

Possible or Not?: ESG Certification for Hotels and Resorts



Source: Pexels (2024)

Background

In a collaborative effort between the Malaysian Association of Hotels (MAH), inspection and certification company SGS Malaysia, and environmental sustainability consultancy SAIMATRIX INTEGRATED, the Malaysian hospitality industry took a significant step towards sustainable tourism with the launch of ESG Certification for hotels and resorts (TTG, 2024). Approved and endorsed by the Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture (MOTAC), the ESG certification aims to provide clear guidelines and a comprehensive, holistic, and measurable checklist for hotels and resorts in Malaysia, as well as serving as a benchmark to drive the industry towards the nation's 2030 vision for sustainable tourism (TTG, 2024).

To obtain ESG certification, hotels and resorts must follow a structured pathway that begins with Basic ESG Training from SAIMATRIX INTEGRATED, which introduces the certification requirements and essential ESG principles (SGS, 2024). After training, SGS conducts a pre-assessment and gap analysis to evaluate the establishment's current practices and areas for improvement. Based on these findings, hotels and resorts develop and implement action plans under the guidance of SAIMATRIX INTEGRATED to address identified gaps. Following the necessary improvements, a rigorous certification audit is conducted by SGS to evaluate compliance with the ESG framework. Upon successful completion of the audit process, hotels and resorts are awarded ESG certification, which must be renewed annually (SGS, 2024).

Challenges

While the ESG certification initiative is poised to drive the development of sustainable tourism in Malaysia, it faces several significant challenges. The general lack of sustainability awareness is cited as the biggest obstacle to introducing ESG strategies nationwide (Elite Asia, n.d.). Many hotels lack dedicated teams or personnel with the expertise to guide the implementation of ESG practices. Even when representatives attend pre-assessment training, effectively

disseminating knowledge throughout the organization can be difficult, which may hinder the implementation of necessary changes. There is also no guarantee of consistent compliance from hotels between annual renewal inspections, as some establishments may revert to less sustainable practices after certification without ongoing monitoring.

The certification process itself is complex and time-consuming, requiring extensive training and multiple visits to each hotel. Relying on a single auditing firm and consultancy to certify all participating hotels nationwide raises concerns about feasibility and capacity. Furthermore, current industry practice often requires only large companies to disclose and be rated on their ESG efforts, while small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs)—which make up a significant portion of the Malaysian market—are typically excluded (BoardRoom, 2023). Many SMEs lack experience in compiling sustainability reports, and there is no existing benchmark for evaluating smaller businesses, which further complicates the auditing and certification process.

Implementing ESG practices also requires substantial investment, and small local businesses are often less capable than larger firms in terms of finance and human resources (Adenan et al., 2024). Without government incentives or adequate support, SMEs may be marginalized, as certified hotels attract more eco-conscious travelers and non-certified businesses are left at a competitive disadvantage. Since the certification is endorsed by the ministry, hotels that do not participate may find themselves at a significant disadvantage in the market. This could inadvertently undermine the goal of fostering a more sustainable hospitality industry if smaller businesses are excluded from the benefits of certification.

Discussion Questions

1. What are the main objectives of the ESG certification for hotels and resorts in Malaysia?
2. What roles do MAH, SGS Malaysia, and SAIMATRIX INTEGRATED play in the certification process?
3. What measures can be taken to ensure that the ESG certification process remains fair and accessible to all hotels, regardless of size or financial capability?
4. Considering the complexity of the certification process, what alternative approaches could be explored to streamline ESG certification and continuous monitoring of hotels and resorts?
5. How can the impact of the ESG certification initiative be measured in terms of its impact on sustainable tourism in Malaysia by 2030?

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Keywords

- Hotel
- Sustainable Tourism
- Industry Benchmark
- ESG Certification
- Sustainability Awareness
- ESG Audit

可能与否？：酒店与度假村的 ESG 认证



Source: Pexels (2024)

背景

通过马来西亚酒店协会、检验认证公司 SGS 马来西亚公司与环境可持续性咨询公司 SAIMATRIX INTEGRATED 的共同努力，马来西亚酒店业随着酒店及度假村 ESG 认证的推出，在迈向可持续旅游方面迈出了重要一步(TTG, 2024)。该 ESG 认证获得了旅游、艺术及文化部的批准和认可，旨在为马来西亚的酒店和度假村提供清晰的指导方针和一个全面、整体且可衡量的检查清单，并作为推动行业朝着国家 2030 年可持续旅游愿景发展的基准(TTG,2024)。

要获得 ESG 认证，酒店和度假村必须遵循一个结构化的路径。首先，需要参加由 SAIMATRIX INTEGRATED 提供的基础 ESG 培训，该培训介绍认证要求和基本的 ESG 原则 (SGS, 2024)。培训结束后，SGS 会进行预评估和差距分析，以评估企业当前的实践和改进领域。基于这些发现，酒店和度假村在 SAIMATRIX INTEGRATED 的指导下制定并实施行动计划，以解决已识别的差距。在完成必要的改进后，SGS 会进行严格的认证审核，以评估对 ESG 框架的合规性。成功完成审核流程后，酒店和度假村将被授予 ESG 认证，该认证必须每年更新 (SGS, 2024)。

挑战

尽管 ESG 认证计划有望推动马来西亚可持续旅游的发展，但它面临着若干重大挑战。全国范围内普遍缺乏可持续性意识被认为是引入 ESG 战略的最大障碍 (Elite Asia, n.d.)。许多酒店缺乏专门的团队或具备指导 ESG 实践实施专业知识的人员。即使有代表参加了预评估培训，要在整个组织内有效传播知识也可能很困难，这可能会阻碍必

要变革的实施。此外，无法保证酒店在年度更新审核之间始终保持合规，因为一些企业在没有持续监控的情况下，可能在认证后恢复到不那么可持续的实践中。

认证流程本身复杂且耗时，需要进行大量培训并对每家酒店进行多次访问。依赖单一的审计公司和咨询机构来认证全国所有参与的酒店，引发了对其可行性和能力的担忧。此外，目前的行业惯例通常只要求大公司披露并对其 ESG 努力进行评级，而占马来西亚市场很大一部分的中小企业通常被排除在外 (BoardRoom, 2023)。许多中小企业缺乏编制可持续性报告的经验，也没有评估小型企业的现有基准，这进一步使审计和认证过程复杂化。

实施 ESG 实践也需要大量投资，而本地小型企业在财务和人力资源方面往往不如大公司 (Adenan et al., 2024)。如果没有政府激励或足够的支持，中小企业可能会被边缘化，因为获得认证的酒店会吸引更多具有环保意识的旅行者，而未获认证的企业则会处于竞争劣势。由于该认证获得了部级认可，不参与的酒店可能会发现自己在市场上处于显著劣势。如果中小企业被排除在认证的益处之外，这可能无意中破坏培育一个更具可持续性的酒店业的目标。

讨论问题

1. 马来西亚酒店及度假村 ESG 认证的主要目标是什么？
2. MAH、SGS 马来西亚公司和 SAIMATRIX INTEGRATED 在认证过程中扮演什么角色？
3. 可以采取哪些措施来确保 ESG 认证过程对所有酒店，无论规模或财力如何，都保持公平和可及性？
4. 考虑到认证过程的复杂性，可以探索哪些替代方案来简化 ESG 认证以及对酒店和度假村的持续监控？
5. 如何衡量 ESG 认证计划到 2030 年对马来西亚可持续旅游发展的影响？

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关键词

- 酒店
- 可持续旅游
- 行业基准
- ESG 认证
- 可持续性意识
- ESG 审计

可能與否？：酒店與度假村的 ESG 認證



Source: Pexels (2024)

背景

透過馬來西亞酒店協會、檢驗認證公司 SGS 馬來西亞公司與環境可持續性諮詢公司 SAIMATRIX INTEGRATED 的共同努力，馬來西亞酒店業隨著酒店及度假村 ESG 認證的推出，在邁向可持續旅遊方面邁出了重要一步 (TTG, 2024)。該 ESG 認證獲得了旅遊、藝術及文化部的批准和認可，旨在為馬來西亞的酒店和度假村提供清晰的指導方針和一個全面、整體且可衡量的檢查清單，並作為推動行業朝著國家 2030 年可持續旅遊願景發展的基準 (TTG, 2024)。

要獲得 ESG 認證，酒店和度假村必須遵循一個結構化的路徑。首先，需要參加由 SAIMATRIX INTEGRATED 提供的基礎 ESG 培訓，該培訓介紹認證要求和基本的 ESG 原則 (SGS, 2024)。培訓結束後，SGS 會進行預評估和差距分析，以評估企業當前的實踐和改進領域。基於這些發現，酒店和度假村在 SAIMATRIX INTEGRATED 的指導下制定並實施行動計劃，以解決已識別的差距。在完成必要的改進後，SGS 會進行嚴格的認證審核，以評估對 ESG 框架的合規性。成功完成審核流程後，酒店和度假村將被授予 ESG 認證，該認證必須每年更新 (SGS, 2024)。

挑戰

儘管 ESG 認證計畫有望推動馬來西亞可持續旅遊的發展，但它面臨著若干重大挑戰。全國範圍內普遍缺乏可持續性意識被認為是引入 ESG 戰略的最大障礙 (Elite Asia, n.d.)。許多酒店缺乏專門的團隊或具備指導 ESG 實踐實施專業知識的人員。即使有代表參加了預評估培訓，要在整個組織內有效傳播知識也可能很困難，這可能會阻礙必

要變革的實施。此外，無法保證酒店在年度更新審核之間始終保持合規，因為一些企業在沒有持續監控的情況下，可能在認證後恢復到不那麼可持續的實踐中。

認證流程本身複雜且耗時，需要進行大量培訓並對每家酒店進行多次訪問。依賴單一的審計公司和諮詢機構來認證全國所有參與的酒店，引發了對其可行性和能力的擔憂。此外，目前的行業慣例通常只要求大公司揭露並對其 ESG 努力進行評級，而佔馬來西亞市場很大一部分的中小企業通常被排除在外 (BoardRoom, 2023)。許多中小企業缺乏編製可持續性報告的經驗，也沒有評估小型企業的現有基準，這進一步使審計和認證過程複雜化。

實施 ESG 實踐也需要大量投資，而本地小型企業在財務和人力資源方面往往不如大公司 (Adenan et al., 2024)。如果沒有政府激勵或足夠的支持，中小企業可能會被邊緣化，因為獲得認證的酒店會吸引更多具有環保意識的旅行者，而未獲認證的企業則會處於競爭劣勢。由於該認證獲得了部級認可，不參與的酒店可能會發現自己在市場上處於顯著劣勢。如果小型企業被排除在認證的益處之外，這可能無意中破壞培育一個更具可持續性的酒店業的目標。

討論問題

1. 馬來西亞酒店及度假村 ESG 認證的主要目標是什麼？
2. MAH、SGS 馬來西亞公司和 SAIMATRIX INTEGRATED 在認證過程中扮演什麼角色？
3. 可以採取哪些措施來確保 ESG 認證過程對所有酒店，無論規模或財力如何，都保持公平和可及性？
4. 考慮到認證過程的複雜性，可以探索哪些替代方案來簡化 ESG 認證以及對酒店和度假村的持續監控？
5. 如何衡量 ESG 認證計畫到 2030 年對馬來西亞可持續旅遊發展的影響？

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關鍵詞

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- 可持續旅遊
- 行業基準
- ESG 認證
- 可持續性意識
- ESG 審計