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### Upholding accountability: The role of audits in ESG practices

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By Lisa Beth Lentini Walker

In today’s challenging business landscape, environmental, social, and governance (ESG) principles have emerged as a differentiator and guidepost in corporate decision-making. As companies increasingly prioritize impact on climate, ethical conduct, and responsible governance, the need for oversight and accountability mechanisms becomes paramount. With this in mind, the audit function serves an important role in testing, monitoring, and challenging ESG disclosures and transparency.

ESG considerations have evolved from being merely a checkbox on a corporate responsibility list to a more scrutinized strategic planning and risk management component. Stakeholders are now scrutinizing companies not just for financial performance but also for their environmental impact, social initiatives, and governance practices. They are expecting accountability and taking action when activity doesn’t align with statements. This shift in scrutiny underscores the importance of accurate and reliable reporting, which can be supported through effective audits.

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