

POLICY ON PROTECTED AREAS

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ISSUED BY

Sustainability Committee

PROCESS OWNER

Director of Engineering, Security,

APPROVED BY

PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVE

FIVE is committed to environment and supports biodiversity conservation by recognizing that protected areas are essential for biodiversity conservation as well as for the maintenance and functioning natural ecosystems.

All the properties under FIVE aligns with the IUCN-WCPA's Best Practice Protected Area Guidelines.

PROTECTED AREAS

IUCN defines a protected area as:

“A clearly defined geographical space, recognised, dedicated and managed, through legal or other effective means, to achieve the long-term conservation of nature with associated ecosystem services and cultural values.”

Protected areas are the onshore or offshore areas where biological diversity and related resources, both natural and cultural, are protected and maintained, within the scope of a legal framework. Although most protected areas are granted this status under national, regional or local legislation, some protected areas are recognised as such by customary law and tradition (e.g. South Pacific). Moreover, some protected areas are granted this status by international (World Heritage or Ramsar) or regional (Natura 2000 Network) organisations.

The protected areas include:

- National Parks
- Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs)
- Special Areas of Conservation (SACs)
- Special Protection Areas (SPAs)
- Ramsar Wetlands
- Local Sites
- Sites in the process of becoming SACs or SPAs ('candidate SACs', 'possible SACs', 'potential SPAs' and sites of community importance (SCIs) or a Ramsar wetland ('proposed Ramsar site')
- Marine Conservation Zones

Protected areas can be categorised into six types, according to their management objectives:

- **Category I** Protected area managed mainly for science or wilderness protection (I(a) Strict Nature Reserves, and I(b) Wilderness Areas).
- **Category II** Protected area managed mainly for ecosystem protection and recreation (National Park).
- **Category III** Protected area managed mainly for conservation of specific natural features (Natural Monument).
- **Category IV** Protected area managed mainly for conservation through management intervention.
- **Category V** Protected area managed mainly for landscape/seascape conservation and recreation (Protected Landscape/Seascape).
- **Category VI** Protected area managed mainly for the sustainable use of natural ecosystems (Managed Resource Protected Area).

BUFFER ZONE: Any area, often peripheral to a protected area, inside or outside, in which activities are implemented or the area managed with the aim of enhancing the positive and reducing the negative impacts of conservation on neighbouring communities and of neighbouring communities on conservation.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- Local Order No.11 of 2003 prohibits the constructing buildings, structures, roads using motorized vehicles or practicing any agriculture, industrial or commercial activities in the protected areas, or practice any activity, acts or works in areas surrounding the conservation area unless by a permit from the competent authority in accordance with approved conditions and rules.
- Protected area authorities should also have the duty to coordinate with other public and private entities that may be planning construction or other operations in identified buffer or connectivity areas, to inform them of the conservation importance of these areas. In addition, other entities planning development or approving development in such areas should be required to coordinate with the relevant protected areas authority and, where there may be potentially significant impacts, to undertake an EIA: Part III, Chapter 1: Generic elements of protected areas legislation (IUCN).
- Construct or destroy any building or other structure, whether on land or sea in protected areas, operate a business or solicit, sell or attempt to sell any goods or services, including tour companies and tourist businesses, require written permission.
- The Man and the Biosphere (MAB, UNESCO) programme is an intergovernmental scientific programme that aims to establish a scientific basis for enhancing the relationship between people and their environments, thus promoting innovative approaches to economic development that are socially and culturally appropriate and environmentally sustainable.
- The Ramsar Convention on Wetlands of International Importance Especially as Waterfowl Habitat is an international treaty for the conservation and sustainable use of Ramsar sites. It is also known as the Convention on Wetlands.
- IUCN Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs) contribute significantly to the planet's biodiversity and overall health. These sites have proven to be a key tool for guiding decisions on conservation and sustainable management.

GUIDELINES

- Any establishments or constructions under FIVE is not in proximity to the areas under IUCN Green List of Protected and Conserved Areas.
- FIVE will encourage continuous improvement in environmental issues to minimize the impact of hotel operations, defining objectives and monitoring compliance, and promoting the sharing of best practices as examples to be followed within the organisation.
- FIVE will consider consultation with biodiversity expert organizations, such as conservation groups, governmental organisations, or research organisations and universities prior to site selection for future projects.
- FIVE is committed to refrain from operations affecting protected areas and further areas of particular importance for biodiversity including UNESCO Man and the Biosphere Reserves, areas designated under the World Conservation Union (IUCN) designation I-IV, Key Biodiversity Areas, wetlands designated under the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance (the Ramsar Convention).
- Biodiversity risk and impact assessments are conducted prior to every establishment during the planning stage itself.
- At FIVE, we don't use resources that are produced or harvested by methods that are unregulated or particularly damaging to biodiversity.
- Suppliers are chosen based on their compliance with our standards in environmental and biodiversity criteria, where requirements for the goods and services that we obtain from them are specified. We demand the suppliers to improve in sustainable procurement of resources.
- FIVE continuously monitors and/or evaluates the effectiveness of biodiversity management measures adopted.

FUTURE CONSTRUCTION

- In case of any future establish comes in proximity to the buffer zones, a proper Mitigation strategy should be adopted.
- To avoid harming or disturbing protected species proposals could reduce the size of the development or alter its layout to retain the site's important habitat features.
- Plan for construction work should be carried out at specific times to avoid sensitive times, such as the breeding season for wild birds.
- If it is not possible to completely avoid harm, disruption should be as minimal as possible.
- Special emphasis must be given to considerations related to the conservation aims, and to the principles of waste management, and because of this, the construction of such buildings within the protected areas, particularly in their most valuable parts, is to be avoided.
- Demonstrate effective sustainable development through the design and construction of buildings and infrastructure that comply with local zoning and protected or heritage area requirements, respect the natural or cultural heritage surroundings in siting, design, impact assessment and land rights and acquisition, use locally appropriate principles of sustainable construction.
- Natural as well as cultural impact of the construction should be assessed along with environmental and social impact assessment.
- Ensure that the plans are in compliance with recommendations made in Environmental Impact Assessment report.

TARGETS

- Reduce the direct pressures on biodiversity and promote sustainable use of resources.
- Provide staff with any necessary training, and ask them for their ideas and suggestions for biodiversity actions that the hotel could support.
- Create incentives for staff to support biodiversity conservation, e.g., through a 'Green Employee of the Month' award.
- Appoint a senior manager and/or 'green team' to take responsibility for your biodiversity actions.

MITIGATION STRATEGIES

- Developing sites, and locations within sites will be avoided, where existing key habitats, buffer areas and other landscape features of major importance for wildlife would suffer direct impact resulting in the reduction or complete loss of habitat or would suffer an indirect impact from nearby development through increased ecological disturbance and stress.
- Discuss suitable mitigation measures with the developer, and adopt mitigation strategies like moving protected species out of the development site.
- In case of the project cannot be completely dropped out of the protected areas, minimisation of the negative impacts caused by the proposal shall be considered.
- Mitigation plan should include avoidance of harm through best practice, measures to deter species from the location, capture and planned movement of individual species, controlled destruction of shelters, including breeding sites, replacement of shelters or breeding sites, habitat creation or enhancement measures, monitoring, management and remediation measures.
- The overall ecological quality, extent, capacity, structure and functioning of the site and the surrounding ecological network will be enhanced by creating new habitats, buffer areas and landscape features that are of importance for wildlife.
- Rectification efforts based on the restoration and enhancement of surrounding or nearby features unaffected by development will be focused.
- Purchasing strategies will be reviewed accordingly.
- The affected protected area will be compensated by the creation of new or additional buffer areas to reduce possible negative impacts caused by the proposal.

IMPLEMENTATION

- The existing 4 establishments are not in proximity to any of the protected areas listed under IUCN Green List of Protected and conserved areas.
 - The following are the protected areas in United Arab Emirates and Zurich listed under IUCN Green List of Protected and conserved areas.
1. Dubai Desert Conservation Reserve- United Arab Emirates
 2. Al-Wathba Wetland Reserve- United Arab Emirates
 3. Mangrove Marine National Park- United Arab Emirates
 4. Marawah Marine Biosphere Reserve- United Arab Emirates
 5. Swiss National Park- Switzerland

COMMUNICATION

FIVE will promote the communication of this policy among employees and stakeholders, enhancing awareness about policy on protected areas and biodiversity conservation providing communication channels for reporting progress in environmental matters as well as promote environmentally responsible behaviour.