

ABSTRACT

Water is a finite resource and inefficient use thereof can exacerbate scarcity. “Green building” provides one approach to functional building design and operation, to increase efficiencies. The Green Star Office rating tool helps gauge countries’ commitment to water conservation in the built environment. This research employed a literature review and comparative assessment of projects in Australia, New Zealand and South Africa. Respondents to a purposefully sampled survey provided additional feedback on the tool, gaps in its approach and points for consideration during tool redevelopment. It was found that Green Star (GS) is changing the building sector landscape, by, *inter alia*, facilitating reduced potable water use and providing an effective mechanism for water conservation. However, as a voluntary system, GS has limited replicability. A key research recommendation is to use performance data from certified buildings to inform the development of South African specific water efficiency guidelines and mandatory standards to guide the ongoing evolution of GS.