

5th February 2007

Environmental initiatives by European tourism businesses

First environmental benchmarks for hotels and camping sites in Europe!

For the first time, international figures of more than 450 accommodation businesses in tourism in 15 European countries have been presented at the Reisepavillon in Hanover. These figures have been calculated within the framework of the European projects "TourBench" and "SUTOUR" supported by the LIFE programme of the European Commission and the Deutsche Bundesstiftung Umwelt.

- What is the energy and water consumption of 2-5 star hotels and camping sites in Europe? What is the waste production per day?
- What are the costs for energy, water and waste per night?
- How much is the difference "best businesses" consume less than others?
- What new international instruments of environmental management are available for tourism businesses?

Concerning these questions Eva Haas, project assistant at ECOTRANS, Saarbrücken, and Sven Eckardt, project manager at IER, Stuttgart, have presented up-to-date results to the interested audience:

For example, the average **energy consumption** of a European hotel is approximately 300 kWh per m² and at least 75 kWh per night. To make these key figures more understandable and to calculate the theoretical potential the figures of the 25% businesses with lowest consumption per category were disclosed in the report as benchmarks (25% quantil). According to this analysis the benchmarks for hotels are between 170 and 210 kWh per m² resp. 34-59 kWh per night. It is noticeable in particular that small 2 star hotels show higher consumption than 4 and 5 star hotels. "This depends probably on the often difficult personnel and financial situation of such businesses that do not have time, experience and money to implement relevant measures and concepts" , said expert Sven Eckardt.

The benchmarks for **water consumption** per night are at 96 l on camping sites, 133 l in hotel garni businesses and 213 l in hotels with restaurants. The potential for saving is enormous: the water consumption of a 4 star hotel garni is 235 l per night on average, the benchmark for this group is only 91 l.

With respect to waste management the analysis of the two European projects has shown that there is a difference in evidence between waste weight and waste volume in a tourism business. While solid waste is at 50%, paper at 12% and organic waste at 31% of the total waste weight, the percentages of waste volume is allocated differently: solid waste 55%, paper 23% and organic waste 9%. Hotels in Germany and Austria produce 2 kg resp. 6 l waste per person and night, costs appropriate to this are approximately 30 Cent.

Conclusion: The average consumption figures and benchmarks present a valuable orientation guide not only for hotel managers or camping site owners. The partly significant saving potential shows between budget and actual figures. In times of intense competition and increasing costs for energy, water and waste equipment investments amortise more and more quickly. Also eco-labels, tour operators, destinations or tourism consultants benefit from the results when they compare these figures with those of their own businesses, calculate and achieve the saving potential practically.

According to these key figures 22 examples of good practice including their innovative environmental performances in 10 countries have been presented at the event. „It is impressive to see what hotels and camping sites, holiday apartments, group accommodation and Bed & Breakfast businesses do with high encouragement and creativity to reduce their environmental consumption and the CO2



emission and to achieve economical success and high recognition with these activities. So, let's hope that more and more businesses will use the new management instruments TourBench and SUTOUR on the Internet to identify own potential for savings and to improve their financial situation.", signified Eva Haas at ECOTRANS, the European network for sustainable tourism development.

The brochure "**Environmental initiatives by European tourism businesses: Instruments, indicators and practical examples**" with the presented results and further hints and links are available as download at

www.tourbench.info

and

<http://sutour.ier.uni-stuttgart.de>

Contact:

Herbert Hamele
ECOTRANS e.V., Saarbrücken
herbert.hamele@ecotrans.de

Sven Eckardt
IER, Universität Stuttgart
se@ier.uni-stuttgart.de