



IS HOTEL ENVIRONMENTAL PERFORMANCE INFLUENCED BY DATA BENCHMARKING AND CERTIFICATION?

Summary

This study demonstrates that what gets measured gets managed. The analysis of historical EarthCheck benchmarking data and average operational improvement rates achieved in over 1000 hotel properties over the last seven years, demonstrates that data benchmarking and continued membership in a metric based environmental certification program yields measurable benefits.

The Study

EarthCheck customer surveys indicate that businesses that sign up to EarthCheck benchmarking and certification do so because they have an expectation that benchmarking will help them to measure and improve operational performance, lead to improved awareness of resource saving opportunities and motivate their staff. Until now it has been difficult to quantify these benefits over any time period.

Data was interrogated from three main perspectives. First, to determine total annual consumption levels and associated costs; second to deliver sector-specific benchmarks for resource use per guest night and overall improvement rates; and third, resource use reductions on a per-guest night level achieved since joining EarthCheck.

General Observations

This analysis delivers several key insights:

1. Resource costs (electricity, water and waste) for accommodation businesses are substantial, adding up to annual costs in the order of \$500,000 to \$1,000,000, or more for some businesses.
2. Findings show that financial savings made by EarthCheck businesses are in the order of several tens of thousands of dollars per annum.
3. Electricity reductions achieve the greatest financial benefits, but reductions in water and waste are also significant.
4. Overall, businesses in the EarthCheck program managed to reduce resource use annually by as much as 4.2% (water), 5.7% (electricity) and 7% (waste).
5. The analysis indicates measurable (and generally consistent) savings per annum – often somewhat larger in the earlier years of membership, but still substantial for longer-term participants.

Specific Findings

Electricity

To examine the effectiveness of joining the EarthCheck certification program, the annual electricity use and changes since joining the program were examined. Business and vacation hotels unanimously achieved reductions in electricity use per guest night. Substantial reductions were made in the first few years of membership, but reductions were still achieved even after several years in the program (Figure 1).

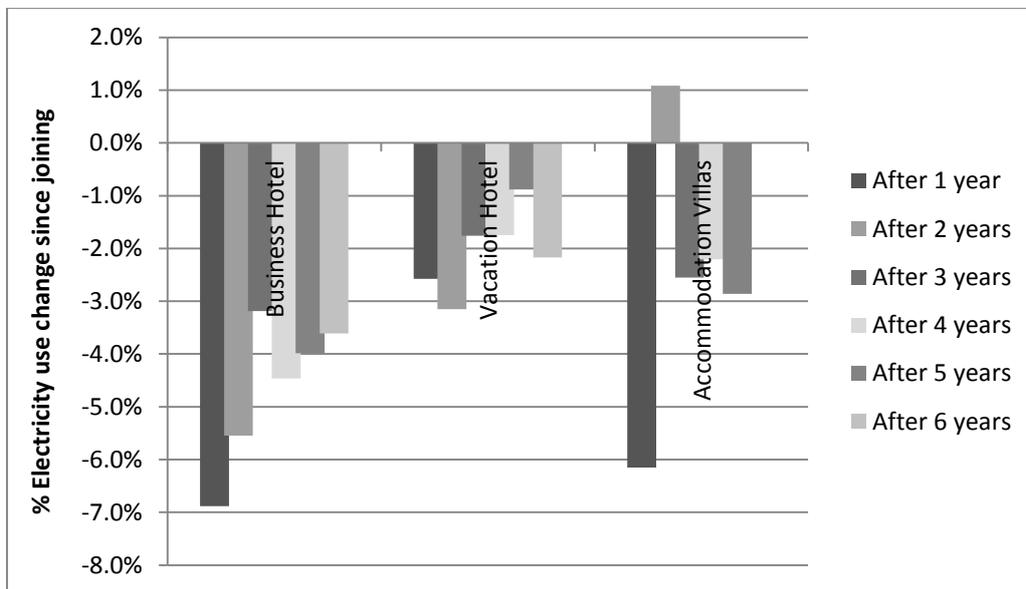
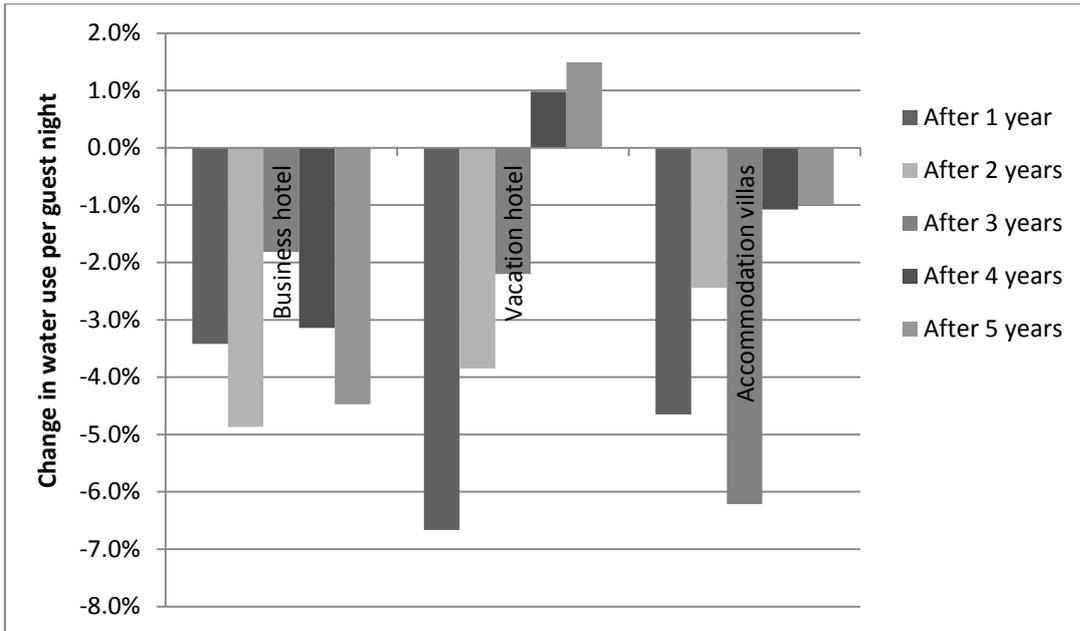


Figure 1: Change in electricity use per guest night since joining EarthCheck by sector

Water

Despite notable differences between countries a comparison of water use per guest night across different accommodation sectors is insightful. Water use per guest night is lowest in business hotels with an average of 945 litres per guest night. Accommodation villas use substantial amounts of water per guest night (2,695 litres). Improvement rates were highest for business hotels; achieving an average improvement of 4.2% per annum.

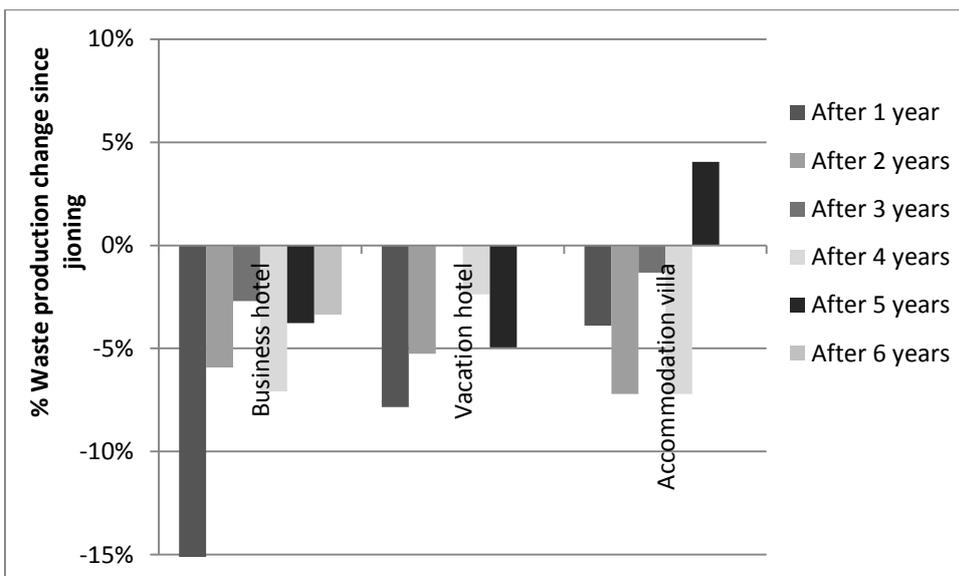


Change in water use per guest night since joining EarthCheck by sector.

Waste

On average, businesses produce between 5.1 litres (business hotels) and 6.7 litres of waste per guest night (accommodation villas). All accommodation types have achieved substantial improvements, ranging between a reduction of 12.0% (business hotels) and 6.4% (accommodation villas).

Reductions in waste production since joining EarthCheck have been substantial, in particular for business hotels that achieved a reduction of 15% after their first year of membership. Improvements continued thereafter at reduction rates between 3 and 7%.



Change in waste production per guest night since joining EarthCheck by sector.