GUIDELINES OF BEST PRACTICE FOR BIRD FRIENDLY HOTELS IN EGYPT

NATURE CONSERVATION EGYPT

GEF/UNDP – Birdlife International Migratory Soaring Birds Project - Egypt
Guidelines of Best Practice for Bird Friendly Hotels in Egypt

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The BirdLife International-UNDP/GEF Migratory Soaring Birds Project

The Red Sea/Rift valley hosts the migration of over 2 million birds through the region, with Soaring Birds in huge flocks numbering tens of thousands migrating from wintering grounds in Africa to breeding grounds in Europe and Central Asia and vice versa along the second biggest Flyway in the world.

Yet this area is also subject to huge development pressures, as increased demands for energy, food supply, and tourism lead to significant changes in land use and generate the need for increased waste management. Indiscriminate hunting and illegal killing of birds is widespread. Thus, these five sectors of Agriculture, Energy, Hunting, Tourism and Waste Management can create an increasingly inhospitable environment for Migrating Soaring Birds and have the potential to affect populations of soaring birds across three continents.

The Migratory Soaring Birds (MSB) project aims to integrate conservation of visiting birds into these key sectors of our societies. This is being achieved through partnerships and strategic alliances with private businesses, NGOs, governments, international organizations. The MSB Project is working with these sectors in order to incorporate protection of the flyway at the heart of the development decisions and land use changes within the region, and in the case of hunting, working with governments and sustainable hunting organizations to protect MSBs from illegal killing.

The Project also calls on the concept of hospitality towards visiting guests, a concept deeply rooted in the region’s culture. Finally, it is crucial to understand the importance of birds in preserving our environment. Vultures are fundamental to a healthy African and Middle Eastern environment, as crucial scavengers. Birds also eat and control agricultural pests; their migration spectacle attracts eco-tourists from around the globe and their presence acts as indicators of how well the Project succeeds in achieving sustainable development in the region.

The Migratory Soaring Birds project is working in 11 countries within the Rift Valley/Red Sea Flyway: Djibouti, Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Jordan, Lebanon, Palestine, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Syria and Yemen.

Under the Tourism Sector of the MSB project comes the Guidelines of Best Practice for Bird-Friendly Hotels Along Egypt’s Flyway. It aims to promote the conservation of birds amongst the tourism sector in Egypt by encouraging bird-friendly management of facilities, administration and services.

FOREWORD

The BirdLife International-UNDP/GEF Migratory Soaring Birds Project

The Global Environment Facility (GEF) unites 182 member governments — in partnership with international institutions, civil society organisations (CSOs), and the private sector — to address global environmental issues. GEF is the donor agency for the MSB project.

The United Nations Development Program (UNDP) is the United Nations’ global development network, an organisation advocating for change and connecting countries to knowledge, experience and resources to help people build a better life. UNDP is the executing agency for the MSB project.

Birdlife International is a global Partnership of conservation organisations that strives to conserve birds, their habitats and global biodiversity, working with people towards sustainability in the use of natural resources. Birdlife is the implementing agency for the MSB Project.

The Egyptian Environmental Affairs Agency (EEAA) is the executive body designated with enforcing environmental policies set out by the Egyptian Ministry of Environment. The Nature Conservation Sector (NCS) of the EEAA is the implanting partner for the Migratory Soaring Birds Project in Egypt.

THE MIGRATORY SOARING BIRDS PROJECT IS SUPPORTED BY THE FOLLOWING ORGANISATIONS:
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SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION TO THE GUIDELINES
Tourism is one of the largest and most economically significant industries in the world. According to the United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO), the number of international tourist arrivals in 2012 surpassed 1 billion tourists for the first time in history, indicating the continued growth of this vast industry.1

Responsible tourism can be defined as responsible travel to areas that conserves the environment and improves the wellbeing of local people.2

Principles of Responsible Tourism

Responsible tourism is about uniting conservation, communities, and sustainable travel. This means that those partaking in responsible tourism should abide by the following the principles:

• Minimize impact;
• Build environmental and cultural awareness and respect;
• Provide positive experiences for both visitors and hosts;
• Provide direct financial benefits for conservation;
• Provide financial benefits and empowerment for local people;
• Raise sensitivity to host countries’ political, environmental, and social climate.

A growing market for responsible tourism

With a growing global awareness on environmental and social issues, more tourists around the world are choosing to make responsible choices for travel, taking into consideration their social, environmental and economic impacts to their host locations and communities.

Responsible tourism and nature conservation

The tourism industry is one of the most important sources of income to Egypt, and is very dependent on Egypt’s history as well as its natural beauty. Responsible tourism provides incentives for conserving nature by highlighting its potential economic benefits and moral value to tourism facilities and other local stakeholders. Once these benefits have been recognised, natural habitats are more likely to be sustainably conserved by host communities.
Migratory birds are some of history’s most experienced and prevalent travellers. Every year, millions of birds fly over continents, oceans, mountains and valleys, to complete their gruelling journey from north to south in autumn, and from south to north in spring. In turn, there are specific routes that birds follow as they migrate twice a year. These routes are called migratory flyways, and along these flyways are vital sites for biodiversity that are endowed with great tourism potential.

With over 2,000 species of birds migrating across the world, a variety of tourists, particularly birdwatchers and nature lovers, are particularly drawn to destinations located along migratory flyways around the world. However external pressures continue to grow, whether directly or indirectly related to tourism, putting migratory birds and their habitats at risk. This calls for a responsible approach to tourism that ensures that sustainability of natural habitats and the birds that depend on them.

Egypt’s Red Sea coast and Nile Valley basin have hosted migratory visitors for thousands of years. Egypt acts as a corridor for birds migrating from Europe and Asia to Africa, and this route is commonly referred to as the Red Sea / Rift Valley Flyway. This flyway is the second most important flyway in the world for migratory soaring birds, and it stretches from West Asia to East Africa.

**1.3. EGYPT IN THE HEART OF THE RIFT VALLEY / RED SEA FLYWAY**

Egypt’s Red Sea coast and Nile Valley basin have hosted migratory visitors for thousands of years. Egypt acts as a corridor for birds migrating from Europe and Asia to Africa, and this route is commonly referred to as the Red Sea / Rift Valley Flyway. This flyway is the second most important flyway in the world for migratory soaring birds, and it stretches from West Asia to East Africa.

*What are migratory soaring birds?*

Although all migratory birds fly, they do however maneuver the skies in different ways. Smaller birds will migrate mostly at night flying en masse. However, many larger birds soar using warm air currents, barely flapping a wing for huge distances to save energy and prevent exhaustion. These warm air currents develop over landmasses, not water bodies, during the day as the sun heats up the ground. This means that different soaring birds, like storks, pelicans, eagles and vultures, are dependent on Egypt as a crucial corridor in the flyway as it connects Europe and West Asia to Africa, making it one of the least exhausting migratory routes.

*Migratory soaring birds and tourism*

The peak of migratory soaring bird migration is a huge visible event which involves large flocks of birds passing through the region. This is an impressive spectacle for tourists but is not sufficiently promoted within the tourism industry. With its land connection between the Middle East and Africa, Egypt lies at the very heart of the flyway where this spectacle is most prominent. Nearly 100% of the world’s white storks pass through the country. With this said, Egypt and its thriving tourism industry have a responsibility to protect this crucial flyway against growing threats.
Millions of birds depend on Egypt’s Red Sea and Nile Valley corridors for food, water, shelter and protection. However, due to the massive increase in human “development” and other activities, the wellbeing of soaring birds is now threatened. Below is a brief list of human activities that pose a significant threat to birds along the Egyptian flyway:

**HUNTING**
- Illegal shooting and trapping kills tens of thousands of migratory soaring birds along the flyway. This poses a high risk to large birds of prey, storks and cranes.

**AGRICULTURE**
- Toxic pesticides and untreated effluents poison some species along the flyway.
- Habitat degradation for agricultural expansion and intensification reduces resting and feeding grounds for birds.

**ENERGY**
- Wind turbines, power lines and pylons put migratory soaring birds at risk of collision and/or electrocution, injuring and killing birds along the flyway.

**WASTE MANAGEMENT**
- Open landfill sites and wastewater treatment plants attract, injure and kill migratory soaring birds.
- Solid waste dumping alongside the use of poison baits to ward off pests lead to the poisoning and illness of birds.
- Contaminated water sources can attract birds due to the very limited fresh water sources away from the Nile Valley, putting them at risk of contamination and illness.
- Entrapment in sewage and sludge also injures and kills birds.

**URBANIZATION**
- Urban expansion has led to habitat degradation and contamination. Leaving migratory soaring birds with fewer opportunities to feed, drink and rest safely.

**OIL POLLUTION**
- Oil pollution and affiliated water contamination has negatively impacted migratory soaring birds, specially affecting raptors and storks in the Gulf of Suez.

**CLIMATE CHANGE**
- The impacts of climate change are diverse and complex. Unexpected weather patterns can have disastrous impacts on migration, potentially impeding movement and threatening the survival of birds. Extremes of weather can negatively affect food resources for birds and other wildlife.
The importance of birds and their role and function in the ecosystem, their economical value as well as cultural and aesthetic aspects are often overseen or underestimated. Their existence implicates elemental benefits for human beings and natural systems.
Being superb natural historians, the ancient Egyptians were keen observers of the world around them, especially the flora and fauna. They also integrated all kinds of creatures in their artwork and in their hieroglyphic writing system. Most wildlife in ancient Egypt was concentrated around the Nile and large areas of the Delta where the ancient Egyptians built their homes close to. The marshes and the banks of the Nile were abounded with waterfowl and other birds, which were the food source for living. The ancient Egyptians became acquainted with the behaviour of the many birds sharing their environment. Migrating birds in particular served the people to mark the passage of time. In turn, birds play a fundamental and vital role in Egypt’s history and religion, particularly that some of the earliest and most important Egyptian gods were thought to manifest themselves in various birds. Soaring through the unattainable sky and living in harsh desert circumstances, birds represent to the ancient Egyptians the greatest cosmic powers.
INDICATORS FOR ECOSYSTEM HEALTH AND A CHANGING ENVIRONMENT

Birds are well adapted to all kinds of ecosystems on earth and form an essential element in the diversity of nature. These well-studied and usually easy recognizable creatures are very sensitive to changes in their environment. Due to their responsiveness to changes in the food chain or habitat structure birds act as valuable bio-indicators for the health of ecosystems. Species at the top of food chains such as raptors and fish eating birds are particularly vulnerable to accumulating environmental toxins in their prey and themselves. Consequently, declines in global bird populations are alarm signals in order to address and mitigate these negative impacts on ecosystems and human health.

SCAVENGERS, POLLINATORS AND SEED DISPERSERS

In their role as pollinators, seed dispersal, scavengers and biological pest controller birds are involved in many ecosystem functions and provide ecosystem services vital for the well-being and existence of humans. Birds have the capability to reduce populations of insects and other pests (e.g. rodents) harmful to humans and agriculture by direct predation or limiting their food sources. Vultures are even capable to lower risks of diseases spreading by feeding on carcasses and waste. The dispersal of pollen and seeds through feeding on nectar and fruits birds is beneficial to the floral life and ensures the reproduction of a variety of plants in the ecosystem.

1.4.3. BIRDS AND THE HAPPINESS OF PEOPLE

Besides their intrinsic value, birds have an overall positive impact on the happiness of people and contribute to individual experiences. Their distinctive appearance, behaviour and characteristic evoke pleasure to many of those who take a moment to notice them and get lost in their beauty.
1.5. THREATS TO BIRDS FROM TOURISM IN EGYPT
1.5.1. HABITAT LOSS AND DEGRADATION

The indiscriminate expansion of tourism-related facilities & infrastructure along the Egyptian flyway has led to the destruction and degradation of natural habitats that soaring birds have depended on for tens of thousands of years. Birds depend on these habitats for feeding, resting, and shelter, thus the destruction of these habitats reduces their chances of survival and endangers existent populations. Although many tourism developments have attempted to conserve their natural surroundings, specific activities leading to the destruction of native vegetation and interference with local ecosystems have contributed to the creation of a hostile environment for migratory birds.

1.5.2. DEPLETION OF WATER RESOURCES

Local resources of water are depleted to support tourism development, leaving migratory soaring birds without safe supplies of water to help them continue their cross-continental journeys.

1.5.3. COLLISION WITH STRUCTURES

- Power line structures erected close to green outdoor space of the tourist accommodations with overhanging wires might pose a risk of collision (as well as electrocution) to resident and migrant birds looking for food and shelter.

- Collision with building components, such as transparent and reflective glass is an additional threat to birds visiting urban areas 26 27 28. Reflection of green scenery attracts birds, exhausted from migration and unfamiliar with the location.

1.5.4. POISONING & POLLUTION

- Soaring birds can be accidently killed through poison baits used for pest control for wild canines and rodents, usually left at waste disposal sites.

- Water pollution is also widespread, and contamination with toxic wastes is thought to result in the deaths of hundreds, if not thousands, of raptors every year. For example, in Sharm El Sheikh over a thousand birds die every season at the sewage ponds there due to water contamination.23

- Pesticides contain toxic chemicals that are designed to be harmful to a target pest (insects, rodents, fungi, unwanted plants, bacteria etc.) but can also have negative long-term impacts on non-target species and the entire environment. Pesticides are used commonly in household, garden and lawn products, in insect repellents as well as in swimming pool chemicals and applied on a large scale in the agricultural sector (e.g. seed treatment, weed control etc.)

- Artificial/inorganic fertilizers used for gardening add nutrients to the soil which are usually highly concentrated and soluble and therefore released faster than plants are able to uptake them. As a consequence over-applied inorganic fertilizers excessive nutrients are leached and might pollute natural systems. High inputs of nutrients to aquatic systems result in increased algal production (algae bloom) linked with reduced water quality. Birds drinking from polluted water sources or feeding on contaminated fish are likely to be affected. In addition inorganic fertilizers create an unfavourable environment for microorganisms vital for natural soil fertility and plant growth.
1.5.5. HUMAN DISTURBANCE

Recreational activities

Unmanaged tourist activities can result in disturbance to resting, feeding or roosting birds. If disturbance occurs everyday particularly in early morning hours, ‘before thermals have developed, then flying will be difficult and energy-demanding particularly if there are no suitable alternative roost sites nearby’.23 This could increase mortality rates during migration. Migrating birds on Egyptian shorelines that depend on mangroves as a foraging, nesting and protecting area might be disturbed by water sports activities such as kite surfing. Other activities such as off-road activities with 4x4 cars and quad bikes (beach buggies) can also have a negative impact birds when such activities are unmanaged.

Light and noise pollution

Light and noise from hotel facilities can disturb wildlife, making it more difficult for some species to feed and reproduce effectively.31 Illuminated buildings and outdoor features can pose threat to night migrating species, which depending on starlight for orientation and are not able to recognize glass surfaces as a barrier. Intense upright lighting and floodlights potentially increases risks of collision and disturbance as well as large vegetation placed close to illuminated windows (e.g. lobby area). Birds lose orientation and are more likely to collide and hesitant to leave the light area. Bad weather condition force usually high-flying migrants to lower down, where they could be harmed through light pollution. Weather conditions with fog and humid air can also increase the illuminated area by refracting light.

Lack of awareness

Lack of awareness is essentially at the heart of most environmental issues in the region. Tourism facilities, local communities as well as local governmental administrations remain unaware of the ecological, historical and economic value of birds to Egypt. Furthermore, they remain unaware of the threats to migratory birds as they fly over Egypt. This increases the incidence of harmful environmental practices, and decreases the benefits that may be attained through celebrating, protecting and conserving migratory birds and their habitats.
SECTION 2: SCOPE & USE OF GUIDELINES
2.1.1. WHY HAVE THESE GUIDELINES BEEN DEVELOPED?

The Guidelines of Best Practice for Bird Friendly Hotels Along the Egyptian Flyway are an attempt to ensure the overall benefit of the Egyptian tourism industry, local communities of the flyway, and migratory birds. Through the implementation of these guidelines, birds will face fewer threats, allowing tourism facilities and local communities to benefit from the added value that comes with the conservation of birds and their natural habitats. If the current threats posed by tourist accommodation facilities along the Egyptian flyway persist, this increases risks ecological hazards, as well as the loss of potential, sustainable economic gains.

Therefore, these guidelines aim to reduce the threats posed to migratory birds as they migrate through Egypt, and provide a competitive edge to tourism within the flyway by celebrating and highlighting the natural spectacle of migratory birds.

2.1.2. WHO CAN BENEFIT FROM THESE GUIDELINES?

“…tourist accommodation facilities in their operational phase, located along Egypt’s Red Sea Coast and Upper Nile Valley basin…”

The Guidelines of Best Practice for Bird Friendly Hotels Along the Egyptian Flyway have been developed for tourist accommodation facilities, most notably (but not exclusively) hotels, located along the Egypt’s Red Sea Coast (including the Gulf of Suez & South Sinai), as well as hotels located within Upper Egypt’s Nile valley basin.

The guidelines have been developed for tourist accommodation facilities of variable scales; large five-star hotels as well as smaller eco-lodges can benefit from the produced guidelines, gain a competitive edge, and assist in the conservation of birds migrating over Egypt.

Furthermore, these guidelines of best practice focus on the management and design of facilities, administrative practices, and bird friendly services.
2.2. HOW TO USE THIS DOCUMENT

1. Review guidelines of best practice (Section 3).

2. Fill out the questionnaire provided in Annex 1 to assess your current performance.

3. Adopt guidelines of best practice where applicable, to ensure maximum benefit for you and migratory sowing birds.

4. Periodically assess compliance to guidelines and commitment to nature conservation.
SECTION 3:
GUIDELINES OF BEST PRACTICE
FOR BIRD FRIENDLY HOTELS
This section specifically deals with the administrative components of your tourist accommodation facility. By administrative components, these guidelines refer to the administrative actions and process that should be implemented, to set a strong administrative foundation for bird friendly practices. The following topics will be discussed:

3.1.1. Legal Compliance with Environmental Legislations (Law 4/1994);
3.1.2. Environmental Policy
3.1.3. Environmental Management System;
3.1.4. Staff Development and Training;
3.1.5. Raising Guest Awareness on Birds & Biodiversity of the Flyway;
3.1.1. LEGAL COMPLIANCE WITH ENVIRONMENTAL LEGISLATIONS (LAW 4/1994)

It is essential that any tourist accommodation facility functioning in Egypt be established and maintained in accordance with Egyptian legislation. Compliance with local laws is the minimum requirement to ensure an establishment’s dedication to the environmental conservation and sustainable use of local resources. For more details on legal compliance, please refer to ANNEX 3.

3.1.2. ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY

In light of the increased global demand for environmentally friendly services and amenities, many tourist accommodation facilities have established, documented, implemented and maintained environmental policies.

An environmental policy refers to the overall intentions and direction of an establishment to conserve the environment. It provides a framework for actions to conserve the environment and reduce environmental impacts.

If a hotel does have a documented environmental policy in place, it should be updated to include a commitment to the conservation of migratory soaring birds and their flyway.

For more details on an effective environmental policy, please refer to ANNEX 3.

3.1.3. STAFF DEVELOPMENT & TRAINING

The tourist accommodation facility shall ensure that all of its staff, particularly those who may have a potential impact on the environment, are aware of its commitment to environmental protection, and its role in conserving migratory soaring birds.

It is absolutely crucial to include staff in environmental protection efforts taken by the tourist accommodation facility, to ensure that those running the establishment are willing and capable of taking the necessary precautions and procedures (presented in Section 3.2. of this document) to ensure and promote the conservation of migratory soaring birds.

3.1.3.1. - RAISE STAFF AWARENESS ON ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY AND BIRD CONSERVATION:

Staff should be made aware of the tourist accommodation facility’s environmental policy, through documented trainings. A specific emphasis should be placed on how the environmental policy aims for the conservation of migratory soaring birds, as well as nature in general.

3.1.3.2. - ENHANCE BEST PRACTICES OF STAFF AFFECTING THE WELLBEING OF BIRDS:

Staff specifically working in the management of facilities should be competent on the basis of appropriate education, training or experience, to ensure that their practices during working hours do not negatively impact birds. This competence can be achieved through targeted trainings, based on the guidelines of best practice highlighted by this document in Section 3.2 - Bird friendly Management of Facilities.

3.1.3.3. - TRAINING RELEVANT STAFF ON THE MIGRATORY SOARING BIRDS OF THE FLYWAY:

Selected staff should be aware of the migratory soaring birds that regularly visit the premise of the tourist accommodation facility. Targeted trainings will aim to provide staff with basic skills on bird identification, and general knowledge on birds and bird migration. This will help them engage tourists and fellow staff members alike, to appreciate local and migratory birds alike, and promote their conservation.
3.1.4. RAISING GUEST AWARENESS ON BIRDS OF THE FLYWAY

The tourist accommodation facility should ensure that guests are provided with the relevant information needed to increase their awareness on the birds that can be seen in the vicinity, and on the importance of the migratory flyway.

With the Red Sea / Rift Valley Flyway acting as the second most important flyway in the world for migratory soaring birds, it is important for guests to be aware of these birds and understand their importance. The administration should ensure that the following materials and information is made available to guests:

- EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS / LEAFLETS ON RESIDENT & MIGRATORY BIRDS

Leaflets with concise information on common residential and migratory birds (appearance, behaviour, habitats, threats and conservation etc.) on and in the vicinity of the tourist accommodation are useful tools for guided/unguided birdwatching and for general awareness creation. Educational material may also include recommendations when and where to go birdwatching and explain responsible behaviour. Additionally a bird checklist can be added for the detailed overview on the various bird species (scientific and local names) and recording their sighting. Fact and information sheets can be displayed in the room and are also available on demand at the reception for day visitors.

- DIARY OF WILDLIFE SIGHTINGS

An easy way to engage guests and staff is to maintain a diary of wildlife sightings that is easily accessible and highlighted within the hotel. This can become a valuable source of reference for wildlife observations, as well as highlight the value of the hotel.

3.1.5. ENGAGING WITH EGYPTIAN ENVIRONMENTAL NGOS AND INITIATIVES

- Identify local and national NGOs working in the field of environmental protection and nature conservation.
- Engage and coordinate with NGOs to identify common grounds required for awareness raising and capacity building.

It is highly recommended that the administration engages with Egyptian environmental NGOs and other initiatives that have the expertise to assist with training staff on all the different components of the guidelines of best practice. This may include training specific staff members on basic bird guiding; how to get in touch with local bird guides; selecting suitable birdwatching sites; establishing birding trails; and providing the necessary educational material. It is also important to note that collaborations with local Egyptian NGOs increase the legitimacy of the tourist accommodation facility as an ecotourism destination.
SECTION 3: BEST PRACTICE GUIDELINES FOR BIRD FRIENDLY HOTELS

3.1.6. MARKETING BIRDWATCHING SERVICES TO LOCAL AND INTERNATIONAL TOURISTS

Birdwatching tourism provides fantastic opportunities to attract a wide range of tourists, varying from specialized birdwatchers to regular tourists hoping to enjoy the different elements of Egypt’s nature. In order to tap into this lucrative and varied base of clientele, specific marketing techniques can be used to market your tourist accommodation facility as a birdwatching hotspot.

3.1.6.1. PROMOTIONAL MATERIALS SHOULD INTEGRATE BIRDS AND BIRDWATCHING ACTIVITIES

If possible, brochures, pamphlets, posters and other promotional materials used by the hotel should include pictures of local and migratory birds that can be seen in your area. The use of birds as visual aids will increase your appeal and attract more birdwatchers and non-birdwatchers alike. Promotional materials should also include birdwatching services offered by/through your tourist accommodation facility. Such pictures and resources can be made available through local NGOs working in the field of nature conservation and documentation, such as Nature Conservation Egypt (NCE), as well as local wildlife photographers.

3.1.6.2. ONLINE MARKETING SHOULD BE USED TO PROMOTE BIRDS AND BIRDWATCHING ACTIVITIES

- **Online platforms**, such as websites and Internet forums, are an excellent way to promote your services and amenities to a wider scope of tourists from all around the world.

- **Official website** should mention your location along the second most important migratory route for soaring birds in the world, as well as the variety of birds that can be seen in your area.

- **Online booking** portals and travel websites should be contacted and informed of your birdwatching services, to ensure that birdwatchers from around the world are aware of your facilities and available services. Such portals and travel websites also allow tourists to review your accommodation facility, increasing your appeal to potential clients looking for second opinions. Examples include (TripAdvisor.org; Booking.com; ResponsibleTravel.com, etc…)

- **Social media** tools should be utilized to promote your tourist accommodation facility as a bird friendly establishment that promotes bird conservation and offers birdwatching activities. Social media has revolutionized the way in which information is exchanged between people locally, regionally and internationally. Whether through your official Facebook page or Twitter account, it is important to engage members of the online community by sharing your most recent updates, offers, packages, and pictures, to keep potential guests interested. Breath-taking pictures of nature (especially birds) are particularly effective in attracting users to your social media outlets.
3.1.6.3. PARTNERING WITH LOCAL AND INTERNATIONAL TOUR OPERATORS, COMPANIES AND GUIDES

LOCAL BIRD GUIDES: It is important for tourist accommodation facilities to identify and coordinate with local birdwatching guides already providing their services to tourists. This ensures that local birdwatching guides can benefit by providing their services to your guests.

LOCAL TOUR OPERATORS: Collaborative marketing with local tour operators working along the Egyptian migratory flyway (Red Sea and Upper Egypt) are an effective way to market your tourist accommodation facility as an attractive birdwatching destination to both Egyptian and non-Egyptian tourists. Specific local tour operators may be experienced in outreach to foreign markets through their partnerships with international tour operators.
SECTION 3.1. SUMMARY OF ACTIONS FOR BIRD FRIENDLY ADMINISTRATION:

3.1.1. LEGAL COMPLIANCE WITH ENVIRONMENTAL LEGISLATIONS - LAW 4/1994
   i. Ensure at least the minimum compliance with regulations set by environmental legislations and decrees.
   ii. Resolve any violations to environmental legislations and decrees.

3.1.2. ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY
   i. If a documented environmental policy exists, it should highlight the commitment to conserving migratory soaring birds and safeguarding their flyway.

3.1.3. STAFF DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING
   i. Raise staff awareness on environmental protection and bird conservation.
   ii. Enhance best practices of staff affecting the wellbeing of birds.
   iii. Train relevant staff on the migratory soaring birds of the flyway.

3.1.4. RAISING GUEST AWARENESS ON BIRDS & BIODIVERSITY OF THE FLYWAY
   i. Ensure that guests are provided with the materials needed to increase their awareness on the birds that can be seen in the vicinity, as well as the importance of the migratory flyway.
   ii. Keep a diary of wildlife sightings to engage both guests and staff.

3.1.5. ENGAGING WITH ENVIRONMENTAL NGOS & INITIATIVES
   i. Identify local and national NGOs working in the field of environmental protection and nature conservation.
   ii. Engage and coordinate with NGOs to identify common grounds required for awareness raising and capacity building.

3.1.6 MARKETING BIRDWATCHING SERVICES TO LOCAL & INTERNATIONAL TOURISTS
   i. Promotional materials should integrate birds and birdwatching activities.
   ii. Online marketing should be used to promote birds and birdwatching activities.
   iii. Partnering with local and international tour operators, companies and guides.
3.2. GUIDELINES ON BIRD FRIENDLY MANAGEMENT & DESIGN OF FACILITIES

This segment of the guidelines deals with the tourist accommodation’s management and design of its facilities. While the first section of the guidelines (3.1.) deals with a wide array of administrative aspects, this section of the guidelines (3.2.) deals with how your facilities should can be managed and/or designed in a manner that reduces threats to migratory soaring birds.

The following section on bird friendly management and design of facilities will deal with the following topics:

3.2.1. Landscaping
3.2.2. Water bodies
3.2.3. Golf courses
3.2.4. Waste management
3.2.5. Building design
3.2.1. BIRD FRIENDLY LANDSCAPING

Landscaping typically refers to improving the aesthetic appearance of a piece of land by changing its contours, adding ornamental features, or planting trees and shrubs. Gardening and vegetation are an essential component behind landscaping.

The selection of plants, structure and maintenance of vegetation affects the existence and variety of birds and wildlife in the garden. Plants play an important role in the ecosystem by providing a natural microhabitat and a protective layer for wildlife. For birds, trees and shrubs offer shelter for resting and roosting as well serve as ideal perching and lookout sites. Trees and shrubs provide fundamental food sources with the production of fruits, seeds and/or flowers. By attracting more birds, there are increased opportunities for birdwatching tourism, as well as natural pest control where migratory birds can feed on unwanted pests (rodents, insects, etc.)

THREATS TO BIRDS

• Habitat loss/degradation

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

• Use native plants and vegetation
• Promote sustainable mowing, trimming and pruning
• Reduce/avoid the use of toxic pesticides, and depend on natural/sustainable alternatives
• Use natural fertilizers; organic compost and nitrogen fixers
• Use rooftops for gardening/landscaping (rooftop gardening)

BENEFITS TO TOURIST ACCOMMODATION FACILITY

• Safer, eco-friendly environment for guests
• Reduced costs for resources
• Increased opportunities for birdwatching in the vicinity
• Natural pest control by migratory birds

BENEFITS TO BIRDS

• Safer, more suitable habitats for resting, roosting and feeding
• Reduced threats of poisoning
Native vegetation refers to all the vegetation that naturally occurs in an area/region, as opposed to non-native or introduced species of vegetation that have been introduced from other places around the world. Native vegetation is more adapted to local conditions and habitats, meaning they require fewer resources for maintenance (water, fertilizers, pesticides). Native vegetation can meet the needs of birds and enhance the habitat value of gardens. However, the majority of plants selected for hotel gardens are introduced species with an ‘ornamental’ value. This means they are planted mainly for decorative purposes. Irrespective of aesthetic characteristics, there are mostly no other functions. If planted outside their natural range, some introduced species can become invasive and cause serious threats to biodiversity. Thus, non-native (introduced) plants are not recommended for outdoor landscaping. Rather, native plants are encouraged because they use less water, require less pesticides, and increase the nutritional value of the soil (nitrogen fixers).

Such examples can be planted in mixed gardens of native and non-native plants, and are specially recommended for the use in landscaping around tourist accommodations. By including native species into the garden area, and creating natural habitats safe and attractive for birds and other wildlife, tourist accommodation facilities can make a valuable contribution to the country’s floral and faunal biodiversity.

Tourists may also be interested in seeing native flora. Combine desert plants with common ornamental plants already established in the region. Additionally, tourists can be engaged through interpretation boards that highlight the importance of native plants to local wildlife and migratory birds.
3.2.1.2. BIRD FRIENDLY MAINTENANCE OF VEGETATION (MOWING, TRIMMING & PRUNING)

**ACTIONS**

- Prune vegetation to enhance dense growth
- Check for nests before trimming and cutting vegetation
- Leave untouched patches of vegetation while trimming and cutting
- Apply a rotation system where each type of vegetation is maintained at different times

**BENEFITS**

- Healthier, more sustainable gardens for birds & other wildlife
- Alternative, more natural appearance of gardens

Maintenance of vegetation refers to the actions taken to maintain and preserve plants, including mowing, trimming and pruning of vegetation. Bird friendly maintenance can play a crucial role in protecting biodiversity whilst remaining attractive to guests. Depending on the kind of methods and procedures applied, bird friendly maintenance can substantially benefit wildlife.

1 **PRUNE VEGETATION TO ENHANCE DENSE GROWTH**

Pruning is the practice of cutting away dead or overgrown branches or stems to increase fruitfulness and growth. Pruning enhances dense growth of shrubs and habitat structure, allowing for healthier vegetation that is more resilient against pests.

2 **LEAVE UNTouched PATCHES OF VEGETATION WHILE TRIMMING AND CUTTING**

- Bird friendly gardens host plants of different heights, patches with open spaces as well as dense vegetation suitable for a wide range of birds.

3 **APPLY A ROTATION SYSTEM WHERE EACH TYPE OF VEGETATION IS MAINTAINED AT DIFFERENT TIMES**

- Apply a rotation system in which each vegetation type (trees, hedges, lawn, paths) is not maintained at the same time, so that birds can benefit from as much of the present vegetation as possible.

4 **ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE**

Garden waste can be used for mulching the beds to reduce the growth of weeds or compiled at designated undisturbed areas (along water, paths, hedges) for enhanced habitat structure. Native or introduced vegetation already used by birds should not be removed before replacement plants have established. Weeds, which are not suppressive, can be supportive in this process.29
### 3.2.1.3. MANAGING PESTICIDES AND FERTILIZERS

#### ACTIONS

1. Avoid/reduce toxic chemicals in pesticides & fertilizers
2. Document the use of products and apply them according to the set descriptions
3. Apply mechanical prevention methods to reduce the need for fumigation
4. Integrate natural alternatives to chemical pesticides
5. Use natural fertilizers

#### BENEFITS

1. Healthier environment for both birds and guests
2. Cutting costs on chemical products

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**1 AVOID/REDUCE TOXIC CHEMICALS IN PESTICIDES & FERTILIZERS**

- The use of chemical pesticides and fertilizers can be significantly harmful to both wildlife and guests. Due to the dangers posed by such chemicals, tourist accommodation facilities are strongly encouraged to avoid toxic chemicals in pesticides and fertilizers.

**2 DOCUMENT THE USE OF PRODUCTS AND APPLY THEM ACCORDING TO THE SET DESCRIPTIONS**

- In the case that such products are to be used, this use should be documented, and applied in accordance to the product description, without excess (reduced usage). Documentation of chemicals’ use ensure monitoring and accountability by designated staff.

**3 APPLY MECHANICAL PREVENTION MEASURES TO REDUCE NEED FOR FUMIGATION:**

- Mechanical prevention measures can be applied to reduce the need for fumigation while maintaining guest comfort. For example: providing guests with mosquito nets and coils; reducing the use of artificial light sources at night (so as to attract less flying insects); properly sealing waste bins and other open food sources.

**4 INTEGRATE NATURAL ALTERNATIVES INSTEAD OF CHEMICAL PESTICIDES**

- Natural/herbal methods have proven to be increasingly effective pesticides that do not negatively impact biodiversity or surrounding water sources. Planting mint, dill and garlic are good examples or herbal pesticides that deter specific pests.
- Effective prevention measures against insect damage on plants are pulling out weak plants, creating healthy organic soil conditions, and keeping plant foliage dry. Increasing the variety of plants, specifically native plants, can reduce the impact of insects on vegetation (mixed plant beds).
- Integrated Pest Management (IPM) is the ‘coordinated use of pest and environmental information with available pest control methods to prevent unacceptable levels of pest damage by the most economical means and with the least possible hazard to people, property, and the environment’. Common prevention methods used are mechanical traps and barriers, natural predators (e.g., insects that feed on harmful insects), insect growth regulators and pheromones 35 (biological mating scents).

*Example for IPM: Setting up bat boxes in trees and structures can provide roosting habitats for bats, which act as a natural means for controlling insect populations. This also adds an exciting wildlife dimension for nature-lovers, and promotes the hotel’s care for wildlife and the environment.*
- Organic compost: This is decomposed organic matter that is recycled and used as a natural fertilizer to improve soil structure and enhance fertility, without the use of chemicals. Compost is beneficial for the microorganisms in the soil that are essential for the conversion of minerals into crucial nutrients for plants. Organic compost can be purchased from nearby local communities that recycle organic waste, or can be produced by your tourist accommodation facility by recycling organic waste (refer to the section on Bird-Friendly Waste Management).

- Nitrogen fixers: Nitrogen is one of the primary nutrients required by plants to grow. You can increase the supply of nitrogen in the soil by planting specific legumes Nitrogen fixing plants, such as legumes (beans, peas, etc.), convert atmospheric nitrogen in symbiosis with microorganisms associated to their root system into plant-usable form. Therefore less external inputs of fertilizers are needed.
### 3.2.1.4. Roof Top Gardening/Landscaping

#### ACTIONS

1) Designate accessible rooftops that may be suitable for gardening/landscaping
2) Plant rooftops with a variety of native vegetation
3) Explore the possibility of planting vegetables and herbs suited for the local climate
4) Provide guests access to rooftop gardens

#### BENEFITS

1) Regenerating suitable habitats for birds to rest and feed
2) Creating attractive, green areas for guests
3) Providing an alternative, organic source of vegetables for guests
4) Cooling mechanism for buildings (protecting roofs from the sun)

Rooftops are often neglected architectural elements that can have both ecological and economic benefits for tourist accommodations, creating potential for habitat creation. Green rooftops make urban ecosystems healthy and attractive for humans and wildlife. Even smaller green areas can be important stepping-stones for migratory birds, facilitating migration and interactions between plant and animal populations. Birds resting and feeding on green rooftops are less disturbed by human activity, and would increase birdwatching opportunities in the vicinity. Additionally, vegetated surfaces prevent damages of roofs by reducing temperature fluctuations and UV-radiations, therefore are beneficial for the durability of the building.

### 1. Designate Accessible Rooftops That May Be Suitable for Gardening/Landscaping

- Tourist accommodation management should locate and designate accessible rooftops that may be suitable for gardening and/or landscaping, to ensure that rooftop gardening/landscaping can happen effectively, by exerting the least amount of effort in transporting resources to the rooftops, as well as to provide guests access to the rooftop gardens.

- Consider safety precautions, such as fencing rooftops to reduce dangers for staff gardeners and visitors alike.

- External factors, such as sun, shade and wind should be taken into consideration while selecting a suitable rooftop. The selection of rooftops should happen in coordination with experienced staff responsible for gardening and landscaping.

### 2. Plant Rooftops With a Variety of Native Vegetation

- Planting native vegetation is strongly recommended, to ensure that rooftop gardening uses the least amount of resources possible (water, pesticides, etc.). Native vegetation is very attractive to birds, and can also provide the tourist accommodation facility with the opportunity to showcase native botany to guests interested in learning about Egypt’s nature. Please refer to the previous section titled, “Native Plants and Vegetation.”
3 EXPLORE THE POSSIBILITY OF PLANTING VEGETABLES AND HERBS SUITED FOR THE LOCAL CLIMATE

- An increasing amount of tourist accommodations are providing their guests with “home-grown” organic vegetables and herbs, as an attempt to improve the quality of food served. Although it is unlikely that rooftop gardens can fulfil the full demand of the tourist accommodation facility, home-grown vegetables and herbs can be offered at a higher price as a gourmet service for guests who request it.

- Possible vegetables suitable for the winter include broccoli, cabbage, lettuce, onion, potato and spinach. Other vegetables suitable for the summer include cucumber, pepper, tomato, and beans.

- Possible herbs suitable for your rooftop garden include sage, thyme, and rosemary, as they require less attention than other herbs.

SECTION 3: BEST PRACTICE GUIDELINES FOR BIRD FRIENDLY HOTELS

4 PROVIDE GUESTS ACCESS TO ROOFTOP GARDENS

- Rooftop gardens should be showcased to guests, to promote native plants, local gardening, and a greener, more sustainable approach to tourism. Guests should be informed of the rooftop garden’s location, and provided information with the types of vegetation present.

- Guests should be given the opportunity to partake in gardening rooftops, to engage them in ‘green activities’, and to explain the importance of habitat recreation for migratory birds.

The concept of rooftop gardens is not alien to Egypt. Several local pioneering initiatives in already managed to convert Egyptian rooftops to green and fruitful gardens in order to support and diversify human livelihoods, most notably Schaduf– Urban Microfarms (http://www.schaduf.com/).
Artificial open water bodies on, or adjacent to, the premises of tourism accommodation facilities offer suitable habitats for birds to rest, roost and forage for food. Water source, quality and structure play an important role in maintaining a safe, ecologically balanced habitat that is not dangerous to wildlife. Both natural and artificial water bodies pose a potential threat to all birds if heavily polluted, particularly to migrating birds that feed and gather around water bodies during migration (i.e. storks and pelicans).

**THREATS TO BIRDS**
- Degradation of natural, water-based habitats;
- Water contamination;
- Pollution;

**RECOMMENDED ACTIONS**
- Safeguard non-recreational artificial water bodies
- Establish wildlife ponds
- Reduce chemicals used in swimming pools
- Explore alternatives to chlorinated swimming pools

**BENEFITS TO TOURIST ACCOMMODATION FACILITY**
- Safer, eco-friendly environment for guests
- Wildlife friendly water bodies can increase birdwatching opportunities

**BENEFITS TO BIRDS**
- Cleaner water sources for migratory birds
- Reduced contamination of water bodies in the vicinity
- Regenerated habitats suitable for birds
3.2.2.1. CREATING WILDLIFE PONDS

**ACTIONS**

1) Utilize a variation of water depths for the pond
2) Incorporate a high diversity of aquatic flora & fauna
3) Create gently slanted, vegetated edges around the pond

**BENEFITS**

- Safer water bodies for both birds in the vicinity
- Increased opportunities for birdwatching activities
- More natural, appealing aesthetic appearance for guests

Wildlife ponds (also referred to as naturalized ponds) are artificial water bodies that are designed to recreate a natural habitat for local flora and fauna, a small wetland ecosystem attractive for migratory soaring birds. Such ponds function as an oasis for wildlife and can help keep birds away from the swimming pool area. Wildlife ponds can also have a recreational value by offering excellent locations for birdwatching.

1) **UTILIZE A VARIATION OF WATER DEPTHS FOR THE POND**

- Ensure that the pond is relatively shallow, whilst including a variation in water depths to induce thermal movements and prevent stagnation of the pond.

2) **INCORPORATE A HIGH DIVERSITY OF AQUATIC FLORA & FAUNA**

- Incorporate a high diversity of aquatic flora and fauna, which helps oxygenate and clean the wildlife pond from pollutants.

3) **CREATE GENTLY SLANTED, VEGETATED EDGES AROUND THE POND**

- Create gently slanted, vegetated edges (e.g. giant reed, Acacia seyal) that include rocks, to supply shade for birds as well as safety from predators.
There are several benefits to using natural pools and wildlife ponds. They are safe for both birds and humans, and they provide opportunities for birdwatching activities. The aesthetic appearance is more natural and appealing to guests. Additionally, using natural pools instead of chlorinated pools can reduce potential negative effects on wildlife and humans as a result of high chlorine dosages. Monitoring and documenting the usage of disinfectants can also ensure that adequate and sustainable levels of chlorine are maintained at all times.

1 REDUCE AND MONITOR THE USAGE OF CHEMICALS IN SWIMMING POOLS

- Use the minimum, adequate amount of disinfectants (chlorine) as specified by the product description, to achieve appropriate hygienic results. This should reduce potential negative effects to both wildlife and humans as a result of high chlorine dosages.
- Monitor and document the usage of disinfectants, to ensure that adequate and sustainable levels of chlorine are maintained at all times.

2 EXPLORE ALTERNATIVES TO CHLORINATED SWIMMING POOLS

- Natural pools are designed with two linked sections: the first section is the regeneration zone, where water is regenerated using a natural filtering system that includes a variety of aquatic vegetation and stones. The second section is dedicated for swimming.
- The bottom of the natural pool should be sealed with a standard UV and tear resistant plastic sheet, and then covered with earth.

For specialized services located in Egypt to set up your natural pools and wildlife ponds, refer to Archer Corporation (http://www.archer-corporation.com/addresses).
3.2.3. BIRD FRIENDLY GOLF COURSES

Golf courses cover vast green areas within some tourist accommodation facilities, presenting them as potentially valuable habitats for migratory birds, including threatened species. If designed and managed sustainably, golf courses can entail mutual benefits for humans and nature. The ecological value of a golf course increases in areas where nature has been heavily impacted by human development, such as urban and agricultural lands, as well as other areas that are lacking in freshwater and vegetation. However, when designed and managed unsustainably, golf courses can add onto the threats faced by migratory birds as they pass through Egypt twice every year. Furthermore, golf courses can be utilized to promote bird conservation by raising awareness of golfers, as well as providing birdwatchers the opportunity to benefit from golf courses as well.

THREATS TO BIRDS

- Habitat fragmentation/degradation
- Poisoning
- Pollution

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

- Promote native plants and vegetation in golf courses
- Create interconnected and diverse vegetated habitats for birds
- Reduce/avoid the use of toxic pesticides & fertilizers
- Naturalize existent water bodies (i.e. wildlife ponds)

BENEFITS TO BIRDS

- Regenerated natural habitats suitable for birds
- Cleaner water sources for migratory birds
- Reduced threats posed by golf courses to migratory birds

BENEFITS TO TOURIST ACCOMMODATION FACILITY:

- Safer, eco-friendly and more attractive environment for golfers
- Increased birdwatching opportunities
- Reduced costs on resources (water, fertilizers, pesticides, etc.)
Although golf courses in Egypt represent vast green spaces that are attractive to birds, the type of plants and vegetation covering the golf course usually have no beneficial value to local wildlife, including migratory birds. Native vegetation refers to all the vegetation that naturally occurs in an area/region, as opposed to non-native or introduced species that originate from elsewhere. Nevertheless, introduced species of plants are still commonly used to landscape golf courses, and in turn require lots of water for irrigation, as they are not suited to the local climate.

1 USE NATIVE, DROUGHT RESISTANT PLANTS AND VEGETATION ON GOLF COURSES

- Golf courses can be landscaped with more native species that are well suited to the local climate and are more beneficial for birds and other wildlife, instead of totally depending on ornamental, non-beneficial introduced species of plants and vegetation. Native vegetation is more adapted to local conditions and habitats, meaning they require fewer resources for maintenance (water, fertilizers, pesticides).
- Please refer to the section titled “Native plants and vegetation” under “Bird friendly landscaping” for details on suitable choices for native plants.

2 PROMOTE NATIVE PLANTS AND VEGETATION BY SHOWCASING THEM THROUGH GOLF COURSES

- Golf courses are sometimes viewed as additional environmental burdens to developing countries with limited resources. However, there is an opportunity to change this perception: golf courses can be used as a platform to showcase the wide variety of plants that are native to Egypt. This will increase the attractiveness of the golf courses to non-golfers, who in other circumstances would not be interested in seeing/visiting the golf course during their stay at your tourist accommodation facility.
### 3.2.3.2. CREATE INTERCONNECTED AND DIVERSE VEGETATED HABITATS FOR BIRDS

#### ACTIONS

1. Leave untouched patches of vegetation along the golf course
2. Maximise patch sizes and connectivity for birds
3. Use vegetated edges for ponds as buffer zones for wildlife

#### BENEFITS

- Regenerated natural habitats that are safe for birds
- Enhanced habitat value of golf courses for birds & wildlife
- Increased attractiveness of golf course for guests

### 1. LEAVE UNTouched PATCHES OF VEGETATION ALONG THE GOLF COURSE

- While trimming and mowing the golf course, leave as many untouched patches of vegetation as possible. This increases the quantity of suitable habitats for birds, whether for resting or feeding.
- Leaving untouched patches of vegetation will also make your golf course look more natural and unique, straying away from the standard, boring appearance of perfectly trimmed golf courses.

### 2. MAXIMISE PATCH SIZES AND CONNECTIVITY FOR BIRDS

- Ensure that patches of vegetation on the golf course are as large as possible, to provide safe resting and feeding areas for birds.
- Connect patches of vegetation with one another, allowing for natural corridors for birds and other wildlife. This enhances the golf course’s value as a safe habitat for wildlife. These clusters of interconnected vegetation form a corridor in which birds are protected from predation while moving between different habitats.

### 3. USE VEGETATED EDGES FOR PONDS AS BUFFER ZONES FOR WILDLIFE

- Maximize the value of existent water bodies by increasing the density of surrounding vegetation, creating safe buffer zones for birds and other wildlife, undisturbed by human interaction and less impacted by pollutants.
### 3.2.3.3. MANAGING THE USE OF PESTICIDES & FERTILIZERS

#### ACTIONS

1. Avoid/reduce toxic chemicals in pesticides & fertilizers
2. Document the use of products and apply them according to the set descriptions
3. Utilize natural alternatives to pesticides & fertilizers

#### BENEFITS

- Healthier environment for both birds and golfers
- Reduced costs on chemical products

#### 1. AVOID/REDUCE TOXIC CHEMICALS IN PESTICIDES & FERTILIZERS

- Whenever possible, avoid the use of chemical pesticides and fertilizers as they can pose significant dangers to the well-being of birds and other wildlife.
- When it is absolutely necessary to use chemical pesticides and fertilizers, reduce the quantity as much as possible.

#### 2. DOCUMENT THE USE OF PRODUCTS AND APPLY THEM ACCORDING TO THE SET DESCRIPTIONS

- In the absolutely necessary case that chemical products are applied on golf courses, this use should be documented, in light of the tourist accommodation facility’s environmental management system (refer to Section 1 of the guidelines, titled Bird Friendly Administration). Documentation of chemicals’ use ensure monitoring and accountability by designated staff.
- Products should be applied in accordance to the set product description, without excess (reduced usage).

#### 3. UTILIZE NATURAL ALTERNATIVES TO PESTICIDES & FERTILIZERS

- Fertilizers: It is recommended to use organic compost rather than chemical fertilizers to reduce chemical contamination of the golf course, and to strengthen the nutritional foundations of the soil.
- Pesticides: Pruning and trimming vegetation, specifically weak plants, will leave less room for pests to take effect. Use natural herbs to deter specific pests, while using an integrated pest management system to control other pests. Note that migratory birds act as a biological means for pest control, as they feed on many of pests such as insects or rodents.

**Please refer above to Section 3.2.1.3 – Managing Pests and Fertilizers for more information.**
3.2.3.4. NATURALIZE EXISTENT WATER BODIES (WILD LIFE PONDS)

**ACTIONS**

1) Create natural wildlife ponds
2) Safeguard existent water bodies on golf courses

**BENEFITS**

- Regenerated natural habitats for wildlife
- Safer water bodies for birds
- More attractive, exotic golf courses for guests

1 CREATE NATURAL WILDLIFE PONDS

- Although golf courses are typically scattered with different water bodies to diversify the golfing terrain, many of these water bodies are not beneficial to biodiversity, but are only used for aesthetic/decorative purposes. By following section 3.2.2.2 - Creating wildlife ponds, natural ponds should be created to provide beneficial habitats for migratory birds.

2 SAFEGUARD EXISTENT WATER BODIES ON GOLF COURSES

- Ensure that reused wastewater that is used to fill up water bodies on the golf course have undergone the necessary treatments before they are accessible to migratory soaring birds. No untreated wastewater should for water bodies on golf courses.
- Regular testing of water bodies in golf courses should take place and be documented in accordance to the established environmental management system. This is to ensure adequate monitoring of a healthy golf course.
3.2.4. BIRD FRIENDLY WASTE MANAGEMENT

**ACTIONS**

1. Separating organic waste from non-organic waste at dumpsites
2. Minimize open-air exposure of solid waste
3. Prevent the use of anti-pest poison baits in dumpsites

When properly designed and managed, waste disposal sites and treatment facilities offer considerable ecological services that often go hand in hand with the obvious social, health and economic benefits. Indeed, waste water and solid waste disposal and treatment sites can provide important and safe habitats, notably resting and feeding sites for migrating and resident birds. Tourist accommodation facilities can enhance their waste management practices to ensure a safer, more sustainable environment for birds and guests alike.

**THREATS TO BIRDS**

- Poisoning as a result of pollution, contamination and pest control
- Suffocation/strangulation
- Entanglement in solid waste

**RECOMMENDED ACTIONS**

- Safeguard dumpsites and other solid waste containers
- Promote waste separation by staff and guests

**BENEFITS TO BIRDS**

- Reduced risk of poisoning and illness
- Safer habitats for resting and feeding

**BENEFITS TO TOURIST ACCOMMODATION FACILITY:**

- Healthier and more sustainable environment for guests
- Increased birdwatching opportunities
- Increased awareness on sustainable waste management
- Long term financial gains resulting from recycling & composting
SECTION 3: BEST PRACTICE GUIDELINES FOR BIRD FRIENDLY HOTELS

3.2.4.1. SAFEGUARDING DUMPSITES AND OTHER SOLID WASTE CONTAINERS

<table>
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<tr>
<th>ACTIONS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1) Separating organic waste from non-organic waste at dumpsites</td>
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<td>2) Minimize open-air exposure of solid waste</td>
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<td>3) Prevent the use of anti-pest poison baits in dumpsites</td>
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<th>BENEFITS</th>
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<td>1) Reduced risk of poisoning and illness</td>
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<td>2) Decreased infestation of unwanted pests</td>
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<td>3) Cleaner and safer environment for guests and local staff</td>
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1 SEPARATING ORGANIC WASTE FROM NON-ORGANIC WASTE AT DUMPSITES

- Organic waste should be separated from non-organic waste at the tourist accommodation facility’s dumpsite, using different containers or allocated spaces for each type of waste. This aims to ensure that birds do not consume non-organic materials that could lead to poisoning, suffocation or strangulation.

- Organic material can then be used to produce compost (organic fertilizer), suitable for fertilizing the soil and replacing the need for chemical fertilizers.

2 MINIMIZE OPEN-AIR EXPOSURE OF SOLID WASTE

- Whether at the tourist accommodation’s dumpsite or in waste bins located on the premises of the tourist accommodation facility, open-air exposure of solid waste should be minimized. Containers and bins should be constantly sealed.

- Minimizing exposure of solid waste to open air reduces the chances of birds feeding on harmful waste, and will also attract less pests to the dumpsites and garbage bins.

3 PREVENT THE USE OF ANTI-PEST POISON BAITS IN DUMPSITES

- Avoid using anti-pest poison baits in dumpsites, as this increases the chances of bird mortality. While some birds may by mistakenly consume the poison baits, other birds (specifically migratory raptors) may feed on poisoned rodents, further endangering them.

- By minimizing open-air exposure of solid waste, this will reduce the need for poison baits as less pests will be attracted to dump sites.
3.2.4.2. SAFEGUARDING ARTIFICIAL WATER BODIES

**ACTIONS**

1) Test and monitor all artificial water sources regularly
2) Ensure that all reused wastewater in open water bodies has been treated

**BENEFITS**

- Safer water bodies for both birds and guests in the vicinity

1 **TEST AND MONITOR ALL ARTIFICIAL WATER SOURCES REGULARLY**

   - Professional testing of all artificial water sources should take place regularly and be documented, to ensure that open water bodies on the premises of tourist accommodation facilities are safe for both birds and guests.

2 **ENSURE THAT ALL REUSED WASTEWATER IN OPEN WATER BODIES HAS BEEN TREATED**

   - All reused wastewater must have undergone the necessary treatments before being reused for landscape irrigation or to comprise other artificial water bodies that are accessible to migratory soaring birds.
3.2.4.3. PROMOTE WASTE SEPARATION AND AMONGST GUESTS AND STAFF

**ACTIONS**

1) Provide guests with segregated waste containers for different types of waste
2) Inform guests that the tourist accommodation facility separates waste
3) Reduce – Reuse – Recycle

**BENEFITS**

1) Increased efficiency in waste segregation at dumpsites
2) Decreased waste production by the tourist accommodation facility
3) More awareness amongst staff & guests on sustainable practices

1 PROVIDE GUESTS WITH SEGREGATED CONTAINERS FOR DIFFERENT TYPES OF WASTE

- Ideally, tourist accommodation facilities should provide segregated waste containers all across its premises. Separate containers should be provided for organic waste, plastic, metal, paper, and toxic substances (i.e. batteries). If the tourist accommodation facility is incapable of implementing full segregation of waste, it may begin with separating organic waste from inorganic waste. Separating waste is ultimately beneficial for birds, as it reduces the chances of birds accessing and feeding upon potentially harmful waste.
- Ensure that such containers are sealed appropriately, to prevent unwanted pests from accessing waste and to prevent birds from feeding on harmful waste materials.

2 INFORM GUESTS THAT THE TOURIST ACCOMMODATION FACILITY SEPARATES WASTE

- Guests should be made aware of the tourist accommodation facility’s waste segregation system, including information on where the designated waste containers are allocated.
3.2. LANDSCAPING

3.2.1. Use native plants and vegetation
3.2.1.1. Use native plants and vegetation
3.2.1.2. Promote sustainable mowing, trimming and pruning
3.2.1.3. Reduce/avoid the use of toxic pesticides, and depend on natural alternatives
3.2.1.4. Use natural fertilizers; organic compost and nitrogen fixers
3.2.1.5. Use rooftops for gardening/landscaping (rooftop gardening)

3.2.2. WATER BODIES

3.2.2.1. Safeguard non-recreational artificial water bodies
3.2.2.2. Establish wildlife ponds
3.2.2.3. Reduce chemicals used in swimming pools
3.2.2.4. Explore alternatives to chlorinated swimming pools

3.2.3. GOLF COURSES

3.2.3.1. Promote native plants and vegetation in golf courses
3.2.3.2. Create interconnected and diverse vegetated habitats for birds
3.2.3.3. Reduce/avoid the use of toxic pesticides & fertilizers
3.2.3.4. Naturalize existent water bodies (i.e. wildlife ponds)

3.2.4. WASTE MANAGEMENT

3.2.4.1. Safeguard dumpsites and other solid waste containers
3.2.4.2. Promote waste separation by staff and guests
3.3. GUIDELINES ON BIRD FRIENDLY SERVICES

This section sheds light on the different services that can be provided to guests, enhancing their experience at your hotel/facility. The following topics will be discussed:

INTRODUCING THE GLOBAL BIRDWATCHING INDUSTRY

Birdwatching is growing to become one of the most significant forms of responsible tourism around the world, proving itself to be an environmentally conscious recreational activity that provides economic hope for many threatened natural areas around the world. While the term birdwatching refers to the practice of observing birds in their natural environment as a hobby, birdwatching tourism, also known as avitourism, refers to travel outside of one’s usual environment to view birds in their natural habitat.

Although birdwatching attracts tourists from across the socio-economic spectrum, birdwatchers also comprise a large segment of educated and wealthy tourists with high expectations to see birds in their natural habitats. In turn, birdwatchers are willing to pay more money and spend more time than average tourists to have their expectations met. As birdwatching is a nature-based activity, the conservation of birds and their natural habitats is a driving force for more tourism.

3.3.1. Birdwatching tours and activities
3.3.2. Bird surveys
3.3.3. Designating birdwatching spots
3.3.4. Providing gear/equipment for birdwatching
3.3.5. Environmental events and festivities
3.3.6. Opportunities for guests to volunteer/donate to local NGOs & initiatives
3.3.7. Beach clean-ups
3.3.1. BIRDCALLING TOURS AND ACTIVITIES

DIVERSIFY THE AVAILABLE BIRDCALLING PRODUCTS & SERVICES

- The niche market avitourism enables the diversification of products and services offered by the tourist accommodation and increases benefits for the host community. Numerous bird-related activities such as professionally guided, customer oriented tours and excursions (half/full day) to designated birdwatching spots in the surrounding habitats.

- Birdwatching trips should include organised visits to protected areas and national parks, to showcase Egypt’s natural heritage and beauty, alongside the local attempts for conservation.

COORDINATE WITH LOCAL BIRD GUIDES (COMMUNITY GUIDES)

- Birdwatching tours can be organised by trained personnel from the tourist accommodation facility, or arranged in partnership with skilled local bird guides that are familiar with the area and birds. The concept of using ‘community guides’ for birdwatching and other wildlife related activities is widely common in southern African regions and gains popularity all over the continent. Essential birdwatching and guiding skills, as well as compliance to birding ethics, are required. Using local birdwatching guides raises awareness within the community and improves the sense of stewardship towards birds and their habitats. Simultaneously tourists become sensitised to local cultural conditions and social needs. Birdwatching offers a promising alternative source of income generation and has the capacity to serve opportunities for bird conservation. Community-based birdwatching tourism can contribute to the conversion of local poachers to become protectors of their natural wildlife resources.

ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE FOR BIRDCALLING SERVICES

- Birdwatching tours should well prepared and timed, informative, include transport, water supply and offer optional food packages.

- Guided self-drive tours and tailor made tours (specific target species and sites) could also be arranged on request.

- The service provider should be trained in fundamental first aid measures and always carry a complete first aid kit and communication device (cell or satellite phone, radio).

- It is recommended to give a briefing prior to departure regarding the itinerary, relevant safety precautions and responsible behaviour towards birds and the environment (i.e. disturbance, waste disposal).

- Guest health and safety is a crucial priority and should be taken into consideration while planning and implementing any activities. It is advisable to draft a plan of actions in case of emergency, including communication with local medical services, hospitals and police.

- Provide your guests with information on all the available birdwatching tours and other nature-related tours, including a detailed description, timing, price, and so on. This information can be listed and attached to the general information booklet in the room or posted in the lobby/reception area.

- Create a ‘nature room’ where guests have the opportunity to enjoy indoor nature and bird related activities. These may include screening documentaries about migratory birds, displaying bird books and posters, and so on.
Conservation organisations in Egypt perform regular counts on different migrating birds to investigate their migration patterns and populations. Travelers interested in bird identification, habitat surveys or banding may want to participate in such activities. Willing and able guests can also carry out bird surveys on the premises of the tourist accommodation using checklists. These activities will be a valuable contribution to assess the variety and number of birds visiting the area.

3.3.2. BIRD SURVEYS

Interpretive signs can be placed in suitable birdwatching spots, with titles such as “Birds of the Red Sea” or ‘Migratory Soaring Birds of the Red Sea Flyway’. Such signs can contain basic information on the birds that can be seen in the vicinity of the tourist accommodation, or on coastal shores and vegetated open water ponds. The signboards could be associated with bird hides, which provide shade, seating and screen birds from direct disturbance, or are mounted along an unguided birding trail. Guests and visitors could be additionally provided with a map, which indicates the location of the birdwatching spots, hides and course of the birdwatching trail.

- A bird hide is a shelter, often camouflaged, that is used to observe wildlife, especially birds, at close quarters.

- A birdwatching trail is a specific route that guests can follow to see different types of birds, as well as different wildlife and plants.

3.3.3. DESIGNATE BIRDWATCHING SPOTS IN THE VICINITY

- Offering and/or renting binoculars, telescopes and field guides give the opportunity to travellers without own equipment watch birds like a professional. Equipment could be handed out at the reception or is available from staff responsible for activities. If it is not financially feasible to buy binoculars/telescopes, local guides/operators and NGOs may be able to provide this, and have costs included into the price of trips and activities.

- Tourist accommodations with craft/gift shops can extend their selection with outdoor equipment (hats, T-shirts, sunscreen etc.), specific birdwatching gear, guidebooks, postcards with birds, posters and leaflets.
Local initiatives for nature conservation are actively involved in the protection of migratory birds and their stopover habitats. Conservation can be promoted through voluntary engagement (community, staff) or directly supported through financial contributions (tourist accommodation, guests). Contact local NGOs for updates on current projects to see what support can be provided to them.

Regular cleanups of the surrounding areas (beaches, desert plains, close by vegetated space) keep habitats suitable and safe for migratory birds to rest and feed. Events collaborated with staff members, volunteering guests and/or local community raise awareness about threats and conservation issues.

3.3.6. PROVIDE GUESTS WITH OPPORTUNITIES TO VOLUNTEER/DONATE TO LOCAL NGOS & INITIATIVES

Participating in environmental events and festivities together with local NGOs raises awareness, encourages community involvement and is an ideal marketing tool. Some examples of annual events are: World Migratory Bird Day (WMBD) World Environment Day, and International day of Biological Diversity, and International Vulture Awareness Day (IVA).

3.3.7. BEACH CLEAN-UPS

Regular cleanups of the surrounding areas (beaches, desert plains, close by vegetated space) keep habitats suitable and safe for migratory birds to rest and feed. Events collaborated with staff members, volunteering guests and/or local community raise awareness about threats and conservation issues.
SECTION 3.3. GUIDELINES FOR BIRD FRIENDLY SERVICES

3.3.1. ORGANISE BIRDWATCHING TOURS AND ACTIVITIES
3.3.2. PARTICIPATE IN BIRD SURVEYS
3.3.3. DESIGNATE BIRD WATCHING SPOTS IN THE VICINITY
3.3.4. PROVIDE BIRD WATCHING GEAR/EQUIPMENT
3.3.5. ORGANISE ENVIRONMENTAL EVENTS AND FESTIVITIES
3.3.6. PROVIDE GUESTS WITH OPPORTUNITIES TO VOLUNTEER/ DONATE TO LOCAL NGOS AND INITIATIVES
3.3.7. ORGANISE BEACH CLEAN UPS FOR GUESTS AND STAFF
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questionnaire : Bird Friendly Practices</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>N/A</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>3.1. Bird Friendly Administration</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>- 3.1.1. Legal Compliance (Law 4/1994)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Was an EIA produced and submitted to the relevant administrative authorities before/during the establishment?</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Were biodiversity and MSB concerns taken into consideration during the EIA process for the tourist accommodation facility?</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Is there an established and maintained environmental registry?</td>
<td>No</td>
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<tr>
<td>- 3.1.2. Environmental Policy</td>
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<tr>
<td>Does the tourist accommodation abide by a documented environmental policy or code of conduct?</td>
<td>No</td>
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<tr>
<td>Does this environmental policy include specific reference to bird and biodiversity considerations?</td>
<td>No</td>
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<tr>
<td>Is the environmental policy adhered to strongly/modestly/poorly?</td>
<td>No</td>
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<tr>
<td>Is the environmental policy periodically reviewed and adjusted accordingly?</td>
<td>No</td>
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<tr>
<td>- 3.1.3. Environmental Management System</td>
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<tr>
<td>Is there an established, documented and implemented environmental management system?</td>
<td>No</td>
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<tr>
<td>- 3.1.4. Staff Development &amp; Training</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Are top management and staff aware of their site's sensitivity and significance to migratory soaring birds?</td>
<td>No</td>
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<tr>
<td>Is there a periodic awareness/training programme for staff on the environmental policy and other relevant environmental issues?</td>
<td>No</td>
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</table>
### Questionnaire: Bird Friendly Practices

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
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<th>Remarks</th>
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#### 3.1. Bird Friendly Administration (continued)

- **3.1.5. Raising Guest Awareness on Birds & Biodiversity**

  Are guests provided with information on migratory soaring birds, as well as other wildlife that can be seen in the vicinity?

- **3.1.6. Engaging with Environmental NGOs & Initiatives**

  Is management aware of local NGOs & initiatives working in environmental conservation and/or awareness?

  If yes, are local environmental NGOs and initiatives engaged in efforts?

- **3.1.7. Marketing Birdwatching Services to Local & International Tourists**

  Are birdwatching services marketed/promoted to local and international tourists?

  Are online platforms and social media outlets utilized to market birdwatching services?

  Is there an established partnership with local and/or international birdwatching tour companies/operators?

#### 3.2. Bird Friendly Management & Design of Facilities

- **3.2.1. Landscaping**

  Are native plants and vegetation used for landscaping purposes?

  Are birds and other wildlife taken into consideration when mowing, trimming and pruning vegetation?

  Are chemical pesticides and fertilizers used for landscaping/gardening?

  Are natural alternatives to pesticides used to replace/reduce chemicals? (i.e. integrated pest management, efficient maintenance, herbs, etc.)

  Are natural fertilizers (i.e. organic compost and nitrogen fixers) used?
### Questionnaire: Bird Friendly Practices

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>N/A</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
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</table>

#### 3.2. Bird Friendly Management & Design of Facilities (continued)

**- 3.2.2. Water bodies (continued)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>N/A</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Is reused wastewter properly treated before being used?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Does the tourist accommodation facility have wildlife ponds suitable for birds?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Are swimming pools chlorinated with the least amount of chlorine possible in line with the product description?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Does the tourist accommodation facility have natural pools or alternatives to chlorinated swimming pools?</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**- 3.2.3. Golf Courses**

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<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>N/A</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Are native plants and vegetation used for landscaping golf courses?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Are vegetated patches interconnected to provide safe habitats for wildlife?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Do golf courses use chemical pesticides &amp; fertilizers for landscaping?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Are waterbodies affiliated to the golf course “naturalized” (suitable for wildlife)?</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**- 3.2.4. Waste Management**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>N/A</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Is organic waste separated from non-organic waste at on-ground dumpsite(s)?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Are precautionary means taken to minimize open-air exposure of solid waste?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Are anti-pest poison baits used in dumpsites?</td>
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<td>Is waste separation promoted amongst guests and staff?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Is waste recycled by the tourist accommodation facility?</td>
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<tr>
<td>If yes, is organic waste recycled to manufacture compost?</td>
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</table>
## Questionnaire: Bird Friendly Practices

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>3.3. Bird Friendly Services</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>N/A</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Does the tourist accommodation facility offer birdwatching services to guests?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Are birdwatching services/trips coordinated with local bird guides (community guides)?</td>
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<tr>
<td>If yes, are local environmental NGOs and initiatives engaged in efforts</td>
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<tr>
<td>Are bird surveys and counts conducted by the tourist accommodation facility?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Are there designated birdwatching spots in the vicinity?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Is birdwatching equipment (binoculars, bird-guides, etc.) provided to guests for free or for rent?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Does the tourism accommodation facility organise/partake in environmental events and festivities?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Are guests provided with the opportunity to volunteer or donate to local NGOs and initiatives?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Are beach clean-ups organised for guests and staff?</td>
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</table>
Pesticides contain toxic chemicals that are designed to be harmful to a target pest (insects, rodents, fungi, unwanted plants, bacteria etc.) but can also have negative long-term impacts on non-target species and the entire environment. Pesticides are used commonly in household, garden and lawn products, in insect repellents as well as in swimming pool chemicals and applied on a large scale in the agricultural sector (e.g. seed treatment, weed control etc.).

- Insecticides (neonicotinoid e.g. used for seed treatment) can be toxic to terrestrial (pollinators) and aquatic life (invertebrates) and their impacts are still widely underestimated. Pesticides (i.e. DDT) applied with no caution and knowledge of impact on human health and ecology caused in the past high bird mortality rates through the persistence in the environment and concentration upwards through the food chain. Raptors as top predators particularly threatened. Small non-lethal dosages of insecticides have already potential negative impacts on their performance and reproduction of birds.9

Insects as a precious source of proteins compose an important part of birds’ diet. Accordingly insecticides have also an indirect impact on bird species depending on this food source.

- Fumigation describes an insect pest control method using gaseous pesticides and ‘some of these materials are capable of producing serious effects on human health’ and environment. Besides the unpleasant odour, guests, staff and wildlife on the premises are exposed to volatile toxic chemicals. If not applied with precaution and expertise these pesticidal chemicals might have poisonous effects.10

- Herbicides are widely used in the agricultural sector and in gardening for weeds control and are also potentially persistent. Roundup® is a common, widely used herbicide which removes weeds efficiently. At the same time its active chemical agents are suspected to be toxic and harmful for human health and animal life (Ref.). Negative impacts on bird population derived from herbicide usage occur also due to alterations of habitat properties/quality and diversity (decrease in abundance and diversity of food and shelter).
3.1.1. LEGAL COMPLIANCE WITH ENVIRONMENTAL LEGISLATIONS (LAW 4/1994)

It is essential that any tourist accommodation facility functioning in Egypt be established and maintained in accordance with Egyptian legislation. Compliance with local laws is the minimum requirement to ensure an establishment’s dedication to the environmental conservation and sustainable use of local resources. For more further details on legal compliance, please refer to ANNEX 3. Although there are a number of legal requirements at stake, these guidelines of best practice will only look at the following two:

Article 19/20/21: Environmental Impact Assessments (EIAs):
Prior to the inauguration of the tourist accommodation facility, environmental impact assessments (EIAs) are produced, submitted and approved by the relevant administrative bodies.

Action: Present the produced EIA and the relevant administrative approvals required for the establishment of your tourism accommodation facility.

ARTICLE 22: ENVIRONMENTAL REGISTRY
The tourist accommodation facility is to create and maintain an environmental registry that documents all of the environmental factors relating to the establishment.

For more details on the environmental registry required by Egyptian law, please refer to Annex 3 of the Executive Regulations for Law 4/1994.

Action: Present the environmental registry, proving that it is regularly maintained and updated.

3.1.2. ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY

Top management shall establish, document, implement and maintain an environmental policy for the tourist accommodation facility. The environmental policy shall highlight the commitment to conserving migratory soaring birds and safeguarding their flyway.

In light of the increased global demand for environmentally friendly services and amenities, many tourist accommodation facilities have established, documented, implemented and maintained environmental policies.

- An environmental policy refers to the overall intentions and direction of an establishment to conserve the environment. It provides a framework for actions to conserve the environment and reduce environmental impacts. These actions should include those highlighted in this document to promote bird friendly administration (3.1), management of facilities (3.2), and services (3.3).

- Top management (high ranking managers) should set the environmental policy, to ensure maximum dedication to the conservation of nature and specifically birds. This environmental policy should be documented and made accessible to both tourists and the general public.

- The environmental policy should make specific mention of migratory soaring birds, including the need to conserve them and safeguard their migratory flyway (the Red Sea / Rift Valley Flyway).

- Inspired by the ISO 14001 Standards for Environmental Management, an effective environmental policy shall:
  • Be appropriate to the nature, scale and environmental impacts of the tourist accommodation facility;
  • Include a commitment to continual conservation of nature, specifically migratory soaring birds;
  • Include a commitment to comply with applicable legal requirements set out by Egyptian legislation (Law 4/1994);
  • Provide a framework for implementing the environmental policy, by designating specific individuals to implement the set actions and objectives;
  • Be documented, implemented and maintained;
  • Be communicated to all persons working for or on behalf of the tourist accommodation facility;
  • Be made available to the public.

3.1.2. - ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT SYSTEM
An environmental management system shall be established, documented, implemented and maintained, to implement the environmental policy (3.1.2.). Each tourist accommodation facility, regardless of its size, functions with a management system of one sort or another, to ensure that it continues to function efficiently and effectively. An environmental management system (EMS) is a documented set of rules and processes that are used to implement and maintain your environmental policy through a specific set of actions. These actions should include all environmental aspects of the tourist accommodation facility, but with a special emphasis on the actions noted in this document for bird friendly administration, management of facilities, and staff training/awareness.
REFERENCES

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27. J. Colding , C. Folke, Ecosystems February 2009, Volume 12 issue 2, pp 191-206: The Role of Golf courses in biodiversity conservation and ecosystem management
32. American Bird Conservancy (2013). The Impact of the Nation’s Most Widely Used Insecticides on Birds