

ABSTRACT

The global hospitality industry is currently facing many challenges from the external business environment. These include the effects of global recession, a downturn in overall trade and an increased demand for service excellence from a much more quality conscious clientele. A more recent challenge, however, relates to an increase in global awareness of environmental issues. Contemporary consumers require goods and services to be produced, or delivered, in environmentally friendly ways. As a result, managers are being forced to reconsider their business strategies and activities. Indeed a wide range of industries has already responded to consumers' dictates on conservation issues. It is now universally accepted that organisations can only achieve their strategic objectives by adopting an environmentally friendly philosophy. The global hotel industry, like any other industry sector, can no longer resist this trend. This study, therefore, shall examine the extent of environmental management practice in the hotel industry, which is one of the major sectors responsible for the development of sustainable tourism. In particular, this study investigated the extent of Green Practice within the Phuket hotel industry, in Thailand. It reports the findings from a two-stage methodology that was designed to shed light on both the current extent of environmental practice within the Phuket hotel industry, as well as the motivation(s) for such practice. Empirical research is reported on a survey of Phuket hotels, with results suggesting that whilst there is evidence of environmentally sensitive practice within the Phuket hotel industry, this is not widespread and rather uncoordinated. The results further suggest low levels of environmental awareness amongst Phuket hoteliers and that where environmentally sensitive practices have been operationalised, this has been due more to the search for bottom line savings than any internalised belief in the value of any such practice.