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## GREENWASHING AND REPUTATIONAL RISKS IN THE HOTEL INDUSTRY

*To determine the development strategy, economic entities should take into account global trends in society and business. Therefore, the focus on sustainable development, environmental protection and adherence to the principles of environmental responsibility are relevant issues for creating and strengthening reputational capital nowadays. Behavioral patterns of consumers and stakeholders demonstrate an advantage in relations with hotels that implement a transparent policy of green entrepreneurship, support environmental and social initiatives. Visualization of false environmental declarations can lead to loss of loyalty, a decrease in the reputation of the hotel business entity, as well as a loss of trust in environmental initiatives in general. However, the lack of transparent criteria for assessing environmental friendliness and the spread of greenwashing significantly complicate the identification of such hotels. The main hypothesis is that the use of greenwashing is a short-term strategy that provides temporary consumer loyalty, but in the long term leads to a loss of customer trust, a deterioration in the reputation of the hotel brand and a decrease in its competitiveness. The research is based on the use of theoretical methods (analysis, synthesis, systematization, historical-*

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## ГРІНВОШИНГ ТА РЕПУТАЦІЙНІ РИЗИКИ В ГОТЕЛЬНОЇ ІНДУСТРІЇ

*Для формування стратегії розвитку економічні суб'єкти мають враховувати світові тенденції у суспільстві та бізнесі. Тому фокус на сталому розвитку, збереженні довкілля та дотриманні принципів екологічної відповідальності сьогодні є актуальним питанням створення та зміцнення репутаційного капіталу.*

*Поведінкові патерни споживачів та стейкхолдерів демонструють перевагу у відносинах з готелями, що здійснюють прозору політику зеленого підприємництва, підтримують екологічні та соціальні ініціативи. Візуалізація хибних екологічних декларацій може призвести до втрати лояльності, зниження репутації суб'єкта готельного бізнесу, а також втрати довіри до екологічних ініціатив загалом. Проте відсутність прозорих критеріїв оцінювання екологічності та поширення грінвошингу значно ускладнюють ідентифікацію таких готелів. Висунуто гіпотезу, що використання грінвошингу є короткостроковою стратегією, яка забезпечує тимчасову лояльність споживачів, але у довгостроковій перспективі призводить до втрати довіри клієнтів, погіршення репутації готельного бренду та зниження його конкурентоспроможності. У дослідженні на використано теоретичні методи (аналізу,*



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logical, content analysis), empirical research (surveys, case studies), as well as modeling and benchmarking.

The concept of greenwashing, its main types and mechanisms of use in the marketing strategies of hotel business entities are considered. The impact of false environmental claims on the formation of customer trust, competitiveness and long-term reputation of hotels is studied. Practical recommendations are proposed for identifying and combating the use of greenwashing through environmental audits, the introduction of transparent environmental standards and increasing business responsibility. The results of this research form practical recommendations for hotel management on how to avoid greenwashing and move towards real environmental initiatives.

*Keywords:* green business, anti-crisis strategy, reputation management, innovation, environmental awareness.

синтезу, систематизації, історико-логічного, контент-аналізу), емпіричні (опитування, кейс-стаді), а також моделювання й бенчмаркінгу. Розглянуто поняття грінвошингу, його основні види та механізми застосування в маркетингових стратегіях суб'єктів готельного бізнесу. Досліджено вплив неправдивих екологічних заяв на формування довіри клієнтів, конкурентоспроможність і довгострокову репутацію готелів. Запропоновано практичні рекомендації щодо виявлення та боротьби з використанням грінвошингу через екологічний аудит, впровадження прозорих екологічних стандартів і підвищення відповідальності бізнесу. Сформовано практичні рекомендації для менеджменту готелів, як уникнути грінвошингу та перейти до реальних екологічних ініціатив.

*Ключові слова:* зелений бізнес, анти-кризова стратегія, управління репутацією, репутаційні маніпуляції, інновації, екологічна свідомість.

**JEL Classification:** M14, M31, L83, Q56.

## **Introduction**

Environmental pollution leads to sea level rise, freshwater pollution, the appearance of "garbage islands" in the world's oceans, extreme weather events, loss of biodiversity, etc. As a result, nature's recreational opportunities are decreasing, which negatively affects the health of society. For our own research, it is necessary to implement strict compliance control over the behavior of the population and business entities regarding their impact on the natural environment, as well as restore its ability to self-recover and reproduce.

Hotels are a significant consumer of resources, including water and energy, and generate a large amount of waste (food, plastic, and textile). Unethical practices can hide the real impact on the environment. Therefore, an effective solution to ensuring the environmental friendliness of business is to identify cases of greenwashing and implement state and public control to prevent territorial environmental disasters. Therefore, the development of a mechanism to counter greenwashing is an urgent task in the fight against misleading environmental marketing by business entities.

The concept of greenwashing is attracting increasing attention from society and government authorities, as businesses sometimes try to present themselves as environmentally responsible without backing up their statements with real actions. Sometimes they resort to greenwashing due to negligence or misunderstanding of the essence of environmental products and principles of behavior (Villhauer, 2023). Accordingly, greenwashing provokes conflicts between declared initiatives and actual behavior, and management must be responsible for the information that is made public.

Accusations of greenwashing are not only a reputational failure, but often also the basis for inspections by regulatory authorities and legal proceedings (Pears et al., 2023).

In this context, the attention of scientists and businesses to greenwashing has been justified in recent years. The term "greenwashing" was introduced by the American ecologist Jay Westerveld in 1986 (Samal & Bhalala, 2023), but there are historical examples from previous years that can be characterized as "greenwashing". In particular, the US tobacco industry in the 1950s funded studies that questioned the link between cigarettes and cancer; the forestry industry in the 1980s, under the slogan "sustainable logging" engaged in illegal deforestation (Mysirli & Axarli, 2021).

Regarding scientific research, greenwashing has covered not only environmental, but also financial aspects, communication management and regulatory regulation. The study of the essence of greenwashing is devoted to the work of Miller (2017), Voller (2022), Villhauer (2023), who analyzed the concept of greenwashing from the perspective of business ethical behavior regarding the growth of environmental problems. The essential characteristics of greenwashing were in the scientific focus of such Ukrainian researchers as Smirnova (2017), Ivashura and Borisenko (2019), Nahirna (2021) and others. Greenwashing in advertising as a polyphonic means for manufacturers to create an ecological image of them and sell their products is considered by Vargas (2019), analyzing, at the same time, the types of communications and ways of argumentation. Ecobranding as an important tool of modern marketing was investigated in the scientific study of Bondarenko and Syazin (2024).

The consequences of greenwashing, in particular misleading consumers and undermining public trust in green business a priori, are studied by scientists Kassinis et al. (2022); Teichmann et al. (2023); Yang et al. (2020); Zych et al. (2021).

Some studies are so valuable because of having proposals how to combat greenwashing, the results of which should be implemented in business practices and environmental legislation of Ukraine. The arguments for the use of coercive measures by market regulators were studied by Peng et al. (2024). They proved that "despite the support of stakeholders and evidence of increased transparency after sanctions, regulatory interventions against "green laundering" have limitations and unintended consequences". The methodology for assessing greenwashing practices is supplemented by the study by Lagasio (2023), which combines natural language processing (NLP) methods, innovative ESG Focus Scores and the Greenwashing Severity Index (GSI) to assess companies' environmental, social and governance (ESG) commitments. Practical aspects of applying the concept of sustainable business through the integration of environmental, social and governance (ESG) issues are considered in the analytical report by Benjakul and

Santhiwasana (2022). The authors developed a mechanism for protecting "green" investors from misuse by ensuring clarity and transparency of information and its publication in accordance with the EU Taxonomy Regulation.

The use of the scientific analytic results by Ross (2024), who examined the directions of greening hotels, is applicable to the study of greenwashing as a tool of reputational manipulation in the hotel business. Scientists Alyahia et al. (2024), Chen et al. (2019) studied the moderating role of environmental authenticity (GA) and green transparency (GTR) in the relationship between greenwashing and guests' green trust (GT), which ultimately affects patronage intentions (PI) towards green hotels. The subject of the study by Srivastava et al. (2024) was the correlation analysis of the effects of greenwashing and attentiveness to the intentions of a green hotel by empirically testing negative and self-reflexive aspects of guests' behavior when choosing hotels.

Thus, according to the results of the scientific source analysis, the issue of greenwashing is constantly being updated with the emergence of new environmental challenges, changes in consumer behavior and new eco-initiatives of business that require verification of greenwashing. In addition, in the context of environmental pollution of the territories of Ukraine as a result of military actions, it is important to rethink the concept of "green" business and the integrity of hotels regarding environmental claims. The essence, forms and examples of greenwashing require comprehensive research, in particular for the positioning of Ukrainian eco-hotels in the global market of tourist services in the military and post-war period, which forms the scientific and practical value of the research.

The aim of this research is to determine the essence of greenwashing, the forms of its manifestation in the practice of the hotel business, as well as to develop an anti-greenwashing mechanism in the reputation risk management system. In this case, the key tasks are to determine the essence and directions of environmental activities of business entities; systematize the forms of greenwashing based on the analysis of practical insights; identification of environmental challenges faced by companies when implementing environmental solutions; as well as the formation of recommendations for businesses regarding anti-greenwashing policies in the context of digital communications.

The hypothesis is put forward that greenwashing is a powerful tool for reputation manipulation, which allows hotel business entities to maintain short-term advantages, but can be the cause of long-term risks of reputation loss. To confirm it, the methodology of processing information sources and empirical research results using analytical tools and scientific research methods was used.

The information base of the research is scientific and professional sources on "green" business and greenwashing, hotel business, online hotel platforms.

In the process of processing the material, general scientific methods were used, in particular, comparative analysis to determine the definition of "greenwashing"; historical-logical, to determine the trends and forms of greenwashing; content analysis, to process hotel marketing materials, compare them with the relevant regulatory requirements and synthesize theoretical assumptions and findings. The method of empirical research (surveys, case studies) was used to determine the tone and content of communications regarding green business by hospitality entities. The method of modeling and benchmarking was used to interpret the main directions of forming an anti-greenwashing strategy, based on best practices.

The scientific novelty lies in the development of the concepts of "green business" and "greenwashing", the systematization of forms of greenwashing, as well as the modeling of the anti-greenwashing strategy of business entities, which will ensure increased trust in hotel brands operating in Ukraine.

The limitations of the research were the lack of detailed data on environmental practices in hotels, while public statements on the official pages of hotels (hotel operators) were used. In the future, we plan to consider the areas of regulatory influence on declarations on green entrepreneurship. This will allow us to create additional tools for reputational compliance control in the system of anti-crisis management of business entities.

The content structure of the main part of the article has three sections: the first defines greenwashing and reveals its essential characteristics; the second is the processing of information on the "green" positioning of hotels; the third considers ways to avoid greenwashing in the hotel sector and sustainable development scenarios aimed at solving the problem of greenwashing.

## **1. Theoretical foundations of greenwashing in the context of marketing**

The increased attention of society to ecology and sustainable development has led to trends in the implementation of "green" initiatives by business entities. Therefore, the analysis of manifestations of their conscious environmental behavior and greenwashing (false statements) from the point of view of communications with environmentally sensitive consumers and stakeholders is an important step in overcoming manipulation. In order to understand the phenomenon of greenwashing in more detail, it is worth determining the interpretations of the definition. Since there is no unified interpretation of greenwashing to date, the analysis of definitions common in the academic and professional field will allow us to summarize the main features and characteristics, which will contribute to its adequate use (*Table 1*).

*Table 1*

**Comparative analysis of greenwashing**

Source	Definition Characteristics	Context of use	Key elements
Vargas, 2015	Communication "regarding marketing that presents unrealistic or minimal environmental arguments, knowing that the company often spends more money on advertising and communication for this purpose than on actions effective for the climate and the environment	Marketing, advertising	Marketing communication presenting unrealistic or minimal environmental arguments
Vargas, 2019	A way to gain power and/or reduce possible opposition from stakeholders	Social aspects	A way to gain power and/or reduce potential opposition
Wu et al., 2020	A firm's emphasis on observable aspects of social responsibility and neglect of unobservable aspects	Social aspects, corporate governance	Emphasis on social responsibility
Pylypenko, 2019	A process by which manufacturers claim that their products are organic and environmentally friendly without proper justification	Consumer market	Misleading claims about organic and ecological purity of products
Ling & Aziz, 2021	It occurs when companies use buzzwords such as "green", "eco-friendly" to create a false impression of environmental responsibility		False impression of environmental responsibility
Nahirna, 2021	The process of highlighting the environmentally positive characteristics of a product without correspondingly confirming or masking the environmentally negative characteristics of the product in order to increase profits, reduce costs, or create a positive image for the company		A claim about the environmental friendliness of a product without appropriate confirmation or masking of environmentally negative features
Andreoli et al., 2022	A form of corporate deception that uses environmental claims to mislead consumers about an organization's environmental practices or the environmental benefits of its products and services		A form of corporate fraud that uses environmental claims
Pears et al., 2023	Distortion, misrepresentation, and false or misleading practices regarding environmental, social, and management credentials; claiming or creating the impression that activities, products, and services are more environmentally friendly or sustainable than they actually are	Social aspects, consumer market	Distorted, distorted, or misleading information about the environmental performance of products or activities
Alyahia et al., 2024	Inflating a hotel's environmental image and selectively publicizing positive environmental information and/or concealing information about the hotel's negative environmental impact or associating it with other factors	Marketing, advertising	Inflated environmental image, selective disclosure, withholding information
<i>Oxford Learner's Dictionaries</i> , 2025	A company or organization's actions that aim to make people think that it cares about the environment, even though its actual business is actually harmful to the environment		Misleading environmental claims, competitive advantages
<i>European Commission</i> , n. d.	Unsubstantiated or misleading environmental claims made by companies about their products or services	Regulatory policy	Unsubstantiated claims

*End of Table 1*

Source	Definition Characteristics	Context of use	Key elements
<i>EBA (European Banking Authority), 2023</i>	A practice where statements, declarations, actions or communications relating to sustainability do not clearly and fairly reflect the underlying sustainability profile of an organization, financial product or financial service	Regulatory policy	Unclear and dishonest representation of the sustainability profile

*Source:* compiled by the authors.

Regarding the approaches considered in the table, greenwashing is a manipulative practice of deliberately using unfounded, misleading or false claims about the environmental benefits of a product, service or company’s activities in order to obtain a certain economic benefit and form a positive reputation among consumers and stakeholders.

The authors also have numerous aspects of the application of greenwashing in modern business practice (Szabo & Webster, 2021; Torelli et al., 2020; Vollero, 2022). In particular, the key motive for the use of greenwashing by companies is to improve their reputation in society, drawing attention to their complicity in the global trend of sustainable development. After all, social pressure, and in some countries also regulatory (state and public authorities), is the reason that encourages business to meet the growing demand for products and services that meet environmental and social standards.

Another reason is increased sales, as the created profile encourages environmentally conscious consumers to purchase products or services that are perceived as "green", thereby increasing the company’s revenues. An economic motivation may be cost reduction, as the implementation of environmentally friendly methods can reduce the company’s overall production and operating costs, in particular through an environmental tax or certain financial penalties for environmental pollution.

Another argument for the use of greenwashing is to gain a competitive advantage, as companies seek to stand out among competitors as leaders in the field of sustainable development, thus attracting more conscious and interested customers and attracting "green" investments.

Thus, greenwashing encompasses the communication processes of business entities with consumers, partners, investors and the public and provides for a number of marketing goals that they seek to achieve through the use of deceptive practices regarding environmental sustainability: influencing public opinion; increasing the trust of consumers and investors; diverting attention from environmentally harmful practices and avoiding public and regulatory environmental responsibility; increasing the value of the company by increasing reputational capital.

The concept of greenwashing is interdisciplinary in nature, as it touches on a number of important areas of activity of a hotel business entity (*Figure 1*).



Figure 1. Interdisciplinary connections of the greenwashing concept in the hotel business

Source: compiled by the authors.

In the context of marketing theory, to recognize greenwashing, it is advisable to integrate the "7P" concept, which has components of conscious influence on consumer choice (Figure 2).

<p><b>Product:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- "environmental" characteristics of the product;</li> <li>- "environmentally friendly" building materials, furniture, equipment;</li> <li>- "eco-friendly" containers, packaging, tableware, etc.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Price:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- higher prices for environmentally friendly products;</li> <li>- discounts for using own packaging, reusing raw materials, etc.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Place:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- use of green areas for advertising or product promotion (parks, squares, water bodies);</li> <li>- sales through specialised eco-stores or online platforms</li> </ul>	<p><b>Promotion:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- use of green colours, natural motifs, words like "eco", "bio", "natural", etc;</li> <li>- active participation in environmental movements, cooperation with influencers</li> </ul>
<p><b>People:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- "environmentally conscious" employees;</li> <li>- one-off environmental programmes for employees and customers;</li> <li>- manipulation of customer perception (ideal customer, creation of communities)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Process:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- implementation of environmental processes (waste sorting, water or energy saving, etc.);</li> <li>- cleaning with environmentally friendly products, etc.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Physical evidence:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- certificates, logos, product packaging used to support green claims</li> </ul>	

Figure 2. The "7P" model adapted to greenwashing

Source: systematised by the authors according to (Booms & Bitner, 1981; Ottman, 2017).



As we can see from *Figure 2*, the "7P" model allows us to identify greenwashing as a marketing tool that covers all aspects of business from products to communications, helping to identify discrepancies between the entity's statements about environmental friendliness and reality.

In addition, greenwashing is based on evoking emotions in consumers, in particular responsibility for the environment and "ecological" choices. Therefore, companies often use emotional marketing and neuromarketing tools, appealing to the desire for environmental behavior and desires for conscious consumption. For this, they use eco-labels, certificates or partnerships with environmental organizations as physical evidence to build trust among consumers.

## 2. Empirical evidence of greenwashing in the hotel business

A key aspect in identifying greenwashing is the application of the principles of "green" entrepreneurship. Hotel business entities, whose mission is to create living conditions using the recreational opportunities of the location and their own environmental proposals, are especially interested in the integration of green practices, partner environmental initiatives of local territorial communities. This contributes to improving the ecological quality of the environment, forms comfortable natural conditions for hotel customers. Therefore, the implementation of green entrepreneurship in business strategy will become an imperative in the near future.

To better understand the possibilities of "green" positioning in the strategic prospects of hotels, *Figure 3* shows its key aspects.

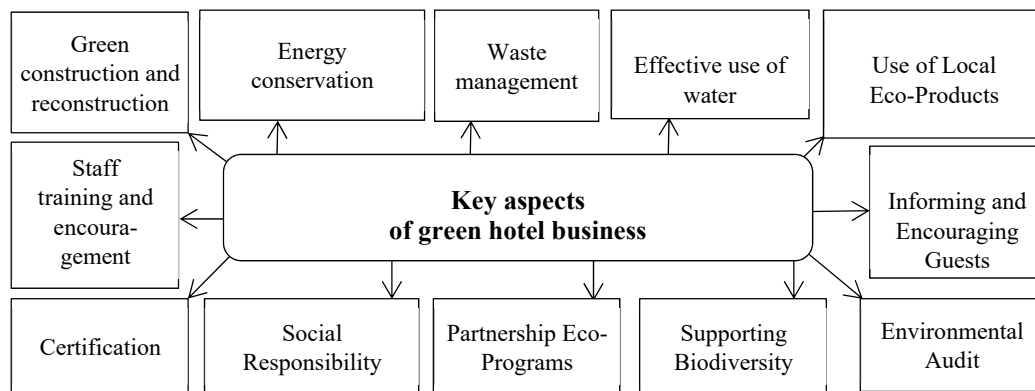


Figure 3. Key aspects of the green hotel business concept

Source: compiled by the authors according to (Tercan et al., 2021; Acampora et al., 2022; Hahn, 2022; Bouarar et al., 2024; DMG, 2024; Zeng et al., 2024).

Some of the aspects indicated in *Figure 3* should be studied deeply. Thus, at the stages of construction and renovation work in a hotel, it is important to take into account the aspects of ecological construction and the use of ecological building materials, as well as energy-efficient equipment: solar panels, thermal insulation, rainwater collection and disposal systems (Pushka & Tikhonova, 2017).

An important environmental goal is waste management, which primarily involves sorting and recycling waste, reducing the use of disposable items, plastic and polyethylene containers, composting organic waste, etc. (Tercan et al., 2021; Businesswaste, n. d.).

The most common practices in the hotel business are the economical use of water, which is achieved by installing economical plumbing fixtures, saving on washing bed linen, reusing water for watering plants, etc. (DMG, 2024).

Environmental goals also include the use of ecological products produced by local farmers and producers, etc. (Tercan et al., 2021; Acampora et al., 2022).

In addition, some hotels that have joined eco-initiatives position the concept of green business in their mission and undergo certification, confirming their environmental friendliness (for example, LEED, Green Globe) and inform guests about this, encouraging them to behave environmentally responsible.

An important component of environmentally conscious business is social responsibility, which involves maintaining a balance between the economic growth of the business entity, social well-being and environmental sustainability. That is, this means that the hotel brand takes responsibility and returns benefits to its community, society, and environment through various initiatives (Hahn, 2022).

The above areas can be used by hotel business entities for greenwashing (*Figure 4*).

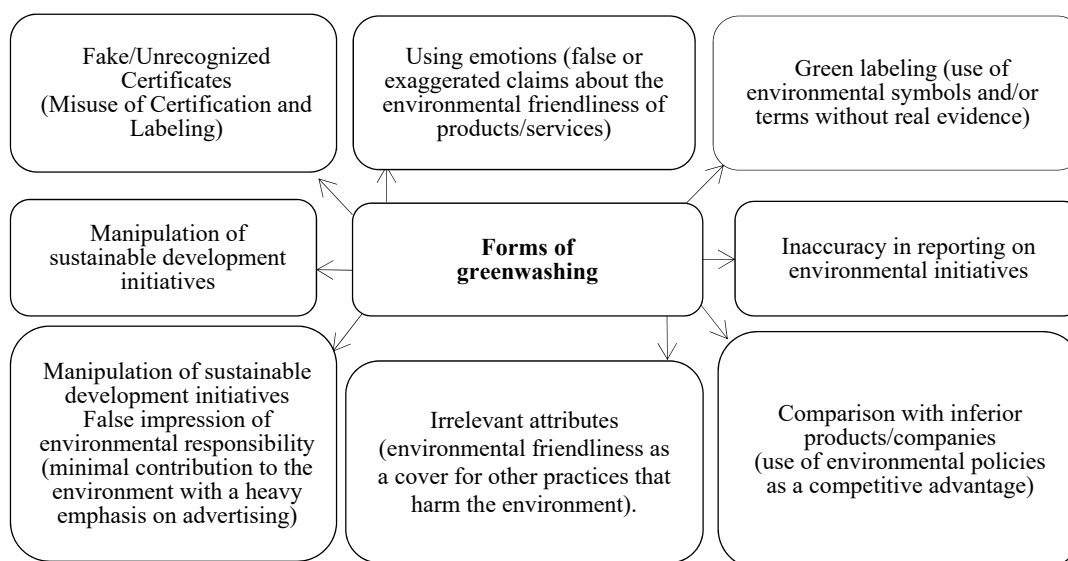


Figure 4. Forms of greenwashing in the hotel business

Source: compiled by the authors according to (Delmas & Burbano, 2011; Chen et al., 2019; Alyahia et al., 2024; Srivastava et al., 2024; Bondarenko & Syazin, 2024).

As we can see, the forms of greenwashing are quite diverse, which gives grounds to study the environmental claims of hotels in detail and detect manipulations.

Disclosure of the fact of greenwashing creates significant risks of losing consumer trust and harms the reputation of the company. At the same time, legal sanctions, such as fines and prosecution for deceptive actions, pose a serious threat. In addition, problems arise with attracting and retaining qualified employees, as they may refuse to work in a hotel with a deteriorated reputation (Vollero, 2022).

Therefore, it is important to monitor the activities of hotels for environmentally conscious consumers in order to support such establishments in sustainable development. Let us examine examples of well-known hotel brands operating in the Ukrainian market and actively declaring "green" practices. Let us take into account the public information of the most popular hotel brands (*Table 2*).

Table 2

Case analysis of greenwashing by hotel brands in Ukraine

Hotel Brand	Green claim	Real measures	Greenwashing Forms	Environmental certificates	Environmental programs
Fairmont	"...Three key initiatives: green design and construction; supporting biodiversity; integrating green procurement...to reduce our carbon footprint, energy consumption and waste generation"	An automated energy management system has been implemented. Energy saving and recycling programs have been implemented, but the scale is not always transparent	Exceeding achievements in scale	EarthCheck Gold	Accor's Planet 21 programme
Hyatt Hotels Corporation	Climate change and water conservation, carbon emissions, energy and water; waste and circularity; responsible sourcing; thriving destinations	Environmental goals are described and detailed, there is a guide to conducting events, but there is limited reporting on current achievements	Statements about participation in local community programs, water and energy savings	Nature Certified (for certain hotels only)	Science Based Target (SBTi)
Radisson Blu Hotel	"...Carbon Neutral Stay for all guests"	Statements about participation in local community programs, water and energy savings	Incomplete reporting on the impact program	Green Key Global LEED (in Odessa)	Hotel Sustainability Basics
Marriott International	"Sustainability is a key value, we support emission reduction goals by 2030"	Long-term plans developed, but limited reporting on current achievements	Manipulation of long-term goals without concrete results	LEED	Serve 360; Science Based Target (SBTi)
Optima (Reikartz) Hotel & Resorts	Reducing waste and emissions into nature	Abandoning plastic bottles of mini cosmetics, slippers, plastic bags	Manipulation through the lack of concrete results	Green Key Global	–

Source: compiled from company websites (Google, Travel, n. d.; Fairmont, n. d., Hotel Initiatives, Sustainable Hotels: Fairmont Promise; Hyatt, n. d.; Radisson Hotels, n. d.; Marriott, n. d.; Optima Hotels & Resorts, n.d.; Green Key, n. d.).

As we can see, the manifestations of greenwashing are insignificant and do not intend to mislead consumers and stakeholders. The main drawback of all the mentioned hotel brands is the lack of confirmation of specific results.

It should be noted that in countries with strict environmental legislation, greenwashing practices allow some business entities to obtain regulatory advantages. Such hotels seek to avoid stricter laws and regulations related to environmental protection in order to preserve their operational freedom and reduce the costs of environmental compliance control.

Although there are no specific court cases on greenwashing in Ukraine or the world, market distributors have made attempts to detect greenwashing. Thus, in 2021, Booking.com launched the Travel Sustainable program, which assigned ratings from 1 to 3+ to hotels (Booking.com, 2021, November 15), but due to imperfect rating and false statements, it was stopped. A well-known sanction was the ban on advertising with the slogan "Fly more environmentally" by Air France in the UK in 2023 (Cloos, 2024, April 15). However, with the adoption of Directive 2024/825 on greenwashing (EU, 2024), Ukrainian business entities, including hotels, should pay more attention to environmental claims and reporting.

Thus, a general trend is emerging in Ukraine and the world to protect the rights of consumers of services and investors, which increases attention to greenwashing. Thus, hotels should be careful in their marketing strategies to avoid legal consequences and maintain customer trust.

### **3. Practical insights of anti-greenwashing in the hotel business**

The correlations of the impact of global trends in sustainable development and the environmental crisis due to the escalation of military operations in Ukraine create extraordinary conditions for hotel business entities, where simple solutions often do not work. On the one hand, hotels are forced to save on costs in order to have a development perspective, on the other hand, they must not ignore the issue of social and environmental responsibility, which, as the above-mentioned statements show, is an outpost of protecting business from public and regulatory sanctions and reputational losses.

Despite the military risks, the Ukrainian hotel services market is open to international tourists, which is why the principles of ecological entrepreneurship should be implemented today. The ecological agendas laid down in the pre-war period and the strategies of "green" entrepreneurship developed for the future create competitive advantages and demonstrate the readiness of hotel business entities for customer-oriented management and the perception of international principles of doing business. However, it is important to adequately develop and implement "green" initiatives in the operational processes and marketing policy of the hotel. Therefore, the formation and integration of an anti-greenwashing strategy into the company's overall development strategy is an effective management decision, taking

into account local and international environmental legislation and consumer sensitivity to environmental practices.

Given the considered essence and forms of greenwashing, we propose to interpret the anti-greenwashing strategy as a comprehensive approach to business management, aimed at building trust in the hotel brand by implementing clear and transparent, ethically sound and environmentally responsible practices in all aspects of the hotel’s activities, which is a consistent process (Figure 5).

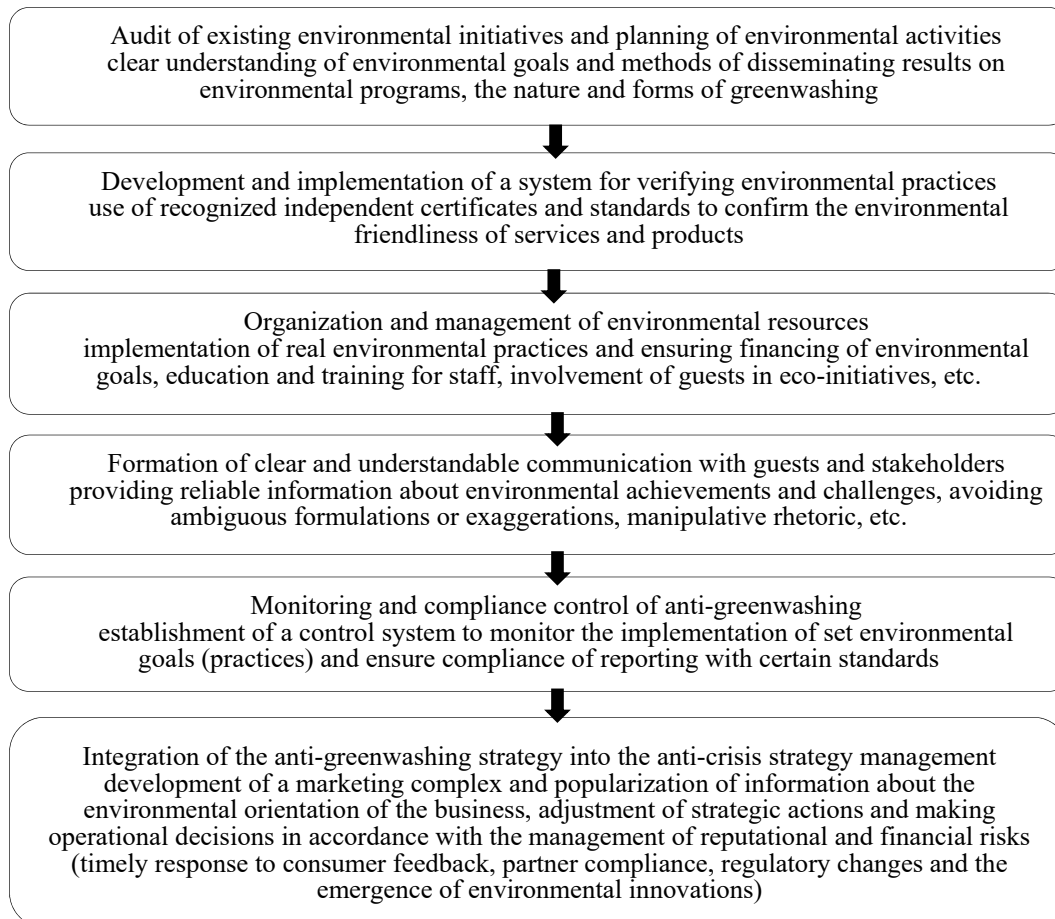


Figure 5. Formation of the anti-greenwashing strategy of the hotel business entity

Source: compiled by the authors according to (Bouarar et al., 2024; Bovsh et al., 2024; Zeng et al., 2024; Mazaraki et al., 2022; Bondarenko & Syazin, 2024).

As we can see, the implementation of the anti-greenwashing strategy goes through the stages of constant monitoring of environmental innovations, standardization and certification of environmental friendliness of products or processes, control over statements and reporting on environmental practices, marketing communications and local regulatory policy. Thus, anti-greenwashing allows not only minimizing the risk of reputational losses, but also to increase the competitiveness of the hotel, attract conscious customers, attract investments and promote its sustainable development.

The effectiveness and feasibility of implementing environmental initiatives is confirmed by the results of empirical research, which was conducted using the Google Form tool. From June to November 2024, a survey form was posted in the online environment in focus groups on social networks, Telegram channels and personal e-mail mailing lists to hotel business operators.

A survey of 243 respondent companies showed that 21% are familiar with environmental practices, of which 14% apply them in practice (*Figure 6*).

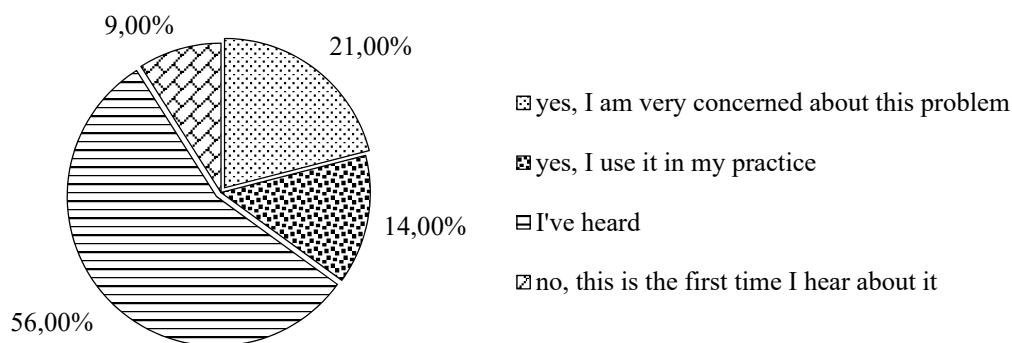


Figure 6. Interpretation of answers to the question "Are you familiar with the concept of green business?"

Source: compiled by the authors based on the results of the survey on (Environmental practices of business entities in Ukraine, n. d.).

Respondent companies that implement green practices note a positive impact on their operations in many aspects (*Figure 7*).

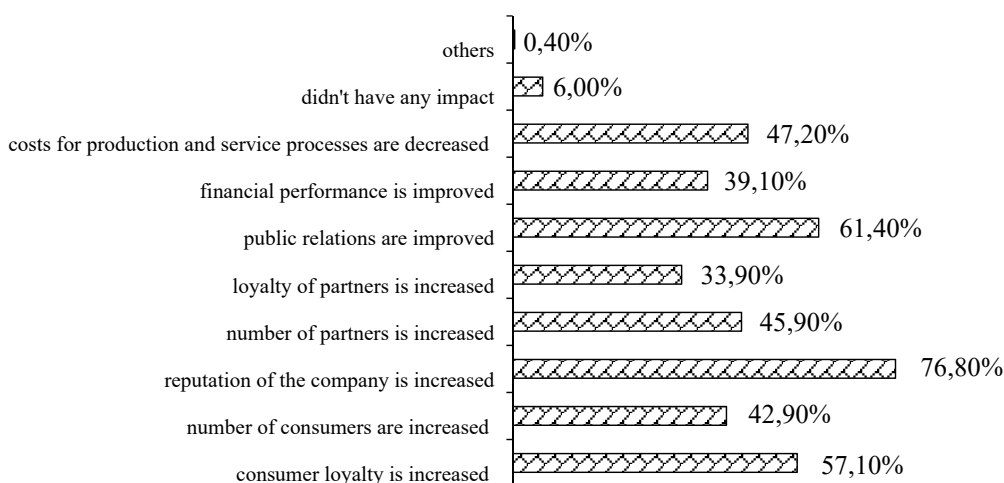


Figure 7. Interpretation of answers to the question "What was the positive effect of implementing environmental practices in the company's activities?"

Source: compiled by the authors based on the results of a survey on (Environmental practices of business entities in Ukraine, n. d.).

Thus, respondents mostly confirm the positive impact on the reputation of companies, relations with customers, partners and the public. In addition, more than a third of respondents recognized the positive impact on financial indicators. In the "Other" category, emphasis is placed on the possibility of obtaining grants or tax breaks for companies that adhere to environmental standards, which can be an additional incentive. In addition, there is a fairly high interest in environmental initiatives among customers (*Figure 8*), which confirms the importance of implementing environmental approaches in business.

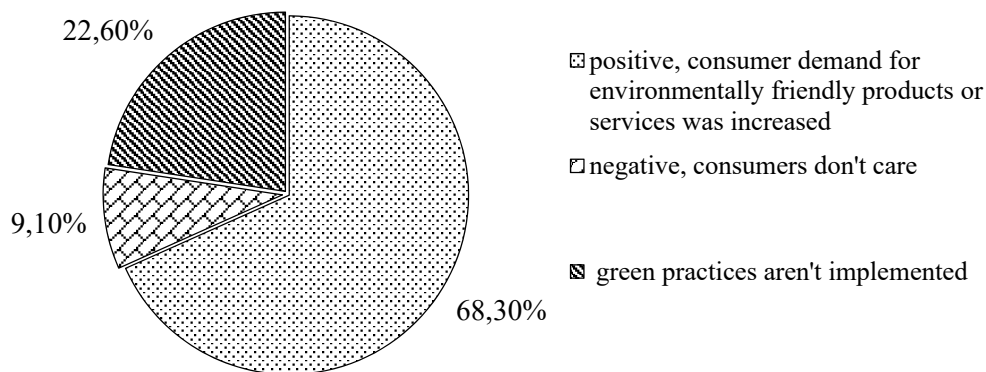


Figure 8. Interpretation of answers to the question "How has the implementation of green practices affected interaction with customers?"

Source: compiled by the authors based on the results of a survey on (Environmental practices of business entities in Ukraine, n. d.).

Environmental responsibility was also noted as an important aspect in partnership interaction (*Figure 9*).

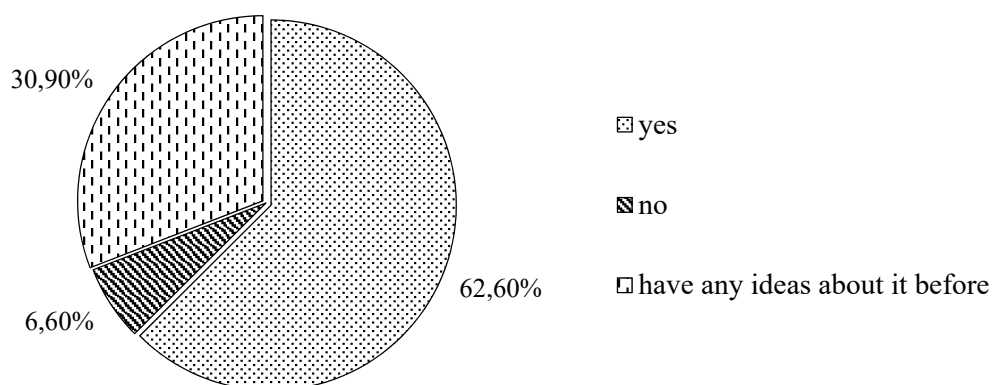


Figure 9. Interpretation of answers to the question "Is it important for you that a partner be environmentally conscious and support environmental initiatives?"

Source: compiled by the authors based on the results of a survey on (Environmental practices of business entities in Ukraine, n. d.).

Considering the environmental crisis as a consequence of the war, which Ukrainian business has faced (blackouts, air pollution, soil, water sources, mining of territories, etc.), it is extremely difficult to implement environmental solutions. Therefore, it is advisable to assess which environmental initiatives are being implemented (*Figure 10*), and which ones are being determined by Ukrainian hotel business entities for the future (*Figure 11*).

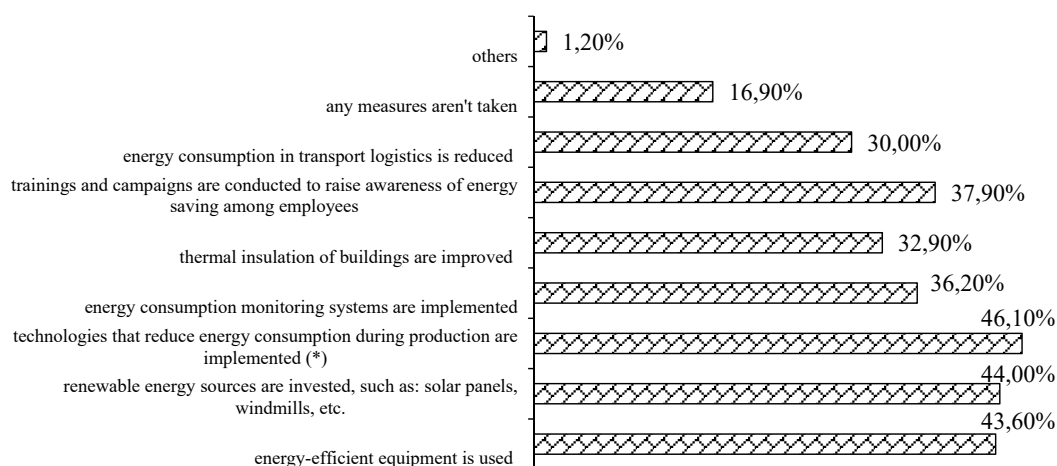


Figure 10. Directions of integration of green initiatives by hotel business entities

Note: \* – automation, use of more efficient cooling and heating methods, etc.

Source: compiled by the authors based on the results of a survey on (Environmental practices of business entities in Ukraine, n. d.).

As we can see from Figure 10, the Ukrainian hotel business is adapting to difficult conditions and implementing energy-efficient technologies and solutions, and only a small proportion of entities do not take any action.

Regarding the priority of green entrepreneurship development, it should be noted positive thinking regarding its integration into practice.

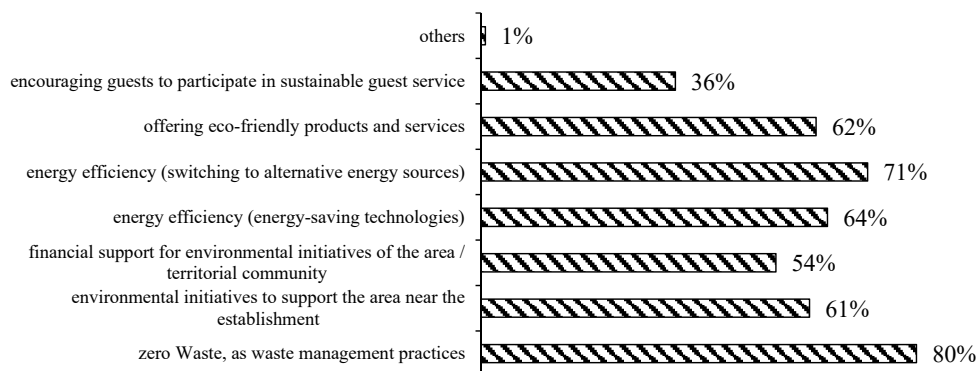


Figure 11. Promising directions of integration of environmental initiatives by business entities

Source: compiled by the authors based on the results of a survey on (Environmental practices of business entities in Ukraine, n. d.).



In particular, the priority areas are waste management, energy saving and the use of alternative energy sources. In the answers "other", respondents identified the importance of issues of social responsibility, training employees and clients in environmental practices.

Thus, the relevance of "green" entrepreneurship among hotel business entities is growing.

In addition, when modeling an anti-greenwashing strategy, it is worth considering the challenges of the environment and the influence of regulators on the behavior of business entities – whether compliance with environmental norms and standards is strictly controlled, or is there a loyal attitude to manipulation of the consciousness of consumers and stakeholders without any sanctions.

Initiatives of state bodies in managing green sustainable practices in business, noted by participants in the hotel services market, are shown in *Figure 12*.

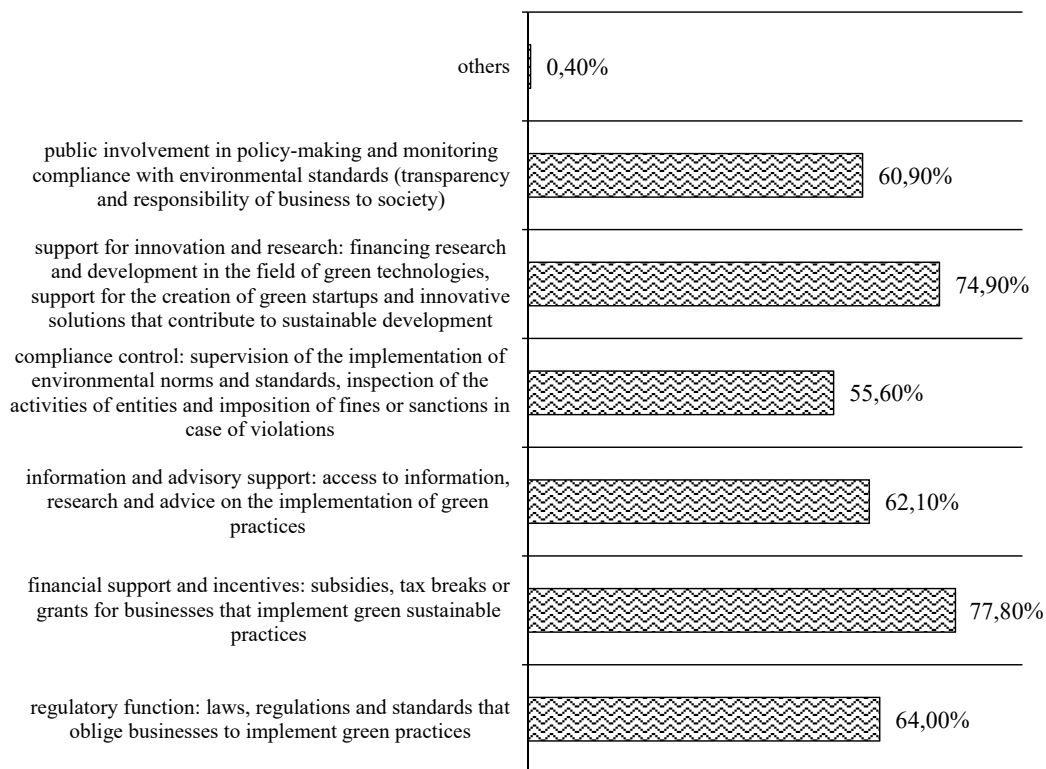


Figure 12. Teleological participation of state bodies in the management of green sustainable practices in business

Source: compiled by the authors based on the results of a survey on (Environmental practices of business entities in Ukraine, n. d.).

As we can see, respondents see a comprehensive participation of the state in supporting and developing "green" practices. In addition, the answer "other" indicates that state institutions can conduct educational programs for business and the public to raise awareness of the importance of

environmental practices and sustainable development. In our opinion, this is a valuable addition that requires an expanded study of the utilitarian approach to state management of environmental practices in business and society. Taking into account the processed data on assessing the prospects for the development of "green" entrepreneurship in the Ukrainian hotel business and the provisions of the anti-greenwashing strategy, we will consider scenario models for the implementation of design thinking depending on two key factors: changing customer environmental requirements (stable or variable), the level of innovation and implementation of green innovations (low or high), and the impact of state regulation (strict or loyal) (*Table 3*).

*Table 3*

Scenario model of implementing an anti-greenwashing strategy in the activities of hotel business entities

Key factors/scenarios	Optimistic Scenario ("Leaders of Change")	Realistic scenario ("Balanced development")	Pessimistic scenario ("Minimal progress")
Changing customer environmental requirements	Variable: customers actively support environmental initiatives by choosing hotels that demonstrate sustainability	Stable: customers are mostly interested in sustainable services, but make decisions based on price and comfort	Stable: weak interest in environmental services; customers' main focus is on price and basic hotel stay conditions
Level of innovation and adoption of green innovations	High: advanced energy-efficient technologies, carbon footprint monitoring systems, sustainable design and owner certification are implemented	Medium: limited introduction of innovations, including waste sorting, energy saving or environmentally friendly materials in selected processes	Low: minimal or no investment in innovation, activities limited to basic environmental initiatives to avoid sanctions
The impact of government regulation on environmental activities	Harsh: strict regulations and fines for non-compliance with environmental norms and standards, which forces businesses to actively develop and implement anti-greenwashing strategies	Loyal: regulation is more declarative, with gradual tightening of requirements and stimulation of voluntary implementation of environmental norms	Loyal: regulation is minimal, sanctions are absent, allowing businesses to ignore environmental obligations

*Source:* compiled by the authors.

Thus, the optimistic scenario is focused on the manifestation of initiatives by the hotel business entity to actively implement innovations (green transformations), which is subject to the variable influence of environmentally conscious customers and strict state regulation (existing or expected in the near future). If customer needs are changing rapidly, and the hotel has the opportunity to actively invest in environmental technologies and innovations, creating a unique customer experience, then resources are directed to the creation of new environmental services that exceed customer expectations, and the implementation of solutions based on sustainable development. They create "green rooms" using only environmentally

friendly materials and interactive systems for guests to measure their impact on the environment; implement innovative loyalty programs that encourage guests to behave environmentally responsible, and also develop their own environmental standards to attract partners and investors focused on sustainability. Ambassadors of this concept are the hotel brands Hyatt Corporation (projects for environmental, educational or social support of the location in which the hotel is located) and Sandos Hotels (environmental programs for recycling, careful water consumption and energy saving, hotel landscaping and "green" guest rooms that fully comply with environmental standards and allow reducing the use of carbon dioxide by 70%) (Rubryka, 2024).

In turn, the realistic scenario focuses on the hotel's environmental responsibility, as guest demand is based on the ratio of price and comfort. Such scenarios are practiced by the Marriott International network, which has a "Serve 360" program with an emphasis on environmental friendliness and sustainable development, as well as the Accor network, which launched the "Planet 21" program after increasing demand for environmentally conscious practices, focusing on reducing emissions and environmentally responsible consumption of resources.

Having the need to take into account the stable needs/requests of environmentally conscious guests and low motivation to introduce innovations, hotels can implement a pessimistic scenario that involves reactive greening only after the emergence of these needs or government sanctions. In this case, management resources are accumulated for the rapid implementation of environmental initiatives. Therefore, it is important to constantly monitor customer feedback to quickly adjust environmental policies to support the hotel's competitiveness. Such scenarios are practiced by national Ukrainian brands Optima (Reikartz), Premier Hotels and Resorts (Rubryka, 2024).

Thus, the scenarios proposed for review demonstrate the possibilities of hotels to adapt their anti-crisis strategies to environmental requirements and customer expectations.

### **Conclusions**

In the scientific and practical business environment, along with the discovered, described and/or identified new concepts, theories or phenomena, their accompanying, often hidden or negatively highlighted, anti-prototypes appear. Such concepts include "greenwashing" as a manipulative practice of consciously using unfounded, misleading or false statements about the environmental benefits of a product, service or company's activities in order to obtain a certain economic benefit and form a positive reputation among consumers and stakeholders.

Specific manifestations of greenwashing in the hotel business include speculation on socially relevant and sensitive topics of business environmental sustainability, dissemination and promotion of deliberately false environmental statements, provoking conflicts between declared eco-initiatives and the actual

behavior of business entities, misleading the expectations of environmentally sensitive consumers and stakeholders, selective publication of positive environmental information and/or concealment of information about the hotel's negative impact on the environment, etc.

The hypothesis that greenwashing is a powerful tool for reputation manipulation, allowing hotel business entities to retain short-term benefits, for example, in the form of increased sales, since the created profile encourages environmentally sensitive consumers to purchase products or services, but can be the cause of long-term risks of reputation loss, in particular due to the negative image formed, was partially confirmed during the analysis of scientific and media sources, practical insights into the environmental practices of hotel business entities.

Greenwashing not only characterizes the activities/inaction of companies in implementing "green business" and intentions to follow global trends of sustainable development, but also has an interdisciplinary nature, as it touches on a number of important managerial, legal, and ethical areas of activity of a hotel business entity. The "7P" model proposed by the authors allows us to identify greenwashing as an emotional marketing tool that covers all aspects of business from products to communications, appealing to the desire for environmental behavior and desires for conscious consumption, helping to identify discrepancies between the subject's statements about environmental friendliness and reality.

The implementation of environmental entrepreneurship in the company's business strategy is a key aspect in identifying greenwashing, as it manifests its influence in the concept of "green" hotel business through environmentally friendly construction of facilities and energy-efficient infrastructure, the philosophy of waste management and the economical use of natural/recreational resources, eco-farming and the formation of environmental awareness among consumers and personnel, etc. It has been proven that the concept of greenwashing makes it possible to study in detail the environmental claims of companies and detect manipulations through the establishment and investigation of various forms of greenwashing, in particular, the demonstration of fake/unrecognized certificates, the use of green labeling symbols without real confirmation, unreliable reporting on the implementation of practices that harm the environment, misleading consumers through a false impression of environmental responsibility, etc.

As the case study of greenwashing by hotel brands in Ukraine showed, the main drawback of implementing "green" practices is the lack of evidence of specific results, which emphasizes the complexity of identifying greenwashing and emphasizes the need to form and integrate an anti-greenwashing strategy as a comprehensive approach to business management, aimed at building trust in the hotel brand by implementing clear and transparent, ethically sound and environmentally responsible practices in all aspects of the hotel's activities.

The effectiveness and feasibility of implementing environmental initiatives is confirmed by the results of empirical research on the attitudes,

intentions and results of implementing environmental practices among respondent companies. In addition, a sufficiently high interest in environmental initiatives among customers has been established, which confirms the formed favorable environment for implementing environmental approaches in business.

The authors considered scenario models for implementing an anti-greenwashing strategy in the activities of hotel business entities, depending on the adaptation of companies' anti-crisis strategies to environmental requirements and customer expectations, the level of implementation of green innovations, and the influence of government regulation.

It has been proven that full control over the manifestation of greenwashing is impossible without state management of environmental practices in business and society, clearly formulated state policy and legislation, as well as the adoption of communication and reporting standards to owners, staff, consumers and the public, so that environmental claims have arguments and confirmation. However, we see this as a future trend in the Ukrainian hotel services market and set the aim to analyze the deontic values of environmental sustainability of hotel business entities, as well as the regulatory framework of state and local authorities in managing environmental practices and sustainable development in future scientific research.

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