Blois Vallée Maillard

Jean Hentz, Sustainable Development Coordinator, Etap/F1

Yves Lecret, Director of Marketing Operational, Novotel France

Nathanaël Mathieu, Sustainable Development Project Manager, Accor

Lucia Padovan, Support Manager, Franchised Hotels Accor Italy

Eric Robert, Director of Operational Marketing and Quality, Sofitel Luxury Hotels - Southern Europe, North Africa

Hélène Roques, Sustainable Development Director, Accor

Juergen E. Seidel, Group Director of Property Maintenance, Engineering & Innovation, Six Senses Resorts & Spas

Renato Sehn, Owner, Pousada Ilha do Papagaio (Papagaio Island Inn)

Helenio and Ildiko Waddington, Owners, Hotel Rosa dos Ventos

The Members of ACCOR's Biodiversity Group, who attended the initial workshop in January 2008 that helped structure the guide:

Gilles Attias, Manager, Sofitel Athens Airport

Chris Broodryk, Regional Maintenance Manager, Accor Asia-Pacific

Laurent Delporte, Business & City Hotels Brand Manager, Global Marketing Sofitel

Pascal Fillon, Sustainable Development Project Manager, Global Marketing Accor

Dan Gilligan, Vice-President of Energy and Environmental Services, Accor North America

Jean Hentz, Sustainable Development Coordinator, Etap/F1

Stephane Hotton, Manager, Ibis Agen Centre

Sophie Janet, Junior Product Manager, Global Marketing Etap/F1

Monika Krzerszowiec, Manager Mercure Wroclaw

Jean Baptiste Le Blan, Product Manager, Global Marketing Novotel

Shanmugam Nanthakumar, Projects & Maintenance Manager, Accor Asia

Domminique Ottiger, Product Manager, Global Marketing Ibis

Johanne Payen, Corporate Social Responsibility Manager, Accor Hospitality Middle East, Africa & Indian Ocean

Christophe Quevremont, Junior Product Manager, Accor Group Procurement

Claude Ronda, Design Manager, Accor Group Marketing

Alice Sadois, Food Quality Manager, Accor Group Procurement

Francisco Sobrinho, Operations Director, Ibis Brasil

Jean-Marc Schnell, Operations Director, Accor Western Africa

Jérôme Sanchez, Manager, Etap Hotel Aubervilliers

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Biodiversity plays an important role in the day-to-day life of a hotel: from the food in the restaurant and wood in furniture and fittings, to the amenities in the spa, the products of biodiversity are everywhere inside hotels. Outside, plants and animals make a hotel’s public areas and gardens attractive for guests, while b

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- How do we harm biodiversity?
- And what can we do to conserve it?

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- How do hotels impact on biodiversity?

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- Ornamental plants and animals

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Taking action in hotel grounds and gardens

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Biodiversity is everywhere. Look around and you'll see plenty of different types of organisms – insects, plants, birds and other animals. Go for a walk and you'll notice different types of habitats and ecosystems – woods, grasslands, ponds, rivers and coasts – each with different species of animals and plants. Unless you use a microscope, you won't see microorganisms, but they too are part of the natural world.

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instance, insects pollinate our crops, birds disperse seeds, and fungi, worms and micro-organisms produce nutrients and fertile soils. Interactions between organisms and the physical environment influence our climate, water supplies and air quality, and help protect us from extreme weather, including mitigation of natural disasters. These benefits are collectively known as ecosystem services. The 2005 Millennium Ecosystem Assessment (http://www.millenniumassessment.org) describes four basic types of ecosystem services:

- ***Provisioning services:*** These are the tangible products that biodiversity provides, including food, fresh water, fuel, and materials, such as wood for furniture and construction and fibre for clothing, as well as genetic resources for medicines and crop security (see Box 1);
- ***Regulating services:*** These are the services that keep major ecological processes in balance, such as climate regulation, flood control, disease regulation and water purification;
- ***Cultural services:*** These are the non-material values that humans derive from nature, including aesthetic, spiritual, educational and recreational benefits; and
- ***Supporting services:*** These are the services that are nec[illegible]

Part I: Biodiversity and Hotels

Box 2: Biodiversity under threat

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According to the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species™ in 2007, a total of 16,306 species out of 41,415 assessed species are threatened with extinction, meaning that they are listed as either Critically Endangered, Endangered or Vulnerable. These include:

- **s**: 1,094 species (22 percent of all known mammals);
- **r s**: 1,226 species, *2008 data* (12 percent of all known birds);
- **sh**: 1,201 species (39 percent of all assessed fish);
- **ept es**: 422 species (30 percent of all assessed reptiles);
- **ph s**: 1,808 species (31 percent of all assessed amphibians); and
- **tt**

species assessed would be at risk of extinction if average global temperatures rise by more than 1.5-2 degrees Celsius. Many species are already affected by warmer global temperatures: for example, more frequent droughts are threatening wildlife in Africa and frequent storms and rising ocean temperatures are damaging and even killing corals around the world, while in the Arctic, polar bears are finding it more difficult to feed as the sea-ice breaks up earlier each year (see Box 3).

- *Habitat conversion:* Through land-use changes and inappropriate occupation, physical modification of rivers or water withdrawal from rivers, loss of coral reefs, and damage to sea floors from trawling, about half of the Earth's land surface has already been transformed or degraded by human activity. The costs of decades of habitat conversion are now becoming all too apparent: for example, where forests have been cleared for timber and agriculture, or for infrastructure development, soil erodes faster and rivers flood more

Box 4: Milestones in international action to protect the environment and biodiversity

1972: "The Limits to Growth," published by the Club of Rome, predicts that the Earth's limits will be reached in 100 years at current rates of population growth, resource depletion and pollution generation. The United Nations establishes the UN Environment Programme.

1973: The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (commonly known as CITES) is agreed in Washington, DC, USA. The treaty prevents or restricts trade in animal and plant species threatened with extinction.

1979: The Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (also known as the CMS or the Bonn Convention) is agreed in Bonn, Germany.

1987: The World Commission on Environment and Development highlights the need for 'sustainable development' to protect the environment and combat poverty and global inequalities.

1992: The Convention on Biological Diversity (generally known as the Biodiversity Convention), and the Framework Convention on Climate Change are adopted at the UN Conference on Environment and Development (the 'Earth Summit') in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, along with Agenda 21- a detailed plan for worldwide implementation of sustainable development.

1997: The Kyoto Protocol, which commits industrial countries to reduce their emissions of carbon dioxide, is agreed in Japan.

2002: The 2010 Biodiversity Target – to achieve by 2010 a significant reduction in the current rate of loss of biological diversity – is adopted at the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg, South Africa.

2005: The Millennium Ecosystem Assessment concludes that natural resources are being degraded on a massive scale, damaging the ecological processes that support life on Earth.

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How do hotels impact on biodiversity?

Each individual has a different impact on the environment. The level of this impact will depend on personal choices and may well be scattered around the globe: food may be imported from other continents, water piped from rivers and reservoirs some distance away, and waste may be disposed miles away from its source. The same is true for a hotel.

A hotel impacts biodiversity at each stage of its life cycle, from planning through to closure:

Figure 1: The hotel life cycle (see illustration opposite)

- **At the planning stage** the most important issue in determining the level of impact that a hotel will have relates to choices about its siting and design. Even the most sustainably operated hotel will have major impacts if it is built in a biodiversity-sensitive area (see Box 5). 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.
- **During the operation 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

Box 6: What are the business benefits of responsible biodiversity practices for hotels?

Implementing good environmental practices in hotel operations, including using biological resources more sustainably, can result in positive business benefits as well as make an important contribution to biodiversity conservation. Key business benefits include:

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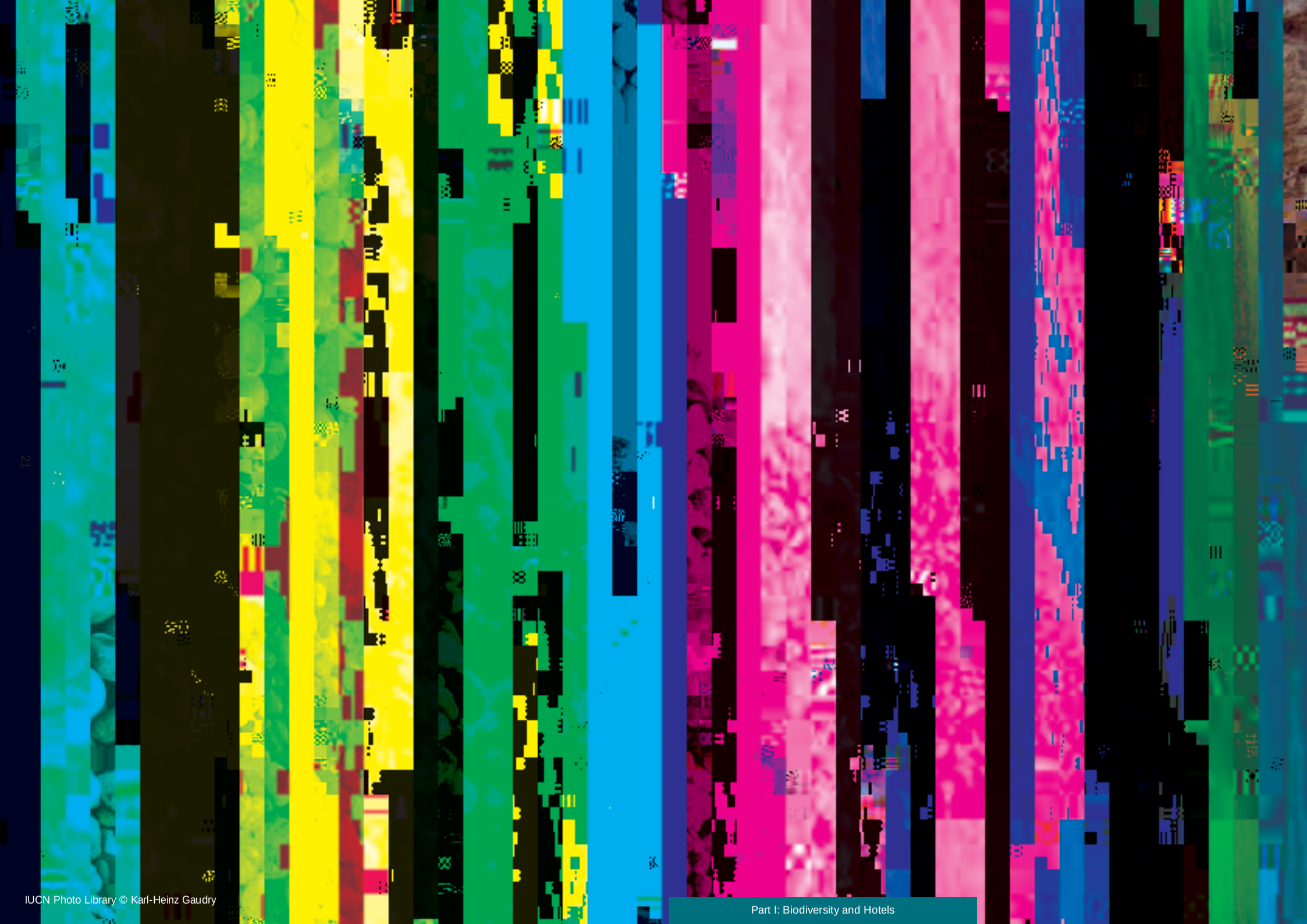

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Hotel grounds and gardens:
Using indigenous plants for landscaping and minimizing light and noise.
Hotel restaurants:
Seeking sustainable sources of food supplies, especially of fish and seafood, agricultural products and wild game.
Hotel souvenir shops:
Guest rooms and public areas:
Making responsible choices in terms of wood used for expansion or renovation projects and furniture; medicinal

Part II: Taking action in the hotel

Biodiversity resources are used in every area of a hotel, from restaurants to guest rooms to gardens (see Figure 2, opposite page). In this section of the guide, you will find recommendations about specific actions you can take in the different areas of your hotel, including:

- *Hotel restaurants:* Seeking sustainable sources of food supplies, especially of fish and seafood, agricultural products and wild game.
- *Guest rooms and public areas:* Making responsible choices in terms of wood used for expansiSV'aEl[illegible]

© Philippe Wang

Principles for taking biodiversity action in a hotel

Although specific biodiversity conservation practices will vary depending on the particular resource concerned or area of the hotel, there are some key principles that apply to all areas:

- **or ter** to introduce management practices and procedures that contribute to biodiversity conservation. In particular:
  - Appoint a senior manager and/or ‘green team’ to take responsibility for your biodiversity actions;
  - Set clear and realistic targets, monitor and report on progress towards reaching those targets;
  - Make it simple for staff, clients, suppliers and stakeholders to do what is asked of them;
  - Provide staff with any necessary training, and ask them for their ideas and suggestions for biodiversity actions that the hotel could support;
  - Create incentives for staff to support biodiversity conservation, e.g. through a ‘Green Employee of the Month’ award;
  - Take time to explain the hotel’s actions and motivations behind those actions to staff, guests, suppliers and

stakeholders, in order to build their support and raise their awareness about the value and importance of conserving biodiversity;

- Integrate the principles and recommendations in this guide into your hotel's existing Environmental Management System; and
- Monitor and evaluate progress in all areas.

- Ensure that, wherever possible, pro ts o e ro s st r h rveste or s st pro e so rehp

Box 7: Threatened species

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The IUCN Red List of Threatened Species™, which is the world's most comprehensive and scientifically-based inventory of the global conservation status of plant and animal species, evaluates the extinction risk of thousands of species and subspecies in all regions of the world. The Red List includes three main categories of threatened species:

- *Critically Endangered Species* are those that face an extremely high risk of extinction in the immediate future, [illegible]

WHAT ARE THE LOCAL AND
GLOBAL BIODIVERSITY ISSUE

Wild game

One of the 65 key points listed in Accor’s Hotel Environment Charter involves serving a meal made from organic ingredients. In France, Sofitel decided to experiment with this recommendation, which combines envbv

Part

Hotel Rosa dos Ventos is located in a private park of 1 million m2, of which 8,000 m2 are built property, representing less than one percent of its total area. More than 50 percent of the property is preserved Atlantic rainforest. In 1990, it became the first hotel member of Relais & Chateaux in Brazil.

The hotel is situated near two protected areas that are part of an important ecological corridor for conservation of the natural resources of the Atlantic Rainforest of Rio de Janeiro. The region also acts as a “bread basket” for the city and state of Rio de Janeiro, with the largest production of vegetables and fruits in the state, mostly originating from small and medium family-based agricultural businesses. Hence, the rational use of a valuable resource such as freshwater, which is used for many purposes and is vital to ecosystem conservation, is a key issue here, with the preservation of natural water sources as an integral part of water conservation measures.

As of 2008, Hotel Rosa dos Ventos is offering a unique attraction to its guests: naturally fluorinated mineral water from the existing natural groundwater fonts within the hotel property. This may be considered a luxury, as few hotels have the possibility to offer this special treat.

The water has been analysed regularly since 2002 and classified as Natural Fluorinated Mineral Water. The various natural water sources are preserved and monitored regularly by hotel staff, who have been trained to understand and value such sources for what they represent for biodiversity conservation and human well-being and consumption, particularly outside the hotel property (as such water sources also are found within the region). Care is taken to preserve natural rainforest vegetation and to prevent disturbances to water sources from walking, movement by surrounding domestic animals and other activities. The goal is to maintain the sources in a pristine state and use only a portion of the water sources on a rotational basis. Regular chemical analyses are carried out and reports produced.

In the hotel, the natural mineral water is used in showers, baths and sinks of guests´ suites and apartments, as well as in the restaurant, saunas, swimming pools and other hotel facilities and services. Through the information folder in the apartments, guests are advised of the existence of naturally fluorinated water sources and the option to consume such water in the hotel.

In terms of environmental and social benefits, this action has contributed to the prevention of improper land use, including potential clearing, contamination by agrochemical use associated with agro-industries, and accelerated erosion. It has also raised the awareness of guests and the local communities about the value of environmental services provided by natural, forested catchments and the importance and health benefits of such natural fluorinated water sources. For the hotel in particular, it is an added value to offer such a luxury ite•t-USWtra t-hhe hah

Box 8: Seafood and agricultural certification schemes

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The Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) runs the only widely recognised environmental certification and eco-labelling programme for wild capture fisheries. It is the only seafood eco-label that is consistent with the ISEAL Code of Good Practice for Setting Social and Environmental Standards and UN Food and Agriculture Organisation guidelines for fisheries certification.

MSC-certified and labelled fish, seafood and seafood products are widely available. As of 2008, over 90 fisheries are engaged in the MSC programme, with 26 certified, 64 under assessment and another 20 to 30 in confidential pre-assessment. Together, the fisheries record annual catches of over 4 million tonnes of seafood, representing more than 42 percent of the world's wild salmon catch, 40 percent of the world's prime whitefish catch, and 18 percent of the world's lobster catches for human consumption. Worldwide, more than 1,000 seafood products resulting from the certified fishy

Box 9: Saving the cork oak landscapes by serving wine with cork stoppers

For centuries, wine bottles have been sealed with cork stoppers made from the bark of the cork oak tree (Quercus suber). Cork is a natural product – it is renewable and biodegradable. Harvesting cork is one of the most environmentally friendly harvesting processes on Earth: no single tree is cut to harvest the cork, and after harvesting, the trees produce more bark.

Cork oak forests are found only in Portugal, Spain, Italy, France, Morocco, Algeria and Tunisia. They are ranked among the most valuable in terms of biodiversity in the world for the endemic plants and endangered species they support, including the Iberian lynx, the Iberian imperial eagle, and the Barbary deer. The economic value of cork oak forests means they – and their biodiversity - are protected by the communities that harvest the cork.

Cork for bottle stoppers accounts for almost 70 percent of the total value of the cork market. However, with increasing use of plastic and metal stoppers for wine bottles, sales of cork stoppers are declining. As the value of cork forests declines, the forests and their biodiversity are at higher risk of fires, degradation or being converted to other uses.

You can take action in your hotel to help preserve the cork forests by only purchasing wine in bottles sealed with cork stoppers. As a further step for additional assurance that cork comes from a well-managed forest, select wines in bottles sealed with FSC-certified cork stoppers (see Box 10 for details of FSC certification).

Sources:
assets.wwf.es/downloads/factsheet_daz

Wood

WHAT ARE THE LOCAL AND GLOBAL BIODIVERSITY ISSUES?

Unsustainable use of wood for construction, furniture and other uses threatens rich and diverse forests around the world. Clear-cut logging of old growth forests destroys forest ecosystems, while intensive forestry plantations can damage the environment thr

Box 10: Forest-related certification systems

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The Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) promotes environmentally responsible, socially beneficial and economically viable management of the world's forests through its worldwide standard of recognised and respected Principles of Forest Stewardship. Forests that meet these standards can request certification and then use the FSC logo on their wood and related forest products. The FSC label allows purchasers around the world to recognise products that support the growth of responsible forest management. FSC operates through its network of national initiatives in 45 countries.

Over 94 million hectares in more than 75 countries have been certified to date according to FSC standards, and several thousand products are produced using FSC-certified wood and carrying the FSC trademark. The FSC scheme is continuing to expand the total area of FSC-certified forests, including in developing countries.

For more information, see: www.fsc.org

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Originally established in 1994 by the American Forest and Paper Association as a code of conduct for the forest products industry in the United States, the Sustainable Forestry Initaitive (SFI) became an

With my suppliers

- Avo

Complimentary toiletries offered in hotel rooms (soap, shower gel, shampoo, etc.) form an importa

With my suppliers

- Choose products from reputable sources that are informed about conservation and sustainable use issues associated with production and sourcing of plant-based body-care products, and which operate in a

Part II: Tak

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WHAT CAN I DO:

Internally

- Regularly check (e.g. annually) with local authorities and associations for species added to CITES lists and national legislation controlling or banning trade in threatened species (http://www.cites.org).
- Train your staff to communicate about the issues concerning illegal trade in endangered species, CITES, and local regulations to protect endangered species.

With my suppliers

- Inform shop managers or leaseholders about issues concerning illegal trade in endangered species, the species on the CITES lists and regulations controlling or banning trade in threatened species.
- Ensure that shop managers or leaseholders understand that they should not display, stock or sell any products derived from endangered species and/or species listed under CITES and/or national legislation controlling or banning trade in endangered or threatened species.

In partnership with public authorities and local organisations

- Encourage local artists to develop souvenirs from sustainable materials, including recycled products.
- Raise awareness in the community and public organisations about threatened species and the need to protect them.
- Work in partnership with local authorities and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) on programmes to control use of local threatened species and their parts in production of souvenirs and other items.

With my clients

- Provide information (videos, DVDs, posters and photo books) to your guests about illegal trade in endangered species and trade restrictions under CITES and/or national legislation. Highlight the fact that customs authorities are trained to check for such species and products derived from these species, and make available information on the fines imposed in the countries of origin of the customers. A useful point of contact is the national CITES management authority (contact details can be found at http://www.cites.org/common/directy/e_directy.html). The National CITES management authority provides information on species traded internationally, and should be able to advise on where to find out about domestic regulations.
- Have a sign in your shop saying that customers can buy “CITES-proof” souvenirs and articles there, as a guarantee that they will not be in trouble with customs upon departure or E•ô-©MtNá•t-USYV_EUE•ô-©MhNVaá•Wp

Manary Praia Hotel is a small, romantic hotel located in Natal, a city of 800,000 people. The hotel is on Ponta Negra Beach, one of the most important beach resort destinations in northeast Brazil, and surrounded by two major protected areas of primary rainforest.

In this area lives the most endangered marine mammal in Brazil: the manatee. During colonial times, this gentle giant was present along most of the northea

Six Senses is an international luxury resort and spa group, actively involved in biodiversity conservation and in the sustainable development of tourism in general. The Six Senses group has strong principles regarding biodiversity conservation, and marine conservation in particular.

One of its activities involves monitoring prod

WHAT ARE THE LOCAL AND GLOBAL BIODIVERSITY ISSUES?

Maintaining a hotel's gardens and grounds can have negative impacts on biodiversity through pollution from pesticides and fertilizers and excessive water consumption for watering and irrigation. In addition, some species used in gardens are highly invasive and can cause substantial damage to populations of native species and disrupt natural ecosystem processes, while the use of locally, regionally or globally threatened species can put additional stress on species populations. Light and noise from hotel facilities can disturb wildlife, making it more difficult for some species to feed and reproduce effectively. For example, the repr eu ed F ôSW_ZEUE•ô-©MnN'á•t-USbWWEUWZá•t-©MeN_á•t-USbZue

- setting up nature trails for guests with interpretative leaflets and other types of information about biodiversity on the trail; and
- including a map of the garden, with the various species and opportunities for bird and wildlife watching, in the hotel directory that is available to guests in their rooms. The map should also be available on the wall next to the door to the garden, and could also be printed on the paper used on trays to serve coffee, tea and snacks in the garden.

• Design sign boards on the hotelsheac r beeg

Rainforest Alliance © Chris Wille

Supporting local biodiversity conservation efforts

WHAT ARE THE LOCAL AND GLOBAL BIODIVERSITY ISSUES?

Protecting biodiversity is vital for maintaining the viability and attractiveness of tourism in destinations.

and conservation projects and environmental education programmes in local schools and communities.

With my clients

- Provide information about the partnerships your hotel supports, and about the partners that you are working with (posters, brochures, web pages).
- Offer the option to your g, ws,

provide them with any training and/or equipment they may need for working with tourist groups.

- Work with destination management organisations and local authorities to ensure that regulations for wildlife watching and nature-based tourism are disseminated by all hotels and other service providers in the destination.
- Work with organisations offering nature-based activities to avoid overcrowding and overuse of sites, for example by encouraging a greater diversity of activities and use of a variety of sites.

With my clients

- Provide guests with information about local natural resources and their value, and about the damage to natural resources, such as coral reefs, birdlife and other biodiversity that can be caused by diving, snorkelling and other recreational activities.
- Recommend responsible providers of recreational activities, and provide guidelines for how to practice these activities in a responsible way.
- Provide information on environmentally sustainable behaviour that can allow guests to minimise their adverse impacts on natural environments and wildlife, such as ct-©MNana-©M activiiess

Part I

Six Senses

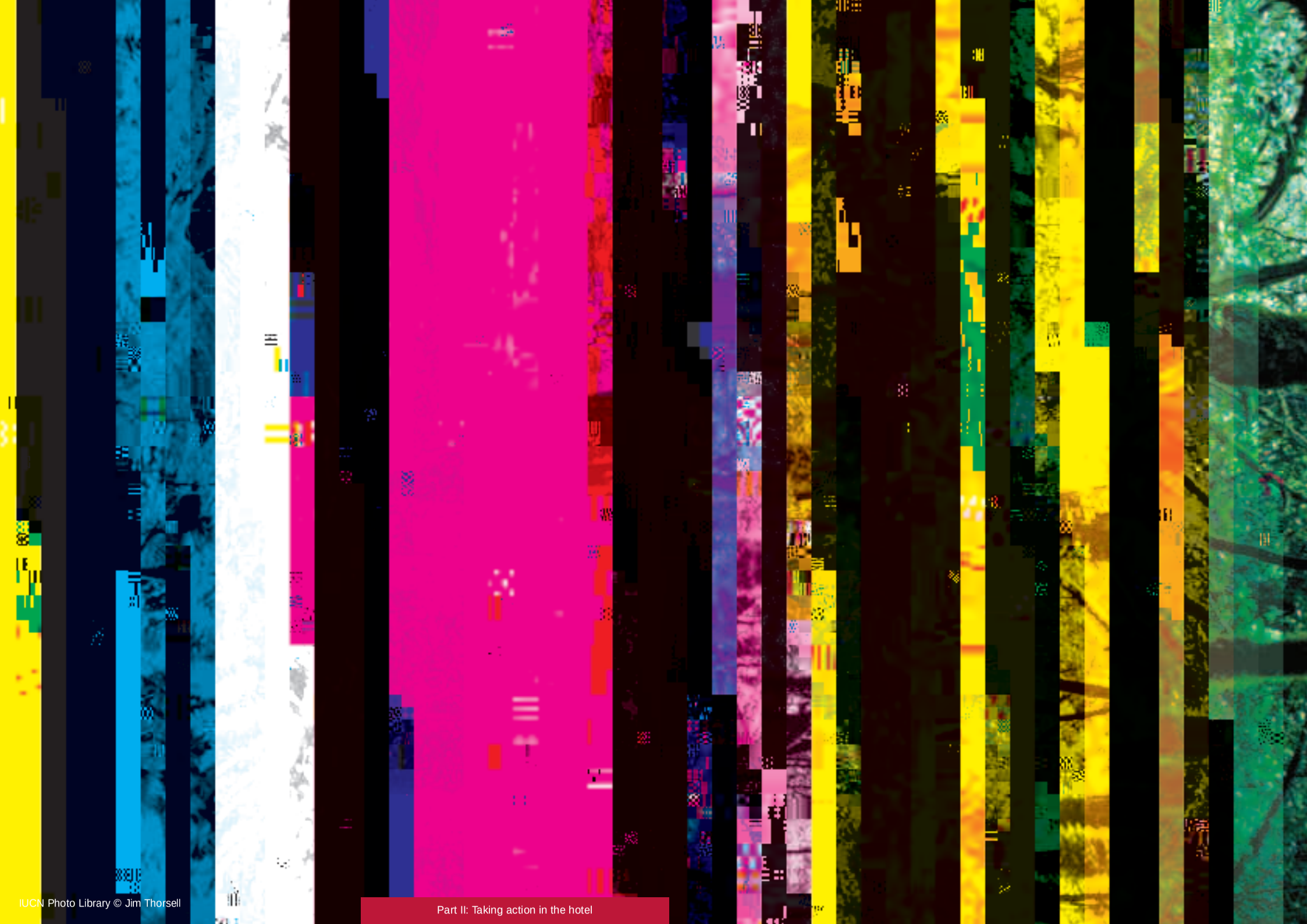
Since 2007, Accor Austria has been working on a bat conservation project in collaboration with a biologist. Although bats are often maligned and misunderstood, they are actually very useful animals that, for example, eat mosquitoes. There are 25 species of bat in Austria, but their future is threatened by urban sprawl, which encroaches on their natural habitat.

Accor Austria's staff thus chose to try to help these animals. Each hotel undertook to build a wooden bat shelter, a 'bat hotel'. The building teams then went off into a forest on the outskirts of town to erect the boxes in trees, in areas visited by these bats. A few months later, the project's biologist reported that several of these shelters were already inhabited by bats.

In 2008, staff volunteers (around six or seven staff members per hotel) were invited to participate in a day of discovery exploring caves in local forests. This fun day centred around a picnic, where children were also welcome. It was thus an opportunity to learn more about the bats' natural habitat and also to clean the "bat hotels" that were erected in 2007.

This inexpensive operation was financed by Accor Hospitality. Although it was an internal project, independent of hotel customers, details of the project were published in the l ccoï

In April 2008, Accor confirmed its sustainable development commitment by committing to the ‘Plant for the Planet: Billion Tree Campaign’. The initiative, which was launched by the



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Part II: Taking action in the hotel

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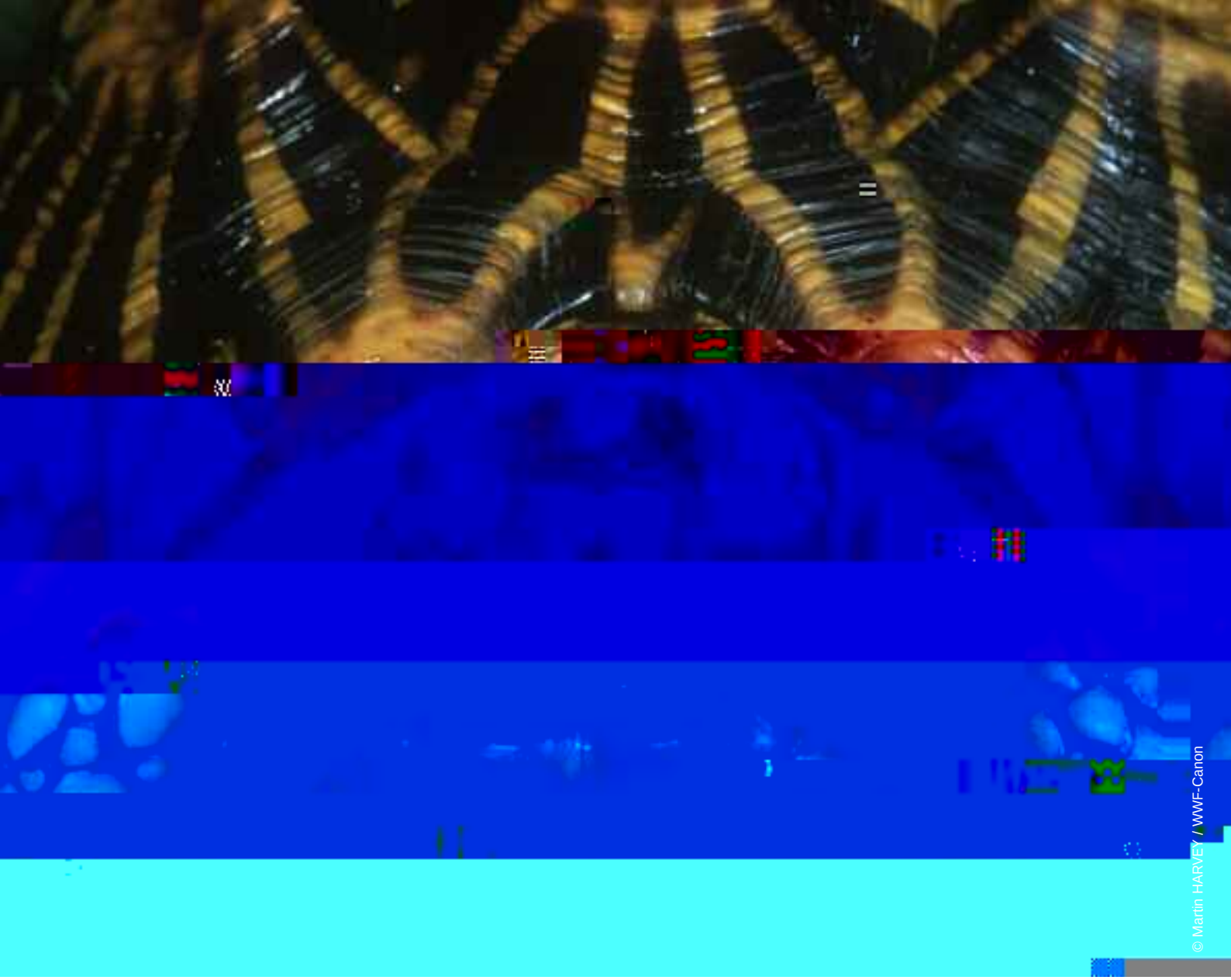
Part III: TRAFFIC Recommends – Factsheets on the sustainable use of biological resources

The following factsheets were developed in support of the project, TRAFFIC, the wildlife trade monitoring network, to guide hoteliers in making sustainable and responsible choices of products and services based on biological resources.

TRAFFIC (http://www.traffic.org) was established in 1976, with a mission of working to ensure that trade in wild plants and animals is not a threat to the conservation of nature. TRAFFIC's vision is of a world in which trade in wild plants and animals is managed at sustainable levels without damaging the integrity of ecological systems and in such a manner that it makes a significant contribution to human needs, supports local and national economies and helps to motivate commitments to the conservation of wild

A note about fisheries and certification schemes



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- *Sport:* Wildlife is collected for sports ranging from falconry to trophy hunting.
- *Healthcare:* Wildlife provides everything from herbal remedies and traditional medicines to ingredients for industrial pharmaceuticals. An estimated 80 percent of the world's population relies on traditional medicines for primary health care.
- *Religion:* Many animals and plants or derivatives are used for religious purposes.
- *Collections:* Many wildlife specimens and curios are collected by museums and private individuals.

The primary motivating factor for wildlife traders is economic, from small-scale local income generation to major profit-oriented business, such as marine fisheries and logging companies.

Between collectors of wildlife and the ultimate users, any number of middlemen may be involved in the wildlife trade, including specialists involved in storage, handling, transport, manufacturing, industrial production, marketing and the export and retail businesses. In fact, most of us are involved in wildlife trade in some way, even if it is just as end consumers of wildlife products.

Scale

The wildlife trade involves hundreds of millions of individual plants and animals from tens of thousands of species.

Timber and seafood are the most important categories of international wildlife trade, in terms of both volume and value. According to the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), more than 100 million tonnes of fish were traded in 1998, and more than a billion cubic metres of wood products were exported globally in 1999.

TRAFFIC estimates that from 2000–2005, 3.4 million lizard skins, 2.9 million crocodile skins and 3.4 million snake skins, all species listed under CITES, were imported into the EU, along with 300,000 live snakes for the pet trade. In 2004 alone, the EU imported more than 10 million cubic metres of tropical timber from Africa, South America and Asia, worth US$1.9 billion.

In 1996, global international trade in medicinal and aromatic plants amounted to more than 440,000 tonnes.

International trade in species of conservation concern is monitored by CITES. From 1995 to 1999, CITES recorded an annual average of more than 1.5 million live birds, 640,000 live

reptiles, 300,000 crocodilian skins, 1.6 million lizard skins, 1.1 million snake skins, 150,000 furs, almost 300 tonnes of caviar, more than 1 million coral pieces and 21,000 hunting trophies.

Value

There is a huge trade in wildlife goods world-wide, with China the largest market and significant markets in the United States and the European Union. Trade is international and domestic, with large volumes of the latter particularly within developing nations. The European Union (EU) tops the list for major importer by value for many wild animal and plant products, including tropical timber, caviar, reptile skins and live reptiles. The legal trade of wildlife products into the EU alone was worth an estimated 93 billion in 2005.

In the early 1990s, TRAFFIC estimatt tildCh

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Tuna are large oceanic f

- t h o f o -t r e t spe es There are three main fishing methods for catching tuna: purse seine, pole and line, and long-line. Other methods include troll lines, hand lines and driftnets. In a few high-value fisheries, traditional

e t pro e s Although individual countries are responsible for managing tuna stocks that occur and are fished within their own waters, much tuna fishing takes place on the high seas, where it is managed by regional fisheries ma

- No mixing of dolphin-safe with other tuna in individual boat wells, or in processing or storage facilities; and
- Fishing trips in the eastern tropical Pacific Ocean by vessels of a certain size to have an independent observer on board.

rse se e f sher es f or s p . e o -f t the t t

Low levels of by-catch and low interaction with marine turtles and marine mammals.

Species of particular concern

orther or t t . e-f Whilst individuals caught legally and over 30 kg in size may be sustainable, it is virtually impossible for consumers to know if that was the case prior to filleting and processing. *MCS ad*

Salmon spawn in fresh water rivers. The young migrate to sea after one to three years and return after up to three years at sea to spawn in their natal rivers.

f s o occur from California north along the Pacific coast to the Bering Sea and Arctic Ocean waters adjacent to Alaska, and throughout the far eastern waters of Russia and Japan. There are five species of Pacific salmon:

- Ch oo or

The main commercial species of **t t s o** is *Salmo salar*, which occurs throughout European waters.

There is a vast demand for salmon in Europe, North America and the Far East, with Japan the largest market. Commercial fishing of wild salmon takes place mainly aUScccEUE•ô-©MaNá•VZSc‘bWEZScbcZEáVZlo

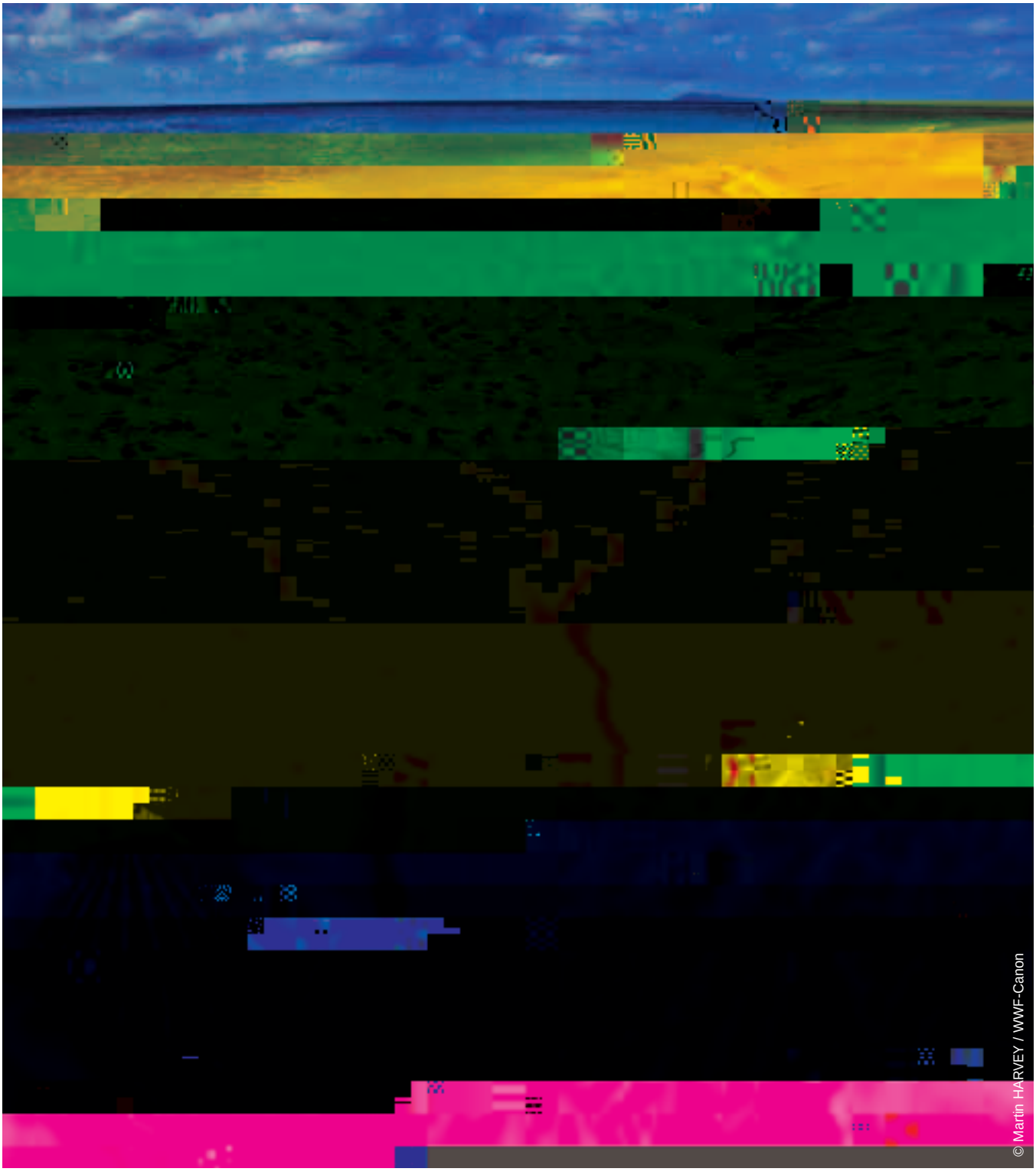
Hundreds of mollusc species are consumed as seafood. Most species are fast-growing and produce large numbers of young, and thus potentially can withstand considerable harvesting. The three main groups involved in the international seafood trade are:

- Bivalves – filter feeding molluscs with two shells, e.g. mussels, scallops, oysters;
- Gastropods – snail-like animals, e.g. Queen conch; and
- Cephalopods – soft-bodied, mobile animals, e.g. squid, octopus.

Although some species are taken from the wild, molluscs are particularly important as they make up about 25 percent of the world's aquaculture production. China is the top producer, with just over 80 percent of world production, followed by Japan, the U.S., France, Thailand, Spain, New Zealand and Italy. Most molluscs used as seafood are bivalves, which are filter feeders that obtain their nutrition by removing suspended particles from water. This makes them highly suitable for farming as they do not require feeding. Wild spat or juveniles are collected in areas of natural spatfalls or produced in hatcheries, and then 'grown-out' to marketable size on a variety of surfaces (trays, ropes, rafts, etc.), either on the bottom or suspended in the water. Bivalve farming has a low impact on the marine environment as there is no feeding with fishmeal or fish oil and hence no pressure on other fisheries, and no increased nutrient input to coastal waters. Bivalves may even make surrounding waters cleaner by filtering out nutrients and organic matter. Fertilizers, antibiotics and other chemicals are seldom used.

There are, however, a few potential negative impacts to mollusc farming, including effects on the nutrient balance of the seabed, introduction of disease in wild populations and escape of non-native species that may out-compete wild stock.

In the UK, the Soil Association has developed standards to certify several bivalves as organic, including mussels, scallops and clams. Certification will provide assurance that farming causes minimum negative impacts on the surrounding environment



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the wild is generally low, and wild spat collection may have a negative impact.

Species to choose

-C C

- t s op *(Zygochlamys patagonica). Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) certified in 2006*. The fishery is mainly in Argentinean waters, but the product is available “frozen-at-sea” in Europe, the U.S. and Canada.
- - h - o e te s ops rope
  - s op *(Pecten maximus). MCS rating: 2 (cause for concern).*
  - t t s op *(Placoplecten magellicanus). MCS rating: 3 (cause for concern).*
  - ee s op *(Aequipecten opercularis). MCS rating: 3 (cause for concern).*
- - t e op ro orthe st - - C - *MBA ranking: Good choice.*
- - str s op *WWF Hong Kong: recommended.*

C

- rope Responsibly managed farmed scallops (e.g. King Scallops), and those certified as organic.
- r e s ops *(Argopecten irradians). MBA ranking: Best* when produced by off-bottom techniques. On-bottom, dredged scallops are considered a *Good Alternative.*
- r e s ops ro Ch *WWF Hong Kong: recommended.*

Species of particular concern

- - s ops h rveste re such as those from the U.S. Mid-Atlantic.

OYSTERS

Oysters are filter-feeding bivalves found in most of the world’s oceans, except near polar extremes. They á•t-©MPNá•t-USb

Species to choose

- r e or . e *MBA ranking:*

SQUID OR CALAMARI

Although almost 100 species of squid are fished commercially, two species, the Japanese flying squid (*Todarodes pacificus*) and the Argentine shortfin squid *(Illex argentinus*), account for over half the world's squid harvest. More than 30 countries or territories fish squh

ocean conditions such as te

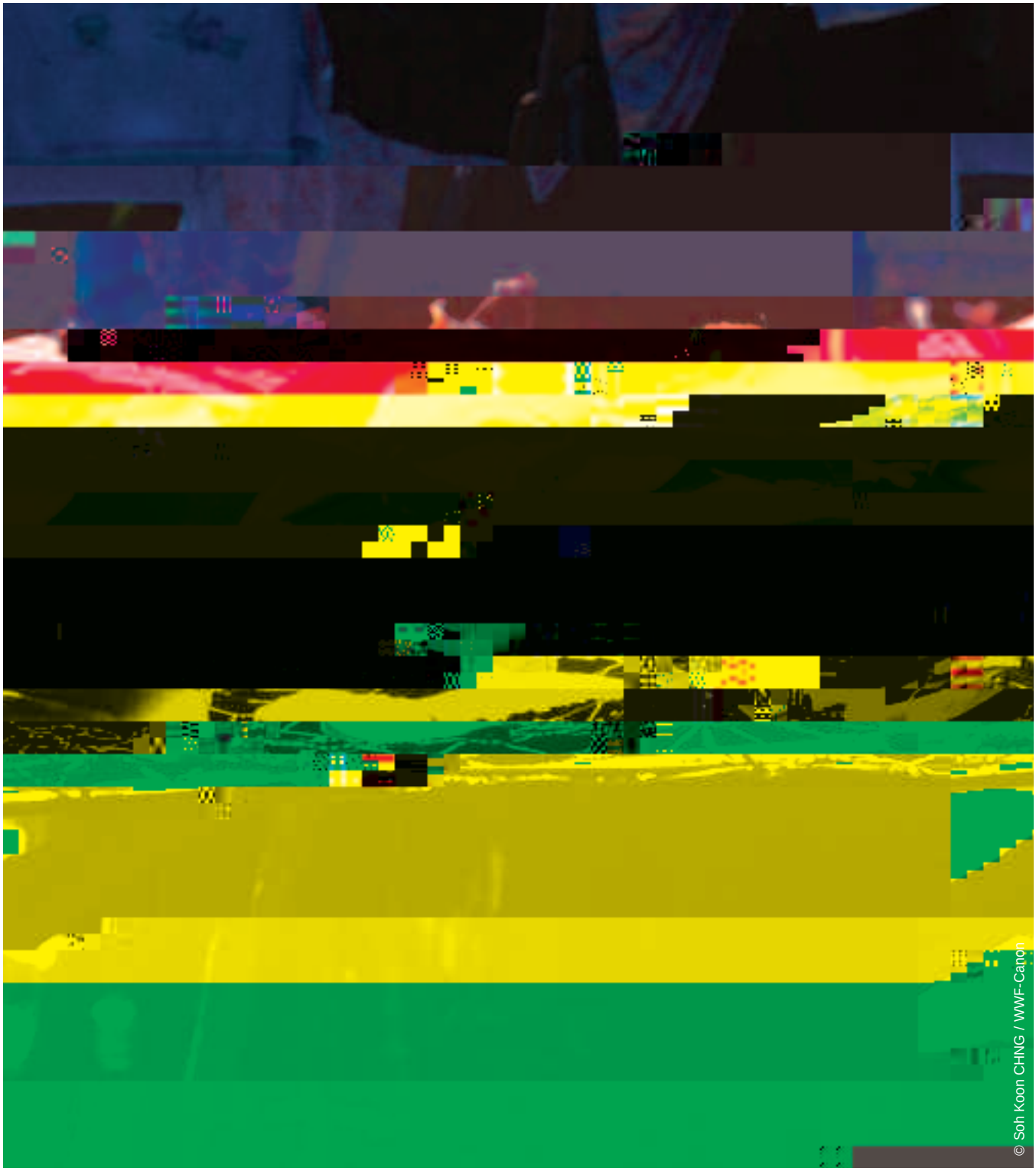
Species to choose

- **top s spe es** *MCS rating: 3 (cause for concern).*

Species of particu

TRAFFIC RECOMMENDS

Factsheet 4: Seafoods specific to Asia



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Seafood is particularly popular in Asian restaurants, and certain species are consumed that are not generally found on menus in other regions of the world. This factsheet concerns some of the species that are both particularly in demand in Asia and of conservation concern, including:

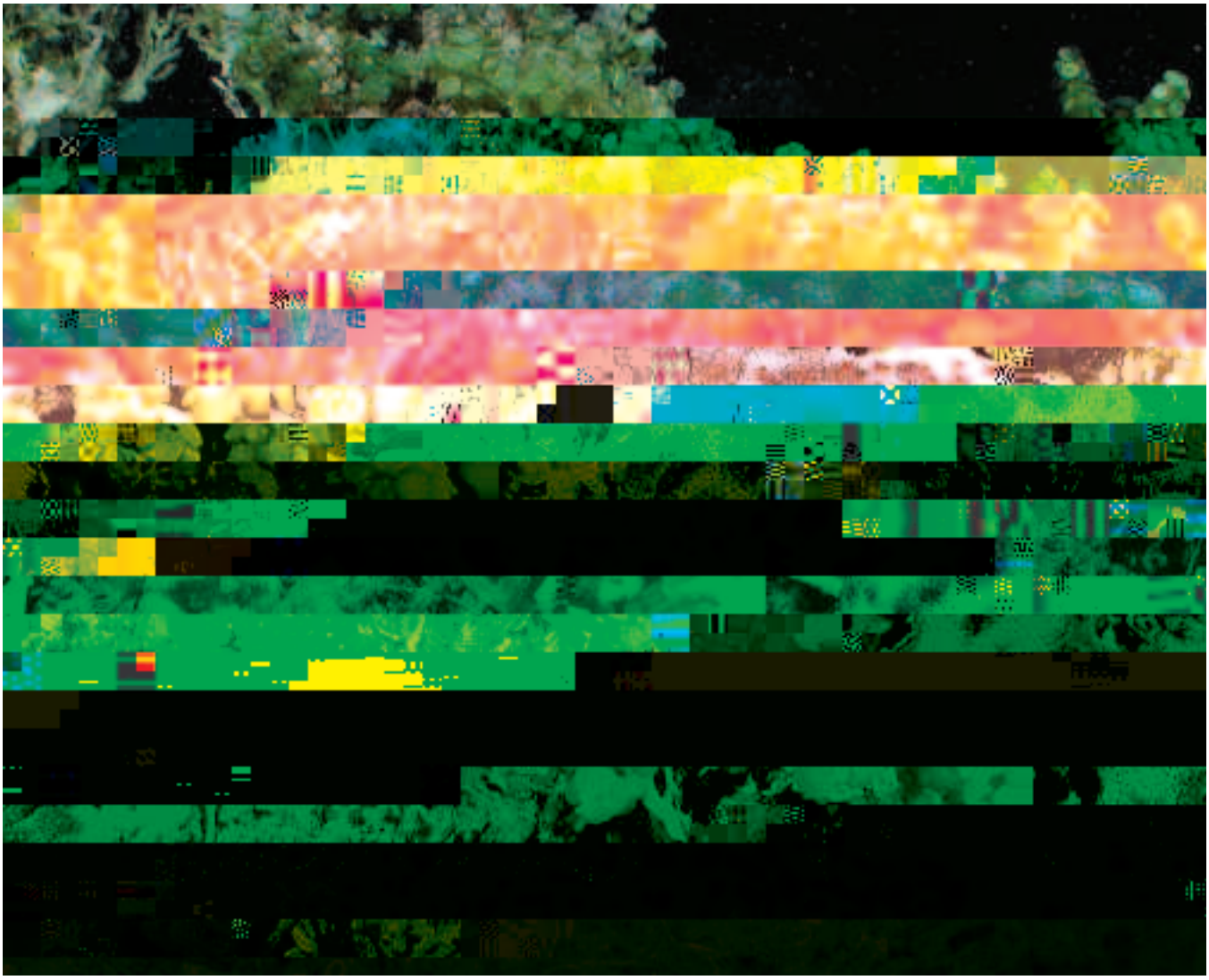
- Sharks, especially shark fins;
- Live reef food fish (LRFF), including groupers, snappers and humphead wrasse;
- Sea cucumbers;
- Giant clams; and
- Geoduck.

SHARKS

About 30-40 species of shark from over 120 countries are exploited for both their meat and fins. The fins are the most valuable product, as they are dried and used for shark fin soup (a prestige dish in many Asian cultures) and other traditional celebratory dishes in East Asia. Shark fins retail for over US$400/kg. The shark fin itself has no taste, but the texture and cultural significance is valued. The biggest and fastest growing market is mainland China, though there are huge markets in Japan, Hong Kong, Singapore and Korea.

Shark meat does not travel well without refrigeration and is generally of low value. It is eaten in a few countries but is rarely seen on restaurant menus. The exception is dogfish shark which is sometimes used as a substitute for cod in fish and chips and sold as ‘rock’, but is not eaten in Asia.

Sharks have an important tourism value in countries that have a diving industry, but population declines are threatening this value. For example, in the Bahamas a single live reef shark is estimated to be worth US$250,000 a year through dive tourism, whereas a dead reef shark has a one-time value of $50-60 to a fisherman.



- h phe r sse *(Cheilinus undulates)*
- eop r or per *(Plectropomus leopardus)*
- s ret or per *(Plectropomus areolatus)*
- h p per *(Cromileptes altivelis)*
- or e-spotte per *(Epinephelus coioides)*
- o f e per *(Epinephelus polyphekadion)*
- s t per *(Epinephelus bleekeri)*
- reo te per *(Epinephelus areolatus)*
- ro r e per *(Epinephelus fuscoguttatus)*
- t per *(Epinephelus lanceolatus)*

SEA CUCUMBERS

Prized in Asian markets worldwide, sea cucumbers are bottom dwelling echinoderms (i.e. related to starfish and sea urchins), in the families *Holothuridae* and *Stichopodidae*. They are mainly harvested and dried for food, but are also used for medicinal purposes. The main market is Asia, with Singapore, China and Hong Kong as the main importation ports. About 50 sea cucumber species are commercially important. High-value species include the sandfish (*Holothuria scabra*), the black teatfish (*H. nobilis*) and the white teatfish (*H. fuscogilva*).

There are a variety of fishing techniques for sea cucumbers, including hand collection at low tide, SCUBA and hookah in deeper waters and trawling and spearing. In the Indo-Pacific, several species are targeted in the same fishing grounds. Elsewhere (e.g. the Indian Ocean, eastern Pacific and Caribbean), the fishery generally focuses on a few species that seldom occur in the same fishing area. Temperate fisheries are monospecific. Since the 1980s, international trade in sea cucumbers for food has increased dramatically, particularly from developing countries that have little or no management in place.

Conservation issues

Once common throughout the world's oceans, sea cucumbers have been decimated by overfishing, as their shallow habitat makes them very easy to collect. Many of the fisheries are of the 'boom and bust' variety, as a result of high market demand. A preliminary global review suggests

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Vancouver Island and are raised in ‘predator exclusion devices’, which are PVC pipes pushed into the sediment. There are approximately 20,000 to 43,500 of these PVC pipes planted per acre on tidelands. There is some controversy in the area over geoduck farming grow-out and harvest practices.

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Bruckner, A.W., K.A. Johnson and J.D. Field (2003). Conservation strategies for sea cucumbers: can a CITES Appendix II listing promote sustainable international trade? Beche-de-Mer Information Bulletin, 18:24-33

Lovatelli A., C. Conand, S. Purcell, S. Uthicke, J-F Hamel and A. Mercier (eds) (2004). Advances in Sea Cucumber Aquaculture and Management. FAO, Rome, Fisheries Technical Paper No. 463: 425 p.

Toral-Granda, V. 2007. Biological and trade status of sea cucumbers in the families Holothuriidae and Stichopodidae Annex 1. Convention on Biological Diversity, 14th Conference of the Parties Document COP14.62

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Underwater Harvesters Association geoduck website: www.geoduck.org

While the information presented in this factsheet was believed to be correct at the time of going to press in 2008, it may have changed since then. “

Numerous crustaceans are popular as seafood, ranging from large lobsters to small shrimp, and the fisheries themselves are equally diverse, involving various gears and ranging from small-scale, local enterprises to large commercial industries. Few fisheries have

Species generally to chose

Try to choose prawns taken in fN

muscular tail and thick hard shells protected with an array of spines. They are typically found on the seafloor in tropical, semitropical and temperate waters, hiding among rocks, kelp and coral, and from shallow to deep water. They are commonly sold just for their tails.

Slipper and squat lobsters, and freshwater crayfish are not covered in this factsheet. The latter are often farmed, resulting regularly in escapes that have led to invasive populations that disrupt aquatic ecosystems and threaten native crayfish stocks.

Conservation issues

C e or tr e a sters Many traditional fishing grounds for popular species, such as the American or Maine lobster (*Homarus americanus*) in North America and the common lobster (*H. gammarus*) in Europe are depleted. The population status of the former is largely unknown but though

- traditional creels that have less impact on the marine environment, lower rates of by-catch than trawl fisheries, and return unwanted catch back to the sea unharmed; or
- nets with sorting grids, larger mesh sizes, or escape panels to allow juvenile fish to escape and redur

are taken in nets, where by-catch may be a problem.

When buying crab, avoid the following:

- Immature and undersized animals below the legal minimum landing sizes or egg bearing (berried) crabs;
- Crabs caught during their winter spawning or breeding time;
- Crabs caught in nets;
- Fresh (not previously frozen) crabs caught during the spawning season; and
- Crab claws, unless it is known that they have been removed from the crab during processing, as claws may have been removed from live crabs and the rest of the body discarded at sea.

The following species are commonly found for sale in restaurants:

Dungeness crab *(Cancer magister)* Also called market crab, San Francisco crab, Pacific edible crab, and commercial crab, these are found in shallow coastal waters from Alaska to Mexico. Their abundance fluctuates with oceanic conditions, and consequently populations are difficult to assess. In the United States, no females can be taken, and only males

Factsheet

Overfishing is one of the greatest threats to the marine environment and its wildlife. The Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) reports that almost 70 percent of global marine fish stocks are overfished or depleted, and in some cases completely fished-out. This can perhaps be seen most dramatically in the North Atlantic – cod stocks in Canada's Grand Banks are still nowhere near to recovering some 15 years after the collapse of the fishery during the early 1990s.

Hotel restaurants can help by sourcing fish from responsibly managed fisheries, and by choosing fish that are caught or farmed in a way that minimises damage to the marine environment. One of the best-known certification schemes that aims to ensure fish are sourced sustainably is operated by the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC). Certified product is marked by the scheme's distinctive blue label.

The issue of the sustainability of fish supplies is exceedingly complex and constantly evolving, therefore the advice here has to be general, and clearly cannot be comprehensive for all species currently traded. Some species may be rare in one locality and abundant elsewhere. Several organisations have produced 'best fish guides' in an attempt to rate various fish species according to the sustainability of their harvest. Links are provided in this document to several of these guides, and local advice should be sought where possible.

Species of particular concern

- **ppers** Many species of snapper are overfished, and the IUCN classifies two species from the Caribbean and Americas – the mutton snapper and the cubera snapper – as Vulnerable. Avoid eating these and try to ascertain the origin of any other snappers which you source. Red snapper caught off the northern coast of Western Australia currently come from healthy stocks, for instance.
- **o** In recent years, hoki has been increasingly sold away from its New Zealand range as a sustainable cod substitute. Although certified by the MSC, the New Zealand conservation organisation Forest & Bird claims there is a significant by-catch of fur seals, albatrosses and other seabirds, as well as overfishing of hoki itself.
- **or fsh** These spectacular fish are at the top of the food chain and play an important role in the marine ecosystem, so their excessive removal may have far-reaching consequences. By-catch of non-target species, such as sharks (on long-lines), dolphins and marine turtles (in illegal driftnets, mainly off North Africa and the rest of the Mediterranean) is an issue for many swordfish fisheries. Harpoon and handline-caught swordfish from the U.S. North Atlantic are the best choice, as these fisheries are well-managed with measures in place to reduce the by-catch of endangered marine turtles.

Species to choose

- **erri (so so sp h r s ppers the te t tes s e s r es** Atlantic Herring populations in the United States and Canada have fully recovered from overfishing in the 1960s, and European populations are thought to be sustainable.
- **s or e e o o** Alaskan pollock fisheries are well-managed and sustainable. Choose MSC-certified fish.
- **ere s** Various species, including chub, king, Atlantic and Spanish. Line- or net-caught mackerel from MSC-certified fisheries are best, if handline-caught fish cannot be sourced.
- **f o** Pacific cod is a better alternative to Atlantic cod, as the Alaskan fishery manages catch numbers and incidental bis-ca

Ca

prices reaching up to US$500 for 100 g of roe. The Beluga st

Probably the most familiar scheme is that of the Forest Stewardship Council


© André BERTSCHI / WWF-Canon

is often overharvested. Use only if verified from a sustainable source.

- oo (*Aquilaria* spp. and *Gyrinops* spp. , which is used in perfumery, is often overharvested, although some now comes from plantations. Use only if verified from a sustainable source.
- t (*Picrorhiza kurrooa* , which is used in herbal medicines, is quite resistant to o

There are many species that are illegal to purchase and keep in live animal displays. Some will be illegal under national legislation, whilst international trade in some species may be in contravention of CITES.

GLOBAL AQUARIUM TRADE

The majority of the global aquarium trade is legitimate. However, an illegal trade in these often-expensive marine creatures does exist. It is difficult to identify many of the species involved, and buyers should pay particular attention to the

REPTILES

The live reptile trade is huge, and is less regulated than the trade in wild birds. The trade in freshwater turtles and tortoises for the pet trade is a particular concern, with many of these animals traded illegally, particularly in Asia. For example, a recent TRAFFIC survey found that Thailand acted as a major hub for the illegal international trade in these animals, with many illegally smuggled into the country (and onwards) from their nativô-©MfN_á•tEUE_UYMedidvôUSw‘á•t-©MtN_á•MnNcZt

Certain souvenirs and fashion items that could potentially be stocked in hotel shops may contain mammal and bird products such a

anim

to their probable customs allowance. A number of cheaper caviar substitutes from non-threatened species (such as Avruga, made from herring roe) are also available.

CORAL

Many corals are prized for the beautiful colours and shapes of their skeletons (corals are not plants, but marine animals closely related to sea anemones and jellyfish). Coral skeletons are widely sold in coastal resorts as decorative souvenirs, or as part of other products, such as jewellery. There is also a large trade in live specimens for aquariums.

Some coral species are classified as threatened and listed in CITES, and coral reefs are an increasingly threatened habitat. The sale of coral products may hasten the decline of these delicate ecosystems, thereby endangering the tourist trade that comes to visit these spectacular natural wonders. This, coupled with the complication of identifying the coral species involved, means the sale of coral souvenirs is inadvisable. For more information on identifying corals see: www.arkive.org/coral/Coral/identifying.html

legitimate

There are two main conservation issues in the use of horticultural plants: use of plants from the wild, and use of potentially invasive species.

USE OF PLANTS FROM THE WILD

The vast majority of plants in horticulture are nursery-grown stock, and their use has no direct impact on wild populations. In most circumstances, all plants used both in landscaping and in indoor decoration will be arti

the tropics include *Stangeria eriopus, Dioon, Zamia* and *Macrozamia* species. These are not collected from the wild. Some other cycads may be wild-collected, mostly for sale in their country of origin, and some are highly threatened. The following, all of which are included in CITES Appendix I, should be avoided unless assurances can be obtained that they are artificially propagated: *Cycas beddomei*; all *Ceratozamia, Chigua* and *Encephalartos* species; and *Microcycas calocoma*.

- **r h. s** Only orchids that are sold as species, rather than as hybrids or named varieties, may be a problem. Wild-collected orchids are unlikely to be commonly encountered, as imports for horticulture (most such specimens are aimed at specialised collectors). However, in the tropics, wild-collected native orchids may well be sold in quite large quantities and often collected without controls. These should be avoided.
- **r-p ts** Air-plants or Spanish moss (*Tillandsia* spp.) may be collected from the wild or grown in semi-wild conditions. Seven species are listed in CITES Appendix II, but are unlikely to be encountered

Many tourist activities increasingly involve interaction with the natural world, as more people become interested in conservation issues, or wish to experience the thrill of seeing unfamiliar wildlife close-up. Consequently, many local companies have sprung up offering eco-tourism and hunting and fishing opportunities to appeal to visitors. Indeed, many hotel guests may have chosen to stay in a particular hotel simply to be close to a particular wildlife-interaction opportunity.

As a result, many of these kinds of activities will be on offer through the hotel or resort's tour desk, or local operators will wish to advertise their services around the hotel. When choosing which local partners to work with (or when setting up your own tours), a number of points should be considered in relation to the effect on local wildlife and the sustainability of any activities.

WILDLIFE WATCHING

Many types of wildlife are tourist attractions in their own right. In various parts of the world, there are popular excursions to watch whales, marine turtles, the African 'Big 5' mammals, rare birds and many other creatures. However, although various voluntary certification programmes are in place around the world, no global standard exists for tour operators. As a result, hotel tour desks should try to ascertain whether the operator adheres to the following guidelines. Do they:

- Employ knowledgeable guides, where possible from the local area?
- Ensure that their tours cause minimum disruption and disturbance to the animals involved (as well as limit the impact on the wider local environment and to local cultures and communities)?
- Limit the numbers of participating visitors and the time they interact with/observe the featured wildlife?
- Provide direct financial or in-kind benefits for conservation and local people?
- Adhere to local/international regulations in relation to interaction with protected species?
- Have proper licenses for their activities?

Where possible, it is also worth asking any relevant local/international conservation organisations if they have any advice or experience with the operators in question. Although most eco-tour operators act responsibly, there are always some that do not – hopefully conservationists will be aware of which these are.

WHALE AND DOWLB?MQ&Dc,ExG

DIVING AND SNORKELLING

Any dive operators should be fully qualified and licensed. In addition, they should help their clients to:

- Observe marine wildlife (such as coral reefs) without impact, making sure that they view wildlife from a safe distance and do not rest or stand on corals and other fragile marine life;
- Avoid touching and damaging life on the seabed and leave live shells, reef fish and animals as they are;
- Learn about the underwater environment so they can better appreciate it; and
- Provide advice on safety issues to consider when diving and ensure that safety considerations are strictly applied in relation to conditions of equipment and diving requirements.

SPORT HUNTING

Sport hunting can be broadly defined as the hunting of an animal (generally by a tourist, particularly a foreign one) for its trophy value (i.e. an item prepared from the body of the game animal). Consequently it is also known as trophy hunting, or as big-game hunting, when referring to the pursuit of large animals such as bears, big cats, elephants, etc.

The hotel should try to ensure that any local hunting operators whose services it endorses can satisfactorily answer the following questions:

- Is it legal to hunt the species concerned in the country?
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Communication is a vital part of any biodiversity strategy, both to explain to staff and suppliers what the strategy is and why it’s important,

Communicating with non-guest buyers

Once you have substantially integrated biodiversity into your management strategies and consider your contribution to conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity as part of your value proposition, you may wish to communicate this to your non-guest buyers, including tour operators, travel agencie

valuable source for special means of communication to get acr

Hotels can take many actions themselves to help preserve biodiversity, but there are cases where effective actions may be limited by factors that are outside the control of any individual hotel. Forurol

- Training courses and technical advice;
- Guidance