

## Hartalega (HART MK)

# ESG 2.0: Defending an above average scoring

### ESG score improves, to 64/100; maintain BUY

We revisit HART's ESG disclosures post release of its FY24 Annual and Corporate Governance Reports and have assigned an above average ESG score of 64 (out of 100), which is higher than its previous ESG score of 61 when first introduced in FY22. We maintain our earnings forecasts and MYR4.28 TP based on an unchanged 3x CY26E P/B peg. Reiterate BUY.

#### Some headwinds were noted...

HART's overall ESG score of 64 is above average, exceeding its sector peer, Top Glove (TOP MK, HOLD, CP: MYR1.08, TP: MYR1.08), which is rated at 56 (above average). HART's score experienced some drag from the rising trend in carbon emissions and total waste generated intensity. Average training hours per employee also decreased to 13 hours from 19 hours. Additionally, despite a -31% reduction in Directors' remuneration, the Board's salary as a percentage of core net profit increased to 11.6% due to a lower core net profit arising from higher costs related to the decommissioning of the Bestari Jaya facilities.

### ...but offset by aggressive carbon reduction initiatives

HART is committed to environmental stewardship, focusing on transitioning to a circular economy and reducing carbon footprint. HART's plan emphasizes optimizing energy usage, expanding renewable energy adoption and minimizing reliance on fossil fuels to support Malaysia's national emissions goals. Key initiatives include cogeneration, solar power integration and ongoing investments in energy-efficient technologies. HART aims to reduce emissions intensity by 25% by FY2026.

### Maintain earnings forecasts

We maintain our earnings forecasts. We continue to like HART for its hands-on management, proven track record in technology and product quality and strong balance sheet (MYR0.39/sh net cash in end-June 2024). HART's ongoing technological investments/advancements should improve its cost efficiency and support its long-term prospects.

FYE Mar (MYR m)	FY23A	FY24A	FY25E	FY26E	FY27E
Revenue	2,410	1,838	2,731	2,926	3,316
EBITDA	(20)	178	328	364	419
Core net profit	162	50	184	207	246
Core FDEPS (sen)	4.7	1.5	5.4	6.0	7.2
Core FDEPS growth(%)	(95.0)	(69.2)	267.6	12.7	18.8
Net DPS (sen)	0.0	0.4	3.2	3.6	4.3
Core FD P/E (x)	40.2	nm	61.0	54.2	45.6
P/BV (x)	1.4	2.0	2.4	2.3	2.3
Net dividend yield (%)	0.0	0.1	1.0	1.1	1.3
ROAE (%)	(4.8)	0.3	3.9	4.4	5.1
ROAA (%)	2.8	0.9	3.5	3.9	4.4
EV/EBITDA (x)	nm	45.2	29.9	26.9	23.1
Net gearing (%) (incl perps)	net cash				
Consensus net profit	-	-	191	290	383
MIBG vs. Consensus (%)	-	-	(3.9)	(28.4)	(35.7)

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# **BUY**

MYR 3.27 Share Price MYR 4.28 (+32%) 12m Price Target MYR 4.28 Previous Price Target

#### **Company Description**

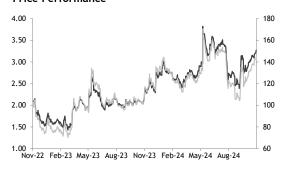
Hartalega is the world's largest nitrile medical gloves producer.

#### **Statistics**

52w high/low (MYR)	3.82/2.14
3m avg turnover (USDm)	5.2
Free float (%)	42.7
Issued shares (m)	3,428
Market capitalisation	MYR11.2B
	USD2.6B
Major shareholders:	

Major shareholders:	
Hartalega Industries Sdn. Bhd.	34.3%
Employees Provident Fund	8.6%
BNP Paribas Wealth Management	3.2%

#### Price Performance



- Hartalega - (LHS, MYR) ----- Hartalega / Kuala Lumpur Composite Index - (RHS, %)

	-1M	-3M	-12M
Absolute (%)	18	32	58
Relative to index (%)	19	25	42

Source: FactSet







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Risk Rating & Score <sup>1</sup>	11.7 (Low)
Score Momentum <sup>2</sup>	-0.2
Last Updated	16 Oct 2024
Controversy Score <sup>3</sup> (Updated: 17 Sep 2024)	0 - No reported incidents

## **Business Model & Industry Issues**

- HART retains its SEDEX membership and has been a constituent of the FTSE4Good Bursa Malaysia Index since 2014, with regular social compliance audits following BSCI, SMETA, WRAP, and ETI standards. As of March 2024, HART received an "A" or "Prime" rating in MSCI ESG, ISS ESG, amfori BSCI, and WRAP, and won the Silver Award in the Healthcare Category at The Edge ESG Awards 2023.
- Like other glove manufacturers, HART relies on migrant workers, facing rising social compliance costs due to evolving regulations. Its long-term vision aims for fully "humanless" factories to reduce manual labor dependency.
- Hartalega scores above-average in our ESG proprietary scoring methodology (see next page) with an overall score of 64/100.

### Material E issues

- HART has established two cogeneration power plants to improve energy efficiency through combined heat and power production. This will help to reduce its dependency on fossil fuels, consequently lowering emissions.
- In FY24, HART implemented several initiatives across its production lines, including completing oven optimization, reprofiling projects, and introducing an advanced burner system to reduce energy consumption.
- Hartalega has invested over MYR127m to shift toward greener energy. A key initiative is the 1.65 MW rooftop solar PV system at the NGC facility, which generated 2,980 MWh of clean electricity in FY24 (+15% YoY),
- More than MYR48m invested in improving wastewater systems at HART plants, allowing it to adopt advanced tracking technologies alongside other innovative measures to minimise the impact on the environment.
- In FY24, HART reported zero incidents of non-compliance with discharge limits and zero incidents of environmental non-compliance.

### Material S issues

- Female representation was 36% of workforce in FY24 (FY23: 37%).
- Lost Time Injury Frequency Rate reduced to 0.27 (FY23: 0.47). In FY24, there were 6 cases of Lost Time Injury.
- Founding member of the Responsible Glove Alliance and a member of the Responsible Labor Initiative, collaborating with global industry stakeholders to promote responsible recruitment and employment practices.
- Providing first-rate workers' accommodation by investing more than MYR142m to date.
- Contributed MYR451,647 towards enriching the lives of 10,944 individuals through initiatives across our four pillars of Education, Health, Environment and Community.
- In FY24, HART recorded zero work-related fatalities across its operations.
- In FY2024, HART recorded zero reported incidents of forced labour.

## Key G metrics and issues

- There are 10 members on HART's Board comprising 2
   Executive Directors (including CEO and Executive Chairman), 3 Non-Independent Non-Executive Director (NINED) and 5 Independent Non-Executive Director (INED).
- Independent Directors made up 50% of HART's Board, inline with the Malaysian Code of Corporate Governance's (MCCG) recommendation.
- In FY24, Hartalega has 3 female directors on the board, representing 30% of the board (minimum requirement is 30%).
- Its audit committee is made up by the 1 NINED and 4 INEDs while remuneration committee is made up by 1 NINED and 3 INEDs.
- Its risk management and sustainability committee is made up of 3 INEDs and 1 NINED.
- Deloitte PLT has been Hartalega's external auditor since 2014.
- HART has implemented essential policies, including an Anti-Bribery and Anti-Corruption Policy, Whistleblowing Policy and Procedure, Supplier Code of Conduct, and Code of Conduct for Employees and Directors. Its whistleblowing platform is managed by a third-party global service provider.
- There was zero reported cases of bribery or corruption across all departments in FY24.

<u>Raisk Rating & Score</u> - derived by Sustainalytics and assesses the company's exposure to unmanaged ESG risks. Scores range between 0 - 50 in order of increasing severity with low/high scores & ratings representing negligible/significant risk to the company's enterprise value, respectively, from ESG-driven financial impacts. <u>\*Score Momentum</u> - indicates changes to the company's score since the last update - a <u>negative</u> integer indicates a company's improving risk score; a <u>positive</u> integer indicates a deterioration. <u>\*Tontroversy Score\*</u> - reported periodically by Sustainalytics in the event of material ESG-related incident(s), with the impact severity scores of these events ranging from Category 0-5 (0 - no reports; 1 - negligible risks; ...; 5 - poses serious risks & indicative of potential structural deficiencies at the company).





	Quantitative Parameters (Score: 44)							
	Particulars	Unit	FY22	FY23	FY24	TOPG MK (FY23)		
	Scope 1 emissions	tCO2e	521,681	378,118	394,037	273,483		
	Scope 2 emissions	tCO2e	658,386	114,517	62,039	152,403		
	Total	tCO2e	1,180,067	492,635	456,076	425,886		
	Scope 3 emissions	tCO2e	NA	5,383.0	4,679.0	6,033.0		
	Total	tCO2e	1,180,067	498,018	460,755	431,919.0		
	GHG intensity (Scope 1 and 2)	tCO2e/rev MYRm	149.6	204.4	248.2	188.7		
		kWh/1,000 pcs						
Ε	Electricity consumption intensity	gloves	8.1	9.2	5.2	9.4		
E .		cu. M/1,000 pcs						
	Water consumption intensity	gloves	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.4		
	·	MMBTU/1,000 pcs						
	Natural gas consumption intensity	gloves	0.3	0.3	0.4	0.3		
	·	tCO2/1,000 pcs						
	Carbon emission intensity	gloves	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.02		
	Total waste generated intensity	kg/1,000 pcs gloves	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.2		
	Non-hazardous waste recycled	%	70.6	71.2	76.8	73.3		
	Proportion of women in the workforce	%	37.0	37.0	36.0	28		
	Women in Sr management	%	36.0	34.0	38.0	52.0		
S	Proportion of locals as new hires	% (avg)	45.0	12.0	15.0	94		
	Lost time injury frequency (LTIF) rate	Rate	0.5	0.5	0.3	0.81		
	Training hours per employee	number	43.2	19.3	13.1	43.9		
	MD/CEO salary as % of reported net profit	%	0.1	1.8	3.6	-0.2		
G	Board salary as % of reported net profit	%	0.3	5.2	11.6	-1.3		
<u> </u>	Independent directors on the Board	%	56	56	44	58		
	Female directors on the Board	%	33	33	30	42		

#### Qualitative Parameters (Score: 67)

- a) Is there an ESG policy in place and whether there is a standalone ESG committee or is it part of a risk committee?

  Yes -Sustainability governance is led by the Board's Risk Management and Sustainability Committee. Supported by the Sustainability Working Committee (SWC), chaired by the CEO and including members of the C-Suite and Senior Management, the
- SWC drives ethical business conduct and integrates ESG practices.
  b) Is the senior management salary linked to fulfilling ESG targets?

No

- c) Does the company follow the Task Force of Climate Related Disclosures (TCFD) framework for ESG reporting?

  No, but HART will align its climate-related disclosures with TCFD by 2025.
- d) Does the company have a mechanism to capture Scope 3 emissions which parameters are captured? Yes, Scope 3 captures business travel and employee commuting.
- e) What are the 2-3 key carbon mitigation/water/waste management strategies adopted by the company?

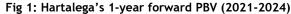
  Energy efficiency: Established two cogeneration power plant to improve energy efficiency. Water mgmt: Installing water ultrafiltration system which allows HART to utlise treated water (from local rivers) at production site and reducing dependency on municipal water sources. Waste mgmt: Invested over MYR48m in enhancing state-of-the-art wastewater treatment at its plants.
- f) Does carbon offset form part of the net zero/carbon neutrality target of the company? No.

Target (Score: 100)		
Particulars	Target	Achieved
Established a 5% reduction target for water consumption intensity by FY2026, with FY2021 as a baseline	11%	13%
Cut carbon emissions intensity from 0.0232 to 0.0172 tonnes CO2 per 1,000 pieces of gloves by FY26, using FY23 as a baseline	0.0172	0.13
Manufacturing plants are certified with ISO 45001:2018	100%	100%
Zero Cost Recruitment Policy	100%	100%
Impact		
NA		
Overall Score: 64		
As per our ESG matrix, Hartalega Holdings Berhad (HART MK) has an overall score of 64.		

ESG score	Weights	Scores	Final Score
Quantitative	50%	44	22
Qualitative	25%	67	17
Target	25%	100	25
Total			64

As per our ESG assessment, HART has an established framework, internal policies, and tangible mid/long-term targets but needs to make headway in improving its quantitative "E" metrics YoY. HART's overall ESG score is 64, which makes its ESG rating above average in our view (average ESG rating = 50; refer to Appendix I for our ESG Assessment Scoring).







Source: Bloomberg, Company data, Maybank IBG Research

### Risk factors

Risk factors for our earnings estimates, target price and rating for HART are: (i) aggressive capacity expansion from the Chinese counterparts; (ii) an aggressive pricing strategy from Chinese producers due to their relatively lower production costs supported by lower energy costs; (iii) spikes in raw material prices that are unable to be fully passed on; and (iv) prolonged price wars and oversupply issues.

### Appendix I

Methodology of our proprietary ESG scoring methodology.

We evaluate the ESG ratings based on quantitative, qualitative and ESG targets. We assign a score for each of these three parameters. The overall rating is based on the weighted average of the scores: quantitative (50%), qualitative (25%) and ESG target (25%).

For the quantitative, qualitative and ESG target, the sub-parameters are assigned a score - '0' for data not available, '+1' for improving trajectory, positive change, 'Yes', better than peers or a positive number if historical is not available and '-1' for declining trajectory, negative change, 'No', lower than peers or a negative number. The total of the scores of all the sub-parameters is divided by the total number of sub-parameters, to derive the score of each of the three parameters.

The sub-parameters may be different for different industries depending on the key areas to monitor for each industry. A company should achieve a minimum score of 50 for an average ESG rating.



FYE 31 Mar	FY23A	FY24A	FY25E	FY26E	FY27E
Key Metrics					
P/E (reported) (x)	nm	617.6	57.4	50.9	42.9
Core P/E (x)	40.0	187.8	57.4	50.9	42.9
Core FD P/E (x)	40.2	nm	57.7	51.2	43.1
P/BV (x)	1.4	2.0	2.2	2.2	2.2
P/NTA (x)	1.4	2.0	2.3	2.2	2.2
Net dividend yield (%)	0.0	0.1	1.0	1.2	1.4
FCF yield (%)	nm	nm	0.7	1.8	2.0
EV/EBITDA (x)	nm	45.2	28.0	25.2	21.7
EV/EBIT (x)	nm	nm	47.9	40.9	33.0
INCOME STATEMENT (MYR m)					
Revenue	2,409.6	1,837.6	2,730.7	2,926.1	3,316.3
EBITDA	(20.0)	177.7	328.2	363.5	419.4
Depreciation	(163.0)	(132.0)	(136.0)	(140.0)	(144.0)
Amortisation	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
EBIT	(183.0)	45.7	192.1	223.5	275.4
Net interest income /(exp)	35.2	53.0	59.5	58.8	58.2
Associates & JV	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Exceptionals	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Other pretax income	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Pretax profit	(214.4)	38.7	251.6	282.3	333.6
Income tax	(24.4)	(18.7)	(60.4)	(67.8)	(80.1)
Minorities	3.7	(7.3)	(7.3)	(7.3)	(7.3)
Discontinued operations	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Reported net profit	(235.1)	12.7	183.9	207.2	246.2
Core net profit	162.4	50.0	183.9	207.2	246.2
DALANCE CHEET (MVD)					
BALANCE SHEET (MYR m)	4 72 4 5	4 427 4	4 424 4	4 547 5	4 (07 7
Cash & Short Term Investments	1,724.5	1,427.4	1,421.4	1,516.5	1,607.7
Accounts receivable	323.5 232.4	386.3 385.7	366.6 263.4	392.8 282.2	445.2
Inventory Reinsurance assets	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	319.8 0.0
Property, Plant & Equip (net)	1,943.1 42.6	1,901.0	1,845.0 45.2	1,785.0 45.2	1,720.9
Intangible assets Investment in Associates & JVs	0.0	45.2 0.0	0.0	0.0	45.2 0.0
Other assets	1,038.9	1,111.7	1,368.8	1,429.4	1,488.9
Total assets	5,304.9	5,257.3	5,310.3	5,451.0	5,627.8
ST interest bearing debt	87.3	62.3	62.3	62.3	62.3
Accounts payable	252.7	316.1	286.4	306.9	347.9
Insurance contract liabilities	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
LT interest bearing debt	62.3	4.3	6.1	36.1	66.1
Other liabilities	244.0	230.0	230.0	230.0	230.0
Total Liabilities	646.6	612.8	584.9	635.4	706.3
Shareholders Equity	4,640.1	4,648.0	4,721.6	4,804.5	4,902.9
Minority Interest	18.3	(3.4)	3.9	11.2	18.6
Total shareholder equity	4,658.4	4,644.6	4,725.5	4,815.7	4,921.5
Total liabilities and equity	5,304.9	5,257.3	5,310.3	5,451.0	5,627.8
CASH FLOW (MYR m)					
Pretax profit	(214.4)	38.7	251.6	282.3	333.6
Depreciation & amortisation	163.0	132.0	136.0	140.0	144.0
Adj net interest (income)/exp	(35.7)	(53.1)	(59.5)	(58.8)	(58.2)
Change in working capital	118.6	(146.9)	(112.3)	(24.6)	(49.1)
Cash taxes paid	(442.3)	(32.7)	(60.4)	(67.8)	(80.1)
Other operating cash flow	374.1	6.7	0.0	0.0	0.0
Cash flow from operations	(36.8)	(55.2)	155.4	271.2	290.2
Capex	(18.5)	(46.7)	(80.0)	(80.0)	(80.0)
Free cash flow	(55.3)	(101.9)	75.4	191.2	210.2
Dividends paid	(239.2)	0.0	(110.3)	(124.3)	(147.7)
Equity raised / (purchased)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Change in Debt	(102.1)	(91.6)	30.0	30.0	30.0
Other invest/financing cash flow	(257.5)	(108.4)	(1.1)	(1.7)	(1.4)
Effect of exch rate changes	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0



FYE 31 Mar	FY23A	FY24A	FY25E	FY26E	FY27E
Key Ratios					
Growth ratios (%)					
Revenue growth	(69.5)	(23.7)	48.6	7.2	13.3
EBITDA growth	nm	nm	84.7	10.8	15.4
EBIT growth	nm	nm	320.6	16.3	23.2
Pretax growth	nm	nm	549.6	12.2	18.1
Reported net profit growth	nm	nm	1,345.3	12.7	18.8
Core net profit growth	(95.0)	(69.2)	267.6	12.7	18.8
Profitability ratios (%)					
EBITDA margin	nm	9.7	12.0	12.4	12.6
EBIT margin	nm	2.5	7.0	7.6	8.3
Pretax profit margin	nm	2.1	9.2	9.6	10.1
Payout ratio	0.0	94.0	60.0	60.0	60.0
DuPont analysis					
Net profit margin (%)	nm	0.7	6.7	7.1	7.4
Revenue/Assets (x)	0.5	0.3	0.5	0.5	0.6
Assets/Equity (x)	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1
ROAE (%)	(4.8)	0.3	3.9	4.4	5.1
ROAA (%)	2.8	0.9	3.5	3.9	4.4
Liquidity & Efficiency					
Cash conversion cycle	55.3	74.6	53.3	43.1	41.8
Days receivable outstanding	55.4	69.5	49.6	46.7	45.5
Days inventory outstanding	52.5	63.9	51.3	41.4	41.5
Days payables outstanding	52.6	58.8	47.6	45.1	45.1
Dividend cover (x)	nm	1.1	1.7	1.7	1.7
Current ratio (x)	6.7	5.9	6.0	6.1	5.9
Leverage & Expense Analysis					
Asset/Liability (x)	8.2	8.6	9.1	8.6	8.0
Net gearing (%) (incl perps)	net cash				
Net gearing (%) (excl. perps)	net cash				
Net interest cover (x)	5.2	na	na	na	na
Debt/EBITDA (x)	nm	0.4	0.2	0.3	0.3
Capex/revenue (%)	0.8	2.5	2.9	2.7	2.4
Net debt/ (net cash)	(1,574.9)	(1,360.8)	(1,353.0)	(1,418.1)	(1,479.3)

Source: Company; Maybank IBG Research



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November 5, 2024



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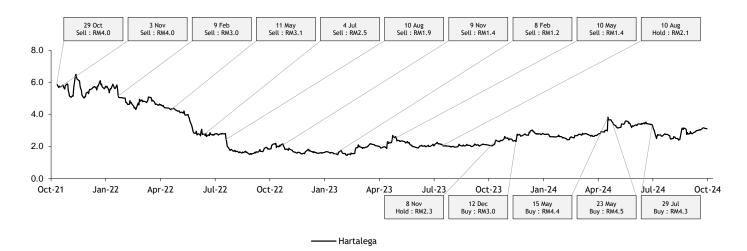
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