

## Construction of the Embassy of France and Ambassador's residence in Doha, Qatar.

1% for Public Art Scheme



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The Embassy of France and Ambassador's residence build project in Doha, Qatar, on the Doha diplomatic campus is entering the construction phase.

This phase follows the design-build bid process launched in 2015 and a long maturation and development process, with a strong commitment to architecture and the environmental approach pursued by France for its diplomatic facilities.

The design team that won the bid consists of the architectural firm **SUD Architectes** (chief designer), which has partnered with **AR Architectes** for landscape design and the environmental approach. The engineering team involved in the project includes **TEM/EXEKO** for the MEP trades, **RBS** for structural engineering and **EUROPTIMA** for project and financial management.

This team has worked closely throughout the bid process with the general contractor **MATTA**, which is responsible for the construction phase, including the management and execution of the construction works.

### THE CLIENT'S GENERAL PROJECT OBJECTIVES

The Embassy of France in Qatar and Ambassador's residence, currently located on the seafront, are being relocated to a new site, within an area dedicated to foreign diplomatic representations. This relocation is necessary because the land where the current facilities are located is being reassigned by the Qatari authorities for a "seafront" project.

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### THE CITY OF DOHA, QATAR



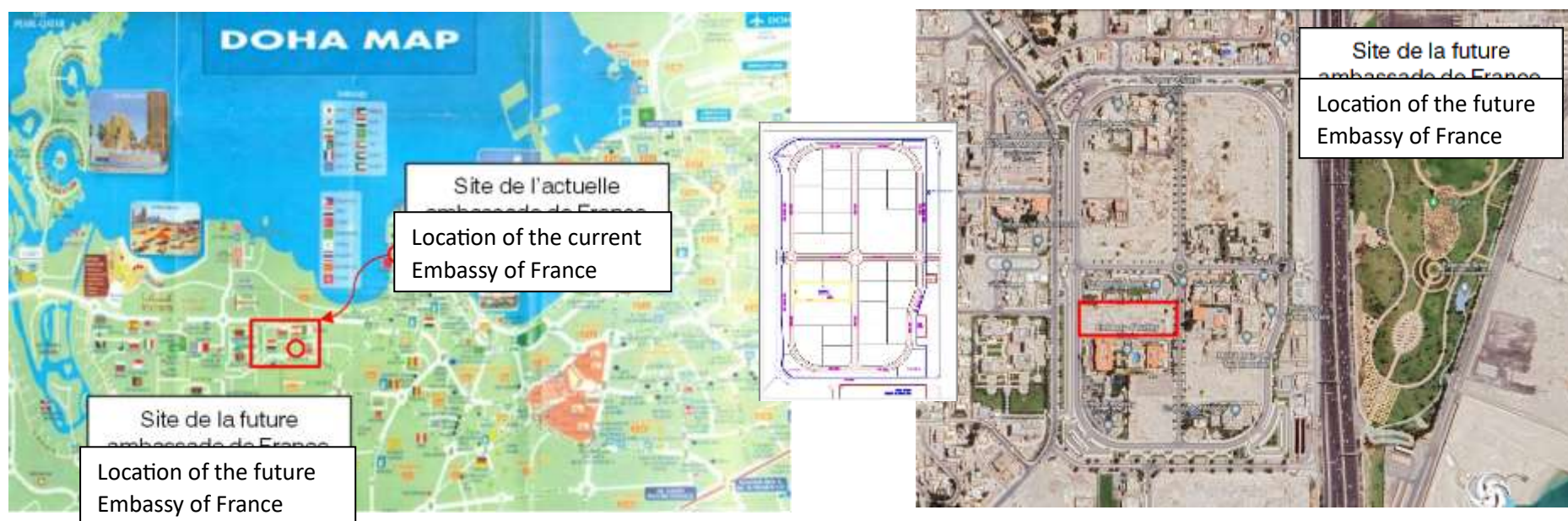
According to Wikipedia, “Doha is the capital city and main financial hub of Qatar. It is located on the Persian Gulf coast in the east of the country, north of Al Wakrah and south of Al Khor, with over 80% of the nation's population living in Doha or its surrounding suburbs. Doha has developed on the waterfront, spreading out gradually in a radial pattern with ring roads” (Wikipedia).

Doha, which is located on the edge of the Arabian Peninsula, has an arid and very hot climate. In summer, the average high temperature between May and September surpasses 38°C with variable humidity, and the dew point can exceed 25°C. Rainfall is scarce, with an annual mean of 75 mm. Winters are mild, with temperatures rarely dropping below 7°C. Summer temperatures frequently exceed 50°C.

### RELOCATION OF THE EMBASSY AND RESIDENCE

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The new diplomatic campus in Doha is already home to several diplomatic representations, built as part of a master plan drawn up by the Qatari Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA), which allocates these plots of land along service roads to countries. The land allocated to France is a rectangular (60 m × 170 m) plot with an approximate area of 10,300 sqm, on which a total build area of around 3,000 sqm will be constructed.

### PROJECT PROGRAMME (2015, excerpts)

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*The project includes two separate buildings to be built: the Embassy of France, which houses all its activities (including its consular section), and the Ambassador's residence, a place of diplomatic representation that should reflect France's standing within the concert of nations. The intention is not to create a place of ostentatious luxury, but rather a functional and pleasant space of high architectural quality to serve visitors.*

*One imperative criterion for the programme is to ensure maximum security of the site and employees. The regional context requires an increased level of security achieved through both appropriate equipment and a functional design that "naturally" facilitates robust protection of the buildings.*

*Local climate conditions require a sensible approach in terms of the durability of the buildings and materials used as well as the quality of use and comfort for daily users and occasional visitors. Accordingly, an embassy is an emblematic public space that should reflect a country's attention to its guests; it is where future tourists, students, entrepreneurs, investors, and others will experience their first impressions before making their trip.*

*From an environmental point of view, the Estate and Logistics Directorate of the Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs would like to make the Embassy of France in Qatar a building of exemplary environmental quality that reflects the best practices in French construction abroad. The embassy and residence has obtained the international French green building certification (known as HQE, issued by CERQUAL Qualitel Certification). To be certified, the diplomatic campus must meet a set of 14 targets covering topics such as how well the building fits into its surroundings, hygrothermal performance, clean construction and energy management.*

*(Based on information from the programme documents produced by SETEC, 2015)*

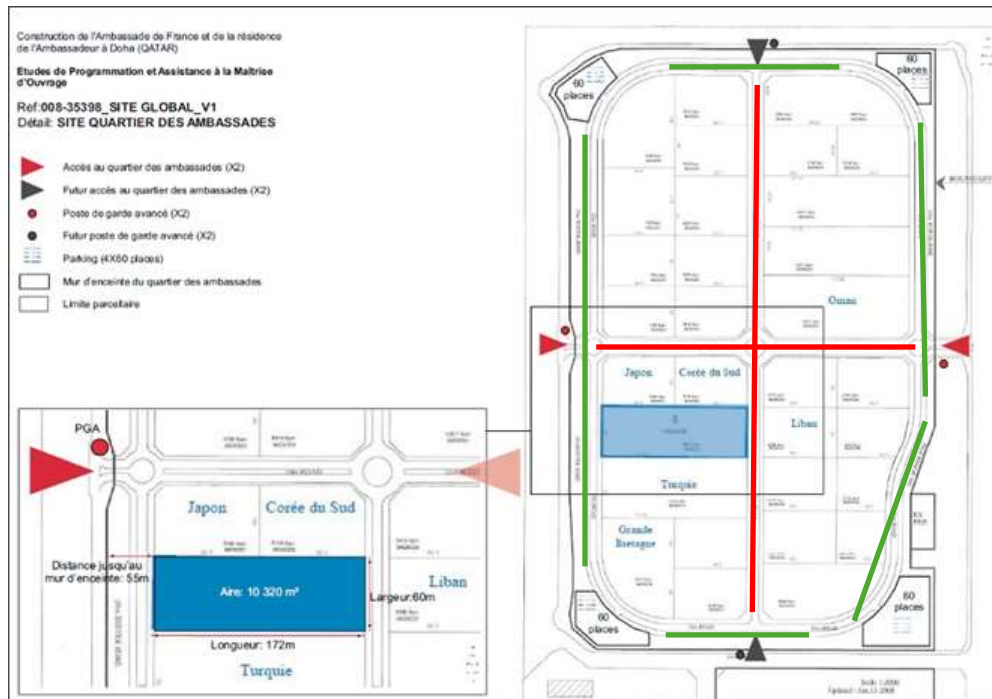
### **AREA AROUND THE PROJECT SITE**



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The diplomatic campus site resembles a housing estate, with rectangular plots that are sometimes subdivided into square plots, arranged along two orthogonal main axes. It is encircled by a carefully constructed perimeter wall with two secure entry points. An inner ring road runs alongside the enclosure.



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The most recent aerial view of the diplomatic campus site shows the current buildings on their respective plots; the undeveloped plots are flat areas of sand. This aerial view shows a general layout, with the desert-like undeveloped plots being predominantly free of vegetation.

The other diplomatic buildings have an eclectic architectural style. Each building is treated as a unique project, while respecting rules that limit building heights. Various architectural styles are on display that either combine traditional features of the different countries or aim for more contemporary styles.



*Embassy of Jordan*



*Embassy of Sudan*



*Embassy of Lebanon*

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The plot allocated to France is bordered by three operational diplomatic sites:

Korea to the north-west, Japan to the north-east and Turkey to the south. Some of the buildings adjacent to the French plot have views overlooking it.



Western view of the French plot



## OVERVIEW OF THE ARCHITECTURAL AND LANDSCAPE PROJECT

The selected project was designed by a consortium comprising SUD Architectes, AR Architectes, TEM/EXEKO, RBS (design firm), EUROPTIMA (project and financial management), and MATTA (general contractor).

### Inspiration

**“Garden carpets and carpet gardens are generally associated with Islamic cultural traditions.”** (Giovanni Curatola, “Gardens and Garden Carpets: an Open Problem”, *Environmental Design: Journal of the Islamic Environmental Design Research Centre*, vol. 2, 1985)

**“The rug is a kind of garden that can move across space.”** (Michel Foucault, “Of Other Spaces”, trans. Jay Miskowiec, *Diacritics* 16, no. 1 (Spring 1986), 24).

**“The nomad finds his space wherever he carries his carpet. He recreates his home by recreating his enclosure and his ground.”** (Manar Hammad, *Lire l'espace, comprendre l'architecture : essais sémiotiques*, 2006, [untranslated]).

**“All you need is a rug on the floor to create your own universe.”** (Louis Kahn, architect)

## **Construction of the Embassy of France and Ambassador's residence in Doha, Qatar.**

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*Our “blank canvas” is an extremely flat and desert-like plot on which we will create an extraordinary, secure environment with a harmonious blend of landscape and built elements ... (extract from the oral bid presentation, 2015).*

The project's design features a strong environmental focus, based on the creation of a self-sustaining ecosystem on a 10,000 sqm strip of sterile sand.

The bioclimatic architecture was considered with an arid environment in mind: the buildings are insulated with compressed earth blocks and wood wool boards, and the roofs planted with desert plants. The orientation of the buildings along a north/south axis creates a shaded area in the centre of the plot, with a water garden that stretches east to west like a green valley, much like an oasis in the desert. This water garden helps regulate the heat around the buildings and, through the use of purifying plants, filters the greywater from the buildings for reuse in the toilets and for watering the palm trees and fruit trees. The embassy, which is expected to be completed in 2026, has been HQE® certified by CERQUAL Qualitel Certification (formerly CERWAY), an achievement showcasing France's expertise in designing sustainable architecture and landscapes.

*Local resources, the climate, topography and vegetation density all work together to create a harmonious landscape that sets off an architectural style that is both welcoming and masterful ... (extract from the oral bid presentation, 2015)*

## Key figures

Surface area: 10,300 sqm

Building footprint: 2,665 sqm

Floor area: 3,640 sqm

Greenery area: 30% of the plot surface area

Number of workstations: 80

Target certification\*: CERTIVEA/CERQUAL HQE ("High Environmental Quality")

Certification received: CERTIVEA/CERQUAL HQE EXCEPTIONELLE ("Exceptional" rating)

\*This process involves creating a bioclimatic building design with respect to the surrounding environment, optimizing water and energy consumption, ensuring easy maintenance and guaranteeing the comfort and health of future users. Building and finishing materials will be chosen so as to limit environmental impact. As a general rule, this means using ecolabelled products with low emissions of harmful substances.

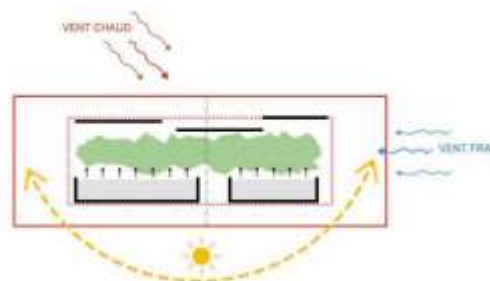
## Construction of the Embassy of France and Ambassador's residence in Doha, Qatar.

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### Une vallée verte construite au fil de l'eau



Valée du Doha et désert



Co-construction de l'Ambassade de France à Doha, Qatar

MATTA Qatar - SUD Architectes - AR ARCHITECTES - TEM PARTNERS - Eranoptima International - R&A

100% 2010-2011-2012

Local resources, the climate, topography and vegetation density all work together to create a harmonious landscape that sets off an architectural style that is both welcoming and masterful.

General layout:

The general layout for the project reflects the layout principles set out in the tendering rules (with the embassy on the west side of the site and the residence on the east side), while ensuring architectural continuity between them by positioning them lengthwise on the site and linking them together with a large pergola.

The service accommodations are located to the north of the site and face inwards to give them a high degree of privacy. The semi-underground buildings play off the progressive topography of the garden.

This layout makes it possible to have a landscape and buildings opposite the embassy that rise high enough to protect its glazed facade.

The residence is divided into two areas (public-private) linked by the entrance to the reception area. This layout provides a strong sense of seclusion for the private residence, while having the reception area open out onto the garden.



## Une ambassade accueillante Intégrée dans son environnement



Intégration harmonieuse du bâtiment et du jardin dans son environnement



Bâtiment construit par l'Embassade de France à Doha, Qatar.

SWATA Qatar – SUD Architectes – AR ARCHITECTES – T&M PARTNERS – Ecoprima International – P&L

14 Mars 2024 10:00:00

The project for the Embassy of France in Doha was to design a pleasant and secure setting that afforded as much importance to the landscape as to the buildings. The master plan places the main buildings to the south of the site, taking advantage of its length, so that the embassy opens out onto a green valley, built along the water.

This valley is imagined as “an elongated geographical depression shaped by a water feature that includes a water garden, and which can be characterized by a microclimate with ecolandscape functions and biological corridors”.

The plot's development has been conceived as a landscaped area to be enhanced and inhabited within the local context of Doha, creating a space where landscape and buildings are built together.

The aim was to preserve a green line through the plot (east/west axis) by placing the buildings to the north and south, while ensuring the site is both functional and secure.

The green valley stretches from east to west, with palm groves running alongside ponds, contrasting with the stone of the buildings to strike a refined balance that unifies the site along its length while giving it a protective and welcoming appearance.

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The architectural design combines plants and buildings to provide optimum protection from the heat, opening onto a refreshing garden at the site's centre. To the north, our project features an ambitious glazed facade overlooking a green valley, built along the water's edge, and a sloped facade to the south. With an earth and lime surface and arrowslit-style windows for controlled light for the building's indoor areas, this thick, protective facade gives the embassy and residence buildings a sense of security, shielding them from the climate and neighbouring areas. The entrance facades are finished in light-coloured, elegant stone, with extensive glazed entrances that are set back to provide continuous shade. The materials used – stone, earth and lime, light-coloured aluminium, lightly tinted glass for the facades – are intended to be as non-absorbent as possible, and to contrast with the vegetation. Inside, the reception area will feature hard-surface floors in bright colours, contrasting with the mood of the walls and ceilings. The viewer's focus will be directed to the beauty of the floor and ceiling details and the vertical design, rather than on unnecessarily ostentatious materials.

## Architecture bioclimatique

Ouverte sur le jardin et protégée du soleil et des vues

- Une **isolation forte** sur les façades exposées et en toiture
- Une **inertie thermique** importante grâce au sol et l'épaisseur des murs
- Un **éclairage naturel** généreux mais protégé

Coupe de principe de la protection contre les vues



Simulation d'ensoleillement des façades et toitures sur une année complète



Cible HQE® n°4 Objectif **TP atteint**  
Gestion de l'énergie

Les bâtiments visent le label HQE®, avec un gain de 40% sur le Bbio RT2012



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From east to west, the valley features ponds where greywater and condensate are treated and recycled: the aquatic flora forms a reconstituted biotope. The water moves from one pool to another, purified by a horizontal helophyte filter, circulating through the centre of the plot and accessible by wooden walkways that link it to the land. Clean water can be stored in a recovery tank, and repurposed for sanitary use, cleaning roads or watering plants.

The plant species proposed for the landscaping plan are a variety of local, low-maintenance plants that grow at different heights.

The various types of outdoor ground cover – stone paving, stabilized surfaces, lawns and wooden decking – have been chosen so as to minimize maintenance and maximize the durability and comfort of the outdoor spaces.

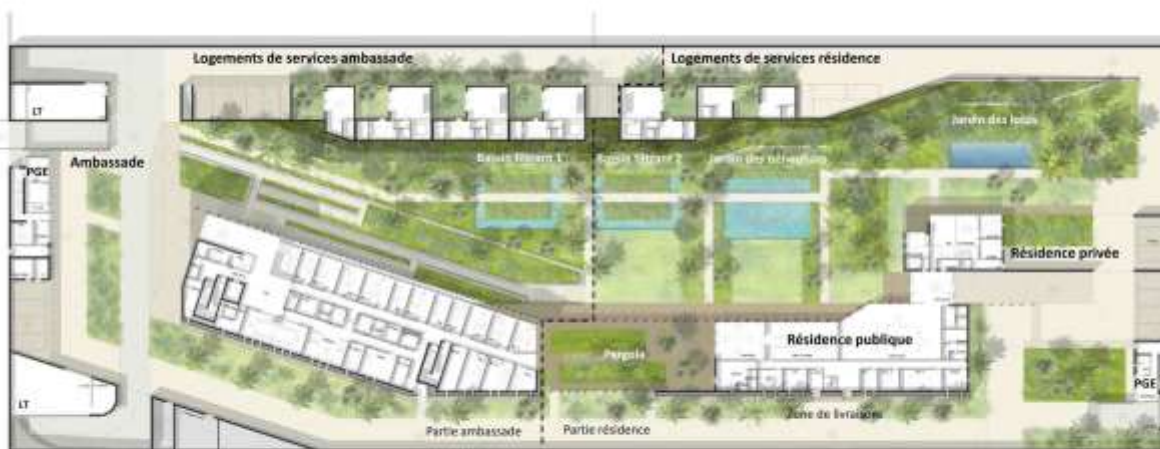
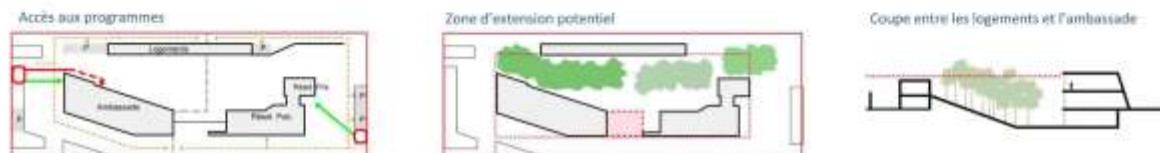


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The master plan of the project places the embassy in the western part of the site and the residence in the eastern part. Architectural continuity is created by orienting these buildings lengthwise across the site and linking them via a large pergola. The service accommodations are located to the north of the site to provide privacy via the patios. The residence features two main areas (one public, one private) connected by a "grand" entrance. The reception area boasts a generous garden view through its glazed facade. The private areas offer a greater degree of privacy.

### Répartition des programmes



Eco-construction de l'Ambassade de France à Doha, Qatar

MATTA Qatar - SUD Architectes - AR ARCHITECTES - TEM PARTNERS - Ecospin International - P&S

#### Embassy

The building is divided across four floors based on the different levels of security required and to separate flows of people.

- The consular area is at garden level.

#### Ambassador's residence

The Ambassador's residence is divided into two parts connected by a spacious reception hall.

- The public residence opens onto the central part of the gardens.
- The private residence is located in the slightly more secluded north-eastern part of the grounds.

#### Service accommodations


The accommodations are all located in the northern part of the site. Each has a private, shaded patio garden.

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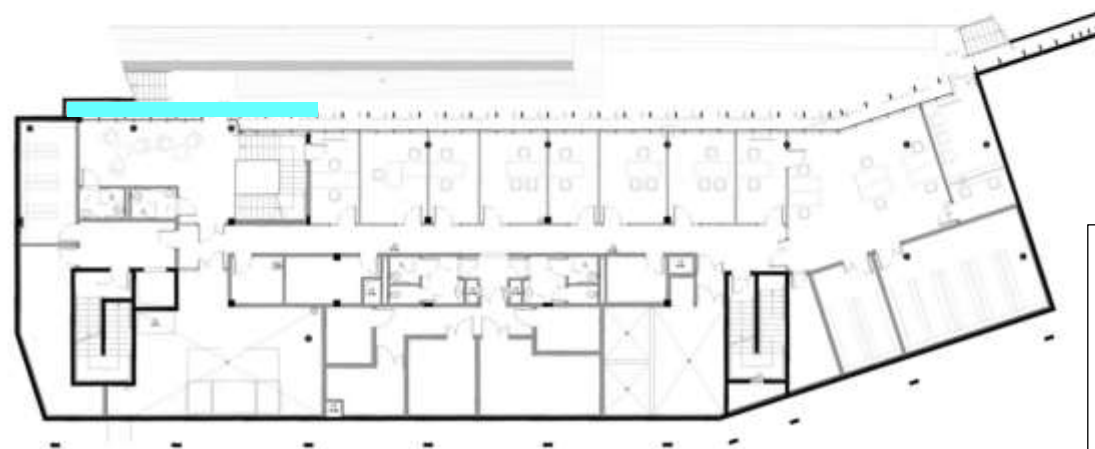
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### REZ-DE-CHAUSSEE / AMBASSADE



 Arcade rooms offering views of the embassy and residence gardens

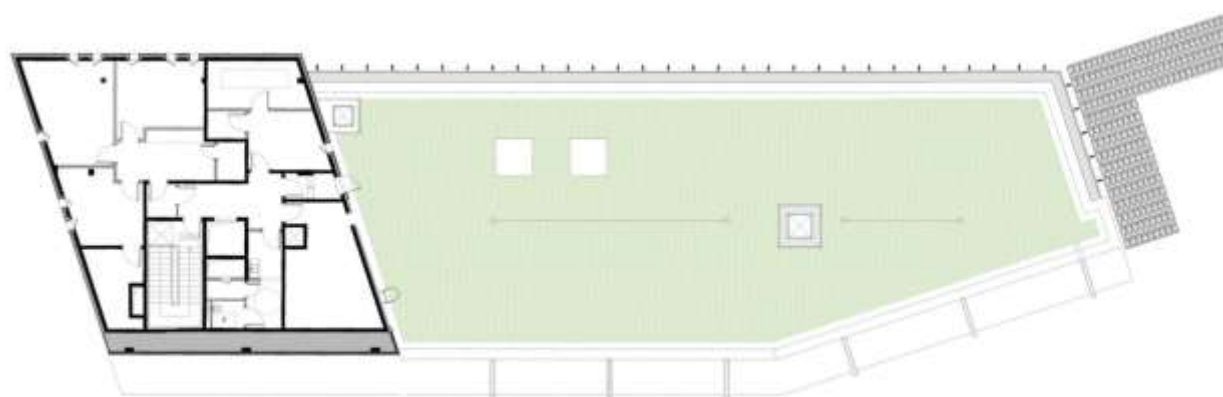
### REZ-DE-JARDIN / AMBASSADE



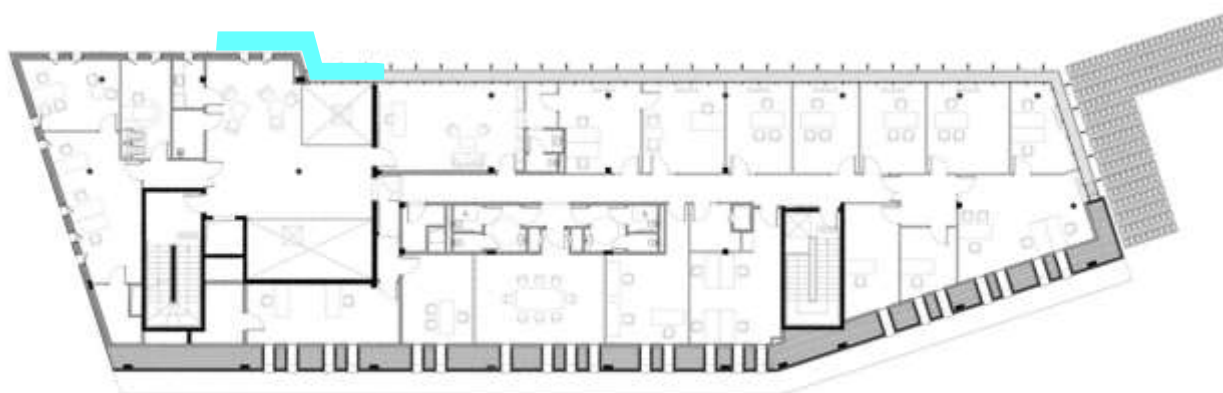
Entrance to the embassy is through a room that overlooks the garden and leads into a hall with triple-height ceilings on the north facade (towards the ground and first floors), as well as double-height ceilings towards the chancery waiting area on the first floor.



R+2 / AMBASSADE

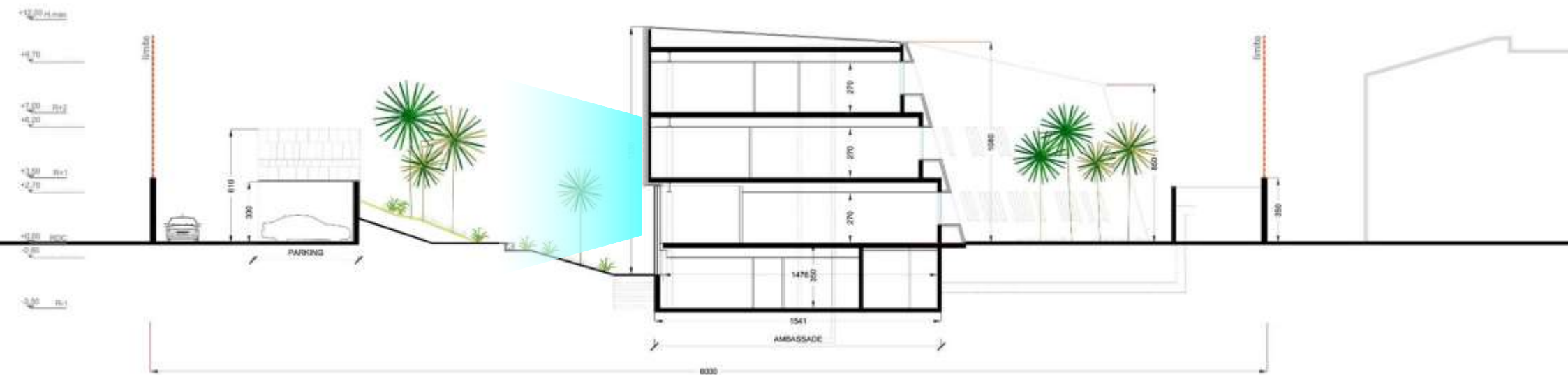


R+1 / AMBASSADE



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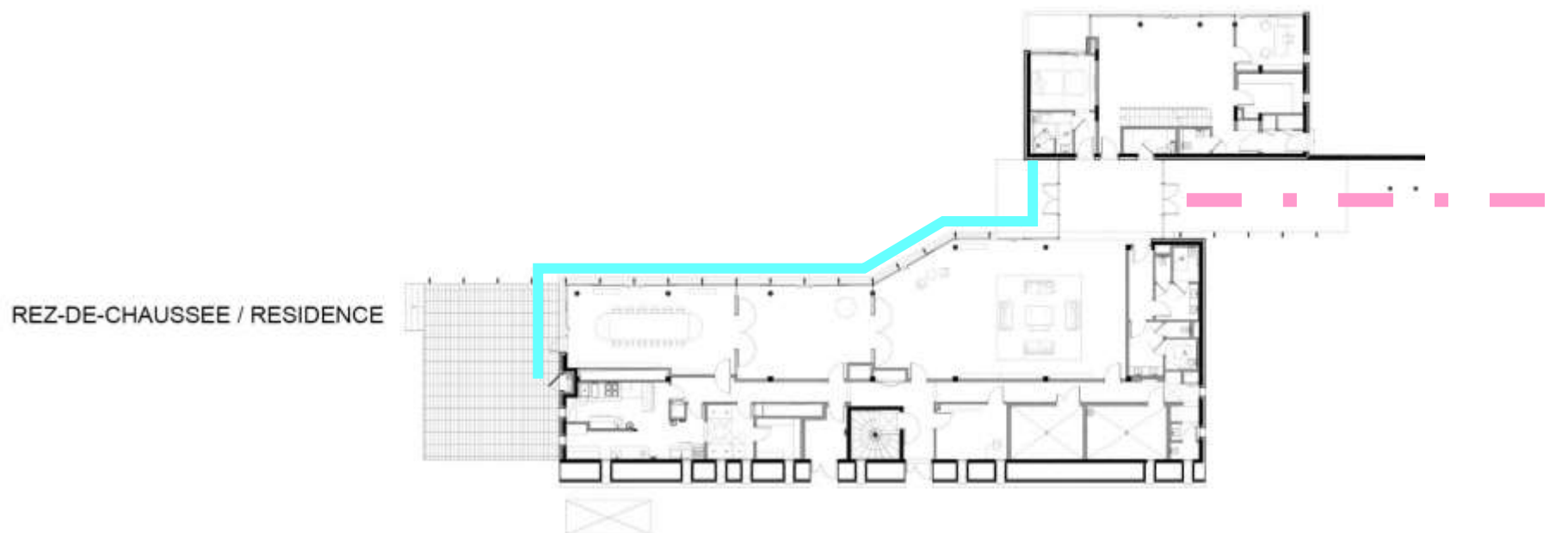


Garden view from the arcade rooms and offices





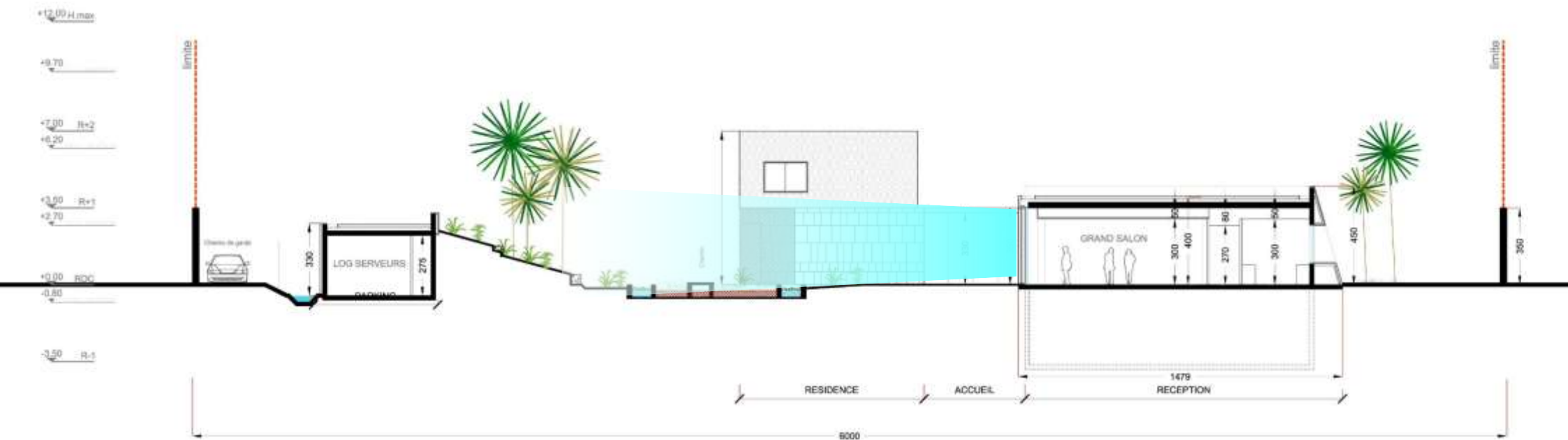
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DOHA - AMBASSADE DE FRANCE - HYPOTHESE DE PLANS INTERIEURS - SUD ARCHITECTES

-  Glazed facades overlooking the gardens
-  Access and grand entrance to the residence



 Garden view from the reception areas and the grand entrance of the residence

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### Chancellerie

Des bureaux ouverts sur le jardins



Ambassador's office (garden view)

### Recevoir

Accueillir avec une architecture épurée



Grand entrance to the French residence

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Reception areas

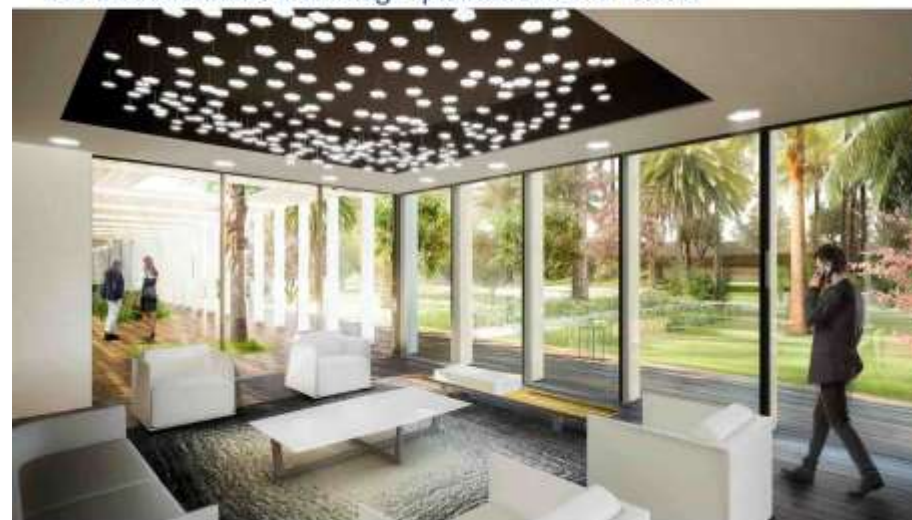
### Recevoir

Des espaces de réceptions très ouverts



### Espace de réceptions

Des lieux donnant une image qualitative de la France



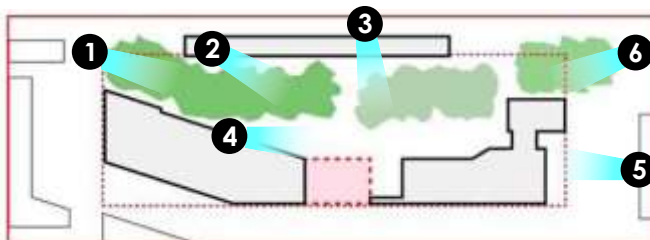
- Gardens opposite the facades of the French residence
- Passage from the residence grand entrance to the gardens

View of the gardens from the residence reception areas



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Extracts from SketchUp volume plans

Perspective drawings showing the different building structures and gardens



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▲ Perspective drawing showing the garden areas as viewed from the grand entrance of the residence

Perspective drawing showing the chancery (embassy) garden spaces ►





## Gestion énergétique optimale

### Des bâtiments économes en énergie

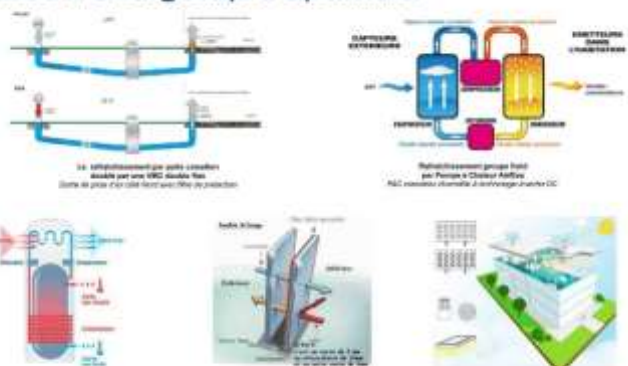
- Procédés de dissipation de la chaleur :
- Des bâtiments très isolés au sud
- Un rafraîchissement naturel de l'air par l'inertie thermique du sol
- Une VMC double flux couplée au puits canadien



Les bâtiments visent le label HQE®, avec un gain de 40% sur le Bbio RT2012

Document de l'Observatoire de l'Énergie et du Climat - 2012

## Gestion énergétique optimale



Les bâtiments visent le label HQE®, avec un gain de 40% sur le Bbio RT2012

Document de l'Observatoire de l'Énergie et du Climat - 2012

## Produits et procédés de construction durables

### Structure parement, isolation : recyclables



90% matériaux sont recyclables

## Produits et procédés de construction durables

### Couverture végétalisée et revêtements de sols extérieurs recyclables



88% des revêtements de sols sont perméables

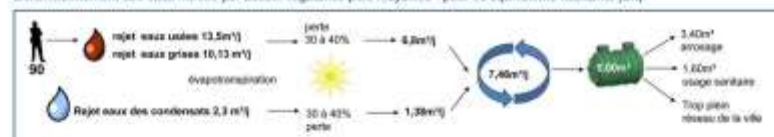
65% des toitures sont végétalisées

Document de l'Observatoire de l'Énergie et du Climat - 2012

## Gestion durable de l'eau

Recycler les eaux grises par des bassins filtrants

Dimensionnement des eaux filtrées par bassin végétalisé puis recyclées : pour 90 équivalents habitants (EH)



Pour une autosuffisance de la résidence en eau.



Document de l'Embassade de France à Doha, Qatar

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Perspective drawing of the gardens on the grand entrance of the residence from the living areas and dining room



Longitudinal sectional view of the facade from east to west



## Des strates paysagères pour la biodiversité

Bassins végétalisés, densité végétale, essences locales



Ambiance des jardins

Eco-construction de l'Ambassade de France à Doha, Qatar

MATTA Qatar – SUD Architectes – AR ARCHITECTES – TEAM PARTNERS – Europlasma International – GIS

Several garden ambiances come to life, tying in with the building design and plan. The garden filters the light through to the different levels of the chancery, which overlooks medium-to-tall vegetation that includes a combination of palm trees, jujube, orchid trees and Mediterranean saltbush.

Along the water, the promenade continues towards the ambassador's reception gardens, where low- and medium-height vegetation is found around the water lily garden, creating a welcoming space for guests.

Outdoor reception areas are equipped with terraces with wooden decking and lawn areas, which connect to both the reception areas and the surrounding landscape.

Further towards the east of the plot is the secluded garden of the Ambassador's residence, where dense, low vegetation (canna lilies and false aloe) and moderately tall vegetation are juxtaposed, with both vegetation areas featuring jujube, orchid trees, and dwarf palms around the lotus pond to create a protected, serene and quiet space.

The plant species proposed for the landscaping plan are a variety of local, low-maintenance plants that grow at different heights.

Local resources, the climate, topography and vegetation density all work together to create a harmonious landscape that sets off an architectural style that is both welcoming and masterful.

## **LOCATION OF THE ARTWORK**

The artwork is to be installed in the outdoor areas of the diplomatic campus.

## **GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE ARTWORK**

The work of art should be designed so as to:

- be accessible to all audiences, in keeping with the local context;
- blend in with the building's architectural and landscaping plans;
- be visible during the day and at night;
- require only light maintenance and servicing, which can be integrated into the site's ordinary maintenance.

The materials used for the artwork must be durable and able to withstand the elements (wind, rain), and be resistant to environmental damage (heat, sun, dust), biological contamination (infestations) and use.