

## **CASE STUDIES OF WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT IN SRI LANKAN HOTEL INDUSTRY**

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Current representation of hotels is a leading and still expanding pillar of the tourism industry all over the world. Through the expansion of the hotel sector, it becomes one of the prominent resource users. Compared to other industries, its intake of water as a scarce resource dominates significantly. Its main water uses are in guestrooms, laundry operations, landscaping, and kitchens. Inefficiencies in water management systems and operational routines followed in most hotels cause considerable impact both environmentally and financially for the well-being of the hotel sector. Therefore, it creates an urge towards a more sustainable scheme of water conservation and management in hotel sector.

As a consequence, the circumstances encouraged to investigate the current water management practice in Sri Lankan hotel industry. Having that aim, the research was headed with a qualitative research approach followed by three case studies. Three leading hotels operating in Sri Lanka were selected. The selection was based on its locality: urban and countryside. Semi-structured interviews along with an interview guideline were used as the technique for data collection and authorized officials for the water management from each case were interviewed in order to collect data. Then, the gathered data was subjected to a content analysis based on the findings of which conclusions were drawn.

The study concludes that water resource management varies in urban hotels compared to countryside hotels. The findings revealed that the main water sources of hotels depend on location, climate and managerial perspectives relating to water. In general, country side hotels use their own water supply method like tube wells, surface wells while urban hotels rely on municipal water supply. Comparing water conservation routines and using alternative water sources, it was revealed that countryside hotels had better practices compared with urban hotels. Also countryside hotels confront water scarcity during dry seasons and therefore, they concern more on water conservation and alternative water sources. However, in urban hotels they get continuous municipal water supply and the less attention is paid on water saving practices and alternative water sources. In addition, wastewater treatment processes of hotels were examined. It was identified that countryside hotels use their own waste water treatment plants while urban hotels discharge their waste water directly to street sewer lines. Thereof, countryside hotels get the benefit of treated wastewater. On the basis of the findings, the study advocates the provision of rules and regulations on water resource management in hotel industry by an authorized body will make the existing water conservation and management mechanisms more efficient.