WORKING MATERIAL 2.14 · CHAPTER 2 — THE OPERATIONAL PERSPECTIVE (SECTIONS B, C AND D) · SETTING: KAIKOURA, NEW ZEALAND

Animals: Interaction, Welfare and Trade

Source: Francesco Dore, The Helm and the Lens, Volume 7a — GSTC Hotel Standard v4.0, subchapter 2.14 (book page 369)

GUIDING QUESTION

In many destinations, animals are the reason guests come: to watch them, to photograph them, sometimes to touch them. A hotel stands between the guest and the animal more often than it realises, as a booking desk, a landlord, a keeper and a shop. What does the standard ask of a hotel in each of these roles, and where does responsible wildlife tourism end?

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
Wildlife tours are the provider's responsibility, not the hotel's	No	D11.1 requires the hotel to ensure that the providers it offers comply and follow responsible practices	
A close-up photograph is harmless if nobody touches the animal	No	D11.3 lists close-up photographs among the close contact prohibited in the managed environment	
Farm and domestic animals fall outside the standard	No	D12 applies to any animals the hotel keeps, owns or manages, temporarily or permanently	
A well-fed animal can take part in shows	No	D12.5 and its guideline exclude animal performances and practices coercing unnatural behaviour	
Hotels in wildlife destinations should stop offering wildlife activities	No	D11.4 asks for clear information on conservation and responsible behaviour where these activities are central	
Wild-caught seafood cannot be served	No	D13.3 allows consumption that is strictly regulated, demonstrably sustainable and approved by competent authorities	

2 · Common mistakes — a self-check

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

☐ Choosing wildlife tour providers on commission alone.

☐ Allowing guests to approach, touch or photograph wild animals at close range on the hotel's grounds.

☐ Feeding wild animals as a guest attraction.

☐ Treating farm and domestic animals as outside the standard.

☐ Calling a vet only when an animal is ill and keeping no welfare records.

☐ Selling souvenirs whose material and origin nobody can document.

☐ Serving wild-harvested food without evidence that the harvest is regulated and sustainable.

☐ Reading D13.3 as an absolute ban, or ignoring the three conditions it sets.

3 · A Checklist for Every Animal a Hotel Touches

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

Question	Why it matters	Our answer
Which wildlife tour providers do we sell, and what evidence do we hold of their practices?	D11.1 makes the hotel answerable for the providers it offers	
Is there a written protocol for wild animals on our grounds, known to every staff member?	D11.2 and D11.3 require protocols and prohibit close contact	
Do we keep care plans and welfare records for every animal in our care?	D12.4 requires regular monitoring and records	
Is the person caring for our animals qualified and trained?	D12.3 and its guideline require relevant expertise and ongoing training	
Do we know the origin of everything we sell or serve that comes from an animal?	D13.3 excludes illegal or unsustainable harvest and trade	
Have we told guests and staff not to buy wildlife products as souvenirs?	D13.2 requires guidance to both	

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 tour providers we sell checked for compliance with wildlife regulations and responsible practice (D11.1)?	Provider evaluations, reviewed yearly	☐
Are there safety protocols and a ban on close contact with wild animals in our managed environment (D11.2, D11.3)?	Written protocol; incident log	☐
If we keep animals, are licences, care, qualified personnel and welfare records in place (D12.1–D12.4)?	Licences; care plan; welfare log	☐
Is there a list of nationally protected species, and guidance not to buy wildlife products (D13.1, D13.2)?	Species list; guest and staff guidance	☐
Is wild-sourced food or merchandise documented as regulated, sustainable and approved (D13.3)?	Supplier documentation per species or item	☐

> *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.*