WORKING MATERIAL 2.13 · CHAPTER 2 — THE OPERATIONAL PERSPECTIVE (SECTIONS B, C AND D) · SETTING: MAHÉ, SEYCHELLES

Biodiversity and the Invasive Plant in the Garden

Source: Francesco Dore, The Helm and the Lens, Volume 7a — GSTC Hotel Standard v4.0, subchapter 2.13 (book page 357)

GUIDING QUESTION

A hotel garden is often the most admired part of a property and the least examined. It can shelter native species, or it can be the place from which a plant escapes into the forest beyond the fence. What does the standard ask a hotel to know about what grows and lives on its land, and what does it owe to the ecosystems around it?

1 · Verification Pact: market claims against the standard

Copied from the book. The last column is for your property: what holds here, and how you know it.

What is claimed	Binding?	What actually holds	In our property
A city hotel has no biodiversity obligations	No	The D9.1 guideline extends identification to nearby green spaces and gardens for urban hotels	
Any donation to a conservation cause meets D9	Only partially true	D9.3 asks for recorded contributions; D9.5 gives priority to areas where the hotel operates	
The standard requires gardens of native species only	No	D10.4 asks to identify native or endemic species and prioritise them where feasible	
Plants from a local nursery are safe by definition	No	The guidelines require every live plant to be screened against the hotel's invasive list before purchase	
The gardener can remove invasive plants as he sees fit	Only partially true	D10.2 asks the hotel to work with local authorities or conservation groups to report and remove them	
An invasive species list, once compiled, is complete	No	The guidelines ask for documentation updated regularly and used for future planting	

2 · Common mistakes — a self-check

Tick each mistake you recognise in your own property, and note where it shows.

☐ Designing gardens for colour and speed of growth without checking for invasive species.

☐ Keeping no inventory of the plants on the property.

☐ Allowing plants to arrive from decorators, catalogues and nurseries without screening.

☐ Removing invasive plants with broad herbicide spraying instead of an agreed method.

☐ Treating a distant donation as a substitute for supporting conservation where the hotel operates.

☐ Forgetting invasive animals in storage areas, basements and delivery bays.

☐ Assuming that a city hotel has no biodiversity to consider.

☐ Compiling the invasive list once and never updating it.

3 · A Checklist for the Hotel Garden and Its Surroundings

The book's checklist, with a column for your own answer.

Question	Why it matters	Our answer
Have we documented the protected areas and species of our destination, with sources?	D9.1 asks for identification and documentation	
Do we have a list of invasive plants and animals relevant to our site, from credible sources?	D10.1 requires a documented list	
Is every plant we buy or receive screened against that list before it enters the property?	The D10.3 guideline requires screening before purchase or installation	
What share of our planting is native or endemic, and is it rising?	D10.4 asks for an inventory and priority to native species	
Which local organisations help us report and remove invasive species?	D10.2 asks the hotel to work with authorities or conservation groups	
Are our contributions recorded, and do they support the areas where we operate?	D9.3 and D9.5 ask for records and local priority	

4 · What would show this is working

Questions drawn from the subchapter's reading of the standard and its practical application. Indicator references point to the GSTC Hotel Standard v4.0; where the evidence lives is this book's practice, not a requirement of the standard.

Question	Where the evidence lives	Seen?
Are protected areas and species in the destination identified and documented (D9.1)?	Documented list with sources	☐
Where sensitive areas may be affected, is there a strategy to manage impacts (D9.2)?	Written strategy	☐
Are contributions to biodiversity conservation recorded (D9.3)?	Contribution records, including staff days	☐
Is there a documented list of invasive plants and animals relevant to the site (D10.1)?	Invasive species list with sources	☐
Are live plants screened against the list before purchase or installation (guideline to D10.3)?	Approval records; decorator contracts	☐
Is there an inventory of landscaping plants identifying native or endemic species (D10.4)?	Plant inventory, updated quarterly	☐

> *What this sheet is not: the GSTC Hotel Standard does not prescribe this form. It is a working aid drawn from the book; the standard's criteria, indicators and guidelines govern the real case. Independent material; not affiliated with or endorsed by the GSTC. The standard's own text at www.gstc.org prevails.*