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REVIEW OF GOOD ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY AND PRACTICE

in the Tourism Sector

Fáilte Ireland
National Tourism Development Authority

Contents

On-Line Appendices

Executive Summary

In the context of an ever-widening application of environmental legislation and policies to a wide variety of tourism activities, Fáilte Ireland, the National Tourism Development Authority commissioned this review to:

(a) establish a baseline of good environmental practice in the industry;
(b) identify representative case studies in this regard;
(c) recommend standards of good environmental policy and practice within the sector; and
(d) identify effective means of promoting good environmental practice in Ireland.

The assignment involved a comprehensive self-completion questionnaire survey which was undertaken within the following sectors: transport operators, accommodation providers, tourism attractions, tourism related activities and tourism destinations. In total, more than 250 tourism related businesses were surveyed and four tourism destinations visited.

There are several factors, which will motivate tourism operators in Ireland to change how the environmental aspects of their businesses are managed. These drivers of change include: (1) rising costs of waste disposal, water provision and energy provision, (2) changes in legislation and enforcement, and (3) changes in the product demanded by the market.

The results of the survey suggest a number of conclusions:

1. The tourism sector is undecided on whether its impact on the environment is positive or negative – a measure of confusion or lack of clarity on the issue remains.
2. The industry considers Irelands environmental issues to be (prioritised): (1) Poor Planning, (2) Traffic Congestion, (3) Litter and (4) Water Pollution.
3. The tourism industry, on the whole, considers itself well informed on environmental legislation, and believes that the main drivers for improved environmental management in tourism are: (i) costs and (ii) customer needs.
4. Though customer needs figures highly as a driver for environmental management, the majority of the industry doesn't see that excellent environmental performance as a potential point-of-differentiation from its competition. For example, the industry, in general, doesn't communicate with customers about environmental good practice; the tourism sector is slow to provide recycling facilities for guests/visitors.
5. Though the industry appears to feel it is coping adequately with the environmental agenda there is an opportunity for Fáilte Ireland, as a Government agency with responsibility for the development of the sector, to positively influence how this is achieved, especially in relation to professional development programmes.

Destinations were not surveyed to the same extent as the four business sectors of the Tourism industry, thus the information available in relation to environmental management therein is very limited. However, it is very clear from the attitudes of the surveyed community in relation to poor planning that very significant problems must exist in relation to Ireland's tourist destinations, especially in relation to physical infrastructure, though measurement of the extent of these problems is difficult, due to paucity of information or data, available publicly or measured.

The consultants presented 8 recommendations to Fáilte Ireland, in the areas of: environmental best practice, information, training, advice/mentoring awards and certification, public communications in relation to the environmental message, co-ordinating effort with other representative agencies, and specific recommendations in relation to the tourism sectors examined.
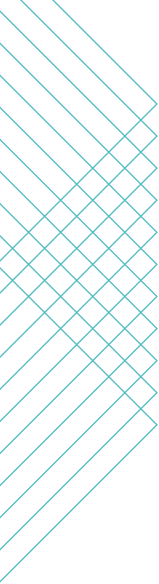
Introduction

1.0 Introduction

1.1   Background

As an international tourism destination, Ireland is heavily reliant on its image as an unspoilt environment. As recent as in 2006, the Fáilte Ireland Visitor Attitudes Survey reported that 74% of foreign tourists polled considered Ireland to be 'a clean and environmentally green destination'. However, during this same survey, when questioned about other environmental issues such as litter, dumping and other types of pollution, the visitors were not as complimentary. It is clear that Ireland's environment is one of its key attractions to visitors from abroad, and, in the current context of rapid economic growth and development of infrastructure, that more attention than ever needs to be paid by the Irish tourism industry to the maintenance of this aspect of Ireland's attractiveness.

Fáilte Ireland, the National Tourism Development Authority has commissioned this review, in the context of an ever-widening application of environmental legislation and policies to the tourism sector.

The purpose of the review was four-fold:

1.   To establish a baseline of good environmental practice across a range of tourism products and categories;
2.   To identify a number of representative case studies across the sector;
3.   To recommend standards of good environmental policy and practice within the sector across a number of tourism activities; and
4.   To identify effective means of promoting good environmental practice within the industry.

1.2   The Consultants Approach

The consultants approach to this assignment involved extensive primary and secondary research. A comprehensive questionnaire survey was undertaken with a small structured sample of the four tourism categories identified by Fáilte Ireland:

▸   Transport Operators: including airlines, coach hire and rental cars;
▸   Accommodation: This was the largest category ranging from Hotels, Guesthouses, B+Bs and hostels through to caravan parks;
▸   Tourism Attractions: Each of the top 50 fee-paying attractions were invited to participate; and
▸   Tourism Related Activities: This category included a wide range of activities, which can form part of the tourism product. This sample included golf clubs, angling clubs, water-based activities, walking/cycling and equestrian activities.

In total, approximately 250 tourism related businesses were surveyed and a response rate of 54% was achieved. This baseline survey of Environmental Practice was supported by a telephone survey across a range of tourism providers drawn from the four categories. The telephone interviews provided an opportunity for more in-depth discussion of issues addressed in the Survey Questionnaire. The rationale for addressing the questionnaire to a relatively small sample size was to obtain a 'flavour' of the type of responses from the various sectors, especially in relation to detailed, rather than general, responses. It was intended that some of the responses to 'general' questions would be compared to those found (for similar questions) in the Fáilte Ireland 'Tourism Business and Employment Survey 2006' (TBES, 2006), which had a significantly larger sample size.

The purpose of the TBES, which is an annual survey, is to provide data on employment and employment prospects in the tourism industry, however in 2006 a section on environmental awareness was included in the TBES. The sample size for the TBES, 2006, was also much larger than the survey carried out as part of this review (refer to Appendix 3), and therefore the results of the TBES were used to supplement the findings of this report. Where possible, in this report, a comparison has been made between the responses from the TBES 2006, and the survey work carried out specifically as part of this review.

In relation to the transport sector, it was only possible (as part of this survey) to obtain a very small sample of responses (from an already relatively small sector) and thus, no general analysis of trends has been undertaken, for the purposes of this study.

The third component of the primary research was a series of personal interviews with tourism providers in four tourism destinations. The purpose of the focus on tourism destinations was to identify the extent to which there were particular environmental issues / problems in areas which are popular with tourists.

The four destinations agreed with Fáilte Ireland were:
- ▸ Westport;
- ▸ Kilkenny;
- ▸ East Cork: Midleton / Youghal / Cobh Area; and
- ▸ Leitrim: centred on the 'Green Box' / Carrick-on-Shannon.

The research in relation to the four destinations was also extended to Local Authorities in the area. It was clear, when data collation was initiated, that there would be significant difficulty due to both the timeframe of the project and the lack of available information, in gathering the amount of information necessary to prepare meaningful indicators of the impacts of tourism on particular destinations. Thus, it was not possible to meet all the project objectives in relation to destinations.

The primary research was supported by a detailed programme of secondary research. This included a detailed review of EU and national legislation in relation to environmental issues and also an assessment of international tourism environmental initiatives.

This work also draws on earlier work prepared by the Consultant Team for Fáilte Ireland / CERT – 'The Green Agenda' (2002).

1.3   Structure of the Report

The Report is set out in 6 main parts.

Part 1: The Executive Summary

Part 2 The Introduction, including Methodology and Context of the study. [Chapter 1].

Part 3: Chapters on 'International Challenges for Tourism', 'Ireland and the Environment', 'Challenges
for Tourism in Ireland' (in respect to the environment and sustainability) and 'Environmental
Initiatives in Tourism – Examples'. [Chapters 2-5]

Part 4: The findings of the Baseline Study in Ireland, and report on the level of awareness and action in
relation to good Environmental Management. [Chapters 6 & 7]

Part 5: Case studies of Good Practice in relation to Environmental Management. [Chapter 8]

Part 6: The consultants' findings in relation to improving environmental practice in Irish tourism
and recommendations for Fáilte Ireland in the role it should play in achieving improved
environmental performance. [Chapter 9]

**There are also a number of Appendices, providing supplementary information collected/collated during
and germane to the study. These are:**

App 1: An outline of the Irish Legislation in relation to the environmental impacts of tourism.

App 2: The survey questionnaire.

App 3: The relevant sections of the Fáilte Ireland 'Tourism Business and Employment Survey 2006'.

These appendices are not contained within this report but are available to download on the Fáilte Ireland website,
www.failteireland.ie

International Challenges for Tourism

2.0 International Challenges for Tourism

2.1   Introduction

The quality of the environment, both natural and man-made, is an important part of the tourism product, but many activities relating to the industry can have adverse environmental effects. These impacts are often linked with the construction and management of tourism facilities, including hotels, restaurants, shops, golf courses and leisure centres. Other environmental impacts associated with the tourism sector relate to increased resource and energy use, waste generation and potential water or air pollution.

The key environmental pressures usually associated with tourism have traditionally been:

- Water Usage & Pollution;
- Energy;
- Transport;
- Waste; and
- Physical Impacts.

2.2   Environmental Legislation and Tourism

Increasingly, legislation focussed on improving environmental performance is impacting on all businesses, including those operating within the tourism and hospitality industry. Related 'taxes,' and other fiscal/economic instruments, are rooted in the recognition that society must act in a way that is more sensitive to the environment. Future economic development should seek to enhance the environment, not only avoid commercially-related damage. This enhancement of the environment should greatly strengthen tourism potential everywhere, and thus, the development, acceptance and enforcement of environmental legislation should be strongly supported by the tourism industry, as the benefits (though some are intangible) are likely to strongly outweigh the costs.

Before looking at individual pieces of environmental legislation, it is important to set the context. There is a clear link between legislation and the aims and targets agreed at world level through agreements such as the Rio Earth Summit and the Kyoto Protocol. This section will help give an understanding of the reasons for particular local decisions and give some clarity in terms of the future direction of policy in this area.

2.3   The Rio Earth Summit 1992 & The Johannesburg World Summit 2002

The Rio Earth Summit is a useful starting point in the review of current legislation. The Summit has been the catalyst for all of the policies and legislation enacted in this area in recent times. The clear message from the Summit was that nothing less than a transformation of our attitudes and behaviour would bring about the changes necessary to ensure sustainable development.

The result of the Earth Summit was the adoption of Agenda 21, a wide-ranging blueprint for action to achieve sustainable development worldwide. Agenda 21 addresses many pressing problems and aims to prepare the world for the challenges of the 21st century. It contains detailed proposals for action in social and economic areas and for conserving and managing natural resources; protecting the atmosphere, oceans and biodiversity; preventing deforestation; and promoting sustainable agriculture.

The Johannesburg World Summit (in 2002) was in effect a 10-year review of progress since the Rio Earth Summit. The full implementation of Agenda 21, the Programme for Further Implementation of Agenda 21 and the Commitments to the Rio principles, were strongly reaffirmed at this Summit.

Governments agreed to and reaffirmed a wide range of concrete commitments and targets for action to achieve more effective implementation of sustainable development objectives. Energy and sanitation issues were critical elements of the negotiations and impacted on the outcomes to a greater degree than in previous international meetings on sustainable development. The concept of partnerships between governments, business and civil society was affirmed.

2.4   The Kyoto Protocol on Greenhouse Gas Emissions, 1997

The Kyoto protocol is an international agreement, often in world news recently, whereby the main industrially developed countries committed themselves in 1997 to strategically reduce the levels of greenhouse gas emissions at national level, as a non-competitive (industrially) approach to combating the global effects of 'man-made' climate change.

The protocol sets targets for each of the developed countries and economy-in-transition countries, with a view to reducing overall emissions of the six main greenhouse gases by at least 5 per cent below 1990 levels in the commitment period 2008 to 2012.

The protocol includes a range of policies and measures for countries to implement or further elaborate in order to achieve their targets and promote sustainable development. These include:

- Enhanced energy efficiency;
- Protection and enhancement of sinks i.e. forests;
- Promotion of sustainable agriculture;
- R&D in the areas of renewable and new forms of energy;
- Removal of subsidies, taxes and exemptions that run counter to the application of market instruments;
- Reform in all sectors including transport to limit or reduce greenhouse gas emissions; and
- Methane reductions in the waste and energy sectors.

73 countries have become signatories to this pact. Nearly all countries have ratified the pact including Japan and all 15 European Union states. In 2001 the United States provoked widespread international criticism by rejecting the Kyoto protocol as soon as President Bush was inaugurated.

The EU Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS) is one of the policies being introduced across the EU 25 to tackle emissions of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases in an effort to combat the serious threat of climate change.
The scheme commenced on the January 1, 2005. The first phase is to run from 2005-2007 and the second phase will run from 2008-2012 to coincide with the first Kyoto commitment period. The tourism industry will not be directly effected by this policy, initially, though there may be indirect effects relating to the energy production sector, arising from their participation in the ETS from its earliest inception. Tourism is unlikely to become directly effected until later stages of the scheme (after 2010), when smaller scale energy production activities, such as Combined Heat and Power (CHP) plants and large backup generator plants, as well as the airline industry become part of the scheme.

The scheme works on a "Cap and Trade" basis. All EU 25 governments are required to set an emission cap for all installations covered by the scheme.

Each installation is allocated allowances for the particular commitment period in question. The number of allowances allocated to each installation for any given period is determined on the basis of the National Allocation Plan.

The National Climate Change Strategy produced in 2000 sets out how Ireland will meet its Kyoto commitments (see Appendix 1.2).

2.5   The Treaty of Amsterdam, 1997

The Treaty of Amsterdam seeks to provide stronger guarantees for the environment than those already given by previous E.U. treaties such as the Single European Act in 1987 and the E.U. Treaty (The Maastricht Treaty) in November 1993. It is environmentally important as it introduced the concept of sustainable development, as a Community strategy, through the addition of Article 6 in the Treaty establishing the European Community (The Treaty of Rome, 1957).

2.6   The Water Framework Directive, 2000

The WFD sets a framework for comprehensive management of water resources in the European Community, within a common approach and with common objectives, principles and basic measures. It addresses inland surface waters, estuarine and coastal waters and groundwater. The fundamental objective of the Water Framework Directive aims at maintaining "high status" of waters where it exists, preventing any deterioration in the existing status of waters and achieving at least "good status" in relation to all waters by 2015. Member States will have to ensure that a co-ordinated approach is adopted for the achievement of the objectives of the WFD and for the implementation of programmes of measures for this purpose. The objectives of the WFD are:

 ‣ to protect and enhance the status of aquatic ecosystems (and terrestrial ecosystems and wetlands directly dependent on aquatic ecosystems);

 ‣ to promote sustainable water use based on long-term protection of available water resources ;

 ‣ to provide for sufficient supply of good quality surface water and groundwater as needed for sustainable, balanced and equitable water use;

 ‣ to provide for enhanced protection and improvement of the aquatic environment by reducing / phasing out of discharges, emissions and losses of priority substances;

 ‣ to contribute to mitigating the effects of floods and droughts;

 ‣ to protect territorial and marine waters; and

 ‣ to establish a register of 'protected areas' e.g. areas designated for protection of habitats or species.

The directive rationalises and updates existing water legislation by setting common EU wide objectives for water. It is very broad in its scope and relates to water quality in rivers, lakes, canals, groundwater, transitional (estuarine) waters and coastal waters (out to a distance of at least one nautical mile).

2.7   E.U. 6th Environment Programme (2002-2012)

The EU, since its foundation has published a number of Environment Programmes. The 5th Environmental Programme (1993), adopted a horizontal approach to all causes of pollution. It selected a number of key sectors as targets for attention, one of which was tourism. Among the measures proposed for tourism were:

▸ Improving management of mass tourism;

▸ Improving the quality of tourism services;

▸ Promoting alternative forms of tourism; and

▸ The introduction of information and awareness campaigns.

The new 6th Environment Programme (2002-2012) incorporates the EU's approach to the Kyoto Protocol on greenhouse gas emissions. This programme provides the environmental component of the EU's renewed Sustainable Development Strategy (see section 2.8), and adopts a more strategic approach. It calls for innovative, workable and sustainable solutions to environmental problems. In order to achieve further progress in the areas listed above the E.U. proposes the following six specific actions:

▸ An improvement in the standards of environmental inspection;

▸ The introduction of a name, shame and fame strategy on the implementation of environmental law by individual E.U. countries;

▸ The adoption and implementation of the directive on noise;

▸ The implementation of legislation providing for taxation of resource use, e.g. water;

▸ The removal of subsidies that encourage the overuse of resources; and

▸ The integration of resource efficiency considerations into environmental assessment schemes such as EMAS and the E.U. Eco-labelling scheme - The Flower.

## 2.8   Renewed EU Sustainable Development Strategy, 2006

The European Council adopted an ambitious and comprehensive renewed Sustainable Development Strategy in 2006 for an enlarged EU. The renewed EU SDS sets out a single, coherent strategy on how the EU will implement its commitment to meet the challenges of sustainable development. It recognises the need to gradually move towards a better integrated approach to policy-making. The renewed strategy sets overall objectives, targets and concrete actions for seven key priority challenges for the coming period until 2010, which are:

- ▸ Climate change and clean energy;
- ▸ Sustainable Transport;
- ▸ Sustainable production and consumption;
- ▸ Public health threats;
- ▸ Better management of natural resources;
- ▸ Social inclusion, demography and migration; and
- ▸ Fighting global poverty.

2.9   Summary

In summary, it is evident that the tourism industry in Ireland, like indeed all industries, will be facing changes into the future in the ways in which it can effectively manage its environmental impacts. These changes will be driven by more prescriptive legislation and policy, and are likely to effect the industry in relation to (by priority):

- ▸ Energy management;
- ▸ Water management;
- ▸ Waste management; and
- ▸ (Natural and Heritage) Conservation management.
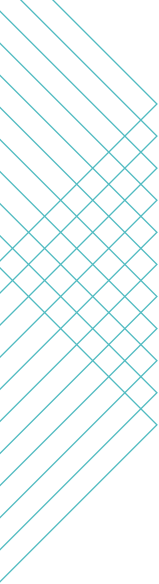
Ireland and the Environment

3.0 Ireland and the Environment

3.1   Visitors Attitudes to Ireland

Fáilte Ireland's most recently published Visitor Attitudes Survey was conducted among non-Irish born overseas holidaymakers during June – September 2006. Estimates show that 1.2 million non-Irish born holidaymakers visited over this period, representing 37% of all holidaymakers coming to Ireland in 2006.

The published results of this survey reiterate Ireland's continued strong performance as a destination that stands out for beauty of its scenery and the friendliness and hospitality of its people. These two factors remain the most prominent positive discriminators for Ireland compared with other holiday destinations.

Eight in every ten holidaymakers were reported to be very satisfied with the natural, unspoilt environment, the relaxed pace of life and the safety and security of the destination, and this rose to around nine in every 10 for the two top ranking features – friendly, hospitable people and beautiful scenery.

Results over the past six years also show satisfaction being maintained at a generally steady level for criteria such as 'nature/wildlife/flora', 'suitability for touring', 'range of good quality accommodation', 'interesting history and culture' and 'traditional music'. Satisfaction with the ease of getting to Ireland has improved slightly for the fourth year in succession. There was no change since 2004 in the proportion very satisfied with factors such as 'reasonably priced accommodation' and 'good food and opportunities for eating out'.

However, a litter free/pollution free environment, which had shown consistent if small gains in satisfaction up to and including 2004, had dropped back slightly in 2005, down two percentage points from 60% to 58%. In 2006, again fewer than 3 in 5 holidaymakers were satisfied with Ireland's performance as a litter and pollution free destination.

In 2005, 13% of holidaymakers were dissatisfied with the litter and pollution situation in urban Ireland; the Visitor Attitudes figures for 2006 indicate that this dissatisfaction has risen to 21%.

3.2   Attitudes and Performance Towards the Environment

This part of the report focuses on the performance and attitude of Ireland and its people towards environmental management, as well as the response of Fáilte Ireland to the impact(s) on Ireland's tourism industry and tourism product(s), from an environmental perspective. The reported perception of the general population in relation to environmental issues is analysed briefly in this section, as are the results of polled overseas tourists.

The continuing success of the Tidy Towns competition (web ref: www.tidytowns.ie), in the public mindset demonstrates a willingness to work to enhance local amenities. Also, the importance accorded to the 'Blue Flag' initiative (web ref: www.blueflag.org) demonstrates an awareness and commitment to environmental standards at public level.

The results of national and international surveys on Ireland's performance across a range of environmental measures are also reported. This part of the report concludes with a review of the CERT[1] environmental initiatives since the publication of their environmental study – 'The Green Agenda' in 2002 (see section 3.3).

3.2.1   Irish Attitudes towards the Environment

The latest report to investigate a range of environmental matters entitled Environment in Focus was published by the Irish EPA in 2006. The purposes of this survey research included:

‣ To collect information on public attitudes to the environment;
‣ To value aspects of environmental protection;
‣ To provide information on experiences with drinking water; and
‣ To provide information on household waste management practices.

The research focuses on providing new information across a range of environmental issues related to the work of the EPA. The 2005 research focused on the household sector and provides a better understanding of the household sector's practices and attitudes to environment related issues, information that can inform the development of environmental policy.

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[1] In 2003 CERT and Bord Fáilte were amalgamated to create Fáilte Ireland

The key findings of the report are as follows:

- Almost half of Irish adults consider waste management the most important environmental issue facing Ireland today;

- One-in-ten adults admitted to burning their household waste, while 15% believe backyard burning of household waste is acceptable;

- 1% of adults admitted to illegally dumping their household waste;

- Many householders are dissatisfied with the quality of their drinking water supply encountering problems with taste, odour, discolouration, and contamination, often on a continuous basis;

- Only half of households drink tap water without further filtration/purification system. One fifth of households rely on bottled water within their homes;

- Just 5% of adults rely on either the EPA or local authorities for information on the quality of surface water. The majority of people primarily assess surface water quality by visual inspection; and

- The adult population strongly favours increasing the level of environmental protection through recruitment of additional enforcement staff, viewing additional expenditures on enforcement in the range €235-320 million worthwhile and value for money.

The survey also shows that the public is very aware of the issue of illegal waste activity in Ireland today. A survey of the public willingness to pay to fund increased levels of environmental enforcement and therefore improve environmental quality was used to infer whether additional public expenditure on environmental enforcement is considered worthwhile and value for money. The analysis shows that the anticipated benefits from a greater level of environmental protection are likely to be greater than the cost of provision of additional enforcement.

The 2006 EPA Environment in Focus Report also stated the following key findings:

Waste Management Significant improvements have been made in the area of waste management. Waste infrastructure has improved, in particular the penetration of waste recycling facilities. This has encouraged and facilitated people to increase the amount of waste recycled and recovered and hence reduce the amount of waste disposed of to landfill.

Transport The report shows that there has been rapid growth in vehicle numbers, energy consumption and emissions generation in the transport sector. Freight traffic has increased in line with economic development, most notably by road. The number of private cars and goods vehicles has more than doubled in the last 15 years. With the volume of road traffic already at the levels predicted for 2010, significant state funding has been committed from 2006 for public transport to provide alternatives to the private car, particularly in urban areas.

Industry Changes in the composition of Ireland's industry base, in particular the loss of heavy energy intensive industry such as steel and fertilizer production, has seen the industry sector become more efficient and productive

in the last decade. Industrial growth has been achieved in the absence of increased waste generation, indeed figures have reduced since 1998, and with minimal increases in energy consumption. A recent European study on energy consumption ranked Ireland third best when evaluating energy consumption per GDP.

Energy The report shows that dependency on fossil fuels continues to grow, imported oil and gas now accounts for approximately 73% of Ireland's energy supply. The supply of renewable energy has increased by 122% since 1990 and new targets will require electricity generation from renewable sources to be doubled over the next five years.

Water River water quality has improved marginally. However, this report shows that the rate of improvement will need to be significantly increased if Ireland is to meet the requirements of the Water Framework Directive and achieve 'good' status for all our water bodies by 2015. Almost 30% of our river length still remains slightly or moderated polluted. Significant improvements are also required for lakes, estuarine and coastal waters and groundwater in order to comply with this Directive.

Air Global climate change remains the primary environmental challenge of this century. Greenhouse gas emissions were 23.1% above 1990 levels in 2004 and this figure must be reduced to just 13% above 1990 levels over the 2008 to 2012 period if Ireland is to meet its Kyoto obligations.

3.3   Recommendations of 'The Green Agenda', 2002

CERT (now Fáilte Ireland) commissioned a study in 2002 to examine the impact of Irish tourism on the environment, and a strategic approach toward managing those impacts. The report's recommendations were framed against the background of an industry that was not considered to be well equipped to deal with the changing level of charges, increased regulation and enforcement and the increased costs of complying with local, national and E.U. legal demands.

The recommendations from the report fell into 3 key strands:

1. **"The Green Alert"** – is an environmental awareness programme. Its central theme is to call on industry to adopt green practices. This is achieved through a series of seminars, newsletters, publications of case studies exemplifying best environmental practices, and a range of promotional activities.
2. **The Green Tool Kit** –The CERT Environmental Work Book – is a management tool kit to support individual firms in developing and implementing their environmental plan. It draws on the wide range of material that is already available in developing measures relevant to an Irish context.

3. **The CERT Green programme** – this is a programme of activities, which supports the sector to adopt environmentally friendly practices. This programme can offer accreditation at several levels, thus being relevant to all firms.

An update on actions taken by Fáilte Ireland in the interim period, specifically on those recommendations shows that:

1. **"The Green Alert"** – The establishment of the Performance Plus programme[2] is a positive step towards the Green Alert, particularly the awareness raising and case studies elements. Regional seminars have not been undertaken as yet. Current projects including preparing case studies and providing recommendations on promoting good practice, is seen as a move in this direction.

2. **The Green Tool Kit** –The CERT Environmental Work Book – This has been transformed into Performance Plus - a web-based, self-audit, benchmarking scheme (web ref: www.failteireland.ie/performanceplus).

3. **The CERT Green programme** – The CERT Green Programme was one of the drivers behind the publication in Autumn 2007 of the Fáilte Ireland three year Environmental Action Plan (2007-2009). This sets out 5 key objectives of the Environment Unit, Fáilte Ireland, in the development and promotion of sustainable tourism in Ireland.

It was also intended as part of the Cert Green programme that accreditation would be offered at a number of different levels to firms who adopted environmentally friendly practices. This has not been carried out to date however it is recommended as part of this report that Fáilte Ireland should develop appropriate environmental standards and awards for the tourism sector.

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[2] The Performance Plus web-based programme, developed by Fáilte Ireland, provides members with interactive facilities with which to impress their own enterprises' strengths and benchmark their performance against industry norms in four key business areas, including Energy and Environment.

Challenges for Tourism
in Ireland

4.0 Challenges for Tourism in Ireland

4.1 Drivers for Action on Environment

There are several factors, which will motivate tourism operators in Ireland to change how the environmental aspects of their businesses are managed. These drivers of change include:

1. The rising costs of waste disposal, water provision and energy provision;

2. Changes in legislation and enforcement; and

3. Changes in the product demanded by the market.

This section will examine where such drivers currently exist within the tourism industry, whether their development is on the international or European agenda, and where there are likely to be significant gaps for drivers in the short to medium term.

The environmental context within which the Irish industry now operates has developed rapidly over the last few years. An increase in the cost of waste disposal and energy cost has strongly influenced the change in behaviour. The banning of all 'bottle-glass' from landfill (flat glass excluded) is changing the way many businesses view waste disposal. Recycling, reuse and minimisation has become the norm for many businesses within a short number of years, particularly as enforcement of E.U. and national legislation and regulations has increased.

Focus Case

The Irish national strategy document Sustainable Development: A Strategy for Ireland, published in 1997, included a strategic action programme encompassing eight sectors of the national economy, including tourism.

This report concluded that the key issues in Irish tourism include management of increasing tourist numbers; the concentration of tourists in certain areas; the seasonal profile of the industry; and increasing stress on landscape and infrastructure.

Measures taken include greater emphasis on good environmental management in tourism in the accommodation sector and tourist attractions, and consideration given to the need for controls or restriction on certain unsuitable leisure activities (e.g. the use of jet skis has been banned in certain areas).

Research on the 'critical loads' of tourist destinations to establish sustainable tourist numbers was included in the Tourism and Environment Initiative under the Tourism Operational Programme 1994-1999 (1994).

The goal of Irish tourism policy under the National Development Plan 2000-2006 (1999) was to facilitate the continued development of an economic, environmental sustainable and spatially balanced tourism sector; the overall objective is to develop the industry in a way that widens the spatial spread of tourism, diverts pressure from highly developed areas and increases under performing regions' share of overseas tourism revenues.

In January 2007, a new National Development Plan 2007-2013 was published. It describes a strategy to incorporate not only specific policy measures in the areas of marketing, product development and human resources development, but also seeks to positively influence the broader agenda which impacts on sustainable tourism development e.g. access and internal transport, competitiveness, the natural and built heritage, the environment, the marine and rural development.

The following five sections of this chapter deal with specific issues that affect or are affected by the tourism industry: water, energy, waste, greenhouse gases and traffic congestion; and physical impacts. This section also assesses the degree to which these issues are relevant to the four main sub-sections of the tourism industry; transport, accommodation, tourist attractions, and tourism related activities.

4.2   Water

All businesses in Ireland must now pay water charges, either through flat rate charges or a metered charge. The EEA (European Environment Agency) has identified metering as a powerful tool for decreasing demand for water, with reductions of 10-25% achievable. Metering can also be a useful tool in identifying water losses. The National Water Study 2000 estimated that 47% of water that was treated for use by the public was not reaching the final consumer. Sanitary authorities are aware of the problem, and some have taken measures to reduce leakages.

The availability of water is vital for tourism not only for consumption and sanitary purposes but an important part of Ireland's tourism product is water based and is put at risk from pollution.

The tourism and hospitality sector can be a cause of pollution by:

- ▸ Disposal of water/waste through drains which are cracked or leaking;
- ▸ Septic tanks, which, if not adequately maintained, may allow sewage to seep into water courses;
- ▸ Swimming pool discharges that are not appropriately treated;
- ▸ Use of detergents on the premises which may wash into the drains and leak, or that may be stored inappropriately, spill and enter the water course;
- ▸ Run-off from chemicals used on golf courses;
- ▸ Inadequate storage of fertilisers/pesticides may spill and enter the watercourse; and
- ▸ Drainage to local groundwater from impermeable surfaces e.g. car parks can contain oil etc. which may eventually enter the watercourse.

Sectoral Importance (Water)

	Low Significance	Medium Significance	High Significance	Critical
Transport Operators	■			
Accommodation	■	■		
Tourism Attractions	■	■		
Tourism Related Activities	■	■	■	

The schematic above outlines the significance (for each of the sectors examined) attached to water issues (especially water resource management, water usage and water pollution) across the tourism industry. The activities sector ranks water as being of high significance, the attractions and accommodation sectors rank it at medium significance and the transport operators consider it to be of low significance.

4.3   Energy

The Kyoto Protocol is an international agreement, whereby the main industrially developed countries committed, in 1997 to strategically reduce the levels of greenhouse gas emissions at National Level, as a non-competitive (industrially) approach to combating the global effects of 'man-made' climate change.

The Protocol sets targets for each of the developed countries and economy-in-transition countries, with a view to reducing overall emissions of the six main greenhouse gases by at least 5 per cent below 1990 levels in the commitment period 2008 to 2012.

Ireland's total primary energy requirement (TPER) is dominated by oil and gas. Renewables are the lowest contributor. Total oil usage increased from 46% in 1990 to 58% in 2001. Peat contribution to electricity is declining. Of the 5.24 million tonnes extracted by Bord na Mona during 2000 and 2001, 3 million tonnes was supplied for electricity generation and 1 million tonnes for the manufacture of peat briquettes (the remainder was used in the development of non-energy commercial products, such as soil improvers and compost).

With the depletion of fossil fuel resources, Ireland needs to find its own dependable energy resources. In Irish weather conditions a 1 MW wind turbine could provide in excess of 3 million units of electricity – enough to supply around 650 homes. A 1 MW wood or waste biomass plant could provide over 6 million units of electricity – enough to supply around 1,300 homes.

Sectoral Importance (Energy):

	Low Significance	Medium Significance	High Significance	Critical
Transport Operators				
Accommodation				
Tourism Attractions				
Tourism Related Activities				

The schematic above outlines the significance (for each of the sectors examined) attached to energy issues (especially energy management) across the tourism industry. The transport and accommodation sectors rank this as being critical to the wellbeing of their businesses, while the attractions and activities sectors rank it as being of high significance.

4.4   Waste

Waste impacts on the environment in a number of ways: loss of valuable resources (raw materials, such as card, plastic and glass), need for landfill space, release of methane gas and potential water pollution. Litter can also have a negative impact on visitor perception of Ireland's clean, green image. In 2006, as part of the Visitor Attitudes Survey, 60% of overseas visitors said the streets in their home countries were cleaner than those in Ireland. Over time, this situation poses a significant threat to Ireland's clean, green image. Litter can also be harmful to wildlife – choking up streams, and reducing animal-life access to hedgerows and other habitats.

Municipal waste is made up of waste from households and from commercial activities such as hotels, shops and hospitals. In 2004, a total of 3,034,566 tonnes of municipal waste was generated in Ireland – a 4% rise over 2003. The EEA has reported that Ireland ranks as the largest per capita generator of municipal waste in the EU[3]. The generation of commercial waste increased by 7.6% in 2004 – from 1,141,264 tonnes in 2003 to 1,227,489 tonnes in 2004 . The commercial waste recovery rate increased from 47.1% in 2003 to 50.8% in 2004[4].

The success of commercial waste recycling is reflected in the absence of certain materials, paper and cardboard in particular, in waste bins at commercial premises. On the other hand 38% of organic waste was land filled. This reflects the lack of attention paid to the recycling of organic waste.   For example, Irish airports and railway stations do not appear currently to have recycling facilities for their public users – the benefits, not only from a waste management perspective, but also in reinforcing the public message of government policy (in relation to waste and waste management) would obviously be of major benefit. It follows that similar practice (in provision of waste segregation/recycling facilities) at our major tourist attractions would be similarly beneficial, from a public policy point-of-view.

In 2006, a report published by the Irish EPA's Cleaner Greener Production Programme's project on Greening Irish Hotels (www.greeningirishhotels.com) estimated that the current Irish hotel stock generated over 65,000 tonnes of landfilled waste in 2004, and over 45,000 tonnes in 2005 (EPA, 2006)[5]. Were the industry to move toward the world average, this would necessitate an annual reduction to ca. 28,000 tonnes to landfill – a world leading position would necessitate a reduction in reliance on landfill to ca. 9,000 tonnes per annum. This is not an unmanageable position for the industry – in the Greening Irish Hotels programme some facilities were able to reduce their landfill reliance by 85%.

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[3]   EEA – The European Environment, State and Outlook, 2005
[4]   EPA – National Waste Report, 2004
[5]   It appears that the impact of improved recycling in the sector was already evident in 2005, with a drop of over 30% of waste sent to landfill.

Examples of solid waste generated by tourist facilities:

Accommodation Sector:
- ▶ Newspaper and magazines;
- ▶ Cleansing agent containers;
- ▶ Flowers;
- ▶ Plastic shampoo and cosmetic soap bottles;
- ▶ Old towels, linens, bed sheets and furniture;
- ▶ Paint and varnishes; and
- ▶ Wastewater.

Food Services:
- ▶ Cans, bottles and tins;
- ▶ Food waste;
- ▶ Product containers; and
- ▶ Serviettes and straws.

Open Spaces and Grounds:
- ▶ Plant trimmings;
- ▶ Empty pesticide/fertilizer bottles and bags; and
- ▶ Litter.

Sectoral Importance (Waste):

	Low Significance	Medium Significance	High Significance	Critical
Transport Operators	■			
Accommodation	■	■	■	
Tourism Attractions	■	■		
Tourism Related Activities	■	■		

The schematic above outlines the importance attached to waste issues (especially waste reduction, diversion from landfill and recycling infrastructure) across the tourism sector. The accommodation sector ranks waste as being of high significance, the tourism attractions rank it at medium significance and the transport operators consider it to be of low significance. Tourism related activities do not even rank waste as an issue.

4.5   Greenhouse Gases and Traffic Congestion

The EEA estimates that the average EU citizen travels an average of 1,800 kilometres every year for holidays. 90% of the energy used in the tourism sector is in travelling to and from destinations. The private or hired car is the main mode of transport for tourism in the EU (but not Ireland), and is expected to become even more popular in the future. In 2006, more than one in three holidaymakers (over the June to September period) used a hire car while in Ireland. As demand for tourism and recreation continues to increase, greenhouse gases, particulate matter, noise and traffic congestion can be expected to increase also. These issues are discussed more in the following paragraphs.

The main transport related greenhouse gases are carbon dioxide (CO_2), nitrogen oxides (NO_x) and volatile organic compounds (VOCs). Road transport accounted for 93% of the total of 11.5 million tonnes CO_2, equivalent arising from transport in 2002. The catalyst technologies, common in petrol cars for the control of carbon monoxide (CO), nitrogen oxides (NO) and VOCs, account for some of the increase in greenhouse gas emissions due to their capacity to enhance nitrogen oxide production. The contribution of petrol cars to greenhouse gas emissions is therefore increasing not only due to the growing number of cars but also because these technologies are gaining much greater penetration in the fleet.

Airplanes are an important and increasing source of greenhouse gas emissions that are causing global warming. For example, a return flight for two from Dublin to Los Angeles produces considerably more CO_2 than the average new car does in a whole year. [6]

Within the EU, air transport accounts for only 20% of all tourism trips by EU citizens, domestic and international. However, a recent report suggests that aviation is responsible for 75% of all greenhouse gas emissions of all EU tourism transport (Peeters et al, 2007).

Transport can also create elevated levels of particulate matter, especially PM_{10}. These are particles less than 10 micrometers in diameter that are suspended in the air and are referred to as total suspended particulates. These larger particles can cause irritation to the eyes, nose and throat in some people.

Noise emissions from transport depend on the volume flow, speed and the proportion of heavy vehicles, but also on the topography and distance from the noise source. Noise pollution from airplanes, cars, and buses, as well as recreational vehicles such as jet skis, is an ever-growing problem. In addition to causing annoyance, stress, and even hearing loss, it causes distress to wildlife, especially in sensitive areas.

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[6]   The Carbon Neutral Company (www.carbonneutral.com) calculates that a return flight to Los Angeles from Dublin for two people would result in 3.6 tonnes of CO^2, while the annual emissions of CO^2 from a 1.4 litre car, travelling 8,000 miles per annum is 2 tonnes.

Traffic congestion can be a problem in and around the most popular tourist attractions. This is due to the influx of tourists travelling to these destinations during the summer months. The congestion can lead to frustration and stress for both the local community and the visitors, and also threaten the quality of the tourist experience. Dublin city has recently introduced a ban on large vehicles (greater than 5-axel) from its streets, with the opening of the new Port Tunnel – this initiative was introduced to alleviate traffic pressures on the streets during trading hours, and is likely to be supplemented by further measures (to reduce traffic congestion) in the coming years, which can only be good news for tourism providers.

Sectoral Importance (GHGs and traffic congestion):

	Low Significance	Medium Significance	High Significance	Critical
Transport Operators	■	■	■	■
Accommodation	■	■		
Tourism Attractions	■	■	■	
Tourism Related Activities	■	■	■	

The Schematic above outlines the significance (for each of the sectors examined) attached to transport issues (especially transport infrastructure and congestion) across the tourism industry. The transport sector ranks this as being of critical significance, the attractions and activities sectors rank this at high significance and the accommodation providers consider this to be of medium significance.

4.6   Physical Impacts

Attractive landscape such as sandy beaches, lakes, riversides, and mountaintops, are often transitional zones, characterized by species-rich ecosystems. Typical physical impacts include the degradation of such ecosystems. An ecosystem is a geographic area including all the living organisms, their physical surroundings (such as soil, water, and air), and the natural cycles that sustain them. The ecosystems most threatened with degradation are ecologically fragile areas. In Ireland these places include hardwood forests, wetlands, and coastal areas.

The pressures on these ecosystems are often severe because such places are very attractive to both tourists and developers. Physical impacts are caused not only by tourism-related land clearing and construction, but also by continuing tourist activities and long-term changes in local economies and ecologies.

NATURA 2000 sites are protected habitats for flora and fauna of European importance. They comprise Special Areas of Conservation, designated under the Habitats Directive and Special Protection Areas, designated under the Birds Directive. The Habitats Directive was transposed into national legislation by the European Communities (Natural Habitats) Regulations, 1997 S.I. No. 94 of 1997. NATURA 2000 sites comprise over ten per cent of the country. They have management implications for farmers with sites on their land, as well as onerous planning restrictions.

It is also clear that tourism can have the potential for significant impacts on attractions of cultural heritage, in similar ways to the potential impacts on natural heritage attractions.

Physical impacts of tourism development include:

▸ **Construction activities and infrastructure development:** The development of tourism facilities such as accommodation, water supplies, restaurants and recreation facilities can involve sand mining, beach and sand dune erosion, soil erosion and extensive paving. In addition, road and airport construction can lead to land degradation and loss of wildlife habitats and deterioration of scenery.

▸ **Deforestation and intensified or unsustainable use of land:** Construction of mountain resort accommodation and facilities frequently requires clearing forested land. Coastal wetlands are often drained and filled due to lack of more suitable sites for construction of tourism facilities and infrastructure. These activities can cause severe disturbance and erosion of the local ecosystem, even destruction in the long term. Worldwide, to achieve conservation/protection from a planning perspective, there is usually a trade-off between the specification of mitigation measures or ecosystem compensatory measures, e.g. habitat recreation and a general policy of complete avoidance of damage, such as banning development completely.

▶ **Marina development:** Overbuilding and extensive paving of shorelines can result in destruction of habitats and disruption of land-sea connections. Evidence suggests a variety of negative impacts from shoreline development (including coastal protection works, which have positive infrastructural impacts), increased sediments in the water, trampling by tourists, ship groundings, pollution from sewage and over fishing.

Physical impacts from tourist activities can include:

▶ **Trampling:** Tourists using the same trail over and over again trample the vegetation and soil, eventually causing damage that can lead to loss of biodiversity and other impacts. Such damage can be even more extensive when visitors frequently stray off established trails.

▶ **Anchoring and other marine activities:** In marine areas many tourist activities occur in or around fragile ecosystems. Anchoring, snorkelling, sport fishing and scuba diving, yachting, and cruising are some of the activities that can cause direct degradation of marine ecosystems and subsequent impacts on coastal protection and fisheries.

▶ **Alteration of ecosystems by tourist activities:** Habitat can be degraded by tourism leisure activities. For example, wildlife viewing can bring about stress for the animals and alter their natural behaviour when tourists come too close. This puts high pressure on animal habits and behaviours and tends to bring about behavioural changes.

Sectoral Importance (Physical Impacts):

	Low Significance	Medium Significance	High Significance	Critical
Transport Operators	■			
Accommodation	■			
Tourism Attractions	■	■	■	■
Tourism Related Activities	■	■	■	■

The schematic above outlines the significance (for each of the sectors examined) attached to physical impacts on the natural environment across the tourism industry. The attractions and activities sectors rank this as being of critical significance, while the transport and accommodation sectors rank this at low significance.
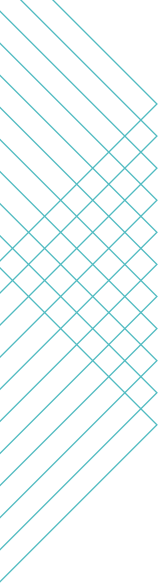
Environmental Initiatives
in Tourism
- Examples

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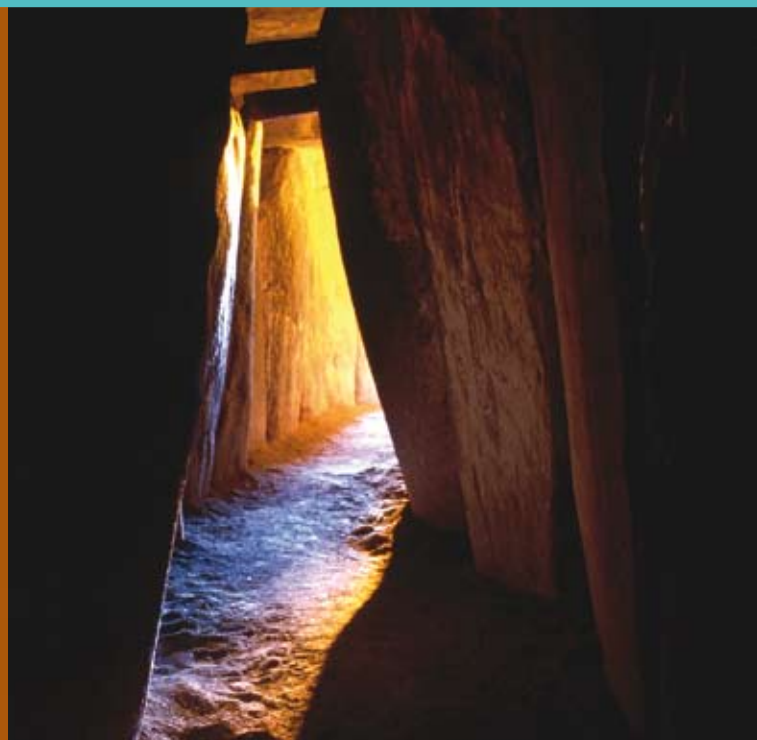
5.0 Environmental Initiatives in Tourism - Examples

5.1 The Green Agenda and World Tourism

The last 15 years has seen a number of major environmental initiatives undertaken by tourism and hospitality enterprises, as well as government authorities. These initiatives have been at the level of the individual enterprise, at national and international level. This part of the report will set out an overview of the most significant of these initiatives. In particular, we will focus on the recent development of voluntary environmental certification and award initiatives.

5.2 The E.U. Eco-Management and Audit Scheme (EMAS)

This scheme serves as a management tool for companies and other organisations to evaluate, report and improve their environmental performance. EMAS, since 2001 has been open to all economic sectors including public and private services. In addition, EMAS was strengthened by the integration of EN/ISO 14000 as the environmental management system.

Participation is voluntary and extends to public or private organisations operating in the European Union and the European Economic Area. Though not specifically designed for tourism activities, this initiative can and has been applied to a number of tourist facilities and activities across the EU. (Web ref: www.emas.org.eu).

5.3 The E.U. 'Flower' Ecolabel

Over the past ten years, the "Flower" has become a European-wide symbol for products, providing simple and accurate guidance to consumers. All products bearing the "Flower" have been checked by independent bodies for compliance with strict ecological and performance criteria. There are currently (September 2006) twenty-three different product groups, and already more than 250 licences have been awarded for several hundred products. Since 1 May 2003, tourist accommodation throughout Europe has been able to apply for the EU Eco-label to show how highly they score on environmental performance.

The 'tourist accommodation services' sector (hotels, bed and breakfasts, youth hostels or even mountain huts) was the first service sector for which Eco-label Flower criteria were developed. There is now an additional set of criteria for campsites.

The product group "tourist accommodation service" comprises the provision of sheltered overnight accommodation in appropriately equipped rooms, including at least a bed. It may include the provision of food services, fitness activities and/or green areas.

In order to apply for the European Eco-label, the tourism operator must meet strict minimum standards with regard to environmental performance and health standards. This includes the use of renewable energy sources, an overall reduction in energy and water consumption, measures to reduce waste, environmental policy setting and the provision of details/features appropriate to 'eco-tourism'. (Web ref: www.eco-label.com)

5.4   UNEP Tourism Programme, (International)

UNEP, as an intergovernmental organization, assists governments to produce effective policies and implementation programmes. From multilateral environmental agreements to national governments, through local authorities and regional organizations, UNEP's Tourism Programme provides support by developing principles and offering technical assistance to destination management organizations interested in using the Local Agenda 21 frameworks and by producing environmental standards. (Web ref: www.uneptie.org/pc/tourism)

The objectives for developing the UNEP Principles for Implementation of Sustainable Tourism are:

- ▸ To help governments and intergovernmental, private-sector and other organizations apply the general concept of sustainable tourism in practice, and minimize environmental impacts from tourism.
- ▸ To facilitate the development of more specific guidelines at the regional level or in relation to specific issues, such as coral reefs and biodiversity.
- ▸ To provide a framework for the work programmes of the Convention on Biological Diversity, the Framework Convention on Climate Change, the Regional Seas Action Plans, and other international agreements that address tourism issues.

5.5   Tourism Partnership, (International)

As a key programme of The Prince of Wales International Business Leaders Forum (IBLF), the Tourism Partnership drives the responsible tourism business agenda. Their innovative tools and programmes demonstrate that economic, social and environmental benefits are possible through practical action. By taking a leadership role, the Tourism Partnership fosters and implements new ideas to address emerging global issues. (Web ref: www.iblf.org)

- **The Greenhotelier** is the key communication tool of the Tourism Partnership. The magazine is a highly respected source of practical information on environmental and socio-economic issues affecting the sector, and a showcase of best practices from around the world;
- **Benchmarkhotel** is a management tool to assess and monitor the environmental performance of hotels – in areas of energy, water, waste and chemical use – and to help identify and prioritise areas for improvement and cost-savings;
- **Sustainable hotel siting, design and construction** is a compendium of guiding principles drawing on industry expertise and providing a single point of reference for planners, investors, hotel owners and developers. It addresses the challenge of sustainable hotel design and development;
- **Environmental Management for Hotels** is a comprehensive guide to quality environmental management and how this contributes to successful business operations; and
- **Sustainable Education Tool** is a sustainability self-education tool for use by hotel operators to measure and monitor economic, social and environmental impacts and to provide guidance for improvement.

5.6   Green Globe, (International)

Green Globe is a worldwide benchmarking and certification program which facilitates sustainable travel and tourism for consumers, companies and communities. It is based on Agenda 21 and principles for Sustainable Development endorsed by 182 governments at the United Nations Rio de Janeiro Earth Summit in 1992. (Web ref: www.greenglobe.org).

The functions of GREEN GLOBE are to:

- Assist companies to develop and operate in an environmentally, culturally and socially sustainable way, helping to save money and promote better business;

‣ Assist consumers through brand recognition to identify companies and destinations committed to better environments;

‣ Assist communities and protected area destinations to develop and operate in an environmentally, culturally and socially sustainable way; and

‣ Benefit the environment through reduction in solid wastes, reduced greenhouse gas emissions, less water pollution, improved habitat conservation and other environmental improvements.

5.7   The Green Tourism Business Scheme, (UK)

This is the largest and most successful environmental accreditation body of tourism related businesses in Europe and has over 500 members in the UK, including amongst others, accommodation providers, visitor attractions, tour operators and conference facilities. (Web ref: www.green-business.co.uk). Issues such as business efficiency, environmental management, waste, transport, as well as topics like social responsibility and biodiversity are covered under this scheme.

By agreeing to the GTBS code of conduct and through independent assessment of their activities the members have made a commitment towards reducing the impact of their business on the environment.
To gain a GTBS award, businesses are assessed once every two years by IEMA registered environmental auditors, who have considerable experience within the tourism sector. The businesses are graded against over 120 measures of best practice, reflecting a balance of environmental, economic and social issues. These cover everything from good management and communication to efficient lighting and heating, as well as things like nature conservation, local crafts and produce, renewable energy and community support and involvement.

5.8   Hospitable Climates – A Benchmarking Initiative, (UK)

'Hospitable Climates' is a voluntary energy efficiency agreement between The Carbon Trust and the HCIMA (Hotel and Catering International Management Association), which aims to reduce carbon emissions and their impact on climate change.

Participating businesses receive a free service through a series of Energy Measures fact files offering guidance on how to improve their energy efficiency – saving money while improving the quality of their guests' experience. The

service is backed up with an interactive website (www.hospitableclimates.org.uk) and telephone help-line. Site visits to follow up can be arranged when appropriate.

HCIMA Accreditation confers on an organisation the international recognition of a quality standard in respect of programmes that are relevant to the needs of the hospitality, leisure and tourism industries and which meet accepted HCIMA benchmark standards. This recognition provides a 'kitemark' (symbol of trust, integrity and quality) to demonstrate that the programme(s) accredited meet recognised levels and standards of professional, knowledge, skills and understanding.

5.9   The Green Audit Kit, (UK)

Since its original launch in 1996, this commercially available product has been used by small tourism businesses in England, many of them reporting substantial cost savings and increased business. (Web ref: www.greenauditkit.org) The Green Audit Kit is designed to be used by all types of tourism businesses, such as:

- Tourism service providers (e.g. restaurants/cafes, transport/tour operators, retail/gift shops);
- Attractions;
- caravan parks;
- serviced accommodation; and
- other accommodation.

It is claimed that the kit contains ideas to help tourism businesses to:

- benefit from the attraction of the countryside;
- appeal to a new and/or growing market and ensure that existing customers return;
- benefit from good publicity opportunities;
- find ways to cut costs;
- contribute to the local community and local economy;
- invest in the future of the local environment; and
- invest in their long-term future.

The vendors state that the Green Audit Kit is designed to assist in making tourism businesses more competitive and more environmentally responsible. It is advertised that adoption of the ideas in the kit:

▸ bring extra business – visitors from the UK and overseas are becoming more environmentally aware and this influences their spending decisions;

▸ save money – by reducing running costs, such as energy consumption and waste disposal; and

▸ is not costly – many of the suggestions require enthusiasm and time, but not more capital.

5.10   The Cleaner Greener Production Programme & The Greening Irish Hotels Programme, (Ireland)

The Cleaner Greener Production Programme (CGPP) is funded through the National Development Plan (NDP) and managed by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). (Web ref: www.cleanerproduction.ie).

The objective of the CGPP is to encourage companies in Ireland, particularly SME's, to adopt a high standard of environmental performance by adapting or improving processes and services in order to minimise negative impact on the environment. The programme seeks to promote environmentally friendly activities through the application of increased resource productivity, waste reduction, reuse of materials, energy management and a change of culture within organisations.

Cleaner greener production aims to reduce consumption of resources and avoid generating pollution in the first place. This type of strategy can cut costs, reduce risks and identify new opportunities. It can be the most efficient way to operate processes, produce goods or provide services.

The Irish Hospitality Institute officially launched The Greening Irish Hotels programme in April 2005. It is the largest and most comprehensive review and research into the environmental practices of the Hotel Industry in Ireland. The programme's main objective is to encourage hotels throughout Ireland to strive towards a higher standard of environmental performance by adapting processes and services in order to minimise negative impacts on the environment whist maintaining quality, productivity and competitiveness. (Web ref: www.greeningirishhotels.ie).

The first National Environmental Conference & Exhibition for the Hospitality & Tourism Industry took place in September 2006, showcasing the Benchmark Findings of the Consultants working on the programme concentrating on Energy, Waste and Water.

The programme reports the following achievements;

▸ 56 Hotels were engaged in more than 20 counties. [Hotels involved in the programme included 3, 4
and 5 Star Hotels with size ranging from 30 to 255 bedrooms. These hotels represent ca. 10 % of
Irish Hotel Room stock];

▸ 20 Training Sessions/Workshops were held with over 600 person-training sessions delivered.

▸ 40 Environmental Reviews were carried out and Cleaner Production Plans created.

▸ Environmental Management principles were introduced to in excess of 3,000 employees.

▸ Best practice standards were identified across Waste, Water & Energy, and the Irish Hotel Industry was
Environmentally Benchmarked for the first time.

Quantifiable environmental achievements included 1,113 tonnes of waste diverted from landfill and 3,000+ tonnes
of CO_2 output reduced by the end of 2006.

The programme also identified future industry opportunities for;

▸ Energy Savings of €61,900,000;

▸ Waste & Water Savings of €19,400,000;

▸ CO_2 Reductions of up to 162,000 Tonnes;

▸ Water consumption reductions of up to 4.5 million cubic metres; and

▸ Landfill Waste reductions of up to 56,000 tonnes

5.11   The Green Box, (Ireland)

The Green Box is emerging as Irelands' first genuine ecotourism destination with a set of standards based on sound
environmental practices highlighting all that the region and its people has to offer. (Web ref: www.greenbox.ie).

Ecotourism is travel which is small scale, low impact, culturally sensitive, community orientated, primarily nature
based, educational and capable of broadening peoples minds and enlivening their souls but providing a unique
experience, firmly grounded in sustainable principles and practices.

The Green Box is Ireland's first integrated ecotourism destination incorporating Counties Fermanagh, Leitrim, West
Cavan, North Sligo, South Donegal and North West Monaghan.

In keeping with many other sustainable and ecotourism destinations around the world the Green Box is creating and promoting high standards of sustainability. When these standards are adhered to participants are certified and given a recognisable award. This process benefits the environment, as tourism businesses have to consider their impact on the environment in terms of their energy use, water use, creation of waste etc. The award is also an excellent marketing tool for enterprises, given the growth of the sustainable tourism market, and reassures tourists who are coming to the area that standards, particularly for food and accommodation, are excellent.

The scheme has resulted in the first Irish certifications to the EU 'Flower' Ecolabel – there have been 14 successful applications for this accreditation to date (September 2006).

5.12   Golf Environment Europe, (International)

Golf Environment Europe is a pan European initiative, based in Scotland, working to promote environmental sustainability in golf. It is supported by a wide range of golfing organisations, including the European Tour, European Golf Association, Federation of European Golf Greenkeepers Associations, European Institute of Golf Course Architects, Sports Turf Research Institute, the PGAs of Europe, and a number of golf federations. European Golf Course Owners Association and a number of golf federations. There are two key components of Golf Environment Europe:

- ▶ European Foundation for Golf and Environment;
- ▶ European Forum for Golf and Environment;

(Web ref: www.golfenvironmenteurope.org).

The organisation sees its functions to be to:

- ▶ Provide an overview of environmental sustainability activities within the golf sector;
- ▶ Set out an environmental management and accreditation system for European golf facilities;
- ▶ Provide guidance on the sustainable development of new golf courses; and
- ▶ Communicate the activities of the Forum for Golf and Environment.

The organisation sees its objectives to be to:

- ▶ Help raise awareness about the relationship between golf and the environment;
- ▶ Demonstrate the wide range of initiatives that are taking place to improve golf's sustainability; and
- ▶ Provide practical guidance and ideas on the role golf courses/facilities can play in the implementation of environmental best practices.

5.13   Blue Flag Beaches/Marinas

The Blue Flag is an exclusive eco-label awarded to over 3100 beaches and marinas in 36 countries across Europe, South Africa, Morocco, New Zealand, Canada and the Caribbean in 2006.

The Blue Flag Programme is owned and run by the independent non-profit organisation Foundation for Environmental Education (FEE).

The Blue Flag works towards sustainable development at beaches/marinas through strict criteria dealing with water quality (beaches only), environmental education and information, environmental management, and safety and other services. The Blue Flag Programme includes environmental education and information for the public, decision makers and tourism operators.

Ireland currently has 81 Blue Flag beaches and 3 Blue Flag Marinas (2007).

Survey analysis

6.0 Survey Analysis

6.1   Survey Analysis

6.1.1   Review of Good Environmental Policy and Practice in the Tourism Sector

This survey was carried out in October/November 2006. The primary research for this report was carried out using a mixed methodology and consisted of participation through: (i) completion of questionnaires by post/email, (ii) phone interviews, and (iii) site visits and interviews.

The rationale for addressing the questionnaire to a relatively small sample size was to obtain a 'flavour' of the type of responses from the various sectors, especially in relation to detailed, rather than general, responses. It was intended, in the survey design, that some of the responses to 'general' questions would be compared to those found (for similar questions) in the Fáilte Ireland 'Tourism Business and Employment Survey 2006', which had a significantly larger sample size. Where possible, a comparison has been made of responses (in both surveys) to similar survey questions.

The Questionnaire used for the survey is included in the report as Appendix 2.

A total of 140 responses were received from a list of 248 questionnaires issued, which represents a return rate of 56%. The surveys were received in the following proportions from the various types of business/organisation polled:

Sector	Category	Category Number	Sector Number	Questionnaire Response Rate
Accommodation	Hotels	31	62	58%
	Hostels	6		
	B&B/Guesthouses	18		
	Camping Sites	7		
Activities	Health/Wellbeing	3	25	33%
	Golf Course	9		
	Equestrian	2		
	Angling Centre	8		
	Cycling/Walking	3		
Attractions	Festival/Event	9	41	95%
	Cultural Heritage attraction	17		
	Natural Heritage attraction	3		
	Other attraction	12		
Transport	Airline	2	12	28%
	Transport Operator	3		
	Car Hire Company	1		
	Marina/Cruising	6		
TOTAL			140	56%

The responses to the questionnaires are analysed based on the following themes:

▸ What links tourism with environmental issues?

▸ What aspect of the environment is important to you?

▸ What are you doing about managing your environmental impact?

▸ Are you engaging your customers on environment issues?

▸ What are you doing about energy management?

▸ What are you doing about water management?

▸ What are you doing about waste management?

▸ What do you think of schemes to improve your environmental performance?

The question numbers (Q1a etc.) refer to the order in which questions were posed on the survey questionnaire.

6.1.2 Tourism Business and Employment Survey 2006

The Tourism Business and Employment Survey 2006 surveyed the following tourism businesses:

Sector	Category	Category Number	Sector Number	Population Response[7]
Accommodation	Hotels	812	1,676	22% (368)
	Guesthouses	409		
	Self Catering Accommodation	455		
Attractions / Activities / Transport	Tourism Services and Attractions	2,778	2.778	15% (429)
Restaurants and Public Houses	Restaurants	2,621	13,247	6% (760)
	Non-Licensed Restaurants	1385		
	Public Houses	9241		

[7] From questionnaires issued, not from the entire sector as a whole.

The TBES 2006 asked businesses the following 5 questions:

1. What type of Environmental Policy do you carry out?
2. What practical environmental measures are in place?
3. What are the reasons for implementing Environmental Policy?
4. Identify the organisation from which you would expect to source information relating to the environment?
5. Describe your knowledge of environmental legislation?

The results from both sets of surveys carried out in 2006 are presented and compared below where possible. It should be noted that restaurants and public houses were only surveyed as part of the TBES 2006, and not as part of the primary research for this project. However the TBES results from the five questions above are presented where relevant first in relation to overall/ general responses (i.e. which includes restaurants and public houses) and then goes on to provide a sectoral (e.g. accommodation, attractions etc) breakdown of the responses.

6.1.3   What links tourism with environmental issues?

Q1A   *In general, what impact do you think tourism is having on the quality of the environment?*

Overall, the number of respondents who thought that tourism had a positive impact on the environment was exactly equal (at 42%) to those who thought it had a negative impact. Those who thought it had a negative impact tended to focus on the impact of greater numbers of people on limited infrastructure, while those who thought it had a positive impact argued that well-managed tourism tended to attract funding which helped to manage the environment in a positive way.

The accommodation sector contained the greatest number of respondents who thought that tourism had a positive impact on the environment (47%), while those in the activities sector had the highest number of respondents that thought it had a negative impact (45%).
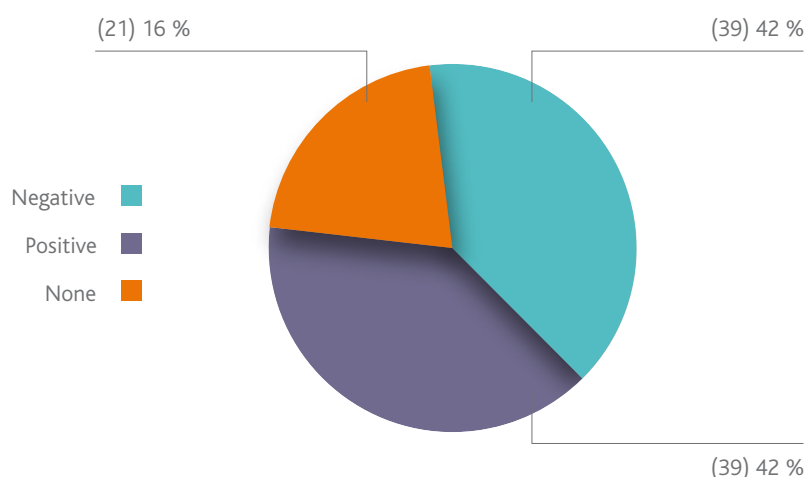
Q1B   *If negative, how serious do you think this impact is?*

Those who thought tourism had a negative impact on the environment were asked to rate how serious they considered this impact to be. Overall, 62% thought it was medium or high impact, as opposed to low or no impact. Those in the activities sector considered a medium-high impact greatest, at 65%; while the transport sector considered a medium-high impact lowest, at 50%.

Q2A *Which of the following environmental problems do you think affects your business or your area in a negative way?*

Issue	Average 'High/Med impact'	Highest 'High/Med impact'	Lowest 'High/Med impact'
Water Pollution	51%	56%, Accommodation	46%, Attractions
Poor Quality Drinking Water	33%	44%, Activities	11%, Transport
Air Pollution	32%	41%, Transport	18%, Activities
Traffic Congestion	66%	80%, Attractions	54%, Accommodation
Noise	37%	54%, Transport	32%, Activities
Litter	62%	77%, Attractions	50%, Transport
Poor Planning	74%	89%, Transport	66%, Attractions
Biodiversity Loss	34%	60%, Activities	21%, Accommodation
Erosion	22%	48%, Activities	14%, Accommodation
Climate Change	27%	48%, Activities	14%, Accommodation
GM Crops	19%	19%, Accommodation	3%, Attractions

Summary: Overall, within the sector, the impacts considered most important (>50% medium-high impact) by the respondent body were (by priority): **(i)** Poor Planning, **(ii)** Traffic Congestion, **(iii)** Litter and **(iv)** Water Pollution.

6.1.4 Why is Environment important for you?

Q13 *Which of the following issues/drivers are likely to motivate you to change the way the environmental aspects of your business are managed?*

Issue	Average 'Likely'	Highest 'Likely'	Lowest 'Likely'
Responding to the changing needs of customers	82%	91%, Attractions	55%, Transport
Point of differentiation from competitors	47%	55%, Transport	39%, Attractions
Cost savings (Energy)	88%	94%, Attractions	68%, Activities
Cost savings (Waste management)	90%	95%, Accommodation	64%, Transport
Cost savings (Water supply)	82%	95%, Accommodation	45%, Transport
Environmental responsibility	79%	86%, Activities	64%, Transport
Legislative compliance	73%	82%, Attractions	64%, Transport
Increased legal enforcement	68%	76%, Activities	55%, Transport

The most important driver identified was cost saving in the three key areas of energy, waste and water. The cost saving agenda was strongest in the accommodation sector.

Interestingly, the 2006 TBES[8] found (in response to the question "What are the reasons for implementing Environmental Policy?") that the highest priority (64% of respondents) was a general concern for the environment. 'Cost Reductions' was the second priority for participants – this was identified by 57% of participants. 'Legislation' was a factor identified by 24% of respondents, while only 2% recognised 'Customer Pressure' as a reason for implementing Environmental Policy. 'General Concern' for the environment, sectorally, was seen as most important to the tourism attractions participants (77%), and least important to the Hotels sector (62%). 'Cost Reductions' were most important to the hotels sector (80%) and least important to the attractions sector (45%).

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[8]   This figure relates to all sectors surveyed as part of the TBES including restaurants and public houses.

There are some unusual (and new) messages from the industry arising from these questions – in this project's survey, when asked "Which of the following issues/ drivers are likely to motivate you to change the way the environmental aspects of your business are managed?", the main drivers for tourism were stated to be: (i) costs and (ii) customer needs, while the 2006 TBES highlighted: (i) general concerns, and (ii) costs. In the 2006 TBES, when asked "What are the reasons for implementing environmental policy", the idea that customer needs were a priority, were almost entirely discounted in this respect.

Q4 *Which one of the following choices best describes your knowledge of environmental legislation as it relates to your business?*

Choices	Average	Highest	Lowest
Aware of all relevant environmental legislation	13%	24%, Activities	9%, Accommodation
Reasonably aware of most environmental legislation but could know more	53%	57%, Accommodation & Transport	45%, Attractions
Somewhat aware of environmental legislation and definitely need more information	25%	29%, Transport	23%, Accommodation
Little or no knowledge of environmental legislation	9%	14%, Attractions	0%, Transport & Activities

This question (Q4) was mirrored almost exactly in the 2006 TBES, and found respective average response rates[9] of: (a) Full Knowledge, 15%, (b) Reasonable Knowledge, 51%, (c) Some Knowledge, 26%, and (d) Little Knowledge, 8%. These results tally almost exactly with this project's findings.

On a sectoral basis, 'Full Knowledge' was most prevalent in the Self-Catering sector, while 'Little Knowledge' was highest in the attractions sector.

Though this project's survey found that customer needs figured highly, it was also found that the majority of the industry doesn't see that excellent environmental performance should be a point-of-differentiation from its competition. Perhaps this is one of the critical messages from this survey – the sector feels that the tourism customer is not seeking to find good environmental performance, and thus they are not keen to pay/differentiate for it. The 2006 TBES findings would appear to endorse this view.

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[9] This figure relates to all sectors surveyed as part of the TBES including restaurants and public houses

In relation to knowledge of the industry's legal obligations on environment, approximately 2/3 of participants (of this project's survey) felt reasonably comfortable with their awareness of legislation, with highest awareness in the activities sector (77%), and lowest awareness in the attractions sector (42%). Analysis, solely in respect of this question, would suggest that there was an opportunity to provide appropriate professional training/mentoring to the various sectors.

Though many independent studies have recently indicated that Ireland's greatest environmental issue is in relation to the environmental impacts of transport[10] , those representatives of the transport sector surveyed as part of the primary research for this project, were least engaged by most of the issues/drivers (though there may be some skewing, as numbers surveyed were less than 10% of the total survey number).

6.1.5 What are you doing about managing the environment?

Q3   *Are any controls/initiatives in place to manage the impact of visitors on the attraction on which your business/facility depends?*


(21) 16%   (51) 39%

In Place
Under Consideration
Not in Place
Not Relevant

(47) 36%   (12) 9%

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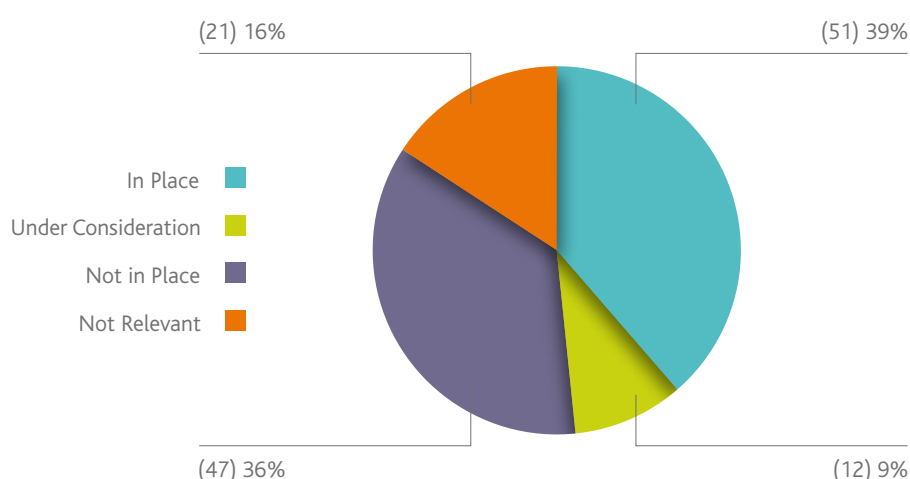
[10] European Environment Agency - Transport and environment 2005: Facing a Dilemma

Q5 *Does your business have a programme to manage the impact it has on the environment?*

(15) 11%   (54) 41%

Negative

Positive

None

(64) 48%
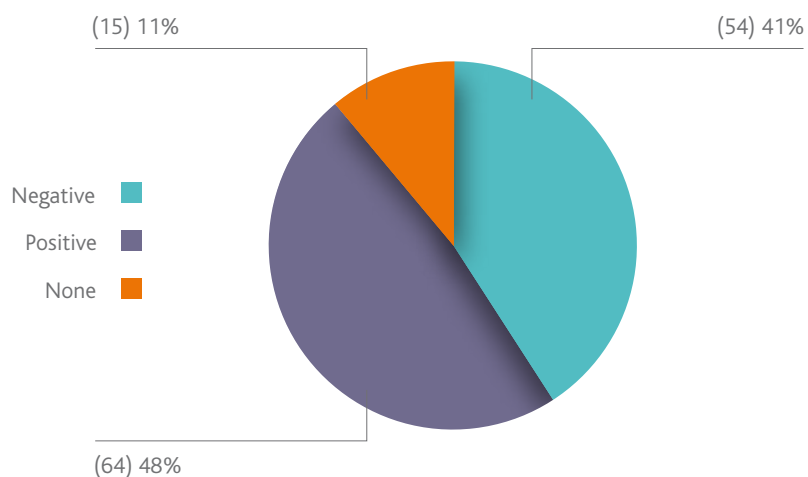
Q11 *Do your staff receive any training in relation to control of energy, water-use and waste performance (or other environmental impacts)?*

(42) 33%   (67) 54%

Yes

Planned

No

(17) 13%
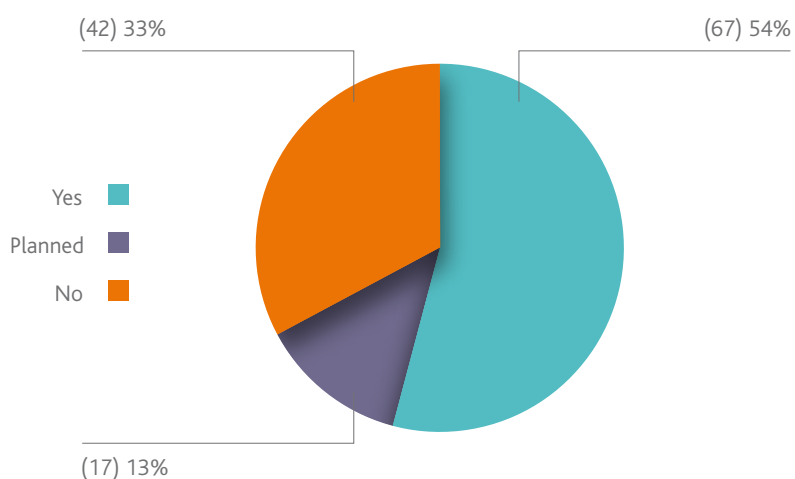
The main messages from the three questions appear to be that the industry recognises that both they and their customers have environmental impacts that need to be actively managed. There is a consistency of around 60% of respondents that already take measures to manage, or are planning to take measures to manage these environmental impacts.

This is only slightly less than the 2006 TBES report where 55% (of all sectors surveyed) stated that they had an environmental policy in place: on a sectoral basis Hotels scored highest with 68%, Guesthouses scored lowest with 53%.

However when questioned further about the nature of these policies (in the 2006 TBES), only 18% of all sectors surveyed stated that a 'Formal Written Policy' of this type was in place (Hotels were highest with 24%, Guesthouses were lowest with 9%). The presence of such an environmental policy in business-plans (for all sectors) scored lower again, at 13% (Hotels were highest with 20%, Guesthouses were lowest with 2%). The prevalent type of environmental policy found by the 2006 TBES was described as an 'Informal Management Aim' – overall this was stated to be the case by 69% of all respondents; Guesthouses were highest at 82%, Hotels were lowest at 62%. The 2006 TBES also reported that (overall and for all sectors surveyed) only 5% of respondents had a 'Programme for Environmental Improvement'; this only reached a significant proportion of positive respondents in the Hotels sector, at 18%. Again, the 2006 TBES also found that (overall and for all sectors surveyed) only 8% of businesses had a 'Responsible Officer' for the implementation of their Environmental Policies; again this only reached a significant proportion of positive respondents in the Hotels sector, at 29%.

Thus, there is also a consistent number that don't or won't manage these impacts – worryingly, the highest numbers of these respondents are in the activities and attractions sectors; both sectors had said (generally, in verbal interviews conducted during the project survey) that a proportion of their visitors/guests felt they should be doing so.

The overall indication from this series of questions (as part of the survey work carried out for this report) would appear, in isolation from other questions, that although 54% of respondents claim to provide some degree of training for staff on environmental issues, with another 13% planning to do so, there is still a gap in knowledge and toolkits to support the industry.

6.1.6   Are you engaging your customers and suppliers on environment issues?

Q6   *Does your facility have an 'environmental policy' which is displayed to guests/visitors/passengers?*

(83) 64%   (32) 25%

Yes
Planned
No

(14) 11%
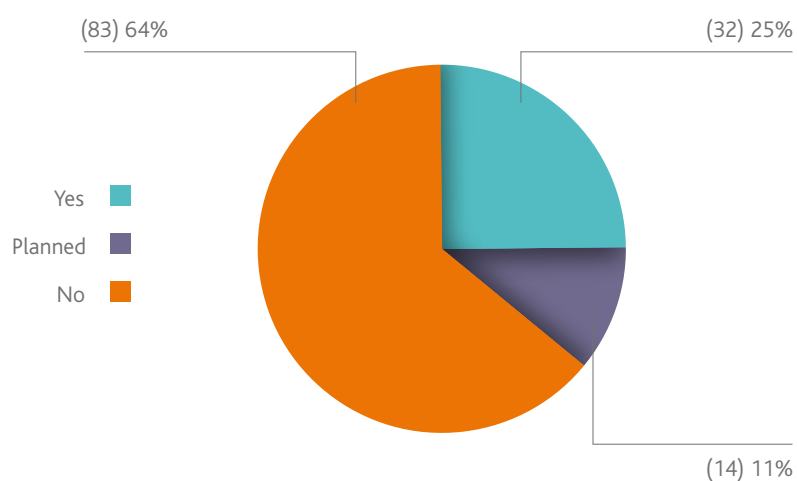
Q7   *Do you provide any environmental communication and education notices for guests/visitors/passengers
on local biodiversity, landscape and nature conservation measures?*

(78) 61%   (39) 30%

Yes
Planned
No

(11) 9%
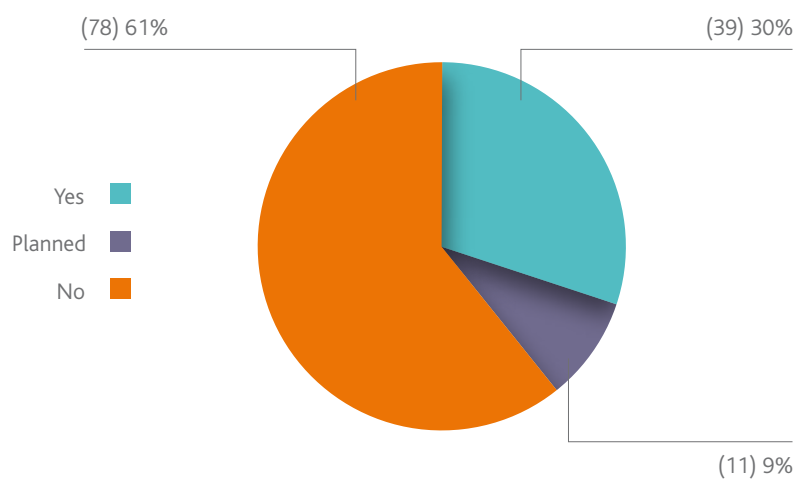
Q12 *Does your facility operate a policy which favours environmentally-preferable purchasing of materials (i.e. local produce or produce from companies with proven environmental management track record)?*
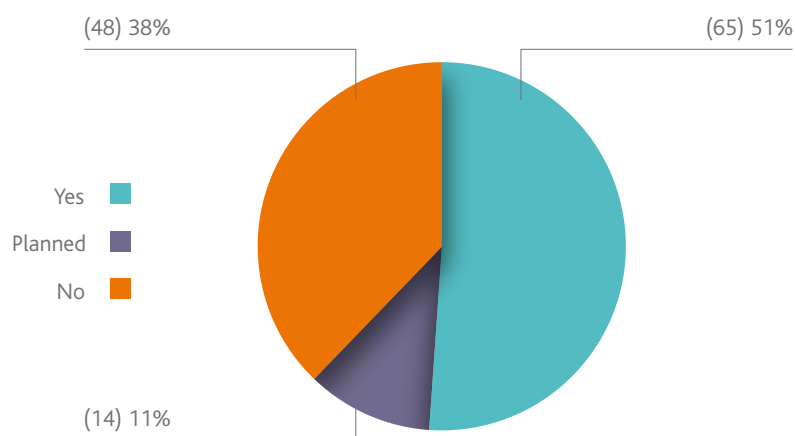
The message from this series of questions appears to tie in with the observation that while, anecdotally, a certain proportion of tourists expect environmental initiatives, there is no evidence to suggest that it is a critical decision-making criterion for them in their choice of accommodation, attractions, activities or transport.

While a minority of consumers appear to engage the public on their own environmental initiatives, and local nature/eco-tourism features, the vast majority do not (and do not intend to). The 'best' sector, in this regard are activities, the 'worst' are attractions – oddly, in that many are natural heritage attractions.

The finding that more than 60% of participants are aware of the successful industry initiatives in hugely reducing their waste management bills, while favouring local business/industry through environmentally-favourable purchasing policies is very encouraging from an environmental management perspective. However, it is evident that tourism managers see this solely as an economic concern – not something in which their customers would be interested. Good performance in this area is dominated in the accommodations and activities sectors (66% and 63% respectively).

Fáilte Ireland should note that there is perhaps an element of "positive PR" for Ireland's image that is being lost as a result of non communication of positive environmental management practices of individual businesses to their customers.

6.1.7 What are you doing about energy management?

Q8 *Does your facility measure/monitor its energy consumption for management scrutiny?*

(42) 32%   (76) 58%

Yes
Planned
No

(13) 10%
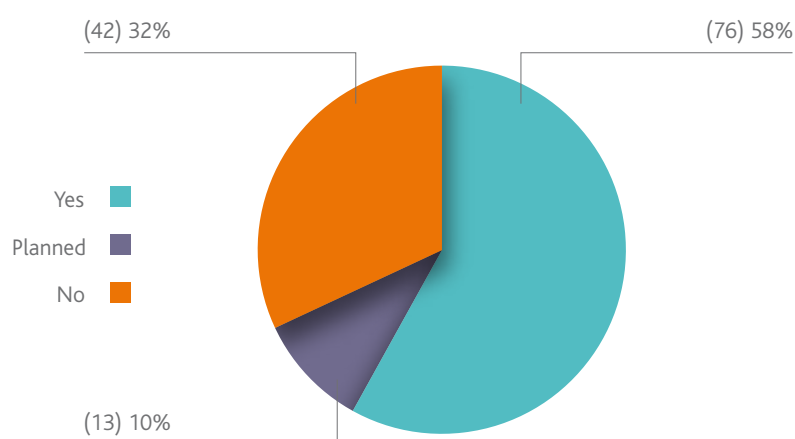
A resounding majority of the respondents are managing their energy use if for economic reasons, rather than environmental reasons, as previously discussed.

However, while it was rated an important driver for environmental management by nearly 90% of participants, only 58% are actively managing this facet of their business. The accommodation sector, not unexpectedly, scored highest (in terms of current or planned energy management initiatives) at 76%; while 38% of attractions stated no intention to embark on such initiatives.

The 2006 TBES found that 49% of overall (including restaurants and public houses) respondents had employed some degree of energy efficiency in their businesses – sectorally, hotels scored highest at 65%, while attractions had the lowest incidence, at 42%.

Q14 *Are any of the following (energy management) measures in place at your business?*

Measure	Average 'Yes'	Highest 'Yes'
Renewable electricity provider	9%	13%, Accommodation
On-site wind generation of electricity	1%	9%, Transport [11]
On-site solar generation of electricity	2%	2%, Accommodation
Combined heat and power (CHP)	8%	18%, Transport [12]
Heat pump	10%	14%, Attractions
Heat recovery system	13%	13%, Accommodation
Efficient Boiler or Air conditioner	53%	62%, Accommodation
Motion switching of light/heat	31%	43%, Accommodation
Energy efficient light-bulbs	86%	93%, Accommodation
Window insulation	61%	77%, Accommodation
EU IV Compliant vehicles	14%	22%, Transport
Hybrid vehicles	4%	7%, Accommodation
Travel route optimisation	30%	40%, Activities

It is evident that some energy-saving technologies have recently become commonplace within the industry, most obviously (in order of occurrence): (i) energy-efficient light-bulbs, (ii) window-insulation, (iii) efficient boilers/air conditioners, and (iv) motion switching of light/heat.

It is also evident from discussions (especially in the accommodation sector), that as technologies develop, and become more reliable, there is an appetite within the industry to utilise such technology. This is clear, even now, especially in relation to solar energy, geothermal heating and CHP.

When viewing the 'best in class' data, it is clear that the accommodation sector is leading within the tourism industry. There appear to have been two main drivers for this (from industry discussions, rather than data): (i) a greater focus on economic performance and managing overheads, and (ii) successful targeted initiatives by Government agencies, especially in relation to Hotels[13].

There may be scope in the other sectors, as well as in accommodation, for the provision of guidance/professional development assistance in relation to energy management, perhaps in tandem with other Government agencies.

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[11] This may relate to transport depots, or any buildings/ facilities associated with the transport sector
[12] As above
[13] Sustainable Energy Ireland programmes, and the Environmental Protection Agency – Cleaner Green Production Programme project, 'Greening Irish Hotels', run through the IHI.

6.1.8 What are you doing about water management?

Q9 *Does your facility measure/monitor its water consumption for management scrutiny?*

(52) 40%   (67) 52%

Yes
Planned
No

(11) 8%
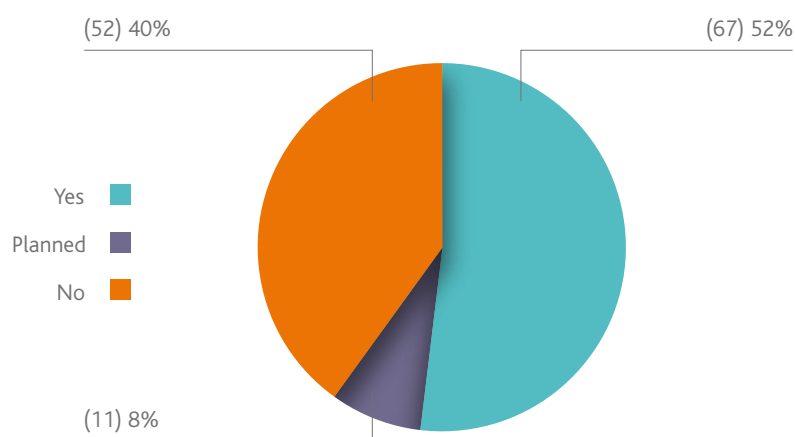
Q16 *Are you paying for water use by the litre at present?*

(34) 45%   (42) 55%

Yes
No
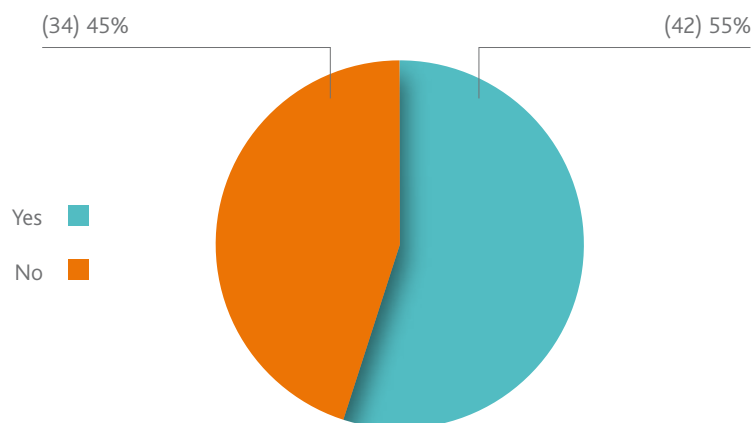
Q15 *Do you use any of the following water-saving measures for your business?*

Measure	Average 'Yes'	Highest 'Yes'
Water Flow reducers	23%	38%, Accommodation
Rainwater collection for use	9%	14%, Activities
Greywater collection for use	6%	8%, Attractions
'Closed-loop' wash facilities	2%	8%, Transport
Systematic leak-checks	54%	67%, Accommodation

The position is very similar to that reported in relation to energy. There is a 'core' of 60% who are actively (or intend to begin) monitoring water-use closely in their business. This percentage equates, in general, with those who are paying 'by the litre' for their mains water.

It appears that water has not yet become a significant overhead item in most tourism businesses.
The accommodation sector appears to have the lead in the management of water, and is well in front of the other sectors with the implementation of the two main technologies/management techniques used in buildings management, i.e. water flow reducers and systematic leak-checking. The main issue, in future, is likely to rest with those facilities that are significant water-users, such as those with swimming pools, leisure facilities and those offering large accommodation facilities.

Though Ireland's climate lends itself well to rainwater harvesting, the extensive use of rainwater is likely to be confined mainly to facilities with large horticultural requirements for water. The use of grey water, again as a consequence of Ireland's climate, is likely to be confined to enthusiasts.

The main finding in this section is that there is a professional development (or training) shortfall in relation to understanding of water management issues for staff in the industry. It is recommended that aspect of facility management be included by Fáilte Ireland, as part of a professional development package, perhaps in association with other Government agencies, and industry bodies in tandem with energy management and waste management.

6.1.9 What are you doing about waste management?

Q10 *Does your facility measure/monitor its waste management/recycling performance for management scrutiny?*

(88) 68%

Yes
Planned
No

(32) 24%

(11) 8%
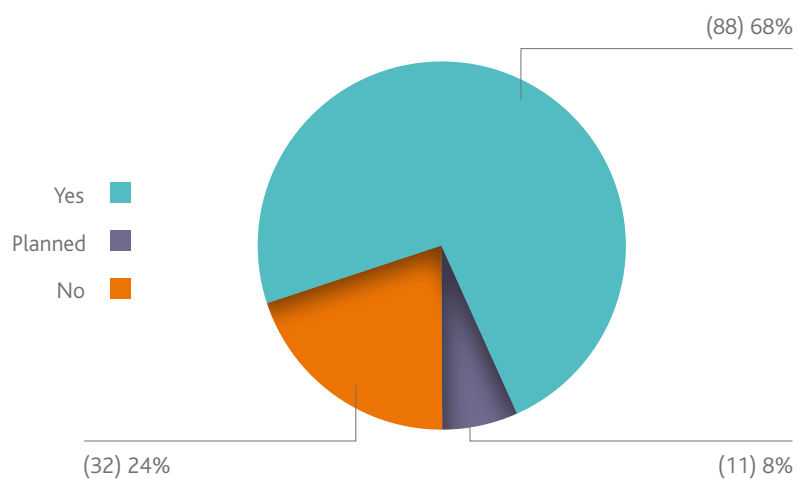
Q17 *Do you reuse, recycle or compost any of the waste generated by your business?*

(109) 82%

Yes
Planned
No

(19) 14%

(5) 4%
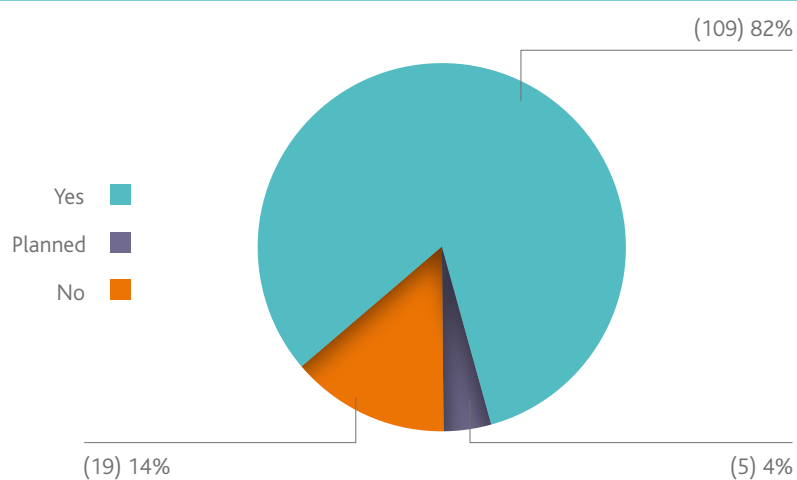
Q18 *Do you provide facilities for your guests/visitors/passengers to reuse, recycle or compost any of the waste
they generate at your facility?*

(50) 40%　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　(68) 54%

Yes
Planned
No

(7) 6%
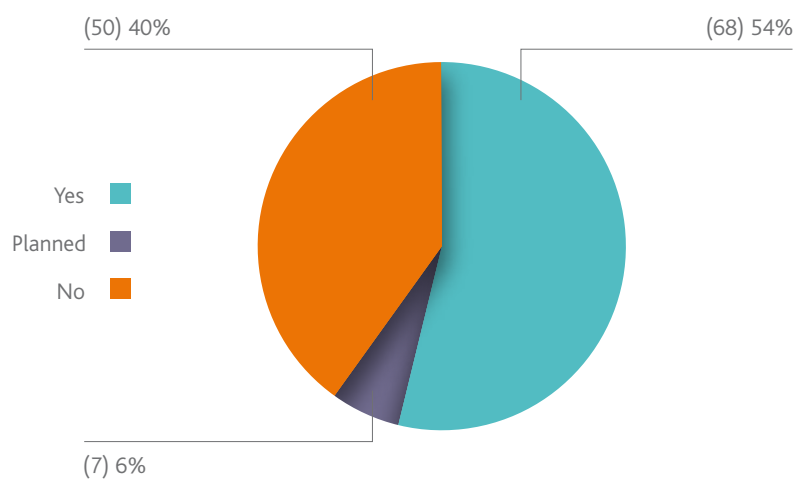
Q19 *Do you avoid 'one-portion', 'one-use' or disposable toiletries or utensils at your facility?*

(42) 44%　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　(43) 45%

Yes
Planned
No

(11) 11%
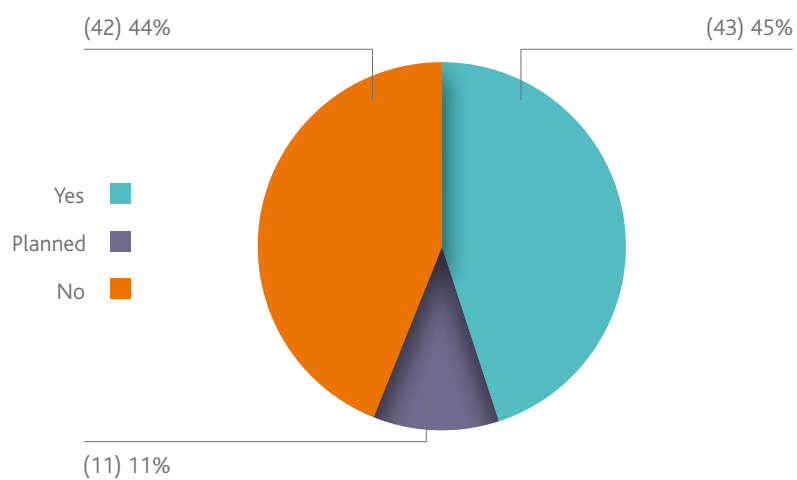
Q20 *Are you confident that the dangerous chemicals (e.g. cleaning chemicals) you use in your business are those with lowest practicable environmental impacts?*

(63) 67%

- Yes
- Planned
- No

(19) 20%   (12) 13%
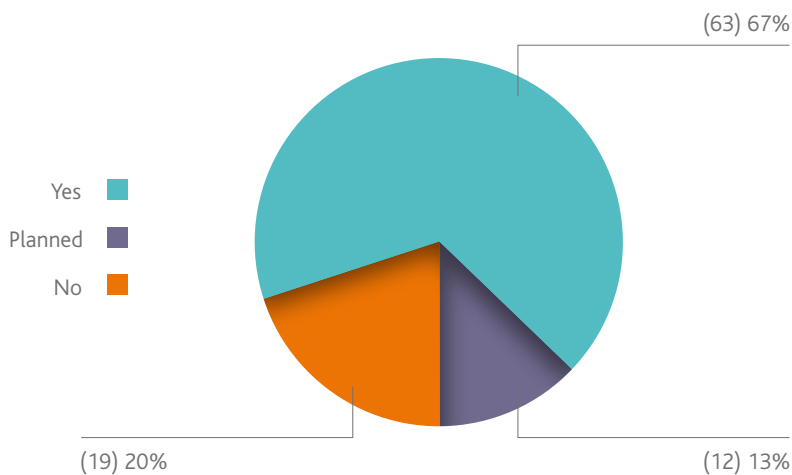
Q21 *Do you manage/control litter generated by your business or your customers, and is it disposed of appropriately?*

(94) 94%

- Yes
- Planned
- No

(2) 2%   (4) 4%
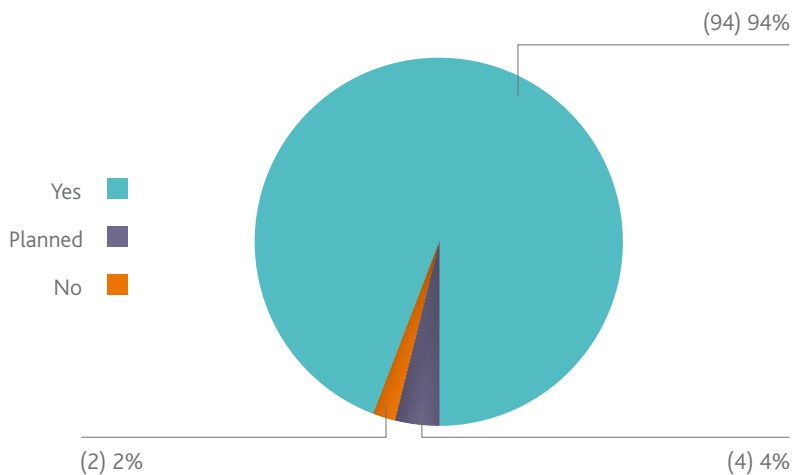
As an 'environmental' overhead item requiring scrutiny, waste management 'scored' higher in the survey than either water or energy. This is probably because of its 'maturity' as an item of concern, since landfill prices sky-rocketed in Ireland in the late 90s, thus all businesses (not just tourism) have been keenly monitoring waste management costs for many years. Monitoring of energy (firstly) and water are likely to follow this pattern in the years to come, not for environmental reasons (as we learned earlier), but for financial management.

Again, in line with what we've seen earlier, the accommodation sector scored highest for waste management scrutiny, with 87% currently undertaking (or planning to begin) this process. The attractions sector again scored lowest, with 38% not considering monitoring their waste at all.

86% of all participants are currently involved in some recycling of their commercial waste – again accommodation scored highest with 91%, while transport scored lowest as 25% had no plans for such an operational item. This finding tallies with the results reported in the 2006 TBES – overall (including for restaurants and public houses) 91% of respondents reported operational recycling policies, with all sectors scoring over 85% in relation to this.

Those businesses offering (or planning to offer) recycling facilities for their visitors/guests was lower overall, at 60% - accommodation again best at 78%, transport worst with 55% having no plans to do so. This finding is again in line with the industry's thinking[14] that the tourist, while having some interest in having 'green' facilities at hand, does not have environment on the radar when decision-making on holidays.

In relation to the use of disposable items in the business (such as one-serving portions of butter, condiments, etc. and disposable plates/cutlery), there is some good environmental practice, but it is not yet 'mainstream'. Anecdotal evidence gathered during the survey would suggest that 'avoidance' of such items is fiscally advantageous – the accommodation sector again leads the way on this venture, with nearly 70% currently engaged in such a scheme or planning to do so.

80% of tourism businesses are confident that the chemicals (mainly cleaning, horticultural) they use in their business (or are planning to use) are the best in the marketplace in terms of low impact on the environment, however it is considered that this confidence reflects a probable lack of awareness of businesses when it comes to this issue rather than actual fact. 98% of tourism businesses feel that they are managing litter generated by their businesses appropriately.

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[14]   In interviews and conversations conducted during the course of this research project.

6.1.10 Restaurants and Public Houses

In brief, the TBES 2006 found that restaurants and public houses were a little 'behind' the accommodation, attractions and activities in relation to environmental policy formulation. While this sector had undertaken recycling and waste management initiatives to the same extent as the other sectors, it was lagging in the areas of assessment of environmental impact, and implementation of environmental programmes.

Motivation for environmental improvements in this sector, in the survey results, was found to be mainly driven by legislation.

6.1.12 Survey Conclusions

The tourism sector is undecided on whether its impact on the environment is positive or negative – those who consider tourism having a positive impact point to the extra resources brought into managing local environments only as a result of income derived from tourism – those who consider tourism to have a negative impact acknowledge the additional impacts on the finite carrying capacities of destinations and infrastructure.

When queried about the greatest environmental pressures in their own particular areas, the prioritised main issues were in relation to: **(1)** Poor Planning, **(2)** Traffic Congestion, **(3)** Litter and **(4)** Water Pollution. While none of these impacts can directly and wholly be attributed to tourism, additional tourist numbers at any destination with limited carrying capacity in any and all of these areas, will serve only to exacerbate the problems.

The tourism industry, on the whole, considers itself well informed on environmental legislation, and believes that the main drivers for improved environmental management in tourism are: (i) costs and (ii) customer needs. However, though it has been stated that customer needs in this regard figure highly, the majority of the industry doesn't see that excellent environmental performance as a potential point-of-differentiation from its competition. Perhaps this is one of the critical messages from this survey – the sector feels that the tourism customer is not seeking to find good environmental performance, and thus they are not keen to pay/differentiate for it.

This belief is endorsed by some other survey findings:

1. While the industry has become involved in several environmental initiatives, it does not consider it beneficial to communicate with its visitors/guests on the issues, though it says the industry's initiatives are partly driven by customers' needs.

2. The industry has, effectively as a whole, taken to waste recycling, though it is slower to provide recycling facilities for guests/visitors.

Though the industry appears to feel it is coping adequately with the environmental agenda there is an opportunity for Fáilte Ireland, as a Government agency with responsibility for the development of the sector, to positively influence how this is achieved.

There is evidence that some of the professional development programmes undertaken by Government agencies in the tourism sector (Fáilte Ireland, EPA, SEI) have been successful on a pilot level.

Destinations Analysis

7.0 Destinations Analysis

7.1   Destinations Indicators

As a part of the project, an attempt was made to collate a set of indicators to estimate the impact that tourism was having on the environment in the destinations visited (during this study).

In October 2007, Dublin Institute of Technology (DIT), in conjunction with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), launched the ACHIEV model, which is a model for assessing sustainable tourism at destination level, through a set of sustainable tourism indicators. It is intended that this set of indicators may serve to act as a template for further studies on tourism destinations.

DIT were consulted prior to the publication of the ACHIEV model, in relation to this section of the study relating to destinations. It is clear from this correspondence that:

1. There is a deficit of the type of information currently collected or available (in Ireland) that will allow immediate development of effective indicators,

2. It is difficult to develop a 'one size fits all' set of indicators, as there are different types of environmental pressures, and different types of tourism from destination to destination, and

3. Without a sense of how exactly the indicators will be used, it is difficult to design sensible and effective measurements of this type.

Focus Case

The Environmental Protection Agency has recently funded a project, entitled Sustainable Tourism Development: toward the mitigation of tourism destination impacts, through the Environmental RTDI Programme 2000-2006, which led to the publication of the DIT ACHIEV model on sustainable tourism at destination level. Methodologies such as the development of carrying capacity or sustainable tourism indicators are of considerable benefit to both government agencies and tourism interests, in determining an area's potential and sustainability. With better information, visitor and area management can be more proactive and capacity issues can be better anticipated and responded to.

The specific focus of the study was the Tipperary Lakeside Lough Derg area. North Tipperary is located in the mid-West region of Ireland; a predominantly rural county dominated by low-lying agricultural grasslands in the central plains, with uplands to the north and west. The principal industries in the county are agriculture, forestry and tourism. The administrative capital is Nenagh with a population of over 7,424.

The population of the western area of the lakeshore is 7,449; which is a growth of 17.5% since 1991, compared to a 5.3% increase in North Tipperary as a whole. For practical reasons, when considering a study area, a relatively compact area has to be chosen, one which capitalises upon its tourism assets by creating its own identity based on its particular tourism product. In this investigation, the Tipperary Lakeside portion of Lough Derg on the river Shannon was chosen to fulfil these requirements.

The initial research undertaken as part of Strand 1 of the project identified a myriad of agencies involved in the collection of data on the natural and physical environment of the study area. Due to the time-consuming and often technical nature of primary data collection, it was decided to favour the exploitation of existing data over primary research.

However some limitations associated with the chosen methodology did become apparent. These were mainly associated with the nature of the existing data and also with accessing the data. The limitations are summarised below:

▸ Data tended to be very specific and detailed. Thus a large quantity of data was available for particular focused aspects of the environment;

▸ Data tended to be recorded at particular spatial scales - can be difficult to interpolate for study area;

▸ Difficulties communicating with holders of data;

▸ Difficulties establishing rights to use data;

▸ Difficulties obtaining data even where it is technically available to the public; and

▸ Issues concerning confidentiality and conflict of interest regarding data.

A more significant issue regarding the use of existing data concerns their suitability with respect to the overall objectives of the project. These objectives can be summarised as follows:

▸ To develop practical methods for the implementation of sustainable tourism policy aspirations;

▸ To devise and improve methods for the implementation of carrying capacity indicators at a destination level; and

▸ To facilitate government and tourism business managers in making more informed decisions.

In the context of these project aims, two particular problems were identified which were associated with the data which was acquired for the project inventory. These were:

▸ Often it was not possible to link data with the effects of tourism; and

▸ Much of the data, though useful in the context of the project, has limited use in the context of the overall project aims.

Thus, in spite of the large quantity of information available, analysis of the data showed extensive gaps in the database when considering the applicability of the data to the carrying capacity indicator concept and the ultimate aims of the project. That is, the data may be relevant to tourism in one sense, but as a potential indicator for the effects of tourism it has little value.

The overall aim of the project was to develop practical techniques to implement the carrying capacity concept in tourism management. The principal technique was the identification and use of indicators to assess tourism carrying capacity. In Strand 3 of the research this technique formed the basis of an environmentally integrated, tourism destination management model which will be used to identify and monitor trends that occur as a direct or indirect consequence of tourism in an area.

During this project the World Tourism Organisation's publication "Indicators of Sustainable Development for Tourism Destinations: A Guidebook (2004)" has been examined extensively. This publication suggests that, in the context that sustainability principles refer to the environmental, economic and socio-cultural aspects of tourism development, sustainable tourism should:

1. Make optimal use of environmental resources that constitute a key element in tourism development, maintaining essential ecological processes and helping to conserve natural heritage and biodiversity.

2. Respect the socio-cultural authenticity of host communities, conserve their built and living cultural heritage and traditional values, and contribute to inter-cultural understanding and tolerance.

3. Ensure viable, long-term economic operations, providing socio-economic benefits to all stakeholders that are fairly distributed, including stable employment and income-earning opportunities and social services to host communities, and contributing to poverty alleviation.

Studies done by the WTO and others have supported the conclusion that the planning and management of tourism in many destinations has occurred with insufficient information, particularly with regard to the impacts of tourism on destinations, the impacts of changes in the social and natural environment on tourism and the longer term maintenance of the key assets which make a destination attractive. Within this context, indicators are an early warning system for destination managers of potential risks and a signal for possible action.

It has thus been attempted to collate information, for the purposes of this study on 11 indicators, in line with the principal indicators for tourism destinations identified in the WTO's series of Baseline Indicators (2004), as tabulated here.

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[15] It should be noted that this study and in particular the research in relation to Destinations was carried out before the publication of the DIT ACHIEV model.

Indicator	Potential Source
1. Ratio of Tourists to Residents	Tourism Officers, CSO
- total tourist population	
- total host population	
2. Tourist Satisfaction	Tourism Officers, CSO
- levels of tourist satisfaction	
- value for money	
- return visitors	
3. Employment	Tourism Officers, CSO
- numbers employed in tourism	
- % of total employment	
4. Local Nuisances	Local Government Officers
- traffic	
- noise	
- litter	
- other	
5. Potable Water availability and quality	Local Government Officers
- WTP capacity	
- % capacity in use	
- water volume consumed annually	
- water shortages	
- water quality standard fails	
6. Wastewater treatment	Local Government Officers
- WWTP capacity	
- % capacity in use	
7. Waste Management	Local Government Officers
- total solid waste annual tonnage	
- % attributable to tourism	
- % recycling rate	
8. Energy Management	Sustainable Energy Ireland, Local Energy Agencies
- energy consumption (during peak and off-season)	
9. Seawater protection	Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government
- No. designated bathing areas	
- No. Blue Flag beaches	
10. Surface Water Quality	Environmental Protection Agency
- No. river monitoring stations	
- No. rated unpolluted	
11. Protected Structures/Areas	National Parks and Wildlife Service
- No. Protected Structures	
- No. SSIAs/SACs/Reserves	

Using this framework for collating information on destinations, the project team sought to collect information on four Irish tourist destinations: (1) Westport, Co. Mayo, (2) Kilkenny City, (3) East Cork, based around the towns of Youghal, Midleton and the Cobh area, and (4) County Leitrim. All four destinations were visited by the project team, and (where possible) businesses in each of the four sectors (transport, accommodation, activities and attractions) were interviewed in each of the destinations. Over forty businesses were visited and interviewed in this part of the project, and their views have also been analysed as part of the overall questionnaire programme.

Practically, it was only possible to identify sufficient information to generate the indicators for Westport, Co. Mayo because of the existence of an in-depth study of tourism for Westport (as referenced in the Case Study below) and the assistance of the Local Fáilte Ireland Product and Marketing Development Manager. It was possible to gather some of the information required in all of the destinations, but not enough to meaningfully describe the impacts of tourism on the environment in each of those areas. This lack of readily available and relevant information tallies with many of the findings of the EPA 'Sustainable Tourism Development' project, described as a Focus Case earlier in this section.

7.1.1 Westport – Case Study

Westport is a town of population greater than 5,000, situated on the west coast of Ireland, at the head of the Carrowbeg river, which flows into Clew Bay. Westport, historically attracted pilgrim tourists due to its proximity to Croagh Patrick, but has more recently developed as a tourist destination, with wider appeal due to the character and attractiveness of its built and natural heritage.

Westport, and a number of its constituent businesses/organisations, have gained national recognition of their efforts culminating in the National Tidy Town award in 2006.

The indicators data show that the town has significant tourist capacity (it can offer nearly 90% of the town's population in additional bed-nights, year round). At present, this capacity is utilised at just over 60% (on an annual average); thus current environmental indicators are not indicative of the impact of a saturated tourist destination.

The employment data (though not up-to-date) suggests that though 18% of the town's labour market works in the sector, the remaining capacity for visiting tourists should create additional employment opportunities.

In relation to the potential nuisances to the permanent residents of Westport, it would appear that traffic congestion is the one that causes most concern – additionally it is of concern to tourists – which points to an

infrastructure deficit. Noise, especially at night, arising from pubs/restaurants/nightclubs, will also increase with utilisation of additional tourism capacity, though at present it doesn't appear to be a major problem. Litter appears to be managed well by local government in alliance with local businesses, but this system is also likely to be tested by increased tourism numbers.

There were difficulties in collating definitive information in relation to water treatment and wastewater treatment capacity in Westport, though it was stated in interviews with local government personnel that there was a current issue in relation to the provision of drinking water capacity for the town. There are plans in progress, at present, to significantly upgrade the drinking water capacity of the town.

Similarly it was not possible to access information about solid waste management, or electrical energy capacity of the town, so no commentary is possible on those issues.

The quality of seawater appears to be very good in the locality (including the Louisburgh area). In total there are four officially designated bathing areas in proximity to Westport, of which three have received Blue Flag status. Similarly, the fresh surface water does not appear to be significantly polluted in the environs of the town – four rivers are monitored by the EPA; Carrowbeg, Owenwee, Moyour and Owenabrockagh river. Of the 11 monitoring stations maintained by the EPA, eight were recorded as unpolluted during their last analyses in 2003. However, the three stations which recorded some pollution were those closest to Westport Town – which indicates that there may be some local deficit in wastewater treatment infrastructure.

International baseline indicators normally scrutinise nature and heritage protection measures (especially in relation to undeveloped or new tourism destinations) as a measure of what safeguards there are against untrammelled development. In Westport, there are 9 Protected Structures, which in comparison with other towns in Ireland might be considered low, leaving the town prone to losing some of its heritage through development.

In relation to nature or natural heritage, Co. Mayo has a high number of protected sites, comparatively speaking, probably due to its size and its relative lack of development.

Overall, it is clear that Westport remains relatively undamaged by tourism, though there are indications that developing the tourism-product locally will require investment in additional environmental management infrastructure.

Table – Indicators for Westport

Indicator	Source/Measurement
1. Ratio of Tourists to Residents	**Local Tourism Officer[16], CSO[17]**
- total tourist population	Estimated for 2000 to be approximately 61% of total 'bed-night' capacity of 4446
- total host population	5,140 (2006, urban)
2. Tourist Satisfaction	**Local Tourism Officer, CSO**
- levels of tourist satisfaction	Very satisfactory – 62.8%, satisfactory – 33.2% (2001)
- value for money	Very good – excellent, though high prices also listed in least attractive features
- return visitors	4.6% stated as reason for visit, 83.1% stated they would like to return
3. Employment	**CSO (2002)[18]**
- numbers employed in tourism	446 (hotels and restaurants)
- % of total employment	Total working population 2540, 18%
4. Local Nuisances	**Mayo CC[19], Local Tourism Officer**
- traffic	Local authority officer had no comment, outside his brief. Survey data revealed that visitors rated it worst aspect of destination (54%).
- noise	Local authority officer said noise was an issue in planning applications. Survey data shows visitors rated it negative aspect of destination (39%).
- litter	Local authority officer had no comment. Survey data revealed that 15% of visitors rated litter as a negative aspect of the destination. Westport won the Tidy Towns competition in 2006
- other	Local authority officer had no comment.
5. Potable Water availability and quality	**Mayo CC**
- WTP capacity	Data not available, though there are capacity problems at present in supply from Lough Mask.
- % capacity in use	No data found
- water volume consumed annually	No data found
- water shortages	No data found
- water quality standard fails	No data found

[16] Fáilte Ireland Product and Marketing Development Manager, Brian Quinn, who provided the publication
       "Westport: A Quality Destination (2002)" – Westport Tourism Organisation
[17] 2006 and 2002 census data
[18] At the time of writing, detailed analysis of the 2006 census was not available.
[19] Iain Douglas, Senior Planner, Mayo County Council

Indicator	Source/Measurement
6. Wastewater treatment	Mayo CC
- WWTP capacity	No data found, though surface water quality in Westport Town is moderately polluted, from EPA data – see 10.
- % capacity in use	No data found
7. Waste Management	Mayo CC
- total solid waste annual tonnage	No data found
- % attributable to tourism	No data found
- % recycling rate	No data found
8. Energy Management	SEI, Local energy Agencies
- energy consumption (during peak and off-season)	Not available
9. Seawater protection	DEHLG
- No. designated bathing areas	4
- No. Blue Flag beaches	3
10. Surface Water Quality	EPA
- No. river monitoring stations	11
- No. rated unpolluted	8
11. Protected Structures/Areas	Mayo CC/ NPWS
- No. Protected Structures	9
- No. SSIAs/SACs/Reserves[20]	pNHA – 64, cSAC – 53, SPA – 11- Co. Mayo

7.2   Conclusions - Destinations

Owing to the difficulty in gathering the information required (in Westport, and the other destinations examined) to demonstrate the indicator measurements, it is clear that, should Fáilte Ireland (or other agencies) wish to use indicators to assess the impacts of tourism on destinations, greater resources must be put in place to measure, gather and collate this information.

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[20]   Only available for County Mayo, as a whole

Best Practice in Irish Tourism

Case Studies

8

8.0 Best Practice in Irish Tourism

8.1   Case Studies

The purpose of the case studies is to raise awareness of good environmental practice within the Industry. The showcasing of practical examples of good environmental practice is designed to stimulate wider interest within all sectors of Irish tourism, and promote the update of good environmental practice.

The case studies are drawn across all sections of Irish tourism including transport, accommodation, attractions and activities. The case studies also focus on a variety of areas including energy efficiency, waste management, purchasing policy and accreditation.

In total, some 14 case studies are used to illustrate how good practice has been implemented within the tourism industry. No further information on Destinations is provided in this section, as the case study on Westport indicated the difficulty in obtaining this information.

1. The Bush Hotel

Managing Waste Through Effective Purchasing

2. Lough Key – Forest and Leisure Park

Environmentally Sustainable Tourism Development

3. Ard Na Hoo Health Farm, Mullagh, Dromahair, Co. Leitrim

Certified Eco Tourism

4. Westport Woods and Spa

Community Going for Growth

5. Waveline Cruisers

Blue Flag Designation for Marinas

6. Kelly's Resort and Spa Hotel

Managing Environmental Costs as Good Practice

7. Angling at Delphi Lodge, Co. Mayo

Managing Fish Stocks and Protecting Biodiversity

8. Carton House Golf Club

Accredited Golf Course

9. Jury's Doyle Hotel Group

Hotel Best Practice

10. Mountain Meitheal

Repair and Maintenance of Walking Routes in County Wicklow

11. Street Performance World Championship, Dublin 2006

Greening Festivals and Events

12. Ferrycarrig Hotel

Serious about Waste Segregation

13. St. Patrick's Cathedral, Dublin

Managing Tourist Demand

14. Mount Juliet, Thomastown, Co. Kilkenny

Green in Practice

Bush Hotel Carrick on Shannon

Managing Waste Through Effective Purchasing

The Bush Hotel is a three star 60 Bedroom Hotel located in the centre of Carrick on Shannon. The Hotel started life as a coaching inn some 200 years ago and retains that strong tradition of inn keeping.

The Bush Hotel was one of the participants in the Greener Cleaner Production Programme promoted by the Environmental Protection Agency and Sustainable Energy Ireland. A 'Green Team' was set up, with membership drawn from all departments. This Team decided to focus on the reduction of waste as a priority.

Environmental Management

The management team at the Bush Hotel has implemented a system of detailed recording of energy use and costs, waste disposal costs and water costs. A number of key performance indicators [KPIs] have been identified to monitor and control these costs. Management at the hotel regularly review these, together with the traditional financial indicators. One area that management has placed a particular focus is on the reduction of the charges that it faces for waste. The hotel has reduced its volume of waste to 30% of its previous volume by a combination of measures, including recycling and elimination. It has successfully eliminated waste by implementing a purchasing policy which is designed to encourage suppliers to use reusable packaging or take the packaging away.

Purchasing Policy

The level of incoming waste was addressed by developing a purchasing policy:

- Sourcing of products which generate minimum waste output;
- Sourcing of product in reusable rather than recyclable packaging;
- Using local suppliers where possible; and
- Only accepting deliveries during environmentally acceptable periods (e.g. not during rush hours).

Initiatives include the purchasing of bulk milk, cheese is purchased in 5lb blocks, detergents in 5 litre containers, cooking oil is now delivered in a bulk tanker similar to heating oil while simultaneously collecting used oil product.

> The introduction of a Purchasing Policy has played an important part in reducing waste. Management have attributed the success of this initiative to its succeeding in engaging all employees from each department in the environmental programme.

2

Lough Key Forest and Leisure Park

Environmentally Sustainable Tourism Development

The Lough Key Forest and Leisure Park is a joint development by Coillte, Fáilte Ireland and Roscommon County Council. It is part of a major new development, which involves developing Lough Key in an Environmentally Sustainable manner, as an important national tourist attraction. This development, funded under the National Development Plan 2000 – 2006, will provide visitors with a cluster of unique attractions.

A new lakeside visitor centre will provide an ideal base for gently leisurely activities or more energetic pursuits in the Park. The Visitors Centre is constructed to exceptionally high standards of energy efficiency.

The 'Lough Key Experience' will take visitors on an engaging journey through the history, flora and fauna of the park using the 18th century underground tunnels and a contemporary tree canopy walk, the first of its kind in Ireland.

This 250m long creation of timber and steel gently rises 7m above the woodland floor. It offers an engaging birds eye view of nature as it meanders through the treetops offering panoramic views of the shimmering island studded lake. The walkway, which is based on an Australian concept, has been carefully designed to minimise any impact on the environment.

Particular care has been taken to mitigate the impact of the construction of the walkway on mature trees and where relevant, on the local bat population.

The cluster of activities also includes an innovative weather-independent 'Boda Borg' adventure house, a Swedish concept unique to Ireland which contains numerous rooms with activities, puzzles and tasks.

An outdoor adventure zone has been designed to provide stimulating and entertaining activities for children of all ages in a colourful and safe environment.

The development of environmentally sustainable tourism projects require careful assessment to ensure that the impact on local biodiversity is minimised and carefully managed on an ongoing basis.

Ard Nahoo Health Farm Mullagh, Dromahair, Co. Leitrim

3

Certified Eco Tourism

Ard Nahoo is an Eco Retreat, settled in the unspoilt beauty of the North Leitrim Glens. The website invites the visitor to:

"Relax within our grounds during your stay and enjoy sessions in our Uisce Area, with outdoor sauna and hot tub, yoga classes, holistic treatments, organic food and a utopia of calm. Or use Ard Nahoo as your base and explore what the local area has to offer, with hiking, surfing, horseriding, kayaking, caving and much more all a short distance from us".

Environment

Ard Nahoo's aim is to work in harmony with the environment and operate a reduce, reuse and recycle policy. The eco cabins are heated with a wood pellet stove. Energy saving bulbs are used throughout and electricity is supplied by a wind energy company. Guests who have flown in have an opportunity to plant a tree to offset their carbon footprint. All waste is recycled and composted as far as possible and only eco friendly detergents and disinfectants are used on site. Vegetables are delivered through a local box scheme and food is bought in bulk to avoid plastic packaging. The accommodation has been certified to EU Ecolabel Standard (The EU Flower Standard).

Certified Ecotourism

This retreat has also been certified according to the Greenbox Ecotourism Label Standard which means that all the key elements of ecotourism are met as part of the experience.

Conservation

Ard Nahoo actively contributes to the conservation of the natural environment. The retreat organises Dawn Chorus mornings which are open to the public. A percentage of the cost of the ecotourism experiences goes towards the following conservation bodies- Birdwatch Ireland, CRANN and The Irish Seed Savers Association. Ard Nahoo has created a wildlife pond and has planted over two hundred endangered and native species of trees. Bird feeders, nesters and bat boxes have also been placed around the site. A large colony of badgers are living on the grounds alongside hares, foxes and other smaller animals.

4

Westport Woods Hotel and Spa

Communicating Going Green

The Westport Woods Hotel and Spa is a 111 bedroom hotel located on the edge of the heritage town of Westport.

The hotel participated in the Greener Cleaner Production Programme and has been actively engaged in implementing best practice in the areas of waste management, water control and energy management.

The hotel has a Green Team in place, which involves representatives from all departments. This team meets monthly to monitor progress and identify new initiatives. In addition to putting in place a series of low cost measures, including separation and recycling and the installation of low energy bulbs, investment has also been made in the installation of a wood-chip burner and a big Hanna closed-vessel composting system.

These changes in energy production have resulted in a 17% reduction in the consumption of energy since 2004 despite an increase in hotel size. Furthermore oil has been disconnected to the hotel, resulting in a 62% reduction in CO_2 emissions. Solar energy heating facilities were installed in 2007; which will be operational in 2008. It is expected that these initiatives will result in a comparable smaller carbon footprint (by 45 tonnes CO_2) for the facility in 2008 (compared to 2007). A district-heating type system is planned for the hotel in the future.

The successes of these Programmes are communicated to guests with a well-presented leaflet describing the Environmental Policy and the achievements to date. The following is an extract:

"We aim to provide the most environmentally friendly atmosphere possible for employees, guests and business partners. We continue to develop best practice in the areas of waste management, recycling, water control and energy management. We invite our guests to get involved by segregating waste and avoiding unnecessary laundry.

Approximately 2,000 trees and shrubs have been planted over the past ten years as part of our woodland renew plan. We plan to begin sustainable growing of willows and other trees, which will be chipped for use in our wood chip burner, which will be installed next year.

These key indicators clearly demonstrate our determination to contribute to a cleaner and greener environment."

Westport Woods Hotel and Spa understands the importance of communicating its Environmental Programme to guests and inviting them to participate.

Quigley's Marina Glasson (Waveline Cruisers Ltd.)

Blue Flag Designations for Marinas

Waveline Cruisers are based at Quigley's Marina, Glasson, Co. Westmeath. The company offers 29 new cruisers with the highest technical standards. The Marina, which is privately owned, has been awarded the Blue Flag for Marinas for the fifth consecutive year.

The 'Blue Flag' is an eco-label which was awarded for the achievement of high environmental standards at the Marina. One of the factors identified as being important to Waveline is the ability to differentiate its cruisers from that of competitors. There is a programme in place, which communicates this fact to visitors. It is also active in measuring its consumption of water and energy.

The Blue Flag is owned and run by the independent non-profit Foundation for Environmental Education. The Blue Flag works towards sustainable development at beaches and marinas through strict criteria dealing with water quality (visual), environmental education and environmental management.

The award of a Blue Flag marina is based on compliance with 23 criteria covering the following aspects:

1. Environmental Education and Information;
2. Environmental Management;
3. Safety and Services; and
4. Water Quality.

Most criteria are imperative whereas others are a guideline. All imperative requirements have to be fulfilled, and in addition a maximum number of guideline criteria. Blue Flags are only awarded for one season at a time. If some of the imperative criteria are not fulfilled during the season or the conditions change, the Blue Flag will be withdrawn.

The Blue Flag Award for Quigley's Marina is important to Waveline Cruisers as a point of differentiation from other Cruise Boat Hire Companies.

6

Kelly's Resort Hotel and Spa

Managing Environmental Costs as Good Practice

Kelly's 4 star Hotel, situated in Rosslare, Co. Wexford, has been a family run resort hotel for four generations since it was established in 1895.

The atmosphere in the hotel is designed for total relaxation though there are also a wide range of activities on offer. In addition to 118 bedrooms and suites, Kelly's Hotel offers a leisure centre and 15,000ft 'Sea Spa' incorporating a wide range of treatments.

Kelly's Resort Hotel won the prestigious 'AA Hotel of the Year' award in 2006. These awards are presented to hotels that stand out as the very best for comfort and hospitality. This award is one of a long list of Awards that Kelly's Hotel has won. Last year it also won 'EIQA National Hygiene Award – Hotel Category', and the 'Food and Wine Magazine Hotel of the Year' for La Marine.

The success of Kelly's Hotel is as a result of the detailed attention to all parts of the business. In response to the rising cost of energy, and the recognition that Hotels need to be more environmentally aware, Bill Kelly has implemented a range of energy efficiency measures including the installation of a wood chip burner and a heat recovery system. The Hotel is also looking into the possibility of installing solar panels.

Initiatives have also been taken in relation to water-saving measures and an active programme to reduce waste, with a combination of recycling and composting.

Angling at Delphi Lodge, Co. Mayo

Managing Fish Stocks and Protecting Biodiversity

Recreational fishing is an important component of the tourism industry in Ireland. With the abundance of coastline and inland waterways, Ireland is the perfect destination for all types of angling holidays. Opportunities to service the angling market exist in a wide range of areas such as accommodation, boat and equipment hire, boatman services, providing bait etc and it is a viable and thriving industry in this country

With successful angling ecotourism projects, anglers and the local population can become viable constituencies for conservation, as the following example testifies.

Mayo offers the visiting angler excellent fishing opportunities. The River Moy is internationally acknowledged as an exceptional salmon fishery, producing several thousand salmon to the rod annually.

Delphi in Co. Mayo is one of the most famous salmon fisheries in the West of Ireland. There is a wide variety of fly fishing, both on rivers and lakes, a spectacular setting and its 170-year angling history, help to make it a very special fishing destination.

Add in its unusually long season, its fantastic lodge and its highly successful salmon enhancement programme and you have one of the most sought-after spots in Europe for serious salmon anglers.

Delphi Fishery was celebrated in the past for its huge catches of sea trout. Sadly, stocks of these fish have been seriously damaged in recent years by local salmon farming and its attendant parasites. All is not lost however, as they are still encountered in the summer and can provide a terrific sport for beginner and expert alike.

To replace the missing sea trout, Delphi Lodge has a major salmon enhancement programme, featuring the annual release of many thousands of extra salmon smolts. These extra fish, reared in Delphi's own hatchery, are tagged prior to release to the north Atlantic.

As a result, the number of fishermen is strictly limited to just twelve per day (or only eight in February and March). Fishing rotates between the river and lakes on a half-daily basis to provide maximum variety of scenery and opportunity. And, with very limited exceptions in the case of Doolough, all fishing is by fly only.

8

Carton House Golf Club Maynooth, Co. Kildare.

Accredited Golf Course

Carton House Golf Club is situated on a private estate of 1,100 acres in County Kildare. The estate is home to two championship golf courses, the O'Meara and Montgomerie courses.

The 1100 acre Estate includes 3km of waterways and 100 hectares of woodland. The Estate has Special Area of Conservation Status and is home to many rare animal and plant species.

Carton House Golf Club holds the prestigious Eco-Management Award presented by Golf Environment Europe at the 2006 Nissan Irish Open. Carton House is the first Irish Golf Club to achieve this international honour – a distinction which is awarded to European Golf Clubs that adopt best environmental practice.

The extensive Carton environmental programme shows how golf facilities can, with appropriate management, conserve and enhance the natural and cultural heritage within the estate. The Environmental Programme encompasses the following:

▸ A five year salmon restocking programme of the Rye River in partnership with the Eastern Fisheries Board;

▸ An extensive tree planting programme to plant 78,000 native Oak and Beech trees in existing woodland;

▸ A commitment to minimise the use of nutrients throughout the Estate – to half the recommended EU NPK Directive;

▸ A total waste management system to divert waste materials away from landfill through recycling, re-use and recovery;

▸ A water resource management system to minimise irrigation and water usage;

▸ Communication of Carton's environmental policy to all staff and external contractors working within the estate; and

▸ The introduction of regular internal environmental audits to ensure compliance with existing environmental legislation and the requirements of Golf Environment Europe.

At Carton, environmental matters are of utmost importance and the management approach adopted ensures that environmental protection is central to all decisions, policies and practices within the estate.

Jury's Doyle Hotel Group

Hotel Best Practice

Over many years Jurys Doyle Hotel Group Ltd. has been implementing environmental policies and systems designed to reduce the impact that the Hotel Group have on the environment. The key initiatives have been in the areas of water conservation, energy conservation and recycling initiatives.

Water Conservation

A survey of water consumption within the Jurys Doyle properties was conducted and as a result they aim to reduce the volume of water used. New properties have been fitted with equipment that eliminates the excessive use of water e.g. water efficient shower heads, toilet cisterns and electronic taps.

Energy Conservation

In 1996 Jurys Doyle commenced a programme to convert to clean technology in the form of combined heat and power systems in the Hotels. This system would retain and re-use the heat which would otherwise be lost in the generation of electricity. As a result there was a substantial reduction (Approx 7,000 tonnes per annum) of carbon released into the atmosphere through the more efficient use of energy.

In 2005 an additional programme to reduce energy consumption by 10% across the Group was launched. The group subsequently achieved this 10% target within the predetermined time period and as a result received the SEI Energy Management Award 2006.

Recycling Initiatives

The Jurys Doyle Waste Management Programme diverts the wastes from landfill towards: "Reduce, Reuse and Recycle" options. They have implemented a complete waste management system for all Hotels and Inns in Ireland. They extract hundreds of tonnes of glass, cardboard, newspapers and aluminium cans from the waste streams and have installed state-of-the-art equipment for the on-site treatment of organic waste.

"Within the Jurys Doyle Hotel Group there is a constant challenge to provide the right environment for the guests and employees and to achieve this there is a huge reliance on external natural resources. We realise that in order to retain these resources we need to protect our natural environment."

10

Mountain Meitheal

Repair and Maintenance of Walking Routes in Wicklow

Interest in recreation in the countryside has grown in the last 20 years. However this increase in recreational use of our mountains, hills, forests and more remote areas has resulted in increased degradation of fragile landscapes and a reduction therefore in the overall quality of the recreation experience for users.

In an attempt to counteract some of these impacts Mountain Meitheal, a volunteer trail maintenance organisation, works to promote sustainable trail work through hands-on projects and training. In 2007 the organisation delivered over 2,100 hours of trail work in County Wicklow, making them one of the main trail providers in the county.

Since the Club started in 2002 Mountain Meitheal volunteers are out and about all year round in all weather conditions doing valuable work on repairing and maintaining hiking trails – mostly in the Wicklow Mountains and occasionally elsewhere. This work is for the benefit of all citizens and visitors who walk in Ireland and who enjoy fresh air and the countryside. Mountain Meitheal believes that as users of the mountains there is an onus for us to "get out, get dirty, and give back"

Mountain Meitheal has developed and adapted a range of solutions and skills to deal with the varied range of trail problems encountered in these landscapes. These include using water bars, stone drains, side drains and turnpikes to manage water; scree walls, rip rap and brash to limit trail spread, and stone pitching, rustic steps and reversal trails to construct new treadway and planting and seeding to reinstate damaged sites.

Mountain Meitheal has been involved in the development of many innovative solutions to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of trail management techniques.

Mountain Meitheal is a model that operated well in other countries but is still new to Ireland, where concerned citizens work in conjunction with the major landowners to promote and encourage sustainable recreation through active hands on involvement.

Street Performance World Championship

Dublin 2006

Greening Festivals and Events

Festivals can have an immensely positive impact on the cultural wealth of Ireland but at the same time, can have the potential to impact negatively on the environment.

A gathering of thousands of people at a festival can result in a number of negative environmental impacts including the generation of waste and litter, damage to plant and birdlife, pollution of rivers and increased carbon dioxide from additional vehicles.

Across the world, more and more festivals are taking steps to reduce their environmental impacts and "green" their activities. Many of the larger festivals now have environmental policies in place, and are looking for new ways of becoming more environmentally friendly.

In 2006 Fáilte Ireland published guidelines for the organisers of festivals and events on how to organise and manage their event in a more environmentally friendly manner.

There are many ways in which festival organisers can limit and prevent negative environmental impacts. Some of these include:

▸ Accessibility – Make sure the venue is accessible by public transport.

▸ Communications - Issue media releases and advertising about your environmental commitment.

▸ Waste - Composting and recycling services are crucial. Ensure receptacles are well signposted.

▸ Water – Supply free drinking water to eliminate plastic bottles.

▸ Facilities – Ensure adequate number of toilet facilities.

▸ Commitment – Establish a "green team" of enthusiastic volunteers and staff are helping people to correctly deposit their waste.

▸ Contractors – Ensure that vendors have their sites as clean and clear as possible

The first ever Street Performance World Championships held in Merrion Square Dublin 2 in August 2006 were noted to have adopted a number of environmental good practices in relation to litter and waste management activities.

12

Ferrycarrig Hotel

Serious about Waste Segregation

The Ferrycarrig Hotel is located 2km outside of Wexford town. All 102 bedrooms provide stunning views over the River Slaney Estuary. There is a wide range of activities on offer including the active leisure club with a 20m pool or a round of golf at the nearby St. Helen's Golf course. For those looking to unwind, the Lodge Spa provides the perfect haven of relaxation and pampering.

The hotel was awarded Repak Best Practice Award 2006 (Hospitality Sector) for the second consecutive year in October 2006, in recognition of the recycling programme throughout all departments of the hotel, with special emphasis on packaging.

Waste management initiatives which have been implemented at the hotel to-date include:
- 95% of all cardboard on site is recycled, with a baling machine located at the hotel;
- All food waste from the hotel restaurants is sent off site for composting;
- Jam jars are re-used and glass bottles are recycled;
- Old newspapers are shredded locally and re-used as animal bedding;
- Any lost property, if not claimed, is sent to charitable organisations;
- Empty toner cartridges are recycled in aid of Temple Street Children's Hospital;
- Old bed linen is sent to the St Vincent de Paul charity;
- Old towels are given to local garages for use as rags; and
- Used stamps are collected from the offices to be sent to St. Patrick's Missionary Society for fund raising (they raised €15,000 in 2005).

According to Chris Culleton, Environmental Manager at the Ferrycarrig Hotel, the key to successfully implementing an environmental policy at the hotel includes a number of factors, including appointing an "Environmental Champion" to oversee the entire environmental programme, along with enlisting key personnel "on the ground", i.e. kitchen staff and cleaners who play an integral role in the segregation of waste. The environment is an important part of induction training for all new staff members who are very receptive in incorporating measures to protect the environment into their work practices. Health and Safety requirements are of utmost concern and relevant staff are fully trained in the use of items of waste management equipment, such as the on-site cardboard baler.

The Ferrycarrig Hotel is involved in other local environmental initiatives, including the An Taisce "Spring Clean" initiative, whereby representatives from the hotel and the local community have come together to help clean up the nearby River Slaney. As far as is practicable, food is sourced locally, supporting producers in the vicinity, and reducing 'food miles' and transport-related emissions.

The Ferrycarrig Hotel is also involved with the Sustainable Energy Ireland "Energy Map" which is an innovative programme for businesses in Ireland. It allows the user to follow a structured approach to energy management to maximise energy efficiency and minimise costs.

"The 'Environmental Champion' has been critical to the success of our waste management programme – it makes a huge difference when improved performance in this task is one of someone's work objectives."

St. Patrick's Cathedral Dublin

Managing Tourist Demand

As the National Cathedral of the Church of Ireland, with traditional and historic links to Ireland's patron saint, Saint Patrick's Cathedral is of outstanding cultural significance. Some fabric is present for every period from the 11th century onwards. The cathedral is one of the oldest ecclesiastical buildings to be established in Dublin outside the city walls.

Today Saint Patrick's Cathedral is expected to fulfil many functions, which were not envisaged when it was first built and later restored. These functions include the accommodation of large number of visitors, public musical performances, and compliance with current statutory requirements.

Saint Patrick's Cathedral has become one of the most-visited buildings in Dublin, with some 300,000 visitors annually; these numbers are set to rise. While donations from visitors make a major contribution to the upkeep and repair of the cathedral, the recent increase in visitor numbers raises some issues, which in time may have an impact on the significance of the cathedral.

The Conservation Plan for Saint Patrick's Cathedral, Dublin provides a policy framework to guide the future conservation of the cathedral. The policies contained in the Plan are designed to assist the future conservation, management and development of Saint Patrick's Cathedral and it's setting in the context of ever increasing numbers of visitors.

Liturgical services and the accommodation of visiting groups are managed in a way that minimises the impact of visitors on the liturgy as far as possible. Visitors are restricted at certain times. The shop closes some minutes before Evensong, but not before the morning service. Large numbers visiting, taking photographs, and having guided tours at this time, create a negative impression, adversely affecting the maintenance of balance between the main focus of activity, which is prayer, and the accommodation of visitors.

Among the issues identified in the Plan is the issue of visitor facilities. The only visitor services available in the cathedral are the shop and toilet facilities. There are no coffee shop or restaurant facilities in the cathedral or the immediate vicinity. This has an impact on the ability to raise revenue, and on the length of time visitors remain in the area. The present displays are limited by the constraints, but every element of the display, as well as the retail area, could be substantially expanded if space were available.

The Plan sets out a detailed schedule of 112 actions which will guide the future conservation of St. Patrick's Cathedral.

The effects and impacts of increasing visitor numbers could be the Cathedral's biggest environmental threat.

14

Mount Juliet Golf Course Thomastown, Co. Kilkenny

Green in Practice

Since opening in 1991, Mount Juliet course has established itself as a premier golfing venue for top professionals and leisure golfers worldwide. The par 72, 7,300-yard layout boasts rolling fairways, many feature water hazards and contoured greens. The course is sited 12 miles south of the medieval city of Kilkenny and is set within Mount Juliet Estate, 1,500 acres of lush, rolling fields and woodland, as well as Mount Juliet House, a magnificent Georgian Mansion, set on a hill overlooking the River Nore.

Environmental management at Mount Juliet is regarded as a serious operational issue. The golf course has a documented Environmental Management System in place, verified against the 'Audubon' System. The Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program (ACSP) or Audubon Signature Program is built upon the basic tenets of 'Plan-Do-Check-Act'.

The adjacent River Nore is an important resource, and regular monitoring of water samples from the river indicates an improvement in water quality downstream of the golf course, in comparison with upstream samples. All applications to the golf course are strictly controlled and all grass cuttings are re-used around the course. Waste oil is recycled, and biodiesel has been trialled for on-site vehicles and machinery use.
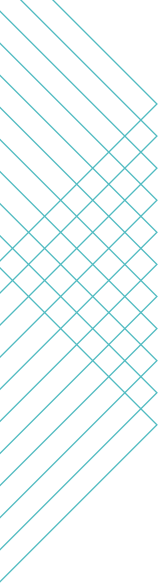
The Golf Course Superintendent, Aidan O'Hara, says that the implementation of the system provided them with the challenge to improve and document their environmental performance. It outlined for them the scope and environmental parameters which they are required to measure or implement, including:

▸ Wildlife/habitat conservation;
▸ Turfgrass management;
▸ Water conservation measures;
▸ Water quality indicators;
▸ Waste management; and
▸ Outreach and education programmes.

Mount Juliet is also sensitive to maintaining natural habitats for flora and fauna and a nature 'hotspot' has become established at one particular site on the estate. The Golf Course Superintendent is involved with conservation groups in the locality, and actively promotes the development of woodland corridors and nesting sites for birds.

"The Environmental Management System has been an excellent business tool and has been invaluable for our Management Team in helping to track our commercial performance as well."

Analysis, Recommendations and Next Steps

9.0 Analysis, Recommendations and Next Steps

9.1   Sectoral Analysis

The analysis of each of the tourism sectors identified in the brief for this project, namely: (a) transport, (b) accommodation, (c) attractions, (d) activities and (e) destinations, involved a four-step framework:

1. Overview   Set out the general extent of good environmental practice within the sector.

2. Drivers   Identify the Drivers of Good Environmental Practice in the Sector

3. Stage of   Identify the progress that has been achieved in implementation of Good Environmental
*   Implementation*   Progress. This is assessed on the basis of 5 steps of progression.

Step 1: awareness (of relevant environmental issues),

Step 2: availability of information (on how to address those issues),

Step 3: access to sector-specific training (on managing those issues),

Step 4: sectoral initiatives (tackling the issues in question), and

Step 5: sector-specific awards (for exceptional management of those issues).

4. Issues   Identify the major issues and barriers, which must be addressed in order to achieve
progress.

The purpose of this framework is to analyse each of the sectors under a common, like-for-like set of parameters, to allow comparison of the degree of development and complexity of the issues within each of the sectors.

9.2   Transport Sector Analysis

Overview: Transport, as a sector does have significant environmental impacts, most notably in relation to climate change and combustion emissions to air. The Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government[21] clearly states that "it is now evident that, due mainly to the very significant increase of vehicles on our roads, emissions from the transport sector represent the greatest threat to our air quality."

Due to the low response rate received from the transport sector as part of this survey, detailed data is not presented here, as the results obtained cannot be considered representative of the sector as a whole. Therefore only general findings in relation to this sector, in the context of this research project are presented.

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[21]   http://www.environ.ie

Drivers: The top three overall drivers for improved environmental performance found for the transport sector were: (1) energy costs, (2) marketplace demands, and joint (3) waste costs, environmental responsibility and legislative compliance.

Stage of Implementation: The analysis of the survey findings, allied with evidence from discussions carried out during the project, suggests that:

1. Awareness within the sector of environmental issues is low-medium;

2. Sector-specific information on how to improve environmental performance is low-medium[22];

3. Access to sector-specific training for employees/managers on managing environmental impacts is not available;

4. Sectoral initiatives on improving environmental performance do not appear to be present; and

5. There are no sector-specific awards or certification schemes for good or exceptional environmental management.

	Low Significance	Medium Significance	High Significance	Critical
Awareness	███	███		
Information	███	███		
Training				
Initiatives				
Awards				

Figure a1. Sectoral Progress in Implementation of Good Environmental Practice in the transport sector of tourism.

Issues: The four greatest environmental problems identified by the sector (which impact on the sector) during the survey, were: (1) Poor Planning, (2) Traffic Congestion, (3) Water Pollution and (4) Biodiversity Loss.

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22 Sector specific information on how to improve environmental performance is available primarily in the airline industry only, with advances being made in fuel efficiency, cleaner technologies, operational plans etc.

9.3   Accommodation Sector Analysis

Overview: In the industry, the accommodation sector appears to be the best developed in relation to environmental management, mainly as a result of various national[23] and international initiatives since the mid 1990s, and also as a result of significant cost increases in waste management services and (more recently) fuel and energy provision. In this context, it is difficult to understand immediately how only 40% of those surveyed (in this sector) felt that tourism had a negative environmental impact, and (of those who did) 25% considered the impact to be high. Awareness in the sector is reasonably high – 66% of those surveyed thought they were fully or reasonably aware in relation to environmental legislation.

In the accommodation sector 57% of respondents already had an environmental programme in place, with 36% having a supporting environmental policy in place – both were well above the average response from all surveyed sectors. The 2006 TBES report found that 61% (of similar sectors surveyed i.e. accommodation and tourism services and attractions) stated that they had an environmental policy in place: hotels scored highest with 68%, guesthouses scored lowest with 53%.

However it is important to qualify these findings and note that when questioned further about the nature of these policies (in the 2006 TBES), only 18% stated that a 'Formal Written Policy' of this type was in place (Hotels were highest with 24%, guesthouses were lowest with 9%). The presence of such an environmental policy in business plans scored lower again, at 13% (hotels were highest with 20%, guesthouses were lowest with 2%). The prevalent type of environmental policy found by the 2006 TBES was described as an 'Informal Management Aim' – overall this was stated to be the case by 69% of respondents; guesthouses were highest at 82%, hotels were lowest at 62%. The 2006 TBES also reported that (overall) only 5% of respondents had a 'Programme for Environmental Improvement'; this only reached a significant proportion of positive respondents in the hotels sector, at 18%. Again, the 2006 TBES also found that (overall) only 8% of businesses had a 'Responsible Officer' for the implementation of their Environmental Policies; again this only reached a significant proportion of positive respondents in the hotels sector, at 29%.

However, the performance of the sector in relation to monitoring of environmental performance in relation to energy, waste management and water use, at 68%, 82% and 66% of respondents respectively – is highest of all respondent sectors in the survey for each management area.

Drivers: The top three overall drivers for improved environmental performance found for the accommodation sector was: (1) waste costs 95%, (2) water costs 95%, and (3) energy costs 91%.

Cost: It is clear that costs are the predominant driver for environmental management in the accommodations sector significantly outstripping all other issues mentioned by respondents.

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23   Through Fáilte Ireland (and previously CERT), the Irish Hotels Federation and the recent EPA
      'Greening Irish Hotels' Programmes.

Environmental Legislation and/or Regulation: Though 70% thought legislative compliance was an important driver for improved environmental management, the proportion who considered that increased enforcement and regulation was an important driver was 63%.

Competitive Advantage: Though (energy, waste and water) costs were seen as the most important drivers for improved environmental performance, only 51% of those polled considered that improved practices (in this context) would/could give them a competitive advantage over their commercial rivals.

Marketplace Demands: Those surveyed revealed that they considered marketplace demands as the fourth most important driver (81%) for improved environmental management in the sector. However, 63% of the sector surveyed had no record or intention of communicating environmental information to customers.

Stage of Implementation: As discussed earlier, analysis of the survey findings, allied with evidence from discussions carried out during the project, suggests that:

1. Awareness within the sector of environmental issues is medium-high;

2. Sector-specific information on how to improve environmental performance exists, both nationally and internationally;

3. Access to sector-specific training for employees/managers on managing environmental impacts is not currently available, but has been in the past;

4. Sectoral initiatives on improving environmental performance are ongoing with EPA, SEI and IHF; and

5. There are currently no sector-specific awards or certification schemes for good or exceptional environmental management, available nationwide, though international schemes are well known in the industry most notably EU "Flower" Ecolabel. In addition, in early 2008, the EPA continued the momentum gained by the Greening Irish Hotels Programme by extending this initiative to a further 150 hotels through the Green Business Initiative under the National Waste Prevention Programme.

	Low Significance	Medium Significance	High Significance	Critical
Awareness	███	███	███	
Information	███	███	███	
Training	███	███		
Initiatives	███	███	███	
Awards	███			

Figure b1. Sectoral Progress in Implementation of Good Environmental Practice in the accommodation sector of tourism.

Issues The four greatest environmental problems identified during the survey by the sector which impact on the sector , were (in order of priority): (1) poor planning, (2) water pollution, (3) traffic congestion and (4) litter. These were the only issues (of 11) that over 50% of the respondents considered were locally important environmental issues of high or medium-scale impact.

It appears, from an analysis of the attitudes expressed, that there is a clear trend toward improving practices within the sector toward better environmental management, which are principally motivated by cost considerations. The accommodation sector is largely of the opinion that the green tourist is not visiting their premises (or marketplace), and is not expected in the short-medium term.

9.4   The Attractions Sector

Overview: Publicly owned and/or operated[24] facilities accounted for (49%) of 41 respondents, and festivals (i.e. specific facility-less attractions) accounted for 20%.

Similarly to the previous sectors, only 44% of those surveyed felt that tourism had a negative environmental impact, and (of those who did) 25% considered the impact to be high. The attractions sector considered their environmental knowledge to be reasonably high – 59% of those surveyed thought they were fully or reasonably aware of relevant environmental legislation.

In the attractions sector 32% of respondents claimed to have an environmental programme in place, with 9% having a supporting environmental policy in place – both of which are well below the average response from all surveyed sectors, in fact the lowest of the four industry sectors examined.

This is further underlined by the relatively poor performance of the sector in relation to monitoring of environmental performance in relation to energy, waste management and water use, at 46%, 46% and 39% of respondents respectively and the lowest of all respondent sectors in the survey for energy and waste management.

Drivers: The survey found that the top three overall drivers for improved environmental performance in the attractions sector were : joint (1) waste costs 94%, joint (1) energy costs 94%, and (3) marketplace demands 91%.

Cost: There is a significant disconnect between what this sector is saying and what this sector is doing, as

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[24]   Most of the Cultural and Natural Heritage attractions were managed by either the Office of Public Works
   or the National Museum of Ireland.

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evidenced by their identification of costs as a driver, but 'falling down' significantly in terms of acting on the driver in terms of an environmental policy, programme or monitoring system.

Environmental Legislation and/or Regulation: Though 82% thought legislative compliance was an important driver for improved environmental management, the proportion that considered that increased enforcement and regulation was an important driver was 75%.

Competitive Advantage: Similar to other sectors, though (energy and waste) costs were seen as the most important drivers for improved environmental performance, only 39% of those polled considered that improved practices (in this context) would/could give them a competitive advantage over their commercial rivals – the lowest percentage of all the sectors.

Marketplace Demands: Those surveyed revealed that they considered marketplace demands as the third most important driver (91%) for improved environmental management in the sector. However, 64% of the sector surveyed had no record or intention of communicating environmental information to customers.

Stage of Implementation: As discussed earlier, analysis of the survey findings, allied with evidence from discussions carried out during the project, suggests that:

1. Awareness within the sector of environmental issues is low-medium;

2. Sector-specific information on how to improve environmental performance doesn't appear to exist, at least nationally (with the exception of Fáilte Ireland's environmental guidelines for festivals and events);

3. Access to sector-specific training for employees/managers on managing environmental impacts is not currently available;

4. There are no sectoral initiatives on improving environmental performance; and

5. There are no sector-specific awards or certification schemes for good or exceptional environmental management available nationally.

	Low Significance	Medium Significance	High Significance	Critical
Awareness	███████████	███████████		
Information				
Training				
Initiatives				
Awards				

Figure c1. Sectoral Progress in Implementation of Good Environmental Practice in the attractions sector of tourism.

Issues: The three greatest environmental problems identified by the sector during the survey, that have an impact on the sector, were (in order of priority): (1) traffic congestion, (2) litter and (3) poor planning. These were the only issues (of 11) that over 50% of the respondents considered were locally important environmental issues of high or medium-scale impact.

It is clear that this sector is conflicted on the environmental agenda – they clearly recognise that there are cost-drivers that should motivate action, but it is not yet happening to a significant degree. With public sector control of a major proportion of this sector, (in particular, within the top 50 attractions in Ireland, of which 31 are publicly operated), a targeted initiative in this bloc (specifically within the OPW and the National Museum) of the sector should produce a very significant short-term positive change in attitude and action on environment.

9.5   The Activities Sector

Overview: Within the industry, the activities sector has some ongoing activities and initiatives in relation to environmental management, most notably for Golf Courses and within the Fisheries industries. There are also a plethora of activities based around the appreciation of the natural environment, including angling, cycling, walking and surfing – there appears to be a natural tendency within such organisations toward responsible environmental management.

Similar to the previous sectors, only 45% of those surveyed (in this sector) felt that tourism had a negative environmental impact, and (of those who did) 18% considered the impact to be high. The activities sector considered their environmental knowledge to be very high – 77% of those surveyed thought they were fully or reasonably aware of relevant environmental legislation.

In the activities sector 48% of respondents already had an environmental programme in place, with 26% having a supporting environmental policy in place – both were right on the average response from all surveyed sectors. This is not reflected in the performance of the sector in relation to monitoring of environmental performance in relation to energy, waste management and water use, at 50%, 68% and 33% of respondents respectively – all relatively low scores in comparison to the accommodation sector.

However, as many of these businesses are based in the outdoors, many with no built facilities in place, this may account for the relatively low scores in relation to monitoring. We found, in some of the interviews conducted, that certain participants in this sector (as opposed to the other sectors) did undertake various habitat management

on-site initiatives (especially in activities related to nature appreciation), wherein they demonstrated responsibility for the parts of the environment where they felt that the activity might have had a potentially significant environmental impact (and thus a negative impact on the viability of the tourism 'draw').

Drivers: The survey found that the top three overall drivers for improved environmental performance found for the sector were (in order of priority): (1) environmental responsibility 86%, (2) waste costs 81%, joint (3) marketplace demands 76%, and joint (3) increased legal enforcement 76%.

Cost: Again, due the likelihood of non-specific facility based activities within the sector, only costs in relation to waste management figured highly in the survey. Within the sector there are many businesses that are operated on a 'shoe-string', with wages and salaries being the only major overhead.

Environmental Legislation and/or Regulation: Though 73% thought legislative compliance was an important driver for improved environmental management, 76% considered that increased enforcement and regulation was important, the only sector surveyed who felt that enforcement was more important than legislation.

Competitive Advantage: Like the other sectors, though costs were seen as important drivers for improved environmental performance, only 47% of those polled considered that improved practices (in this context) would/could give them a competitive advantage over their commercial rivals.

Marketplace Demands: Those surveyed revealed that they considered marketplace demands as the joint third most important driver (76%) for improved environmental management in the sector. However, 50% of the sector surveyed had no record or intention of communicating environmental information to customers.

Stage of Implementation: Analysis of the survey findings, allied with evidence from discussions carried out during the project, suggests that:

1. Awareness within the sector of environmental issues is medium-high,
2. Some sector-specific information on how to improve environmental performance exists (for certain activities), but not nationally,
3. Access to sector-specific training for employees/managers on managing environmental impacts is not currently

available,

4. There are no sectoral initiatives on improving environmental performance ongoing nationally, and

5. There are some sector-specific awards or certification schemes for good or exceptional environmental
    management, available internationally (and taken up by some at national level).

	Low Significance	Medium Significance	High Significance	Critical
Awareness	■	■	■	
Information	■			
Training				
Initiatives				
Awards	■			

Figure d1. Sectoral Progress in Implementation of Good Environmental Practice in the activities sector of tourism.

Issues: The three greatest environmental problems identified by the sector, during the survey and which have an
impact on the sector were (in order of priority): (1) poor planning, (2) litter, joint (3) traffic congestion, and joint
(3) biodiversity loss. With water pollution, these were the only issues (of 11) that over 50% of the respondents
considered were locally important environmental issues of high or medium-scale impact.

It is clear that there is a general leaning toward environmental protection in this sector, probably arising from many
of the business's intrinsic links with nature and the natural environment. Though environmental management
activity is not significant within the sector, there appears to be an appetite (within the very broad 'church' that this
sector encompasses) to participate in a national initiative, should it materialise.

9.6   Tourism Destinations

Overview: Destinations were not surveyed like the four main business sectors of the tourism industry, thus the
information available in relation to environmental management therein is very limited. However, it is very clear
from the attitudes of the surveyed community in relation to poor planning that very significant problems must
exist in relation to Ireland's tourist destinations, especially in relation to built infrastructure.

Stage of Implementation: From our discussions in the sample of four destinations visited as part of the project, the
stages of implementation have been assessed in the same way as for the four sectors, as follows:

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[25] From both the World Tourism Organisation and the United Nations Environment Programme.

1. Awareness within destinations of environmental issues is low-medium,

2. Destination-specific information on how to improve (or at least assess and manage) environmental performance exists internationally , and also now nationally with the launch of the DIT set of sustainable tourism indicators for destinations (ACHIEV model),

3. Whether access to sector-specific training for local authorities on managing environmental impacts is currently available is not known, or was not known to the respondents to which we spoke,

4. There have been a number of sectoral initiatives on improving environmental performance in tourist destinations in Ireland in the recent past, but they have not been widespread, and

5. Other than the 'Tidy Towns' and 'Entente Floriale' competitions, there are no sector-specific awards or certification schemes for good or exceptional environmental management of destinations, available nationally.

	Low Significance	Medium Significance	High Significance	Critical
Awareness	■	■		
Information	■			
Training				
Initiatives	■	■		
Awards	■			

Figure e1. Sectoral Progress in Implementation of Good Environmental Practice in the tourism destinations.

Issues: From our interviews in the various destinations, it would appear that the issues facing destinations vary, from destination to destination, due to specific local concerns, but usually falling within the list of issues to which the four tourism sectors responded as follows (as a whole):

1. Poor Planning — 73% considered high or medium significance issue
2. Traffic Congestion — 66% considered high or medium significance issue
3. Litter — 62% considered high or medium significance issue
4. Water Pollution — 50% considered high or medium significance issue
5. Noise — 37% considered high or medium significance issue
6. Biodiversity Loss — 35% considered high or medium significance issue
7. Poor Quality Drinking Water — 33% considered high or medium significance issue
8. Air Quality — 31% considered high or medium significance issue
9. Climate Change — 26% considered high or medium significance issue
10. Erosion — 22% considered high or medium significance issue
11. GM Crops — 13% considered high or medium significance issue

Thus, from an infrastructural perspective, common deficits referenced, by participants in this survey, included (not in order of priority): water treatment capacity, wastewater treatment capacity, zoning deficiencies (in relation to 'noisy activities'), insufficient roads and traffic capacity, and inappropriate planning and siting of holiday villages.

9.7   Summary of Findings

The following table gives an overview of the findings from the above analysis of the tourism sectors

	Transport	Accommodation	Attraction	Activity	Destination
Overview	Some, focused on cost / noise	Evidence of interest in Good Environmental Practice	No Specific Awareness	Low Awareness in most areas	No Awareness
Stage of Development:					
Awareness	Low	Medium/ High	Low/ Medium	Low / Medium	Low
Information	None	Some	Some	Some	Some
Training	None	Low/ Medium	None	None	None
Initiatives	None	Yes	None	None	Yes
Awards	None	Yes	None	Yes	Yes

9.8   Recommendations

In response to the issues identified, the following 8 recommendations are made to Fáilte Ireland, to assist in the

development of an appropriate capability to support best environmental practice in the tourism industry in Ireland.
A number of general recommendations in relation to environmental best practice are outlined firstly, followed by
specific recommendations for each sector.

Recommendation 1

Create A Tourism Wide Commitment to Environmental Best Practice

Issue   Environment Best Practice in tourism is at an early stage of development. It is most
advanced in the accommodation sector where significant cost savings can be achieved
and which, has benefited from a number of environmental initiatives

Recommendations   Fáilte Ireland should work closely with the Industry Association and the State Agencies
with a role in environmental management, in order to drive environmental best practice
in tourism.

Over the next three years, Fáilte Ireland should position tourism as a 'clean' industry
which seeks to protect and enhance the environmental assets upon which it depends.
In association with the Environmental Protection Agency, Sustainable Energy Ireland,
Comhar, and its other environmental partners, the industry should aim to position itself as
a leader in the application of clean technology and sustainable development.

Recommendation 2

Fáilte Ireland Environmental Programme

Issue   Fáilte Ireland recognises that the drivers of Environmental Best Practice vary between the
sectors, and in some sectors are very weak. In the sectors of tourism where there is a high
usage of electricity the recent price increases have acted as a strong driver in favour of
Environmental Management.

Sectors, which generate a high level of waste, have faced rapidly rising costs for waste
disposal, which has acted as a strong driver for improved management of waste including
the active elimination of waste from the supply chain.

Sectors, which are not faced with high costs for energy or waste disposal, do not have the same economic incentive to introduce Environmental Management. It is important therefore that Fáilte Ireland acts to create a momentum within the Industry.

Recommendations   Fáilte Ireland should work closely with the Industry Associations (e.g. the Irish Hotels Federation, the Restaurants Association of Ireland, and Waterways Ireland etc) and Environmental State Agencies (in particular the Environmental Protection Agency and Sustainable Energy Ireland) to develop a comprehensive Environmental Programme to support the Irish tourism industry in moving towards best practice environmental management.

This programme will include a number of stages as follows: 1) information 2) training, 3) advice/ mentoring and 4) awards/ accreditation.

Information: As a first step it is necessary to provide information in a way that is readily accessible by the industry. This will require a wide range of information, websites, Benchmarking Tools and Environmental Tool Kits. The Performance Plus Programme of Fáilte Ireland has an important role to play in providing information as well as benchmarking for the sector.

Training: Fáilte Ireland will develop a series of Training and Development programmes designed to provide the industry with support in implementing best practice initiatives.

In 2005 a series of County Based Learning Networks (33 networks in 26 counties), now referred to as Tourism Learning Networks was set up by Fáilte Ireland to facilitate peer learning, networking, formal learning, mentoring etc to tourism businesses on a local level. Fáilte Ireland also operates a number of Residential Groups across the country. These comprise larger regional networks. These groups meet for 1-2 days, and comprise approximately 70 small to medium enterprises at a time.

It is recommended that the environmental element of these networks be strengthened by the preparation of a dedicated environmental module by Fáilte Ireland so that the sharing of knowledge and experience of green initiatives can be further strengthened. This concept is well established internationally and often referred to as 'Green Clubs' which act as a vehicle to create local interest in environmental management.

The Continued Professional Development (CPD) Unit of Fáilte Ireland provides training and management advice to senior managers/ supervisors within the tourism industry (primarily hotels). The Environment Unit should also seek to include an environmental element to the CPD courses, focusing on cost savings through best environmental practice.

Advice/ Mentoring: Fáilte Ireland will work closely with Industry Associations and Environmental Agencies in supporting pilot initiatives across each of the tourism

sectors. Fáilte Ireland should establish a panel of environmental mentors which can be made available to businesses on a voluntary basis, paid for by Fáilte Ireland and akin to the business mentors currently made available. The primary function of the mentors would be to undertake environmental audits of businesses and make recommendations on the introduction of environmental management systems, with a view towards an environmental standard/ accreditation such as the EU Flower.

Award / Certification: Fáilte Ireland will support the drive towards best practice in environmental management by establishing and/ or supporting the establishment of environmental standards (followed by awards/ accreditation) for the various sectors of the tourism industry as follows:

1. Failte Ireland will focus on the EU Flower as the mark of excellence for accommodation in Ireland. Fáilte Ireland should aim to have 50 E.U. Flower certified properties in place by the end of 2009. While the E.U. Flower has made very slow progress in gaining widespread recognition across the E.U., it is the only E.U. wide scheme that is available. The framework of the E.U. Flower is similar to that of other environmental awards with a focus on areas such as energy management, water management, waste management, environmental policy and local sourcing.

   Fáilte Ireland will seek to work with the E.U. on the development of the EU Flower for tourist accommodation in the forthcoming review. The criteria of the E.U. Flower should be reviewed to make the criteria more applicable to national circumstances. The existing framework has been developed as a pan-European initiative and in seeking to meet environmental concerns in all EU countries has become cumbersome and unnecessarily complex.

   There is also a need for more industry friendly language as part of the EU Flower. Much of the language is overly technical. Fáilte Ireland should also seek to influence the EU in adopting a staged approach to the achievement of the EU Flower.

2. Fáilte Ireland should also seek to integrate environmental criteria into the classification schemes for the accommodation and non-accommodation sectors.

3. Fáilte Ireland currently operates the Optimus programme, which supports tourism businesses in becoming more profitable, more efficient and more competitive. Recognition under the Optimus programme is awarded based on independent assessment and evaluation of the management practices and approaches. Environmental standards should be incorporated into the Fáilte Ireland Optimus programme. These measures are designed to complement initiatives taken by the EPA for the improvement of environmental standards in the accommodation sector under the National Waste Prevention Programme and the Green Business Initiative.

Recommendation 3

Monitoring the Environmental Performance of the Tourism Industry as a whole

Issue

At present there is very little information available as to the environmental footprint of the tourism industry as a whole. The industry is a very heterogeneous sector, comprising approximately 18,000 businesses, the vast majority of which are small to medium sized enterprises (SMEs). As a result of this it is difficult to determine if progress on improving environmental performance in the tourism industry is being made, and if tourism in Ireland is moving towards becoming a 'clean' industry.

In addition to this, there is no information available to determine how the environmental performance of the tourism industry in Ireland compares to our competitors.

Recommendations

Fáilte Ireland should seek to determine the environmental footprint of the tourism industry in order to benchmark its current performance and monitor progress into the future. Fáilte Ireland should commence work in relation to this through consultation with Comhar and other strategic partners.

Recommendation 4

Maintain the Progress made in the Accommodation Sector with this sector acting as an industry leader

Issue

Good progress has been achieved by some sections of the accommodation sector in introducing environmental best practice and good results have been achieved. This progress has been supported by a number of initiatives through EPA, SEI, IHF and IHI. The challenge is to extend best environmental practice within the accommodation sector.

Recommendations

Fáilte Ireland should work closely with the industry associations and environmental agencies to drive best practice in the accommodation sector. The focus however should be widened from a narrow focus on primary cost drivers to broader sustainable tourism development. This should include a focus on local sourcing of food.

Fáilte Ireland will place a particular focus on developing clusters of accommodation and other tourism activities and businesses, which will be supported by the Tourism Learning Networks.

Recommendation 5

Driving Best Practice in the Attraction Sector

Issue

There has been very limited development in environmental best practice in the attraction sector and the drivers are very weak. Attractions are not major consumers of energy nor generators of waste and as such do not benefit from potential cost saving to the same degree as the accommodation sector.

A significant number of top 50 attractions are the responsibility of the Office of Public Works. While these properties are managed in accordance with the policy of the OPW there is no evidence of a specific environmental programme. A major impetus to driving environmental management in the activity sector would be achieved by involving the Office of Public Works in a specific programme.

Recommendations

Fáilte Ireland should work closely with the Office of Public Works and National Museum to drive environmental management through the range of properties for which they are responsible.

The objective will be to ensure that all such properties achieve best practice and potentially future environmental accreditation (refer to Recommendation 2), thereby creating a critical mass in the attraction sector, thus attracting interest/commitment from non public-sector attractions.

It is particularly important that leadership is given by the Top 50 attractions and it is recommended that each should be encouraged to prepare conservation and management plans for their sites where appropriate, to ensure that the environmental/heritage/cultural significance of the attraction is maintained and enhanced into the future and that the tourism objectives are compatible with the conservation objectives of each site.

Recommendation 6

Driving Best Practice in the Activity Sector

Issue

Within tourism activities there are already a number of recognised environmental awards – for beaches, marinas and golf courses.

The challenge is to widen the awareness and interest across the activity sector, in general, in environmental best practice. The generation of this interest is particularly relevant to this sector as so many of its component businesses are perceived as being green.

Recommendations

Fáilte Ireland should actively promote the benefits of environmental best practice and green tourism within the sector. Fáilte Ireland should continue to develop the Tourism Learning Network, to strengthen and support the sharing and development of green initiatives.

Fáilte ireland should co-ordinate the preparation of best environmental practice guidelines/ initiatives for each of the principal activity areas – walking, cruising, equestrian, angling, golf and water–based activities. The latter is a particularly important activity, which has significant potential for growth.

Failte Ireland should seek to in corporate environmental criteria within any emerging classification system within the activities sector.

The objective will be to ensure that all such activities achieve best practice and potentially future environmental accreditation (refer to Recommendation 2).

Recommendation 7

Best Practice of Environmental Management in Tourism Destinations

Issue

The major environmental problems identified in relation to destinations were poor planning, traffic congestion, water and noise pollution and litter.

The challenges in tourism destinations are typically specific to the location, though there are general issues such as litter. The relevant stakeholders will also vary by destination, though in all cases the local authority will have a pivotal role.

Recommendations

It is recommended that Fáilte Ireland increase its participation as a statutory consultee in the planning process, to ensure that the interests of tourism are protected, in line with a sustainable tourism objective.

Fáilte Ireland should seek to influence and persuade local communities of the economic benefits to be derived from sustainable tourism development and best practice environmental management, and to provide the specific types of support outlined previously.

Fáilte Ireland should work closely with the Department of the Environment Heritage and Local Government to develop the 'Tidy Towns Competition' to have a wider environmental and sustainability context. The Tidy Towns brand has a wide recognition nationally, and is a much-sought after prize. Fáilte Ireland should seek to again become closely identified with this competition. Such involvement could include sponsorship of specific prizes e.g. quality of destination management, development of a green tourism destination.

This involvement will clearly position Fáilte Ireland to capture the full potential of the goodwill and work ethic generated throughout Ireland's destinations by the tidy towns competition.

The Tourism Learning Networks should support the commitment to Environmental Management within major tourism destinations.

It was highlighted as part of this report that there is a significant lack of relevant tourism and environmental data available in relation to tourism destinations in Ireland. In February 2007 the Tourism Sustainability Group (set up by the EU) produced the document Action for More Sustainable European Tourism. This group identified a number of challenges facing the industry and how these challenges could be addressed through a three part model, sustainable destinations being one of these parts (sustainable business and responsible tourists made up the other two parts). This report provides guidance on various processes for destination management, and also presents a set of 50 indicators of sustainability, to be used across Europe.

Fáilte Ireland should seek to road test such an initiative/ model on at least one tourism destination in Ireland. The aim of this project would be to develop a framework and methodology for the implementation of one of these models to determine the carrying capacity/ sustainability of tourism destinations.

Recommendation 8

Environmental Management and the Transport Sector

Issue

There is little development in environmental management in the transport sector. Fuel costs are the major driver of attention in the sector, driven by the spike in oil prices in recent years. This is exacerbated in Ireland by the over-reliance on private motorised transport and an underdeveloped public transport system.

Recommendations

It is recommended that Fáilte Ireland would encourage the use of sustainable transport including ensuring that there are options available to tourists. This would range from information on public transport to the availability of bicycles and well-designated walkways. Fáilte Ireland should encourage, where practicable, transport companies and transport facilities to implement sustainability programmes and policies.

Fáilte Ireland will actively promote the introduction of Greenways, which link town centres to local attractions and also public transport access to major attractions and tourism destinations as part of an overall Destination Management Plan.

It is recommended that Fáilte Ireland should liaise with the Sustainable Transport Unit (in the Department of Transport) in furthering the sustainable transport agenda, particularly in relation to tourism.

Fáilte Ireland should explore the feasibility and desirability among tourists of the introduction of carbon off-set schemes for tourist travel both within Ireland as well as to and from the island.
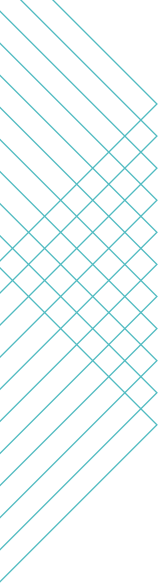
List of Appendices

A list of appendices only has been provided here. This report and the full appendices are available to download on the Fáilte Ireland website www.failteireland.ie.

Appendix 1:   Environmental Policy/Legislation impacting the Tourism Industry in Ireland

Appendix 2:   Questionnaire used during Project Survey

Appendix 3:   Tourism Business & Employment Survey 2006

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