



Environmentally-Friendly Practices in Certified Green Hotels in Phuket Province, Thailand

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Abstract

This study examined the approach of certified green hotels in Phuket to environmental management practices, as well as the perception of the importance of using green practices for both hotel guests and hotel managers, with the ultimate goal of reducing the negative effects and improving the quality of the environment of Phuket and the ecology as a whole. Qualitative surveys were conducted with certified green hotels in Phuket and Russian tourists who had stayed there. The main internal problems in the implementation and use of green practices were the attitude of employees and expenses, as well as the lack of tourist awareness, while there was a tendency to more active participation in external environmental events.

Keywords: Green Practices, Green Certificates, Certified Green Hotels, Eco-Friendly Behavior, Phuket

Introduction

The tourism industry is one of the fastest growing industries, and travel and tourism has become the largest economic sector in several countries. Three main environmental problems arise from these activities: excessive waste, overuse of energy, and overuse of water (Das and Chatterjee 2015, 14).

In response to the growing environmental problems of the hotel industry, the environmental movement has become increasingly popular (Buckley, 2001). Today, the Phuket community, government and local hoteliers are concerned about the conservation of nature and the formation of environmental policies in business. There is not much research here on what kind of eco-friendly practices are used in the hotel business in Phuket, so this island was chosen for research.

It is impossible to achieve success in this field only through the introduction of environmentally friendly methods and obtaining green certificates, it is necessary to obtain the support and approval of hotel guests. For this study, Russian tourists were selected,



as they are little studied in terms of environmental awareness, but they constitute a significant part of foreign tourists in Phuket (in 2018, 906,454 Russian tourists arrived on the island, ranking second after Chinese tourists- 3,078,317 people) (Arrival of Guests at Accommodation Facilities).

Therefore, the purpose of this study is to examine the role of the Phuket hotel business in environmental green management, relevant programs and activities aimed at reducing the negative impact, problems and restrictions in the implementation of green practices in hotels, as well as to clarify the perception of this activity on both sides - managers of certified hotels located in Phuket. In Thailand, several studies have been carried out related areas, but little research has been conducted regarding the operation of certified green hotels located in Phuket.

In particular, the focus is on Russian tourists, who have been little studied in the context of their environmental consciousness but represent a significant proportion of foreign tourists in Phuket. In 2018, 906,454 Russian tourists arrived in Phuket, ranking second only after Chinese tourists (3,078,317 people) (“Guest Arrivals at Accommodation Establishments”, 2020). Therefore, it is interesting to consider how Russian tourists relate to the green lifestyle, their attitude to green tourism in Phuket and their willingness to support them.

Therefore, the aim of this study is to fill in two gaps in literature – on environmental practices and certification of Phuket Green hotels, and on the attitude of Russian tourists towards such practices.

Review Literature

2.1 The green tourism and certifications

In recent years, a lot of research has been dedicated to the environmental impact of tourism and its damage to nature (e.g., Flower, 2006; Jorgenson & Riley, 2012; Khan & Ghouri, 2011; Jang, Chung & Kim, 2015; Sakun, Kravchuk & Gakal, 2019, among others).

Increased environmental awareness has led to the emergence of nature-friendly tourism, which has become a rapidly growing part of the global tourism market (Cloesen, 2003). Green tourism is only part of the “green movement” and focuses on minimising the environmental impact of the industry (Rani & Ravi, 2020). With the increasing number of people seeking green travel, the number of green hotels is growing (Tsai, Wu & Wang, 2014).

To become eco-friendly, hotels need to radically change their work, namely, switch to renewable energy, pay for new eco-transport (such as bicycles for their consumers and staff, build hotels from ecologically clean materials and develop environmental infrastructure, such as walking and cycling paths, vacation spots, camps and observation



platforms, etc. (Hultman, Kazemina & Ghasemi, 2015; Pan et al., 2018). For successful development, green hotels should be introduced with proper monitoring, evaluation and tight management (Das & Chatterjee, 2015).

Hotels turning green and environmentally-friendly are part of the broader concept of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). CSR applies to both philosophy and policies that benefit the economy, society, and the environment; CSR is based on the idea that companies have broader responsibilities outside the realm of trade (Henderson, 2007).

Related to this concept is the Environmental Management System (EMS). The main goals of EMS are pollution prevention; compliance with regulatory standards and, ideally, going beyond the initial goals set forth in the company's environmental policy; cost control based on energy and material savings (Dodson, Sipe, Rickson & Sloan, 2013).

However, the definition of a “green hotel” is vague. Although there is no one specific set of universal standards for a hotel that will be declared “green hotel”, there are some standards that can be used to assess whether a hotel can be considered “green” or “environmentally friendly” (Tsai, Wu & Wang, 2014). Such standards have been developed by various green organizations and companies that award eco-friendly awards and certificates. There are over 100 eco-labels for green tourism, many of which overlap in sectors and geographic coverage; some of them were developed in the 1980s, and many of them, in the 1990s (Buckley, 2001).

The most popular world-wide green hotel certification organization is arguably Green Globe, established by the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC) in 1993. Green Globe's worldwide network is recognized in 187 countries (“About Green Globe”, n.d.). Its goals are to take care of introducing environmental responsibility in the tourism industry; encourage the active participation of all relevant companies; provide an understanding of the link between environmental and business practices; present annual awards, and others (Griffin, DeLacey, Harris & Williams, 2002).

Applicable factors vary depending on geographical location, type of certification and local factors. Experts check and update the entire Green Globe standard twice a year and hotels are evaluated according to several criteria (“Standard Criteria and Indicators”, n.d.).

1. Sustainable management - the long-term sustainable development management system of a business, compliance with relevant international or local laws and regulations, staff training, and accuracy of advertising materials.

2. Social and economic sector – support for initiatives to develop social and infrastructural communities, provision of local employment, and legal protection of workers.
3. Cultural heritage - respect for local cultures and historical sites, maintaining



local cultural traditions and efforts to minimize the impact on the artificial and natural environment caused by increased visitor activity.

4. Environmental factor - achievements in the field of conservation of resources, the use of disposables and consumables, efforts to reduce their use.

Membership levels include Certified Member status (this certificate must be confirmed annually when more than 50% of the relevant indicators are achieved), Gold Member (given to participants who have been certified for 5 consecutive years and all the necessary criteria of the Green Globe standard for travel and tourism), and Platinum Status (awarded to members who have been certified for 10 consecutive years).

Another popular certification is the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED). It is in fact a real estate eco label focusing on the construction and operation of the physical real estate asset. LEED focuses on energy-saving features, water management, waste management, open spaces, etc. (Robinson, Singh & Das, 2016).

Thailand has its own certifying organization - Green Leaf, registered in 1998. It was founded with the help of six organizations: the Tourism Authority of Thailand, the Thai Hotel Association, the United Nations Environment Program, the Thai Electricity Control Authority, the Environmental Quality Development Association, and the capital's waterworks (Thailand: Green Hotels and Resorts, n.d.). The objectives of this fund are promotion and dissemination knowledge about environmental protection and help owners and operators working in the tourism industry in developing and using green practices. As of December 2020, there were 470 hotels certified by Green Leaf ("Green Leaf Foundation", n.d.).

A total of twelve areas are evaluated as follows: Environmental Policy; Waste Management; Energy and Water Efficiency; Purchase of Green Products; Indoor Air Quality; Air Pollution; Noise Pollution; Water Quality; Fuel, Gas, Toxic and Hazardous Materials Management; Environmental Impact; Collaboration with the community and local authorities ("Green Leaf Standard", n.d.). The Green Leaf tries to provide green information via their website, published books and papers, highlighting ways to save energy and water in hotel operations, providing hoteliers tips on how to be more eco-friendly and encourage their guests to use green practices and maintain an eco-friendly atmosphere in the hotel ("Green Leaf Standard", n.d.).

2.2 The environmental situation in Phuket

There are practically no recent studies about what green practices are being applied in the hotel industry in Phuket, although the island's ecology also suffers from the consequences of tourism activities. Tourism growth and population growth caused by migration from all over Thailand has stimulated pressure on land development. This has



led to a reduction in the natural landscape of Phuket and the deterioration of surface, ground and coastal waters (Phuket's Environmental Crisis, 2020).

For example, Phuket has a total of about 16.63 square kilometres of coral reef. The areas of coral reefs that are close to the open sea are in relatively good condition, while on the western side of Phuket, where most hotels are, the coral reefs are mostly in a state of decay (Protecting Patong Beach, 2018).

Another major problem is excess waste. Every day, more than 700 tons of household wastes enter the island's collection and disposal system. This does not include all garbage dumped into the sea, canals, and public and private property, roads and parks (“Phuket Sustainability Indicator Report”, 2013). If this is taken into account, the daily amount of garbage generated and removed in Phuket approaches 1000 tons with capacity of the two existing incinerators to handle a maximum of 950 tons of waste per day (Chuenniran, 2020). To address the problem, the Phuket City municipality plans the construction of a new incinerator, with a capacity of 600 tons per day (Chuenniran, 2020).

The island also has excessive water consumption. For example, in 2017, the water volume in Phuket was 56.16 million m³, and the need for consumption was 70.76 million m³, that is, Phuket needed another 14.60 million m³ of water resources to maintain its lifestyle. For a number of years there has been regularly excessive water consumption that goes beyond the scope of opportunities (“Water Management in Phuket”, 2020).

On the positive side, more and more people are switching to an environmentally responsible lifestyle. For example, local residents are trying to pay more attention to environmental aspects, even focusing on religious views. The Buddhist concept of karma has a profound effect on the worldview and face of Thai society and is used to propagate certain environmental behaviours. For example, belief in reincarnation and fear of the consequences of bad karma were used to deter local residents from illegal logging in Thai community forest management (Salam, Noguchi and Pothitan, 2006).

Various government organizations, along with private business, are increasingly turning to eco-friendly practices. Green events are increasingly held in Phuket, aimed at improving and preserving the island's natural wealth and diversity; these include, for example, actions to save turtles, beach cleaning and mangrove tree planting (“Beyond the tipping point”, 2020). On January 1, 2020, a decree was signed to abolish the use of plastic bags (“Everyday Say No to Plastic Bags” Campaign, 2020).

In addition to government organizations and local residents, there is also support from private business, including hotels. More hotels are switching to green policies in hotel operations and are introducing eco-friendly practices into the system. The Thai Hotel Association (THA) has asked the government for financial support to help increase the number of facilities that comply with the Green Hotel standards. But at present, the



process of checking and certifying hotels in Thailand takes some time and serves only up to 70 hotels per year due to a limited budget and a lack of specialists (Worrachaddejchai, 2020).

Thus, the consideration and study of green practices in the hotel industry in Phuket will be important in assessing the prospects for development and improving the environmental situation on the island as a whole. However, it is important to evaluate not only the introduction and application of green practices in the hotel industry, but also the attitude and willingness of tourists to support this. This paper focuses on Russian tourists, the second largest group of foreign tourists in Phuket.

2.3 Readiness of Russians to lead an environmentally responsible lifestyle and develop green tourism

There is little research of the environmental consciousness and behaviour of Russian tourists, and on their attitude towards green practices in certified hotels but studies that were conducted suggest that in general Russians are worried about environmental issues. Thus more than half of Russians (56%) rated the environmental situation in the place of permanent residence as dysfunctional and polluted (“Russians about the state of the environment”, 2019). The Higher School of Economics (HSE) found that the problem of environmental pollution worries 94% of Russians (“HSE Advocates for Environmental Transparency”, 2019).

The concept of green tourism and green hotels, however, is relatively new in the Russian Federation. As a rule, the emphasis is on rural green tourism, since Russia has huge agricultural areas where there is fresh air, forests, natural reservoirs. In such places, it is possible to meet small businessmen who decide to open a rest house or a small green hotel and offer their consumers to get as close to nature as possible (Stepchenkova & Morrison, 2008).

The number of people who is beginning to adhere to the right ecological lifestyle is growing every year, especially in large cities. Various green events and exhibitions are increasingly taking place there. Previously, the organizers of such green events were only green initiators or volunteers. Now, government organizations are becoming increasingly involved in organizing green events. For example, from February 14 to February 16, 2020, in the Gostiny Dvor Complex, located in Moscow with the support of the Federal Agency for Tourism and the Ministry of Natural Resources and Ecology, a new project was presented - the Green Wind festival of ecological and rural tourism, dedicated to the lifestyle and relaxation in accordance with the new environmental requirements. The festival aims to become a unique platform for the interaction of ecologists, business representatives with environmental responsibility, local small and medium enterprises,



environmental tourism projects and new generation travel agencies with an emphasis on sustainable development and greening of places (Festival "Green Wind", 2020).

It is also noteworthy that the Russians are not only more involved in some green activities and events, but also apply more green practices in everyday life. Many Muscovites and Petersburgers use environmentally friendly practices, including on vacation (Chernovich, Miles & Polyakova, 2015). As tourists they tend to prefer to visit new countries, rather than travel to the expanses of Russia (Trofimenko & Dzhafarova, 2011). Therefore, it is interesting to analyse how Russians feel when staying at a green hotel, whether they are willing to pay more for such a hotel, whether such a green vacation changes something in their minds, and whether they are ready to promote and develop green tourism.

Methodology

Data were collected in the period October 2019 - February 2020 from the two target groups involved in this study: hotels with green certification and Russian tourists who have stayed in some of these hotels.

Interviews were conducted with the managers of all 26 certified green hotels, using census method. This included all five hotels with Green Globe certification and 21 hotels with Green Leaf certification.

Although all 26 hotels were approached with a request for interview, only ten of them agreed to participate in the survey. Four of them were with Green Globe certification and six – with Green Leaf certification. Upon request, interview questions were sent in advance for review by e-mail, WhatsApp or LINE. Semi-structured interviews with 17 interview questions were conducted with the managers who were usually involved in the planning and implementation of green practices of the hotel. The interview questions for this study were developed from several previous studies: Han et al. 2011, 2018; Manaktola and Jauhari 2007, 19; Renwick, Redman and Maguire 2013, 15; Jabbour and Santos 2008, 16; etc.

The second population in this survey was Russian tourists, who had stayed at least one night in a certified green hotel in Phuket. They were approached using convenience sampling method. Thus, Russians staying in selected hotels were invited to undergo interviews by voluntary consent. The invitations and the interviews themselves took place in the loggias and recreation areas near the reception. After interviewing 22 respondents the data collection was stopped due to data saturation.

The interview questions for this study were developed from several previous studies: Maibach 1993, 8; Robinot and Giannelloni 2010, 24; Jeong et al. 2014, 41; Han et al. 2011, 2018, etc.

Content analysis was used to analyze both sets of data.



Findings

3.1 Main Findings from the interviews with certified green hotels in Phuket

Participation in public green events

Most hotels confirmed that they were actively involved in external green events, such as volunteer cleaning of beaches, rescue of marine animals and mass planting of trees (Table 1). For example, information was received from the GL2 (respondent from the second hotel with Green Leaf certificate) that they have set The Mai Khao Marine Turtle Foundation at the resort. GL2 and its managing company donated about \$45,000 to create a fund, located in Mai Khao beach. Currently, it is one of the few beaches in Phuket where there are still nesting turtles. The foundation saves these eggs, since the beach can no longer guarantee the necessary natural and peaceful environment. The eggs are handed over to the Royal Thai Navy and the Phuket Marine Biological Centre, which take care of hatching egg and releasing little turtles back to the Andaman Sea. The hotel organises special events, inviting their guests or Phuket residents to participate in the turtle release.

GL3 (the third hotel with Green Leaf certification) also commented that they take part in sea turtles release and work together with the Phuket Marine Biological Centre (PMBC). This event annually helps not only save the lives of turtles, but also raise funds for the PMBC program for the conservation and rehabilitation of sea turtles. Since 1994, GL3 has released over two thousand sea turtles and collected 7 million baht for PMBC to work with sea turtles.

In addition, seven of the ten hotels regularly take part in mass tree planting campaigns. GL1, for example, plants about 20,000 mangrove trees per year.

Table 1: Participation in green public events

Practices	Number of Hotels and Certificate system (GG=Green Globe, GL=Green Leaf)	% of the Number of Responding Hotels (10 Hotels)
Cleaning beaches	4 GG, 5 GL	90%
Active position in public green events	4 GG, 5 GL	90%
Participating in tree planting campaigns	4 GG, 3 GL	70%

Waste management

Of all the hotels participating in the study, 100% are engaged in waste recycling (Table 2). All hotels are engaged in the improvement and gardening of their and the surrounding territories: they plant flowers, shrubs, trees. Most hotels (70-80%) are engaged



in waste recycling, use environmentally friendly cleaning products and many refuse plastic and use glass water bottles instead of plastic ones.

Table 2: Green practices for waste management

Practices	Numbers of Hotels and Certificate system (GG= Green Globe, GL=Green Leaf)	% of the Number of Responding Hotels (10 Hotels)
Solid waste separation at source	4 GG, 6 GL	100%
Natural landscaping	4 GG, 6 GL	100%
Use recycled paper brochures	4 GG, 4 GL	80%
Composting organic and food waste	4 GG, 4 GL	80%
Separate hazardous waste collection	4 GG, 4 GL	80%
Avoiding the use of plastic	4 GG, 4 GL	80%
Availability of tanks for processing and compost	4 GG, 3 GL	70%
Using environmentally-friendly cleaning products	3 GG, 3 GL	60%
Wastewater treatment	1 GG, 1 GL	20%
Production of own vegetables		

Energy efficiency

Regarding energy efficiency, the majority of environmentally friendly practices used by all hotel respondents included the use of energy-saving light bulbs and products labelled as energy-saving, as well as encouraging staff to turn off the lights and reduce the use of lightning. At six hotels, time was set for lighting in some specific places, and energy-saving signs and switches were installed so that employees could turn off the lights. Some other methods were also implemented, such as setting up a monthly maintenance schedule for electrical appliances. Most hotels carefully monitor energy consumption and try to reduce these rates. Most respondents said that they follow the principles of Reduction, Reuse and Recycling. Some set numerical targets, such as for example reducing energy consumption, emissions, water use and waste by at least 5% per year (respondent GL1). GL1 works closely with EarthCheck (the world's leading scientific benchmarking, certification and advisory group for travel and tourism). Together they draw up plans and goals for reducing energy, water use and waste management. In 2018 they managed to reduce energy consumption by 6%, the amount of waste sent to landfill by 4%, gas



emissions by 5% and potable water use by 8%. Table 3 shows details of the energy-saving measures implemented.

Table 3: Green practices for energy efficiency

Practices	Numbers of Hotels and Certificate system (GG=Green Globe, GL=Green Leaf)	% of the Number of Responding Hotels (10 Hotels)
Using energy-saving light bulbs	4 GG, 6 GL	100%
Encourage staff to turn off the lights	4 GG, 6 GL	100%
Use energy-saving product labelled	4 GG, 6 GL	100%
Reduce the use of lightning	4 GG, 6 GL	100%
Using a card control system in guest rooms	4 GG, 4 GL 3 GG, 3 GL	80% 60%
Room energy saving system	2 GG, 2 GL	40%
Light level sensors	2 GG, 1 GL	30%
Use of solar energy		

Water efficiency

Water consumption is reduced with low-flow shower heads or tab sensors (in 9 hotels), the installation of dual flush toilets (in 7 hotels), and the use of treated water in garden irrigation (in 5 hotels) (Table 4). Some hotels ask their guests to reuse towels and linen. Some hotels, to manage the lack of sufficient water, have invested in artesian wells, strainers and tanks. GG1 (first respondent with Green Globe certification) reuses water from its own wastewater treatment plant located in the city.

Table 4: Green practices for water efficiency

Practices	Numbers of Hotels and Certificate system (GG=Green Globe, GL=Green Leaf)	% of the Number of Responding Hotels (10 Hotels)
Use low-flow shower heads or tab sensors	4 GG, 5GL 4 GG, 3 GL	90% 70%
Install dual flush toilets	3 GG, 2 GL	50%
Use treated water in garden irrigation	2 GG, 1 GL	30%
Encourage hotel guests to reuse towels and linen		

Problems with adopting green practices



Improving sustainability in the hotel industry depends largely on the regular participation of employees in environmental initiatives and their involvement in the implementation of green practices. However, this study revealed one of the most significant problems in the work of green hotels - low environmental awareness among staff. While they were not part of the survey with the hotel managers, in some hotels, when asked, the front-desk employees did not know what to answer when they heard questions about the environmental practices used in their hotel. Most of them admitted that they do not know what environmental practices are.

Hotels in general admitted to not conveying sufficiently to their guests their green practices or green hotel certifications. This was confirmed from the interviews with tourists, none of whom realized that the hotel in which they stayed had green certificates and applied eco-friendly practices.

3.2 Main findings from the interviews with Russian tourists

Altogether, semi-structured interviews were conducted with 22 Russian tourists who had stayed for at least one night in certified hotels. In the course interviews, a tendency was revealed that many are interested in environmental practices, and they are ready to apply them. About half of all respondents said that they were worried about environmental issues and were increasingly trying to delve into green practices that would help preserve nature. Figure 1 relates the interest in environmental issues and participation in eco-friendly practices of the respondents. Respondents were distributed on this figure in accordance with their answers and psychological characteristics. The numbers correspond to the respondent's number in the survey.

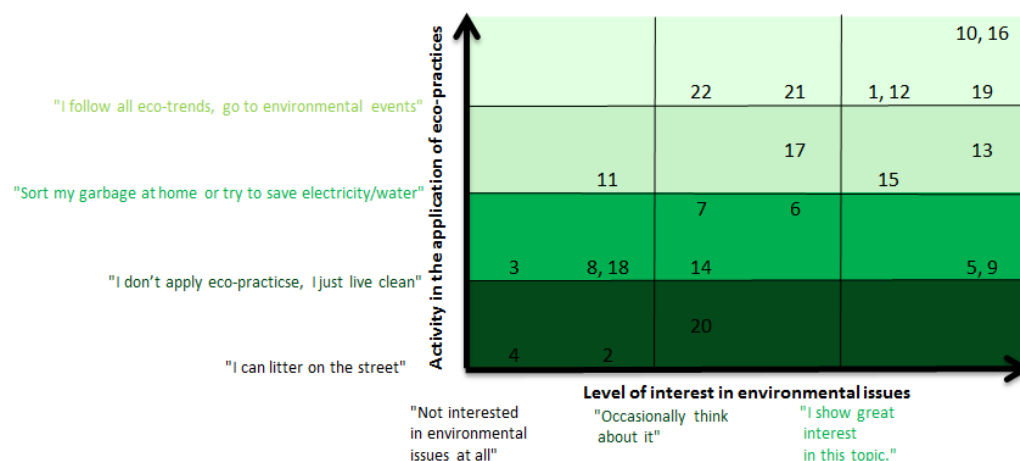


Figure 1: Interest in environmental issues and participation in eco-friendly practices of Russian tourists



The study however revealed that most Russian tourists, even those who are interested in an environmentally responsible lifestyle, do not have knowledge about what green practices are used in the hotel industry today. They confirmed that the hotels do not inform their guests about environmental practices. All interviewed tourists were surprised to learn that the hotel in which they live has an environmental certificate and meets all the requirements of a real green hotel.

On the positive side, when respondents were asked about their intention to engage in green tourism in the future, the majority (about 80%) answered that they already support this area or are interested in green practices and plan to participate in them in the future.

The respondents were also asked about their willingness to pay extra for staying in a green hotel. Just over one-third answered that they were not ready to pay extra money for accommodation in a truly green hotel. The remaining two-thirds of all respondents said they were willing to pay more (between 10-25 percent), but on the condition that it would be a truly green hotel:

“I have to be 100% sure that the hotel is environmentally friendly. That is, to know that the hotel recycles, that water is supplied in glass bottles, has reduced plastic use and so on” - A.P., age 36, male.

Russian tourists appear to want to learn more and start a greener travel style but only if they are provided with relevant information. During the interview with tourists, many wishes were expressed regarding the green policies of hotels. Respondents want hotels to publish information, on social networks and elsewhere, about their green certifications and practices.

“The hotel should write about it on every corner. If not for this interview, I would not have known that this hotel has a certificate, which means that I would not have thought about environmental practices” - S.M., age 36, female.

“Hotel must write about this and prove their environmental friendliness. Although to attach photos with a roof where there are solar panels or show photos of rooms where there are motion sensors that control the consumption of electricity, etc.” - O.M., age 26, male.

“And not only to be certified, but to prove it by actions, show statistics, lead an active eco-social life, make publications on this topic in social networks and so on” - A.O., age 27, female.

Discussion

The first objective of the research was to investigate the green eco-friendly practices in certified hotels located in Phuket. Participation in public environmental events,



waste management and energy conservation are the three main green activities used in the Phuket hotel industry. All of the hotels interviewed stated that they pay great attention to public green events, such as saving sea turtles, cleaning streets and beaches, planting greenery on the island and so on. Some hotels have partly or completely abandoned the use of plastic.

The main problem to implementing environmentally-friendly practices is poor staff awareness. Even though some green hotels replied that they pay great attention to the education of employees in the area of the hotel's environmentally responsible policy, inform the staff about all the latest green work practices, and conduct trainings, in practice it has become obvious that this is not so, especially among junior staff. The results lead to the conclusion that the main problem is the low awareness among staff. When contacting front desk employees, it became clear that one-third of them did not know what environmental practices were used in their hotels, and another one-third said they had no idea about eco-hotels and eco-practices at all. In fact, some hotel employees were unaware of the fact that their hotel had green certificates. Some hoteliers, fearing losing customers, sometimes try not to suggest their guests to save water or electricity, and fail to inform guests about the presence of green policies and green certificates. As a result, many tourists were unaware of the fact that their hotels had green certification.

Previous studies on this topic have shown the opposite result. Han and Hyun (2018) conducted a research on US hotel customers and the results showed that guests agree to save water and reuse towels and bathrobes. Moreover, consumers participate in such practices willingly, out of growing sense of moral duty to nature. From a practical point of view, hotel operators only need to inform about this practice: to contact guests with requests for reuse, publish messages on water conservation on social networks, hang cards / signs in the room that convey a message like “Turning off the water while brushing your teeth - it’s responsible behavior, because in this way you can save more water than you think” or “Saving water is the responsibility of every person in the face of our only planet” (Han and Hyun 2018, 26).

The second objective of this paper was to examine the Russian customers’ willingness to support green practices in certified green hotels. Three-quarters of the respondents said they were interested in a green lifestyle and eco-practices. Almost half of them claimed to be very environmentally responsible people who sort garbage at home and follow all environmental news. However, despite the fact that tourists show interest in this issue, none of the respondents had any idea about what environmental practices are applied in the hotel industry today. The study showed that when selecting a hotel, people are still motivated mostly by price and quality, rather than the degree of greenness of the hotel. Thus, the second significant drawback to developing green hotels was



identified - low awareness among tourists. All the respondents replied that they were not invited to participate in green events. Almost none of them had realized that the hotel in which they stay has a green certificate. Indeed, only 4 of the originally selected 26 hotels have a section with certificates and awards on their official website.

Thus, it is possible to conclude that Russian tourists are really interested in the development of green tourism, they seek to gain new knowledge in this matter, try to apply eco-practices in everyday life and are ready to do this during their holidays, but due to the lack of information and offers with hotels, tourists do not have the opportunity to delve into this issue. Therefore, if hotels more actively published on social networks information about their green practices, offer tourists to participate in green events and inform them about their green policies and maybe even environmental awareness in general, this would give much better results.

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