

RESEARCH SNAPSHOT



Drivers for sustainability practices in NZ's wine industry

What is the issue?

While global wine consumption is growing, environmental sustainability in the wine industry is also receiving increasing attention from retailers, governments, environmental groups, and consumers. New Zealand has experienced a winery boom over the past two decades with a 173 percent increase in the number of wineries. Along with this growth, wineries are also facing issues such as water consumption, its impact on community, and waste management yet little is known about what drives the wine industry to engage in sustainable practices.

What did the researcher do?

Researchers used a mixed method research process to determine what influences and drives sustainability practices, and to monitor environmentally sustainable practices in the New Zealand wine industry. First, informal interviews were conducted with 15 wineries in seven of the 10 wine regions. Then quantitative online surveys (10% response rate) were distributed. The study took place from December 2010 to October 2011.

Why is this research Useful?

First, revealing a relationship between sustainability practice drivers and environmental performance will better help understand the greening process. Second is that governments and industry associations can utilize the effective drivers for the environmental practices by promoting environmental regulation and facilitating additional greening processes at the industry level.

What were the outcomes?

Findings outlined that respondents feel there is insufficient support for wastewater and supply chain management from wineries. Although some practices in regards to water, solid waste, and risk management were commonly adopted, not all of the practices provided as exemplarity were supported by the majority of the wineries. Key drivers for sustainability practices included strategic (competitive advantage, differentiation, marketing benefits &public image). Internal drivers include (managerial attitudes, safety of employees, company culture &concerns about environmental impacts and the state of the environment). Finally external drivers were (customers' demand, pressures from investors communities, and the public, competitors & compliance with regulations).

About the Researcher

Rachel Dodds is an Associate Professor at the Ted Rogers School of Management and her work focuses on sustainable tourism, CSR, islands and tourism policy.

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