

## What is Benchmarking?

Benchmarking is a means by which an operation can assess and improve its environmental, social and economic performance quantitatively by comparing their performance to that of other operators, industry standards and/or best practice.

### *How Does Benchmarking Work?*

In order to benchmark an operation, indicators must be selected for comparison. Three common indicators are:

1. Energy consumption
2. Water consumption
3. Waste Sent to Landfill

Indicators are then benchmarked using an Activity Measure, which is a measure that reflects the key activity of an operation. For example, for Accommodation, the Activity Measure may be 'Guest Nights'. Energy Consumption, Water Consumption, and Waste Sent to Landfill are therefore benchmarked 'per Guest Night'.

### *What is a Benchmark?*

Benchmarking can be completed against 'baseline' and 'best practice' figures.

**Baseline** is an above average standard of performance for the type and location of an operation. It is derived from national reference data and case study research.

**Best Practice** is an exemplary standard of performance for the type and location of an operation. This level is deemed achievable by operations and in most cases, is 30% better than the Baseline level.

## The Benefits of Benchmarking

Benchmarking results will provide an operator with numerous benefits. These include:

- **Context.** Benchmarking provides context for an operation's results and allows them to know how they are placed against similar operations;
- **Areas of Success.** Benchmarking will identify areas in which an operation exceeds the industry norm. Success against benchmarks can be used in 'green' marketing;
- **Areas for Improvement.** Benchmarking will identify areas in which an operation can improve performance. This allows areas to know where they should focus their efforts;
- **Targets.** The Benchmarks provide measures against which targets can be set;
- **Industry Trends.** Through benchmarking, operators can develop an understanding of industry trends and best practices within their industry; and,
- **Competitive Analysis.** Perform competitive analysis without the time and resources needed to conduct an internally staffed and managed effort.

**There are numerous environmental benchmarking programs available to Queensland tourism operators. Refer to the Benchmarking and Certification Program factsheet for more information.**