

BOOKING.COM STOPPED ITS SUSTAINABILITY PROGRAM



Booking com has discontinued its "Travel Sustainable Program" globally after the Dutch Authority for Consumers and Markets (ACM) criticized it as misleading. The ACM argued that using the term "sustainable travel" might give the impression that all travel is sustainable, which could be misleading. Moreover, it could provide an inaccurate picture of the sustainability efforts made by accommodation providers. As a result, Booking com has pledged to remove the program name and all associated reviews.

Furthermore, the company has decided to stop displaying symbols like green leaves. It is developing an improved system that uses external certification to encourage businesses to invest in sustainability and assist consumers in making sustainable choices. **Booking com plans to rely more heavily on third-party certification in future sustainability communication.** The company has also provided information about this on its FAQs page.

In April 2022, Booking com announced that over 100,000 hotels listed on their site had been awarded a Travel Sustainable badge, recognizing their sustainability efforts. This represents more than 25 percent of the 400,000 hotels, motels, and resorts listed on Booking com this year.

The Dutch Authority for Consumers and Markets reported that Booking Holdings is discontinuing this sustainability program. The company has informed the regulator that it is working on an improved system.

A Booking com spokesperson has downplayed the end of the Travel Sustainable program. The spokesperson said the program will continue, but how it is displayed will change slightly. **Official certification guidance will be included for partners certified for sustainability by government-recognized third parties.** For those who do not fully meet the requirements for official certification, information about some of the steps they take on behalf of consumers will still be provided. However, the tiered system will no longer be in place.

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