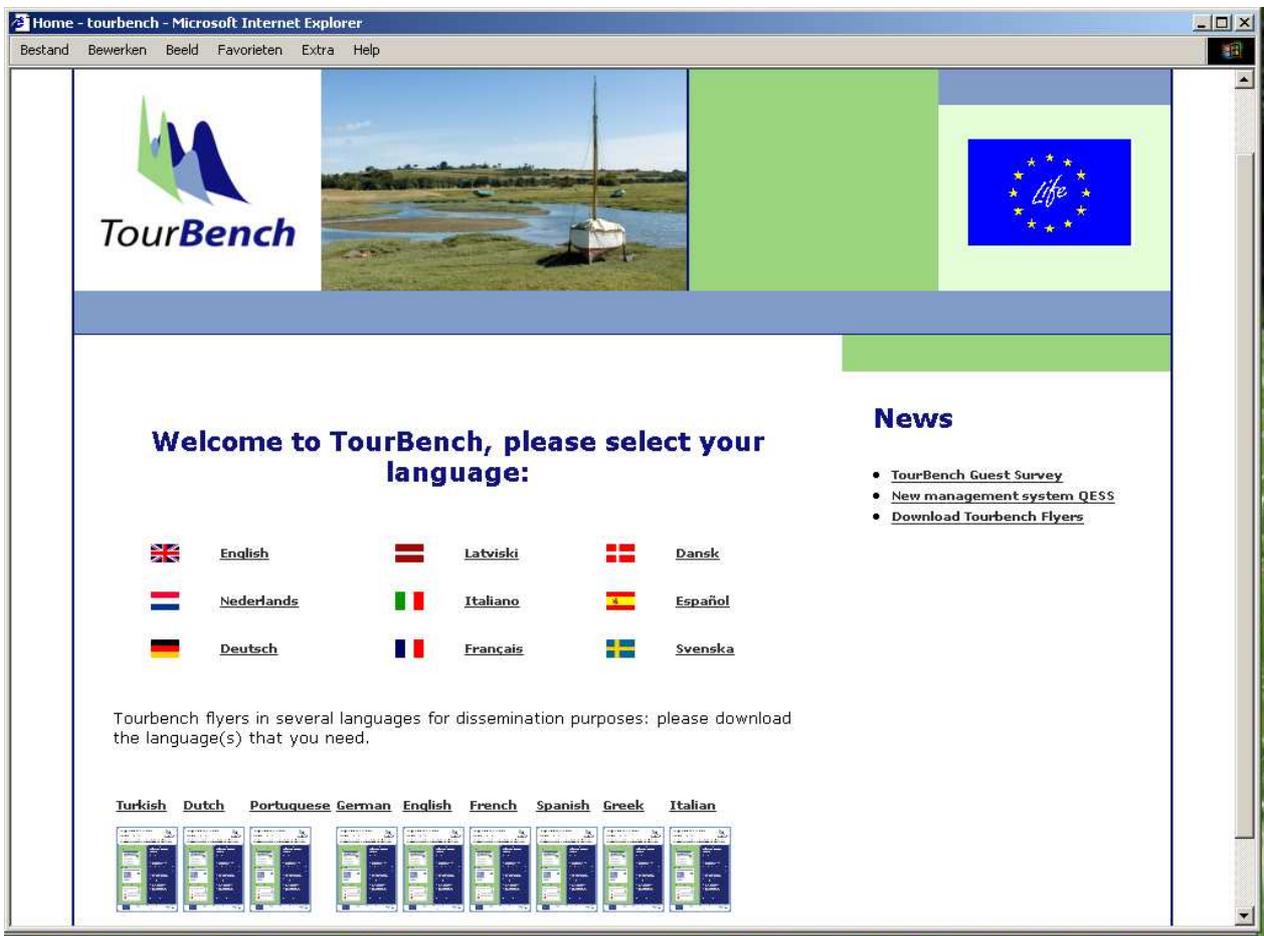


TourBench

Monitoring and benchmarking of environmental consumption and cost in tourist accommodation services

A European contribution to making tourism more sustainable



www.tourbench.info

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The TourBench initiative

More than 95 % of more than 500.000 hotels and camping places, youth hostels and farm holiday houses in Europe are micro, small and medium enterprises. Many of them are run by families. They offer and create many jobs, feel responsible for more sustainable development in their regions, are part of and guarantee an immense variety of authentic tourism from Finland to Portugal, from Ireland to Greece. Tourists expect the environmental quality during their holidays to be high; outside as well as inside the accommodation. Because of the high level of cleaning and of services offered in accommodations, tourists consume more water, energy, chemical substances (for cleaning purposes), and produce more waste than at home. Better management, high-quality information and technical measures can reduce the environmental impact considerably. Many of these measures help to save cost, improve competitiveness, support the regional economy and improve sustainable development - and meet the expectations of the consumers.

The project

TourBench is a European monitoring and benchmarking initiative, that aims to reduce the environmental costs in tourist accommodation businesses. The online system TourBench is a freely available, practical and easy-to-use web-based, multilingual monitoring and benchmarking instrument that enables to scan an accommodation with reference to/on the basis of environmental issues. It helps to determine the environmental impact of an accommodation over a period of years, based on the input of the company's consumption of (and costs for) energy, water, chemicals and waste production. Furthermore, TourBench enables to compare this impact with other, similar accommodations in the respective country or all over Europe. The input of data and the comparison with other accommodations is treated in confidence by the project partners. The strengths and weaknesses of an accommodation with reference to their environmental impact are quickly clarified by a comparison with other accommodations.

In other words: what is the saving potential? Based on the entrepreneurs own input, TourBench provides the necessary information to enable the entrepreneur to determine which investments might be profitable for the business. Furthermore, TourBench informs about success stories and gives tips on how to apply for national and international environmental certificates for the

European Eco-label for Tourist Accommodation Businesses and Camping sites ("EU flower") or for EMAS, the official European Eco-Management Scheme.

By saving the environment, costs can be saved. TourBench helps to improve the sustainability and the quality of a business continuously. To match suggested environmental measures with the wishes of guest, European guest surveys support the benchmarking system TourBench.

The following companies and organisations are partners in the TourBench project:

Syncera (Delft, Netherlands), ECOTRANS e.V. (Saarbrücken, Germany), ECOCAMPING (Constance, Germany), ADAC (Munich, Germany), RECRON (Driebergen, Netherlands), Den Grønne Nøgle v/Horesta (Copenhagen, Denmark), Legambiente Turismo (Bologna, Italy), Verein für Konsumenteninformation (Vienna, Austria), Green Business UK Ltd. (Perth, Scotland), FEE France (Paris, France), Lauku ceļotājs (Riga, Latvia).

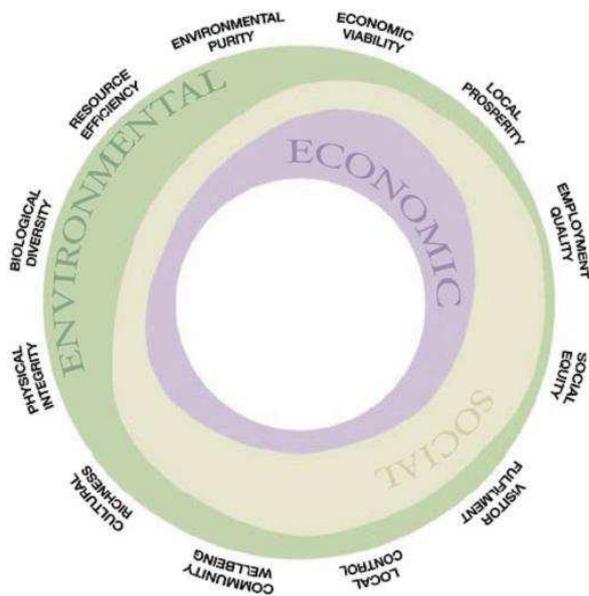
Financial support has been provided by the European Commission LIFE Environment programme and by the DBU, Deutsche Bundesstiftung Umwelt.



Making Tourism more sustainable

The 12 Sustainable Tourism aims

In 2005 the World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) together with the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) published the guide for policy makers "Making tourism more sustainable", which is applicable world wide. It is a "bible" for all decision-makers who are encouraged to be actively involved in the development of environmentally and socially responsible tourism which creates long term economic benefits for the businesses and destinations.



The guidelines include "12 aims for an agenda for sustainable tourism".



How does TourBench contribute to these aims, e.g. to "visitor fulfilment" ?

As part of the Tourbench project the so far internationally largest survey on camping site visitors was carried in order to know their interest and expectations on environmental issues.

Guests expect environmental engagement

The results of the present survey show, that the expectations of guests towards businesses with an environmental certificate mostly tackle a good waste management, a careful consumption of water and energy, the renunciation of environmentally-dangerous detergents and information about eco-friendly behaviour to guests during a camping holiday. Fortunately, most environmental measures are not only accepted by guests but also approved. As people with a strong connection to nature, camping guests are in favour of the engagement of camping businesses in environment and nature protection. What guests are in favour of, and what might be beyond their expectations is, that most environmental measures are in line with improvement of quality of stay, e.g. by means of reconstruction. To communicate this within the marketing activities, provides a competitive advantage of enthusiastic businesses over conventional camping businesses." Almost 40% of the guests in consequence pay attention to **environmental certificates** when choosing their camping site.

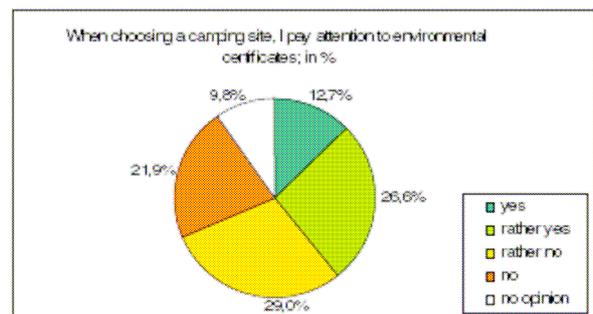


Figure 5: Ecolabels as a criterion for the choice of a camping site.

(TourBench Guest Research, ECOCAMPING, 2006; this report can be downloaded for free from www.tourbench.info)

These figures underline the results of the German Travel Analysis 2002, which annually assesses the expectations and opinions of the German holiday makers (ECOTRANS special analysis within the TourBench project).

Environmental certificates request environmental management

In Europe more than 30 Eco-labels and environmental certificates on national and

international level are available to tourism services. Analysis of the criteria of the leading certificates in Europe shows that many recommend or request from their businesses to “monitor regularly energy, water, waste consumption per overnight stay”. This requirement is part of the “VISIT standard” for tourism eco-labels in Europe, developed within the LIFE project ECO-LAB (2001-2004).

The 30 most common criteria in the EU Flower and the VISIT eco-labels

6 out of 11 eco-labels require activity in this area

Eco-label	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	
CH/ MANAGEMENT												
waste data collection												6
energy consumption data												9
policy setting manager												8
policy action plan												10
Policy setting policy												9
Information to guests												10
staff training												11
water consumption data												10
WASTE												
avoid chemicals												10
refillable bottles/bags/barrels												9
Disposable products												10
Composting												11
Hazardous waste												11
Paper products												9
Breakfast packaging												9
waste separation guests												11
waste separation staff												11
WATER												
Rainwater/ recycled water												9
water-saving machines												7
Leaks												7
Water flow taps/showers												11
WC flushing												11
ENERGY												
Insulation of buildings												7
boiler efficiency												8
switching off heating												9
window insulation												6
switching off lights												8
energy efficient devices												10
renewable sources												11
energy efficient light bulbs												10

Source: ECOTRANS, project "Tourbench", 2004

The Tourbench online tool helps the managers of tourist accommodation services in Europe to meet this "measuring requirement", to recognise their opportunities and to decide upon the right measures regarding their sustainability aims, above all to achieve

- **visitor fulfilment** by satisfying and fulfilling their environmental quality experience
- **resource efficiency** by minimizing the use of water and non-renewable energy resources
- **environmental purity** by minimizing the emission of CO₂ and the generation of waste
- **biological diversity** by minimizing the use of chemicals and hazardous waste
- **economic viability** by saving money and successful investment in low consumption equipment and ecologic buildings

The European TourBench tool for monitoring and benchmarking

Since 2005, TourBench, the monitoring and benchmarking system for the reduction of environmental consumption and costs, is available in nine languages and can be used free of charge directly on the Internet. Hotel managers and owners of camping sites, group accommodations, Bed & Breakfast and holiday homes can now monitor their energy and water consumption as well as their waste production and use of chemicals and compare them with other similar businesses. A European coherent set of measuring units allows comparability between all data sets. All data input and comparison are done anonymously and treated in strict confidence. The higher the number of businesses use the system, the more reliable average results and benchmarks (best of) are available on a national as well as international level, such as: what is the average water consumption per night of similar businesses in Europe. A special Return on Investment calculation tool allows users immediate planning and decision making in order to reduce e.g. their relatively high water consumption.

Basic and advanced data

TourBench shall show reliable results and benchmarks. This requires a high quality and completeness of information per data set as well as many data sets.

The TourBench partners agreed on following "basic" data as minimum information:

TourBench - Basic data to start with	
year	country
accommodation type	eco-certification
surface area	number of beds/ pitches
number of over-night stays	
consumption of water	cost of water
consumption of electricity	cost of electricity
consumption of other energy (main type)	cost of other energy (main type)

With these basic data the individual tourism service can monitor its progress in the reduction of the main environmental consumption and costs over the years.

For the calculation of benchmarks many more factors are included into the TourBench system, such as the existence of facilities like a restaurant or a pool, service level, territorial situation, climate and landscape, season, size of indoor and outdoor area, number of beds/pitches, and eco-certificates gained. The environmental sections allow to specify the energy and water sources, quantities and treatment, the types and treatment of recycled and unsorted waste, the various types of chemicals used for cleaning, washing and disinfection. The automatic calculation tool works with the most common currencies and measuring units in the European countries. As output the system can also show the CO₂ emission – and thus show the contribution to climate change.

The system can be used at any moment by individual businesses as well as by experts which have got the necessary information from their businesses, e.g. auditors of Eco-labels, environmental managers of hotel groups or professional energy consultants. New users prepare their basic data, create their account, log in the password protected section, fill in their data - and get their first individual TourBench report.



Return on Investment

Every year the managers of hotels and camping sites have to replace energy and water consuming equipment for cleaning and washing, heating and cooling, lighting and cooking. TourBench includes an online Return on Investment calculation tool for the calculation of saving potential of the various available heating systems, lighting bulbs or shower heads. Just click and calculate the period for your return on investment...

Rol calculations are available for:

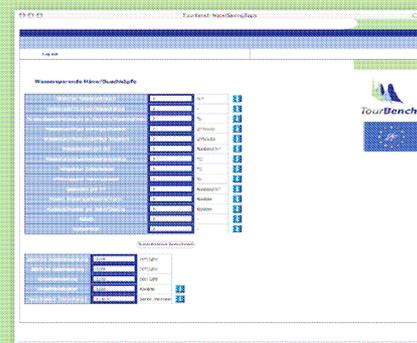
- Surface insulation
- Insulation of piping
- Boilers
- Solar panels
- Frequency modulator
- Presence sensor

- Thermostatic water taps
- Grey water system
- Ventilation
- Pool cover
- Water saving toilets
- Water metering pitches
- Electricity metering
- Ureum reductor
- Water saving taps/shower heads
- Time switches
- Energy saving light bulbs

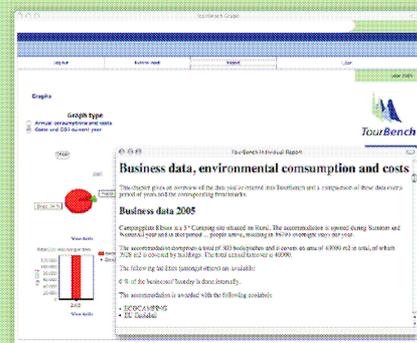
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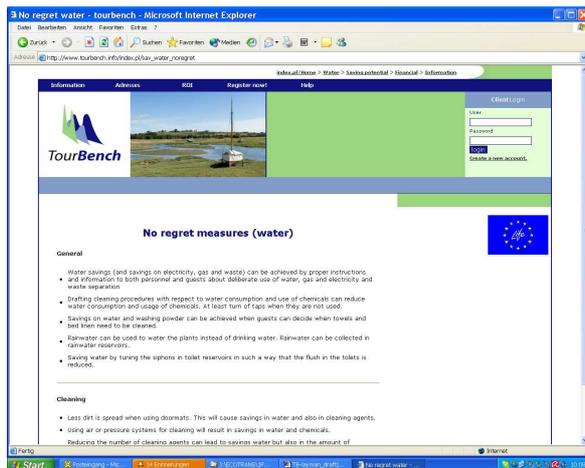
Step 3: get your results



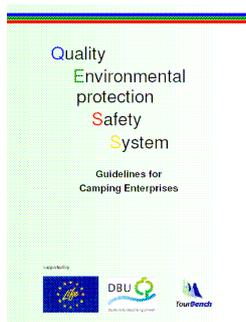
Public information and tips

Since 2004 key information for accommodation managers is publicly available on the TourBench website, with a special focus on:

- sustainable tourism aims
- environmental problems and solutions on use of energy, water, waste, and chemicals
- examples of good practice, web links
- environmental certificates in Europe



A special TourBench guidebook "Quality, Environmental protection, Safety System" was developed for camping site managers in Europe who want to get familiar with environmental issues and to prepare for working with TourBench. This report is available at www.tourbench.info.



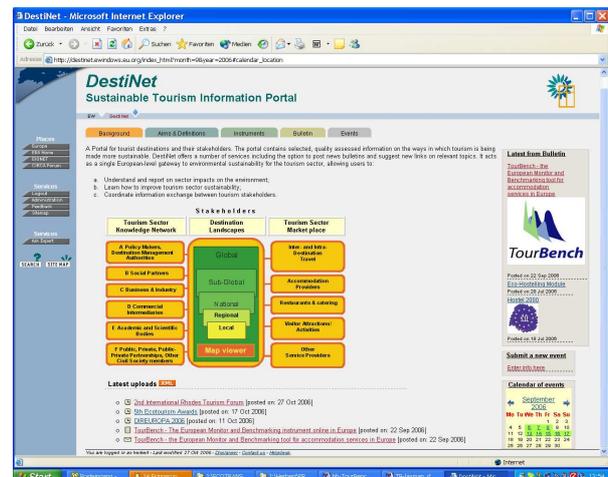
More information on DestiNet

Within the Tourbench research for public information it became very clear that thousands of professionals, governmental and non-governmental organisations work for sustainable tourism development in Europe and elsewhere. All together they know - and wish to know – a lot of practical answers to questions like:

- What aims and indicators are available to monitor sustainable tourism development there on local, national or international level ?
- which stakeholders are active for sustainable tourism development?

- what instruments are available for effective planning, training, implementation, management and marketing?
- which Sustainable Tourism certificates are available for which types of tourism services?
- which coming events will have a focus on special sustainability issues?
- which examples of good practices and initiatives contribute successfully to economic, environmental and social sustainability?
- where can we find all these stakeholders, tourism services and destinations?

The growing availability and diversity of information on the Internet made it necessary to rethink the concept of "every relevant information shall be available on TourBench". Therefore in close collaboration with the European Environment Agency the Tourbench project partner ECOTRANS developed the concept and structure for DestiNet as freely accessible portal with quality assessed Sustainable Tourism Information: since 2005 the DestiNet portal is online and is linked to Tourbench.



The coherent structure of DestiNet allows TourBench partners and any other interested stakeholders:

- to upload and link any relevant information from your own website to the portal, and
- to search and find such information as result lists and on the geographic map.

Within the TourBench project all relevant information from the ECO-TIP data base (TourBench partner ECOTRANS) was updated and transferred to Destinet. A special "Sustainable Tourism Market place" section will show a.o. 60 good practice accommodation businesses in Europe (see: Examples of good practice)

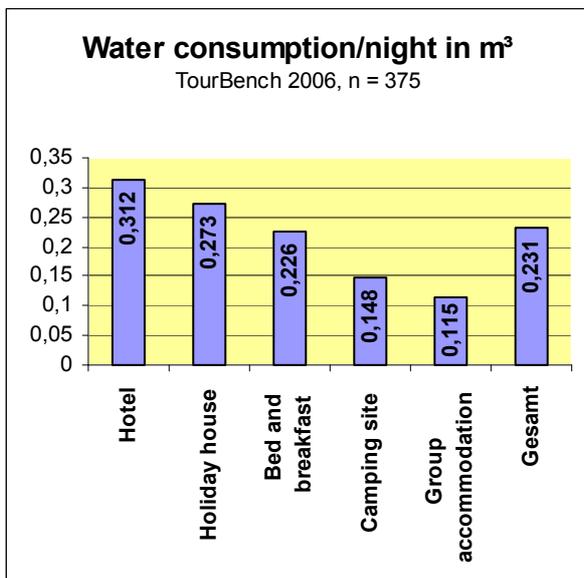
<http://destinet.ewindows.eu.org>

First European results

Until June 2006 about 600 data sets from 25 countries were entered into the password protected section of TourBench. For the calculation of International average consumption and cost per overnight stay, of the influence of specific services or of difference between countries about 400 complete data sets from 17 countries are available, above all from hotels and camping sites.

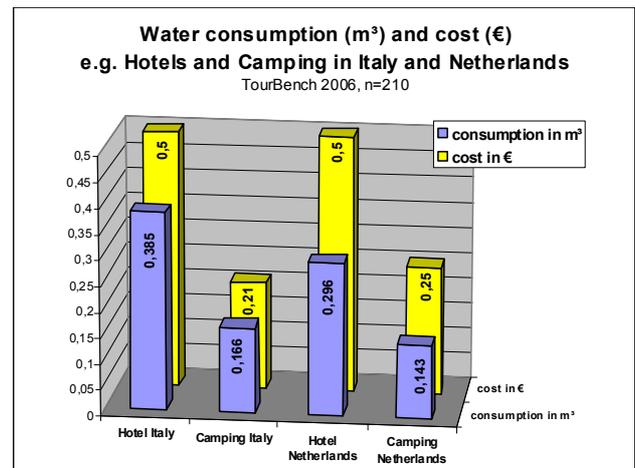
In order to assure high quality most of them were controlled and entered with the help of the TourBench partners. The data are from 1999 – 2006, mostly from the business year 2005. **With these data first ever in Europe e.g. the average water consumption and cost can be calculated.** With a growing number of participating businesses more and more differentiation will be possible.

Water consumption in European Tourist Accommodation services



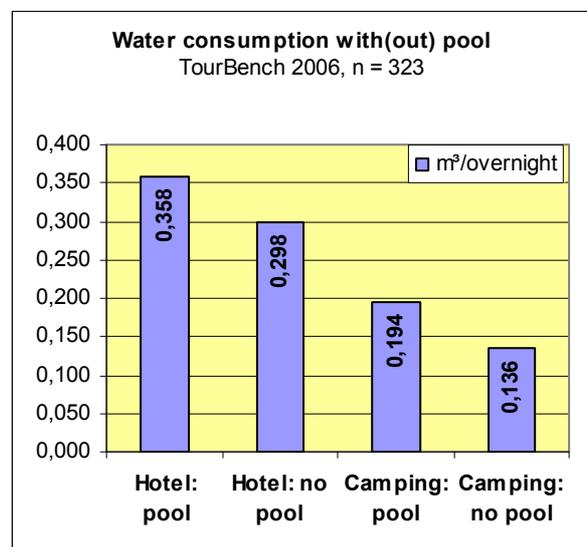
Hotels and holiday houses consume far more water per overnight stay than camping sites or group accommodation services. The differences between the five main types of accommodation services are about 50 liter from one to the next. As guidance for average consumption of water per overnight stay in European we can suggest:

- 300-350 l in hotels
- 250-300 l in holiday houses
- 200-250 l in bed & breakfast
- 150-200 l in camping sites
- 100-150 l in group accommodation services



The comparison of cost and consumption in hotels and camping sites in the Netherlands and Italy shows:

- the consumption in Italy at both hotels (385 l) and camping sites (166 l) is higher than in the Netherlands (296 l and 143 l)
- the water cost per overnight stay is in both countries nearly the same (0,5 € in hotels, 0,21 and 0,25 € in camping sites). The higher consumption in Italy obviously is compensated by slightly lower cost for water.



And: hotels and camping sites with swimming pool need ca. 60 l more water per overnight. This means for hotels ca. 20%, for camping sites ca. 40% more consumption and cost than in the businesses of their colleagues without pool.

Promotion and dissemination

In total more than 260 dissemination activities were realized by the partners and in collaboration with external organizations and experts. The target groups for dissemination were accommodation businesses and other tourism sector key players (professionals, tourism organisations, media). The newsletters, magazines, on-line services, and publications with TourBench information were disseminated altogether to more than 130.000 tourism professionals as recipients or readers.



During the project many presentations were given at tourism fairs (e.g. at WTM, ITB, BIT, and Reisepavillon), conferences (e.g. in Malmö, Estoril, Rio de Janeiro, Marianske Laske) and national events and workshops. In that period the promotion of the Tourbench online tool to accommodation businesses was mainly done at special workshops (e.g. Netherlands, Germany), at meetings with tourism associations representing accommodation businesses (e.g. EFCO, HOTREC, EUFED, ADAC Camping Forum) or groups of businesses – above all on national level by the partners in Italy, UK, Netherlands, Denmark, Latvia, Austria, Germany, and France.

Since autumn 2005 the TourBench tool has been promoted directly to accommodation businesses as potential users. The accommodation businesses received information in workshops, by direct letters via email, in promotion letters and flyers in 10 different languages. In addition a group of external experts and organisations contacted some thousands of accommodation businesses and recommended Tourbench by direct letters and promotion flyers.

Test the Tourbench online service for free and benefit now!

www.tourbench.info



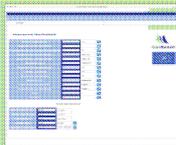
TourBench is the new monitoring and benchmarking tool on the Internet for tourist accommodation services in Europe with special focus on energy, water, waste and chemicals

www.tourbench.info

Step 1: login



Step 2: fill in



Step 3: get your results



10 good reasons

TourBench

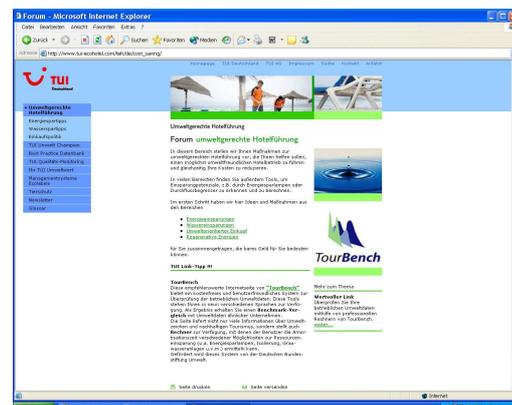
1. Available in a choice of nine languages
2. Keeps you up to date with European eco-certification services
3. Free access to a personal environmental benchmarking system
4. Records your environmental consumption
5. Tracks your environmental performance
6. Print and Save option for environmental measurement reports
7. Calculates potential savings when installing energy and water technologies
8. A valuable and powerful environmental measuring tool
9. Helps you comply with the monitoring requirements of certification and awarding schemes.
10. An easy way to manage utility bills

TourBench: less = more

TourBench was developed with the support of the European Union LIFE program & the Deutsche Bundesstiftung Umwelt.




About 8.000 businesses and professionals participated at the meetings and presentations on regional, national and international events.



References to the TourBench website are not only made by the project partners but also by external experts and supporting organisations such as e.g. the TUI Group, the Federation of Tour Operators (FTO) or EUFED.

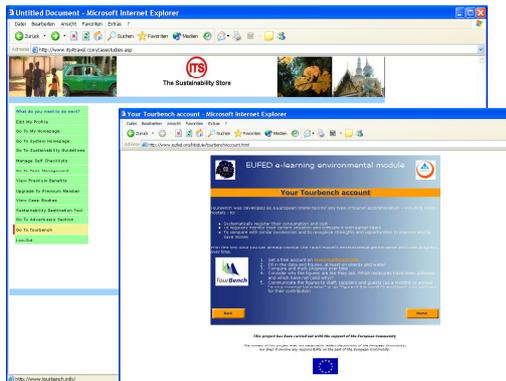
Searching on 'TourBench' with Google currently gives around 12.000 hits, not only on the partners websites, but also on other websites such as www.world-tourism.org, <http://ipu.umweltpsychologie.de/>, www.saf.is and many others.

Outlook: TourBench “light” and “professional”

TourBench is aimed at those people who really want to monitor and benchmark their environmental consumption and costs. The feedback from businesses to the TourBench partners shows a certain interest but not a immediate willingness to use the system. The reasons are:

- many micro and small scaled tourism services are not (yet) familiar enough with the Internet or they do not trust very much this “virtual world”;
- they do not know their figures or expect too much work to find them;
- they have no time at the moment and want to test TourBench later “when there is time”;
- some want to have a more simple system;
- some work already with their own national system for monitoring.

In consequence for the majority of potential individual users a “TourBench light” version shall be further developed and promoted.



For highly motivated individual users and above all for organisations with special interest the current “TourBench Professional” version with its detailed data structure shall be maintained and upgraded to help:

- Sustainable Tourism certificates which request from their businesses to monitor their environmental consumption;
- Tour operators and groups of “green” hotels which want to continuously improve their environmental performance;
- national and international campaigns and initiatives to reduce e.g. energy consumption and CO₂ production;
- associations of accommodation businesses committed to environmental sustainability, e.g. the European Youth Hostel Federation;
- destinations with a sustainable development strategy, e.g. Eifel Region or protected areas;

- consultancies for accommodation businesses who want to calculate and recommend benchmarks for their clients.

These and other groups are invited to integrate Tourbench into their work, to use the system and to receive annual reports about the consumption and cost of their participating businesses.

TourBench as part of a one-stop shopping tool kit for tourism services in Europe

In order to avoid confusion at and to offer comprehensive service to accommodation businesses in Europe, Tourbench shall be part of a “one stop shopping tool kit” together with complementary initiatives. A common portal website shall be made for those:

- who manage a hotel, camping site or another tourism service in Europe;
- who like to reduce their cost and to raise their competitiveness;
- who want to contribute to sustainable development in their destinations.

This portal shall promote:

- **TourBench** to monitor environmental consumption and cost, to calculate return on Investment and to benchmark with other businesses ► www.tourbench.info
- **SUTOUR** to manage environmental measures and to prepare for EMAS certification. ► <http://sutour.ier.uni-stuttgart.de>
- **Train to Eco-label** to learn how to realise the criteria for the EU Flower and for national certificates. ► www.traintoecolabel.org
- the **Travelife Sustainability Store** to manage the many diverse sustainability needs and to promote good practice to tour operators globally. ► www.its4travel.com

