

## PRESS RELEASE

March 2018

### SIX SIMPLE STEPS FOR HOTELS TO EMBED WATER STEWARDSHIP THIS WORLD WATER DAY

On World Water Day a report from the International Tourism Partnership (ITP) reveals the six simple steps the hotel sector must take in order to protect this vital resource and become responsible stewards of water for future generations.

With less than a month to go before authorities are forced to switch off the water supply in Cape Town, South Africa, water crises around the world are thrown into sharp relief. Forty per cent of the world's population suffers water shortages for at least one month each year.

Countries forecast with the highest water stress in the coming years are also amongst those with the greatest tourism growth, putting hotel companies at the forefront of current and future water challenges, including water scarcity, pollution, access to clean water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH), extreme weather events and governance.

Whilst water is a global concern, water resources can only be managed at a local level, making corporate water management very complex for multinational hotel companies. ITP's guidance aims to bridge the gap between local water issues and company-wide water policies by recommending six steps essential to any corporate water stewardship strategy.

The guidance is backed up by new research from ITP sponsored by [Ecolab](#) with [Greenview's](#) expertise due to be released later this year, which reveals the huge disconnect in the hotel industry between current water cost and water risk valuation. The research shows that not only are most of the top hotel growth markets located in destinations with high water stress and an undervalued cost of water (e.g. China and Southeast Asia), but also the most water-intensive hotel regions in the world have the highest risk of water cost increase. The index uses actual data from key hotel markets for stakeholders including hotel owners and developers, as well as destination managers, to contemplate the full risk of aggregate hotel development to their own bottom line.

Announcing [ITP's Water Stewardship Report](#), Nicolas Perin, ITP's Programme Manager said, "Without water hotels simply cannot operate, therefore it is in the companies' own interests to embed water stewardship throughout their portfolio and for their future development. Water stewardship in hotels addresses the physical, health, regulative, reputational and financial risks hotel companies will increasingly face. Our latest guidance and research insights provide hotel companies with evidence-based information on how much water risk may impact and cost their properties in future years with an unprecedented level of detail in the industry.

"Last year we launched the four ITP Goals for 2030, supported by our member hotel groups and aligned with the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals, which included our Goal on water. Our role now is to support members on their journey to achieving these Goals, and this report represents our understanding of the global water risk, hotels' role as global

operators and high consumers, and the steps they must take to become responsible water stewards and good neighbours.

“We’re making the report public on World Water Day as our charitable remit invites us to share this knowledge, understanding and these best practice examples with the wider industry to help us all achieve more in support of the Global Goal on water than we can working alone.”

A hotel can consume up to 1,500 litres daily per occupied room, and in some countries guests use ten times or more water than is typical for local people, therefore hotels have a particular responsibility to improve their performance on water and embed practices which seek to reduce their water footprint. [ITP’s Goal on Water](#) supported by members states we encourage hotels to embed water stewardship programmes to reduce the number of people affected by water scarcity; also improve water-use efficiency and identify ways to address water scarcity.

The six steps for hotels to action an effective water strategy are:

1. **Understand your relationship with water**, including quantifying your current and future water use, identifying its sources, impact and dependencies and sharing that information through reporting and engagement with local stakeholders. ITP provides [research, tools and benchmarking](#) to help hotel companies through this step.
2. **Set targets and create a plan of action**. Prioritise areas where the best impact can be made and define long-term targets based in science and local contexts. Set indicators for progress with trackable metrics and transparent performance indicators that each property can report against.
3. **Manage water sustainably in your operations**. Identify water efficiencies at property level, ensure adequate wastewater treatment, reduce your pressure on freshwater resources by recycling water and involve your staff and guests to support your water stewardship measures.
4. **Work with suppliers on water**. Analyse products and services of highest spending and engage with suppliers regarding their water stewardship to better identify and address your indirect impacts on water in basins where they are operating.
5. **Build resilience to extreme events and water shortages**. A water stewardship strategy should include procedures and provisions to provide immediate relief effort, address recovery needs and help mitigate against future occurrences of extreme weather events. Properties should focus on improving their resilience to floods, manage their freshwater supply and protect local communities when disaster strikes.
6. **Collaborate on sustainable water management**. Any hotel can impact on the quality of water and on other water users. Hotels need to understand the local water risks and opportunities, engage with existing water initiatives, share information with the public sector and other water users, and support access to clean water, health and sanitation.

ITP invites the wider industry to:

- Use its [latest water stewardship report](#) to help design approaches to water stewardship in hotel companies
- [Use its Hotel Water Measurement Initiative \(HWMI\)](#) to measure and report water use in hotels along with 12,000 properties worldwide already using the methodology
- [Join ITP as a member](#) to access the full range of our research, guidance and knowledge sharing with the world’s leading companies
- Share your water use data through the [Cornell Hotel Sustainability Benchmarking \(CHSB\)](#) to improve public knowledge on water use in the sector and get a bespoke report for your property.

Ends

---

## NOTES TO EDITORS

For media enquiries to ITP, please contact

Siobhan O'Neill  
ITP Communications Manager  
D: +44 (0)20 7566 6664  
M: +44 (0)7824 426585  
E: siobhan.oneill@bitc.org.uk

## GOALS AT A GLANCE

- **YOUTH EMPLOYMENT:** Collectively impact one million young people through employability programmes by 2030, thereby doubling the industry's current impact on youth unemployment.
- **CARBON:** Embrace science-based targets, and encourage the wider industry to join in reducing emissions at scale.
- **WATER:** Embed water stewardship programmes to reduce the number of people affected by water scarcity; also improve water-use efficiency and identify ways to address water scarcity.
- **HUMAN RIGHTS:** Raise awareness of human rights risks, embed human rights into corporate governance, and address risks arising in the labour supply chain and during hotel construction.

[Visit our digital page for full details of the Goals](#)

## WATER

Demand for freshwater is likely to outstrip supply by 40% by 2030 and a third of the world's population will be living in areas of severe water stress by this time. In many countries, water consumption per guest in hotels greatly exceeds that of the local population, so the industry has a responsibility to encourage responsible use and consumption.

To improve water stewardship across the industry, ITP members commit to embedding water stewardship programmes across their hotel portfolios as a means of reducing the number of people affected by water scarcity. Members also support improved water-use efficiency, sustainable withdrawals and supply of freshwater to address water scarcity.

Members encourage the uptake of the Hotel Water Measurement Initiative (HWMI), a common methodology for measuring and reporting on the water footprint of a hotel stay or meeting.

## ABOUT THE INTERNATIONAL TOURISM PARTNERSHIP

The International Tourism Partnership drives responsible business in the hospitality industry by engaging with the world's leading hotel companies, which collectively manage more than 30,000 hotels. ITP's members are Accor, Radisson Hotel Group, Deutsche Hospitality, Diamond Resorts International, Four Seasons Hotels and Resorts, Hilton, Hyatt, InterContinental Hotels Group, Marriott International, NH Hotel Group, Soneva, Taj Hotels, Resorts and Palaces, Whitbread and Wyndham Worldwide

ITP turns responsible ambition and good ideas into positive action. We do this by sharing best practice, offering practical products and programmes and facilitating collaboration in one of the world's largest and most successful industries.

For our members we provide a non-competitive platform for leaders to share ideas, build relationships and work together on making the industry more responsible. For hoteliers around the world, however big and small, we provide access to valuable information and resources at no cost, allowing them to drive their own responsible business agendas. Most of this information is freely available on [www.greenhotelier.org](http://www.greenhotelier.org).

ITP is an initiative of [Business in the Community](#). BITC is the Prince's Responsible Business Network, a business-led membership organisation made up of progressive businesses of all sizes who understand that the prosperity of business and society are mutually dependent. Through participation in BITC's campaigns and programmes, businesses can collaborate and help to bring about lasting change on a wider scale which benefits both business and society.

For more information on ITP and our programmes visit <http://tourismpartnership.org/>