

# SUSTAINABILITY PLAYBOOK FOR ENTERPRISES

Embarking on Your Environmental,  
Social, and Governance Journey



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FOREWORD

Sustainability is emerging as a critical priority for long-term resilient economic growth. International and national sustainability targets, such as the [United Nations’ 17 Sustainable Development Goals](#) (SDGs) and the [Singapore Green Plan](#) 2030 have taken shape to mobilise businesses and citizens for the advancement of sustainable development efforts. With the spotlight on climate change and its associated transitional, operational, and physical threats, businesses must act decisively to mitigate risks and capture new opportunities.

Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) play an intrinsic role in the global and local sustainability movement. By embracing sustainable practices and meeting the demands of corporates, employees, and consumers for sustainable value creation, SMEs can offer products and services that make a positive impact. This can lead to increased revenue, talent attraction and retention, improved productivity, and better access to financing. Despite resource constraints, SMEs can navigate the sustainability landscape with the right assistance by tapping on programmes and support available in this rapidly expanding field.

We are thrilled to present this Sustainability Playbook to provide you with insights into sustainability concepts and trends. With this guide, you can assess your organisation’s sustainability performance and take action to embark on your sustainability journey. Together, we can create a more sustainable future.

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Knowledge partners:



Partners who have also contributed to this Sustainability Playbook include Enterprises, Industry Associations, Professional Bodies, Institutes of Higher Learning, and Education and Training Providers.



# WHAT DOES SUSTAINABILITY AND ENVIRONMENTAL, SOCIAL, AND GOVERNANCE (ESG) MEAN TO BUSINESSES?

Businesses must prioritise and integrate sustainability into their strategies to meet current needs and ensure resources are preserved for future generations. By adopting an ESG lens, businesses can adopt a comprehensive approach to assessing both financial and non-financial risks as well as opportunities related to their operations.

Examples of ESG factors\*:

ENVIRONMENTAL Management of natural resources and the business’ impact on the environment	SOCIAL Ways in which businesses engage with their employees and communities	GOVERNANCE Policies to govern businesses’ decision-making process
Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Emissions	Human Rights and Community Relations	Business Ethics
Air Quality	Data Security	Critical Incident Risk Management
Energy Management	Labour Practices	Management of the Legal and Regulatory Environment
Water and Wastewater Management	Employee Health and Safety	
Waste and Hazardous Materials Management	Employee Engagement, Diversity, and Inclusion	
Ecological Impacts		

\*This list is non-exhaustive. For more ESG metrics, you may refer to the [Global Reporting Initiative \(GRI\)](#), [Sustainability Accounting Standards Board \(SASB\)](#), and [International Integrated Reporting Council \(IIRC\)](#).



# THE CASE FOR SUSTAINABILITY: WHY SHOULD IT MATTER TO SMES?

While there may be initial investment costs, SMEs can benefit from having a sustainability-anchored business strategy. This will also better position them to meet the growing expectations and interests of five key stakeholder groups:



KEY BENEFITS:



### Better performance

Business leaders who embrace and pursue ESG goals will be able to tackle challenges and meet stakeholder needs to build their business capabilities. A [joint study](#) by Bain & Company and EcoVadis found that businesses with ESG initiatives have better financial performance. For instance, their findings indicate that companies that embrace sustainable procurement (suppliers’ ethics, environmental, and labour practices) benefit from higher profit margins of 3% compared to those that do not.



### Optimise resources

Companies can enhance productivity by optimising resources like energy, water, and waste. Companies can pinpoint areas with excessive resource consumption and implement measures for more sustainable usage. This approach may also minimise risks of unexpected expenses linked to price fluctuations in energy and material costs, and supply chain shortages. To illustrate, enterprises can deploy energy-efficient equipment and products that adhere to International Organisation for Standardisation (ISO) or International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) test standards to reduce long-term electrical costs. Utilising reusable or remanufactured components can decrease reliance on raw materials and minimise waste generation.



### Access to funding

Investors and lenders increasingly prioritise supporting companies with sustainable practices as they factor ESG in their portfolios. Banks are now offering more loans for sustainability-related initiatives, giving SMEs another option for financing.



### Talent retention and attraction

Prioritising fairness and sustainability in the workplace can earn employee trust, engagement, and loyalty while reducing turnover costs. Talent are increasingly looking to work for sustainable companies.

Capture new growth opportunities



Regulators, customers, and suppliers are starting to place emphasis on sustainability in their operations and purchases. Businesses that develop innovative and sustainable offerings will be more adept in meeting consumers’ and corporates’ suppliers’ requirements. Efforts include ethical/green sourcing, using renewable energy and sustainable materials (including low-carbon and recyclable), and responsible end-of-product-life practices. Relevant solution providers, such as those offering energy efficiency and waste management solutions, may also observe increased demand.

Companies can also adopt international standards such as ISO 14001 Environmental Management Systems to convey environmental performance to consumers, demonstrating quality and trust to meet local requirements and ease market entry. Based on a survey conducted by EnterpriseSG in March 2022, close to 70% of SMEs which adopted Quality and Standards captured overseas business opportunities.

Mitigate risks



Businesses that are able to identify high-impact ESG exposure will be more pro-active in implementing pre-emptive risk mitigation measures. Examples of ESG-related risks include:

- Regulatory/Compliance risk  
New and stricter ESG regulations and targets may be introduced to mitigate climate change, which could affect the supply chain, production processes, or products and services produced. Examples include the European Union (EU)’s Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM), the EU’s Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive, and China’s “3060” goals to peak its CO<sub>2</sub> emissions before 2030 and achieve carbon neutrality by 2060.  
  
Locally, Singapore’s carbon tax will increase to S\$50-\$80 per tonne by 2030 under the Carbon Pricing Act. The nation has also implemented the Resource Sustainability Act and Extended Producer Responsibility to better manage waste streams. Other sustainability regulatory requirements include Singapore Exchange (SGX)’s sustainability reporting requirements for listed companies and the Mandatory Packaging Reporting which aims to reduce packaging waste among brand owners, manufacturers, importers, and retailers. Businesses should familiarise themselves with key market requirements to stay competitive.
- Operational risk  
Due to increasing climate and cybersecurity risks, businesses may face operational challenges arising from supply chain disruptions and data breaches. To reduce operational risks, companies may adopt good practices such as ensuring efficient internal workflows by setting policies and Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), maintaining systems regularly, and diversifying material sources to build resilience against supply chain disruptions.
- Reputational risk  
Failure to comply with ESG regulations can result in legal and reputational risks, impacting a company’s bottom line. For example, experts have cautioned against greenwashing, which refers to attempts by businesses to appear environmentally conscious, as this can undermine brand image. To avoid greenwashing, green claims should be based on standards and be specific, measurable, and confirmed by a third-party certification or verification body. In addition, business leaders should consider their sustainability impact and implement measures such as ensuring safe working environments and responsible waste disposal methods.

THE 3-STAGE ESG JOURNEY

To pursue sustainability, companies should first build awareness and understanding of concepts, what it means to their business, and acquire the necessary skills to integrate it into the core practices. Then, to monitor the progress of sustainability efforts and pinpoint key areas for improvement, businesses should gather and analyse ESG data over time. This information will aid companies in evaluating the performance, establishing priorities and comprehensive strategies, and implementing targeted actions.

STAGE 1: BUILD AWARENESS IN SUSTAINABILITY

Start by understanding key sustainability concepts and identifying relevant trends and sustainability requirements.



STAGE 2: IDENTIFY RELEVANT AREAS FOR FIRST-STEP INTERVENTION

Establish baselines and use assessment tools to identify areas in ESG that matter the most to your business.



STAGE 3: EMBARK ON PROJECTS TO IMPROVE AND MEET TARGETS

Review business processes, set targets, and determine concrete steps aligned with currently available standards with eventual ESG disclosures in mind.

There is a wide range of support to help companies get started on their ESG journey. The following pages offer an overview of resources, categorised according to a company’s ESG readiness and significant material areas.

Click on the links to access useful resources for your company.



# STAGE 1: BUILD AWARENESS IN SUSTAINABILITY

Achieving sustainability involves more than just pursuing eco-friendly solutions. It requires a comprehensive strategy. Businesses can build up ESG knowledge through training, capability building, and understanding best practices.

## Understand key sustainability trends, regulations, risks, and opportunities

Senior leadership knowledge and commitment are essential to drive and sustain the ESG efforts of businesses in the longer term. Senior leaders need to build their knowledge and capabilities in systems thinking and keep up with megatrends in sustainability. They also need to understand the link between ESG and risk, and their companies’ impact on society and the planet. They must also build a better understanding of their key market regulations and client requirements (including standards and certifications required).

Checklist

☐

Does your company’s management have a basic understanding and awareness of sustainability trends and concepts (e.g. E-S-G, decarbonisation etc.)?

☐

Is your company aware of the key regulations (including standards and conformity assessment practices that may be required) in the market?

☐

Is your company aware of your clients’ sustainability requirements (including standards and conformity assessment practices that may be required)?

☐

Does your company know of the risks and opportunities associated with sustainability?



## Resources for you

STANDARDS AND CONFORMANCE

[Standards Supporting Sustainable Business Practices](#)

Guide on Singapore’s key national standards that can help organisations implement good practices for sustainable management systems, methodologies, and solutions, mapped to the United Nations SDGs. Use this resource to guide your adoption of sustainability-related standards and enhance your capabilities in sustainability.

[International Trade Centre Standards Map](#)

List of standards, with key information on compliance details provided for each standard.

HUMAN CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT

[ESG Training Catalogue](#)

List of SkillsFuture funded courses and programmes in ESG awareness curated for enterprises, employees, and individuals. Businesses can refer to the list and map out the training roadmap for enterprises and employees.

MANAGEMENT OF THE LEGAL AND REGULATORY ENVIRONMENT

[Executive Guide to Corporate Reporting Standards](#)

Guide that provides an overview of three key sustainability reporting frameworks and standards that business leaders should be aware of in sustainability decision process.

GREENHOUSE GAS (GHG) EMISSIONS

[Enterprise Sustainability Programme - Sustainability Courses \(Decarbonisation\)](#)

Courses which provide in-depth knowledge of decarbonisation, covering topics such as carbon accounting, how to set decarbonisation targets and implementation plans, and carbon disclosures and reporting.

BUSINESS MODEL RESILIENCE

[Enterprise Sustainability Programme - Sustainability Courses \(Foundational\)](#)

Introductory courses that provide a fundamental understanding of sustainability, covering key topics in decarbonisation, circular economy, sustainability reporting, and waste management.

[Enterprise Sustainability Programme - Sustainability Courses \(Sustainable Finance\)](#)

Courses covering topics including global and local trends in sustainable finance, sustainable finance instruments, and the process of accessing various financing instruments.

[Business Continuity Planning Guide](#)

Guide that provides video and introductory resources on business continuity planning, risk assessment, and analysis.

[Company of Good Portal](#)

Organisation that provides resources, programmes, and networks to guide companies on their journey to be socially responsible businesses while maintaining a high level of employee engagement and corporate citizenship.

GHG EMISSIONS, ENERGY MANAGEMENT, WATER AND WASTEWATER MANAGEMENT, WASTE AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS MANAGEMENT

[Green Compass](#)

Programme that includes an environmental sustainability assessment, training, and strategic roadmapping tool to help organisations better manage their carbon, energy, water, and waste emissions.

ESG Pillars

Environmental, Social, Governance

Environmental

Social

Governance

Self-help

Training

Assessment Tools & Programme

Grants & Loans

Resources for you

**EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION**  
[Uplifting Women in the Workforce](#)  
Paper that provides recommendations to advance women empowerment in the workplace and business arena.

[SBF Foundation Empowers Circles](#)  
Resource guide on uplifting lives of vulnerable individuals through differentiated employability and employment opportunities.

**CUSTOMER PRIVACY/DATA SECURITY**  
[Sector-specific Advisory Guidelines for Personal Data Protection](#)  
Guidelines to help address companies' sector-specific issues in complying with PDPA.

**BUSINESS ETHICS**  
[eGuide to the Singapore Code of Corporate Governance](#)  
Guides on Board and Board Committee practices in the context of business and regulatory environment in Singapore.

**EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION**  
[Tripartite Alliance for Fair and Progressive Practices](#)  
Guide for organisation that promotes adoption of fair, responsible, and progressive employment practices through labour practices standards, resources, and tools. Employees may also seek assistance for workplace harassment or discrimination from TAFEP.

[Work-Life Harmony Guide for Businesses](#)  
Guide for people managers implementing a positive workplace culture and managing flexible work arrangements.

[Implementation Guide for SMEs to Adopt Tripartite Standard on Flexible Work Arrangements](#)  
Guide with survey, policy, and application templates for SMEs to adapt when implementing effective flexible work arrangements.



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STAGE 2: IDENTIFY RELEVANT AREAS FOR FIRST-STEP INTERVENTION

Understanding and prioritising ESG issues is crucial to identifying the next course of action for businesses. The following tools and resources will help businesses identify baselines of their ESG performance and potential areas of improvement in ESG.

Engage stakeholders to identify material areas

Focus areas and sustainability requirements differ depending on business' readiness, stakeholders' priorities, and the industry's ESG impact. Businesses can assess key ESG areas that matter to them ("material areas") by considering the potential impact on the company and its importance to stakeholders.

Checklist

☐ Has your company identified different stakeholders for your business to respond to from a sustainability standpoint?

☐ Has your company engaged stakeholders to understand their ESG needs?

☐ Has your company weighed the impacts of ESG factors (e.g. energy, water, waste, carbon emissions) to identify critical material areas that matter to the business and your stakeholders?

Collect data to determine company's level of readiness and baselines

After identifying material areas, companies will need to gather data on the current performance and impact of operations, as well as health and resilience of the environmental and social systems through online complimentary assessment tools. There is increasing emphasis on carbon management, and companies should prioritise measurement of their carbon emissions to identify key material areas to focus on and lower their carbon footprint. This is to understand each company's baseline performance before setting targets to monitor their progress.

Checklist

☐ Does your company put in place systems or frameworks based on suitable standards (such as ISO 14001) to track and collect data for the identified material areas, i.e. energy, water, and waste?

☐ Has your company implemented and documented policies based on suitable standards to initiate and track the identified social areas – e.g. HR policy on training and development, fair employment, and workplace safety?

☐ Has your company set policies to monitor the identified governance practices, e.g. anti-corruption, procurement practices, cybersecurity, and data protection etc. based on suitable standards such as ISO 37001 Anti-Bribery Management System and ISO 27001 Information Security Management Systems?



Resources for you

**BUSINESS MODEL RESILIENCE**  
[SDG Compass](#)  
Guide for companies to align strategies and measure contribution to actualisation of SDGs.

[Industry Guide to SDGs](#)  
Guide which maps Sustainability Accounting Standards Board (SASB) industry-disclosure topics to SDG targets to help companies identify financially relevant SDG targets by industry and prioritise activities to address the SDGs that are aligned with industry-specific drivers of value.

[Corporate Purpose: A Framework and Blueprint for Businesses in Singapore](#)  
Framework and blueprint that provides insights on the principles, practices, and indicators pertaining to corporate purpose through tangible actions across 5 impact areas - People, Society, Governance, Environment, and Economic.

[Sustainability Guide for Boards](#)  
Guide to support Boards in the strategic formulation and execution of company's sustainability vision.

[Responsibility Index Communicator for Enterprises](#)  
Assessment tool that provides a report which helps companies to summarise their sustainability efforts and indicate areas of improvement.

**HUMAN CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT**  
[ESG Training Catalogue](#)  
List of SkillsFuture funded courses and programmes curated for enterprises, employees, and individuals to deepen ESG knowledge and capabilities. Businesses can refer to the list and map out the training roadmap for enterprises and employees.

**GREENHOUSE GAS (GHG) EMISSIONS**  
[LowCarbonSG Programme](#)  
Capability building programme to help businesses monitor and reduce their carbon emissions. Provides access to the Carbon and Emissions Recording Tool (CERT), and carbon management workshops.

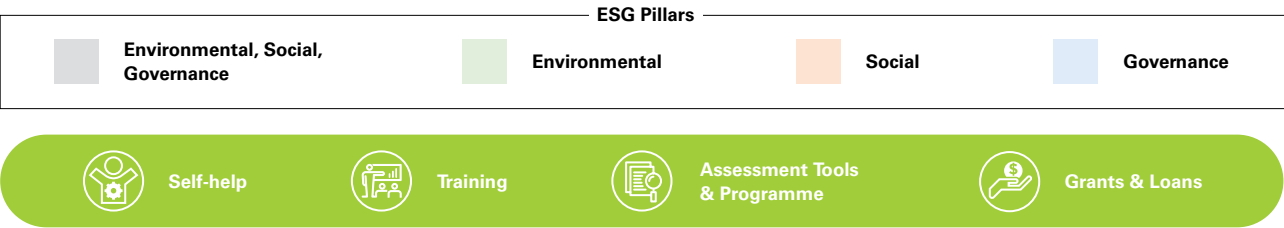
[Decarbonisation for Singapore Enterprises](#)  
Playbook to equip businesses, especially SMEs, with knowledge to kickstart the journey towards low carbon business operations for long-term sustainability.

**GHG EMISSIONS, ENERGY MANAGEMENT, WATER AND WASTEWATER MANAGEMENT, WASTE AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS MANAGEMENT**  
[Green Compass](#)  
Programme that includes an environmental sustainability assessment, course and strategic roadmapping tool to help organisations better manage their carbon, energy, water, and waste emissions.

**EMPLOYEE HEALTH AND SAFETY**  
[iWorkHealth](#)  
Survey tool that helps employers find out their workforce's overall state of mental well-being, and the key workplace stressors affecting them. Employees will receive a free individualised report and employers will receive an aggregated anonymised report with suggestions to address specific workplace stressors.

**MANAGEMENT OF THE LEGAL AND REGULATORY ENVIRONMENT**  
[GRI Material Topics 2021](#)  
Guide on determining material topics, disclosures that companies use to report information about their processes of determining material topics and how they manage each topic.

[SASB Materiality Map](#)  
Guide that maps common material sustainability issues which are industry-specific.





Implement action, plan, and review

There are many resources and standards that can provide valuable frameworks to build up a business’s sustainability capabilities. Independent third-party conformity assessment (e.g. certification and verification) against internationally recognised standards can offer a credible way for businesses to communicate sustainability efforts. Companies should identify upfront the standards and conformity assessment practices that best suit their needs (e.g. meet market and client requirements; differentiate products and services from competitors) and support your company’s objectives (e.g. facilitate market access, clinch new business).

In addition, companies should consider engaging an accredited conformity assessment service provider (i.e. a third-party testing, inspection, validation, or verification service provider) to ensure robustness in their practices and recognition by regulators and customers. Accreditation enhances the credibility of laboratory tests, inspection, validation and verification reports or certificates by providing reliable third party assurance that these services are conducted professionally and meet globally recognised standards. It may also shorten the time to market due to mutual recognition arrangements amongst national accreditation bodies. For instance, companies may engage a Singapore Accreditation Council (SAC)-accredited certification body or its equivalent Mutual Recognition Arrangement (MRA) partners overseas to provide certification service on ISO 14001 Environmental Management System which enables the organisation to manage its environmental responsibilities in a systematic manner. Thereafter, a deeper understanding of their people, processes, and purpose will help them adapt these frameworks to what works for the business.

Checklist

☐

Has your company communicated the ESG plan to key internal and external stakeholders (e.g. suppliers, employees) for alignment?

☐

Is there a team or employee equipped with the right skill sets to implement the actions?

☐

Has your company developed a mechanism or framework for regular reporting and a platform for stakeholder engagement to monitor progress internally?

☐

Does your company regularly review plans and take actions for improvements in ESG efforts?

☐

Has your company identified relevant standards and undergone independent third-party conformity assessment (e.g. testing/inspection/certification/verification) to verify your sustainability efforts?

Communicate efforts

Sustainability needs to be embedded in the organisation’s core strategy process. It is crucial that sustainability risk is recognised as enterprise risk and that the business allocates the required resources and capital to support the implementation of its near and long-term sustainability objectives. Businesses should also have a plan to communicate their progress externally to build credibility.

Checklist

☐

Does your company ensure timely communication of your sustainability efforts and targets to external stakeholders?

☐

Does your company produce a sustainability report? If your company produces a report, do you align it with internationally-recognised reporting and conformity assessment standards or frameworks and requirements?





Resources for you

**BUSINESS MODEL RESILIENCE**  
[Sustainable Finance Programme](#)  
A series of courses to help finance industry professionals upskill in the area of sustainability and sustainable finance.

[Enterprise Development Grant](#)  
Grant that supports projects that help companies grow and transform, including sustainability projects.

[Enterprise Financing Scheme](#)  
Loan that addresses enterprises' financing needs in seven areas including green growth projects at various stages of growth.

[Sustainability Loan Grant Scheme](#)  
Grant for corporates of all sizes to defray the expenses of engaging independent service providers to validate the green and sustainability credentials of the loan.

[Advanced Digital Solutions](#)  
Grant that supports the adoption of advanced technologies (e.g. AI, Robotics, Blockchain and Internet of Things, sustainability solutions) and integrated solutions (e.g. B2B solutions that integrate inventory management) that address common enterprise-level challenges at scale.

[Enterprise Transformation Projects](#)  
Microsite introducing solution providers for enterprise transformation projects to help SMEs translate best practices from industry leaders and Institutes of Higher Learning.

**SUSTAINABILITY DATA BENCHMARKING**  
[ESGpedia](#)  
One-stop registry of ESG certifications and data from different sectors and global verified sources, and fintech tools to enable ESG finance.

**HUMAN CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT**  
[ESG Training Catalogue](#)  
List of SkillsFuture funded courses and programmes curated for enterprises, employees, and individuals to support ESG implementation. Businesses can refer to the list and map out the training roadmap for enterprises and employees.

**MANAGEMENT OF THE LEGAL AND REGULATORY ENVIRONMENT**  
[TCFD Implementation Guide](#)  
Guide to help companies in implementing TCFD recommendations for corporate disclosures of climate-related information, through CDSB and SASB's frameworks and standards.

[GRI Professional Certification Programme](#)  
Course that enhances knowledge and skills required to apply GRI Standards and improve the quality of sustainability reporting.

[Integrated Reporting for SMEs: Implementation Guidance](#)  
Guide to help SMEs understand and implement the International Integrated Reporting (IR) Framework.

**STANDARDS AND CONFORMANCE**  
[International Organisation for Standardisation](#)  
International organisation that shares knowledge on market relevant international standards that support companies to meet UNSDGs.

[International Electrotechnical Commission](#)  
Guide to help organisations that are preparing and publishing international standards for all electrical, electronic, and related technologies. Provides information on conformity assessments.

[Singapore Accreditation Council](#)  
List of SAC accreditation schemes that apply to the Environment and Sustainability industry. Provides more information on SAC's Mutual Recognition Arrangements (MRAs). Provides information on Conformity Assessment Bodies (CABs) accredited by SAC.

[Singapore Green Labelling Scheme](#)  
Website that provides information on the Singapore Green Label.

[Sustainability-As-A-Service Programme](#)  
Programme supporting local companies in meeting customer and regulatory requirements through online self-assessment, training, pre-certification audit and certification.

[Global Ecolabelling Network](#)  
Network that provides information on ecolabels.

ESG Pillars

Environmental, Social, Governance

Environmental

Social

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Training

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Grants & Loans

Resources for you

**GREENHOUSE GAS (GHG) EMISSIONS**  
[SME Kickstarter Decarbonisation Programme](#)  
Programme that provides training and mentorship to SMEs over 3 years, to chart sustainability strategies by establishing Scope 1 and 2 emissions and develop decarbonisation roadmaps.

**GHG EMISSIONS, ENERGY MANAGEMENT, WATER AND WASTEWATER MANAGEMENT, WASTE AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS MANAGEMENT**  
[Green Compass](#)  
Programme that includes an environmental sustainability assessment, course and strategic roadmapping tool to help organisations better manage their carbon, energy, water, and waste emissions.

**ENERGY MANAGEMENT**  
[Energy Efficiency Fund](#)  
Scheme consisting of 5 different grants to support businesses with industrial facilities to improve energy efficiency through technology adoption, energy audits or design workshops.

**WASTE AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS MANAGEMENT**  
[3R Fund](#)  
Grant to encourage organisations to reduce waste disposed of at NEA's incineration plants and disposal facilities by implementing waste minimisation and recycling projects.

**WATER AND WASTEWATER MANAGEMENT**  
[Water Efficiency Fund](#)  
Grant that funds water audits, recycling plant pilots, and full-scale implementation and water-efficient technology adoption.

**GHG EMISSIONS, ENERGY MANAGEMENT, WATER & WASTEWATER MANAGEMENT, WASTE & HAZARDOUS MATERIALS MANAGEMENT, ECOLOGICAL IMPACTS**  
[Catalysing Sustainability in Singapore's SMEs Programme](#)  
Environmental disclosure programme that provides a structured framework for Singapore enterprises to disclose their environmental data and performance.

**EMPLOYEE HEALTH AND SAFETY**  
[Workplace Outreach Wellness Programme](#)  
Programme that supports all private companies in their goals towards a healthier, productive, and more engaged workforce. Includes general workplace health programmes (physical activity, mental well-being etc.), health screenings and corporate challenges.

**LABOUR PRACTICES**  
[Career Conversion Programme for Sustainability Professionals](#)  
Programme to help companies meet manpower needs by training individuals to take on new roles or reskilling them to take on new "green roles" and drive transformation. Support of up to 90% salary and course fee.

**CUSTOMER PRIVACY/DATA SECURITY**  
[Cyber Essentials Mark](#)  
Guide on national cybersecurity certification for organisations embarking on their cybersecurity journey.

**HUMAN RIGHTS AND COMMUNITY RELATIONS**  
[Social Value Toolkit](#)  
Toolkit to help organisations determine and measure their social impact and value.

ESG Pillars

Environmental, Social, Governance

Environmental

Social

Governance

Self-help

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Grants & Loans

## SME CASE STUDY 1: KODA

**Koda is a furniture Original Design Manufacturer established in 1972, selling to over 50 countries with facilities in Malaysia and Vietnam. Koda has integrated sustainability as part of its business strategy and supply chain, and monitors ESG factors by reviewing its key performance indicators, risks, and opportunities periodically.**

**Q: What are some of your most impactful ESG initiatives?**

**A:** We systematically transformed operations via a sustainability roadmap under Enterprise Singapore's Scale-Up programme, managing our environmental impact by using innovative materials and redesigning our process. For instance, we switched to environmentally-friendly honeycomb cardboard packaging and created remanufactured bamboo or sustainably-sourced wood furniture.

On the social front, we abide by the Tripartite Alliance for Fair and Progressive Employment Practices. Sustainability transformation must be coupled with skills upgrading, and we encourage employees to attend training, such as the courses under Enterprise Sustainability Programme and Career Conversion Programme for Sustainability Professionals.

Our governance framework ensures that the leadership and employees adhere to Koda's Code of Conduct. To credibly demonstrate sustainability performance, we also

**Ernie Koh Jyh Eng**  
Executive Director, Koda  
Chairman, Commune Lifestyle

published a sustainability report aligned with the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI), and adopted sustainability-related standards and certifications such as Greenguard, Forest Stewardship Council (FSC), and Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification (PEFC).

**Q: How has Koda benefitted as a furniture retailer with the continued ESG efforts?**

**A:** These efforts have brought economic and reputational benefits, positioning us as a sustainability forerunner in the furniture industry. Koda has been recognised as a High-Growth Company on several media channels (e.g. The Financial Times and Statista in 2021, and Best 200 Companies under a Billion by Forbes Asia in 2022). We believe that our sustainability efforts have also uplifted sales as increasingly conscious consumers are willing to pay more.

**Q: What are key takeaways for businesses looking to adopt sustainable business practices?**

**A:** Sustainability doesn't have to be expensive. It is worth exploring the market and your suppliers' offerings to identify new, sustainable ways as technology improves and prices reduce.

It is also useful to understand the country-specific needs of your operations. For example, Koda provided spectacles after an eye-check initiative for our staff in Vietnam, translating to improved quality control.



## SME CASE STUDY 2: TRU-MARINE

**Established in 1977, Tru-Marine is a homegrown company with a strong reputation for supplying high-quality maintenance, repairs, overhaul, and spares for turbochargers in marine, offshore, power plant, and locomotive applications.**

**Q: How has the company leveraged existing resources and taken efforts to progress on your ESG journey?**

**A:** Our Singapore-based workshop uses 100% renewable energy, attributed to the installation of 398 photovoltaic panels. This has reduced our reliance on utility power by up to 75%, while the rest of our power needs are met by a renewable energy retailer. We also tapped on Enterprise Singapore's Enterprise Development Grant to embark on an ESG roadmap development with DNV. This will help us set clear targets for achieving sustainable development in the areas of energy management, information security, and anti-bribery.

To build our sustainability knowledge and capabilities, we have participated in PwC Singapore's "ESG Essentials for SMEs" course, Green Compass Programme by SIMTech, as well as the LowCarbonSG Programme by Carbon Pricing Leadership Coalition Singapore to monitor and reduce carbon emissions.

We prioritise the well-being of employees and the community. In order to sustain ESG efforts, we have provided relevant training for our Board of Directors, Heads of Departments, and employees. We also partner youth groups, institutes of higher learning, and charities (e.g. Club Rainbow, National Volunteer and Philanthropy Centre, Singapore Polytechnic) to offer scholarships, internships, and learning workshop opportunities.

Tru-Marine has been ISO certified since the 1990s to ISO 9001, ISO 14001, and ISO 45001, which align with the United Nations SDGs 8, 9, 12, and 13. ESG reviews are also part of our board meetings, and we have implemented policies to manage whistle-blowing and internal audits.

**Q: How has Tru-Marine benefitted from the implementation of its ESG initiatives?**

**A:** In just over three months since the installation of photovoltaic panels in March 2023, our CO<sub>2</sub> avoidance stands at 56 tonnes. Furthermore, our collaboration with DNV helps us prioritise and align with sustainability goals and requirements in the maritime industry, with a comprehensive materiality analysis to identify stakeholder requirements, potentially opening up new business opportunities for us.



**James Loke**  
Group CEO

**Linda Hoon**  
Chair, ESG Committee



# SME CASE STUDY 3: SALADSTOP!

**SaladStop! was established in 2009 to revolutionise salads and fast food. Presently, they have over 70 outlets in Indonesia, Hong Kong, the Philippines, Singapore, South Korea, Vietnam, and Thailand. As the company expands their footprint in the region, they continue to advocate against “pre-made culture” and promote a sustainable and conscientious approach to eating.**

**Q: As a provider of sustainable food options, what ESG initiatives have the company undertaken?**

**A:** We are committed to reducing carbon emissions and as part of our efforts, we set up our first net-zero outlet at CapitaSpring in Singapore, with support from Enterprise Singapore’s Enterprise Sustainability Programme. In addition, all our outlets promote eco-friendly packaging, ban single-use plastics, offer brown takeaway bags, and implement paperless ordering and billing. We also implemented carbon labelling on the menu, and our Go Climate Positive campaign allows customers to opt-in to pay for carbon offset. Additionally, we support local farmers and partners to facilitate a traceable and sustainable supply chain while reducing our transport carbon footprint.

Our social initiatives include the Diversity and Equal Employment Opportunities policy. Other than a consistent employee feedback loop through anonymised management appraisals, we have close engagements with our employees, and consider them as our most critical taste-testers for new food offerings. Outside of our corporate headquarters, we also hold regular meetings with outlet managers to update them on green initiatives.

We expect employees to adhere to our Code of Ethical Conduct in all dealings for strong governance practices. Our suppliers are also held to a high standard of business ethics through our Supplier Code of Conduct, and they would need to comply with our sustainability requirements.

**Q: What are the company’s future sustainability plans?**

**A:** Our group is fully committed to achieving net-zero for all stores by 2030 through optimising efficiency and adopting sustainable design. We are taking steps to become a B Corp-certified company, which will enable us to demonstrate social and environmental performance, public transparency, and legal accountability to balance profit and purpose. We will continue to focus on sustainability initiatives, including employees’ skills upgrading, consumer education, and building partnerships with like-minded brands.



**Katherine Braha Desbaillets**  
Chief Brand Officer &  
Chief Sustainability Officer, SaladStop!

# CONCLUSION

Businesses can grow and transform by embracing sustainability. By getting started on their sustainability journey, they can readily capture opportunities, mitigate risks, and avoid the opportunity costs of delaying the first step.

Sustainability goes beyond budgeting and branding; businesses must integrate it into the strategy, operations, and management. By adopting sustainable practices, individuals, organisations, and governments can create long-term value and resilience, and better prepare for future challenges. Companies dedicated to improving ESG performance alongside profits can achieve tangible business outcomes, such as increased employee engagement, improved resource optimisation, innovative market-based solutions to capture opportunities, and better access to funding.

Taking small, incremental steps towards sustainability is crucial for businesses looking to grow and thrive in today’s world. This Sustainability Playbook provides businesses with the fundamental knowledge and understanding to start your sustainability journey and pursue more advanced actions when ready. Together, we can create a thriving and sustainable future for ourselves and future generation.



Stage 1: Build awareness in sustainability	Stage 2: Identify relevant areas for first-step intervention	
(a) Understand key sustainability trends, regulations, risks, and opportunities	(b) Engage stakeholders to identify material areas	(c) Collect data to determine company's level of readiness and baselines
<div><div><input type="checkbox"/> Does your company's management have a basic understanding and awareness of sustainability trends and concepts (e.g. E-S-G, decarbonisation etc.)?</div><div><input type="checkbox"/> Is your company aware of the key regulations (including standards and conformity assessment practices that may be required) in the market?</div><div><input type="checkbox"/> Is your company aware of your clients' sustainability requirements (including standards and conformity assessment practices that may be required)?</div><div><input type="checkbox"/> Does your company know of the risks and opportunities associated with sustainability?</div></div>	<div><div><input type="checkbox"/> Has your company identified different stakeholders for your business to respond to from a sustainability standpoint?</div><div><input type="checkbox"/> Has your company engaged stakeholders to understand their ESG needs?</div><div><input type="checkbox"/> Has your company weighed the impacts of ESG factors (e.g. energy, water, waste, carbon emissions) to identify critical material areas that matter to the business and your stakeholders?</div></div>	<div><div><input type="checkbox"/> Does your company put in place systems or frameworks based on suitable standards (such as ISO 14001) to track and collect data for the identified material areas, i.e. energy, water, and waste?</div><div><input type="checkbox"/> Has your company implemented and documented policies based on suitable standards to initiate and track the identified social areas – e.g. HR policy on training and development, fair employment, and workplace safety?</div><div><input type="checkbox"/> Has your company set policies to monitor the identified governance practices, e.g. anti-corruption, procurement practices, cybersecurity, and data protection etc. based on suitable standards such as ISO 37001 Anti-Bribery Management System and ISO 27001 Information Security Management Systems?</div></div>

Stage 3: Embark on projects to improve and meet targets		
(d) Formulate a plan and set targets	(e) Implement action, plan, and review	(f) Communicate efforts
<div><div><input type="checkbox"/> Are there plans and targets set according to ESG disclosure, reporting frameworks and standards (e.g. Science Based Targets initiative (SBTi), Global Reporting Initiative (GRI), Task Force on Climate-Related Financial Disclosures (TCFD), Sustainability Accounting Standards Board (SASB) etc.)?</div><div><input type="checkbox"/> Is there management commitment to the plans and targets? There should be management support and continued involvement in sustainability initiatives' planning, implementation, and reviewing process.</div><div><input type="checkbox"/> Are there resources set aside to achieve the targets?</div><div><input type="checkbox"/> Is there a team or key personnel to oversee and drive the sustainability efforts and develop a strategy within the company? Management should also be involved in setting direction, introducing plans, instituting change, and driving action.</div></div>	<div><div><input type="checkbox"/> Has your company communicated the ESG plan to key internal and ESG stakeholders (e.g. suppliers, employees) for alignment?</div><div><input type="checkbox"/> Is there a team or employee equipped with the right skill sets to implement the actions?</div><div><input type="checkbox"/> Has your company developed a mechanism or framework for regular reporting and a platform for stakeholder engagement to monitor progress internally?</div><div><input type="checkbox"/> Does your company regularly review plans and take actions for improvements in ESG efforts?</div><div><input type="checkbox"/> Has your company identified relevant standards and undergone independent third-party conformity assessment (e.g. testing/ inspection/certification/ verification) to verify your sustainability efforts?</div></div>	<div><div><input type="checkbox"/> Does your company ensure timely communication of your sustainability efforts and targets to external stakeholders?</div><div><input type="checkbox"/> Does your company produce a sustainability report? If your company produces a report, do you align it with internationally-recognised reporting and conformity assessment standards or frameworks and requirements?</div></div>



The image features a dark gray background with two large, overlapping circles on the left side. The inner circle is a darker shade of gray, while the outer circle is a lighter shade, creating a layered effect. The circles are positioned such that they overlap significantly, with the inner circle's right edge extending towards the center of the frame.

THE SUSTAINABILITY PLAYBOOK FOR ENTERPRISES IS DEVELOPED AS PART  
OF THE ENTERPRISE SUSTAINABILITY PROGRAMME