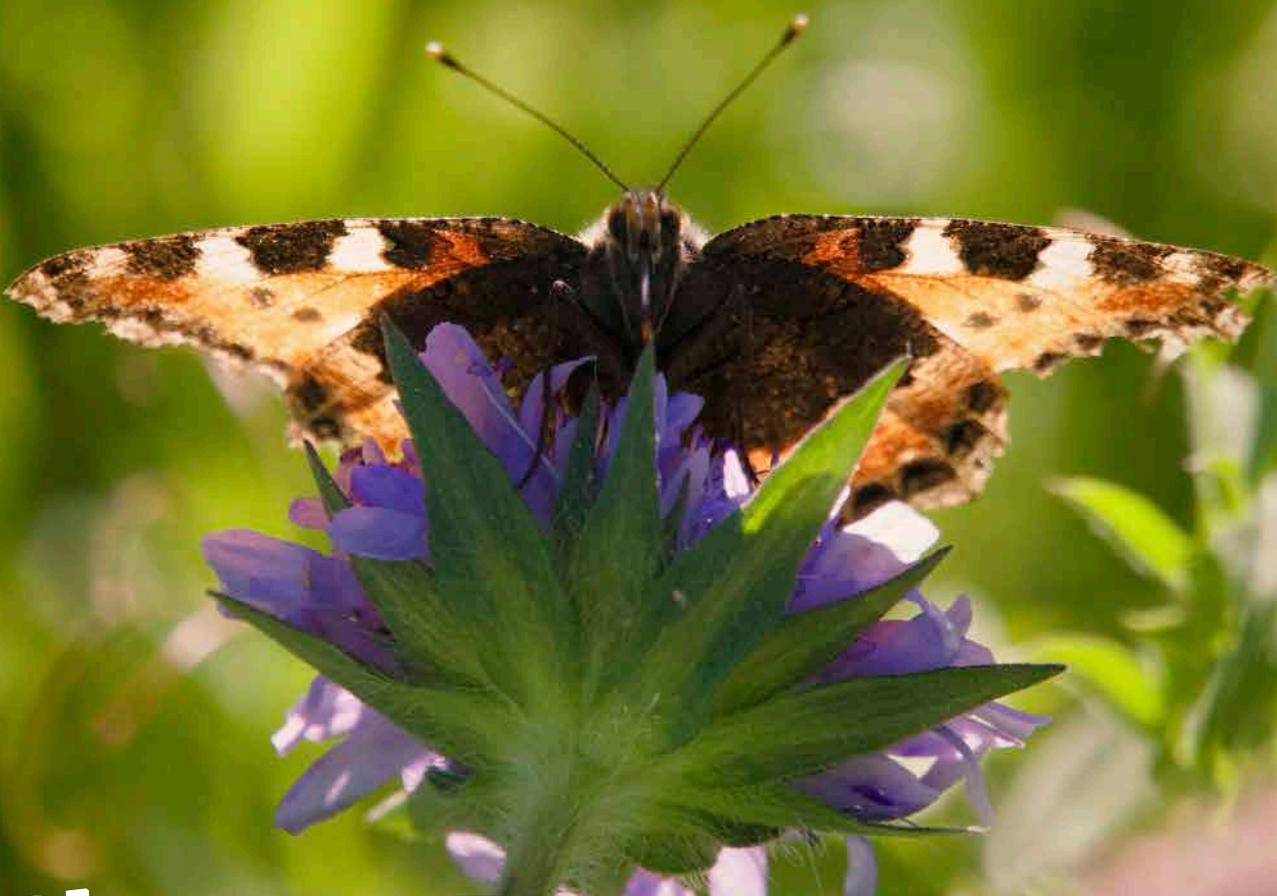




Hosted by

A close-up photograph of a butterfly with orange, black, and white patterned wings perched on a purple flower. The background is a soft-focus green field.

# Chapter Zero New Zealand Impact report 2025

# Table of contents

<b>01</b>	Welcome	Page 3
<b>02</b>	About us	Page 4
<b>03</b>	Highlights	Page 5
<b>04</b>	Impact Model	Page 6
<b>05</b>	Supporting directors' and boards' change	Page 8
<b>06</b>	Monitoring impact	Page 14

Mā te ako ka mārama  
Mā te mārama ka mātau  
Mā te mātau ka ora

*Through learning comes understanding  
Through understanding comes knowledge and wisdom  
Through knowledge and wisdom comes life and wellbeing*

# 01 Welcome

As directors continue to navigate the implications of climate change, the role of governance has never been more central. Chapter Zero New Zealand, hosted by the Institute of Directors as its climate governance forum, exists to support boards to lead with confidence, foresight and integrity in a rapidly changing environment.

This impact report shares highlights from the year to 31 December 2025 and reflects the growing momentum to strengthen climate governance practice across Aotearoa New Zealand. It also highlights the collective effort of directors, supporters and partners working to lift capability and confidence in boardrooms across sectors.

The context for directors this year has been complex and fast-moving. Internationally, climate and sustainability regulation is diverging, with some jurisdictions stepping back from ESG language while others expand expectations for transition planning, due diligence and biodiversity reporting. For New Zealand's trade-exposed economy, these shifts matter deeply: around 70-80% of our export value flows to markets with mandatory or proposed climate disclosure regimes.

At home, directors are operating amid significant policy and regulatory change, while physical climate risk continues to escalate. Weather-related insured losses exceeded NZ\$3 billion across 2023-2024 and some insurers are no longer extending coverage to certain areas. This underscores the impacts already being felt across communities and sectors. These pressures reinforce the importance of strong oversight, credible transition planning and long-term resilience.

Against this backdrop, boards are increasingly expected to provide clear strategic direction and ensure organisations are prepared for the long-term shifts underway. Chapter Zero NZ remains committed to providing practical guidance, trusted insight and opportunities for directors to learn alongside peers as they respond to both risk and opportunity.

We are deeply grateful to the Steering Committee for their commitment and expertise. This year marked an important transition as we farewelled Dame Therese Walsh CFInstD from the role of Chair and founding member Scott St John CFInstD, acknowledging their outstanding contributions. We warmly welcomed Alec Tang MInstD and Brent Goldsack alongside new Chair Ross Buckley CMinstD. We look forward to the next phase of Chapter Zero NZ's leadership and impact.

We are grateful for the continued support of our Foundation Partners – Anthem, Dentons, Hobson Leavy and KPMG – and partner ASB. Alongside our Working Group, their collaboration helps ensure directors have access to high-quality resources, expertise and connections.

Internationally, governance momentum is also changing. At Davos, the World Economic Forum launched new **climate and nature principles** for effective governance, and the Climate Governance Initiative became the Chapter Zero Alliance. Chapter Zero NZ is proud to be part of this wider global movement, while remaining grounded in the unique context of governance in Aotearoa.

We invite you to read this report as a reflection of shared progress and challenges, and as a platform for continued action in the year ahead.

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**Ross Buckley**, CMinstD  
Chair, Chapter Zero NZ Steering Committee

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**Kirsten (KP) Patterson** MNZM, CMinstD  
Chief Executive, Institute of Directors

## 02 About us

### Our mission:

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*“To mobilise, connect, educate and equip directors and boards to make and influence climate-smart governance decisions, creating long-term value for shareholders and stakeholders.”*

Chapter Zero NZ is the Institute of Directors’ climate governance forum and part of the Chapter Zero Alliance (formerly the Climate Governance Initiative), a global network supporting directors to strengthen climate and nature governance.

The IoD hosts Chapter Zero NZ to provide directors with practical resources, guidance and opportunities to engage with peers on the governance implications of climate change. Through events, tools, training and shared learning, Chapter Zero NZ supports directors to meet their duties and strengthen board oversight of climate-related risks and opportunities.

Chapter Zero NZ is open to the wider director community. Joining is free for all directors and governance professionals – not only IoD members – reflecting our commitment to lifting climate governance capability across Aotearoa New Zealand.

Our supporters come from across the director community and bring a range of perspectives and starting points. They share a recognition that climate

and nature-related issues are increasingly material to long-term value and are committed to strengthening board oversight of the risks, opportunities and strategic decisions they create.

In 2025, our priorities included transition planning, target-setting and improving the understanding of climate-related impacts. These themes were supported by a focus on nature and innovation, and by a strong global outlook shaped through the Chapter Zero Alliance network and broader international collaboration and insight.

We have three strategic goals that guide our activities:

1. New Zealand directors are developing the key competencies required to ensure their boards make climate-smart decisions
2. Chapter Zero NZ is connecting and engaging the director community
3. Chapter Zero NZ is a valued partner in the climate governance ecosystem

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### Foundation Partners



### Partner



**Working Group, Collaborators and Technical Advisors:** Anthem, CAANZ, Deloitte, Dentons New Zealand, Earth Sciences NZ, EY, Hobson Leavy, Kantar, KPMG, Ministry for the Environment, Sustainable Business Council, The Aotearoa Circle, Toitū Tahua – the Centre for Sustainable Finance and XRB.

# 03 Highlights

For the period 1 January to 31 December 2025

**2,720+**

Chapter Zero NZ supporters

**3,450+**

followers on **LinkedIn**

**2,730+**

event registrations

Eight submissions on climate-related policy and legislation prepared

**12**

in-person events hosted in four cities

**10**

online events hosted

**12%**

increase in Chapter Zero NZ supporters

**23%**

growth in **LinkedIn** followers

**34%**

increase in online event registrations (average per event)

Four bespoke resources published

**2**

online events co-hosted with Climate Governance Initiative Hong Kong

Website migrated to be hosted on the loD platform

# 04 Impact Model



Image by: Getty Images on Unsplash

Chapter Zero NZ's impact can be understood across a set of connected layers, each reflecting a different level of influence. Our work sits primarily within the director change layer, where we have the greatest ability to support learning, confidence and action. Change at this level helps shape the next layer – board change – as directors take insights and tools back into governance discussions and decision-making. The organisational change layer reflects broader shifts within organisations over time. While Chapter Zero NZ contributes to this wider system, outcomes at this level cannot be attributed to our work alone.

Chapter Zero NZ has been built on a strong base of partners, collaborators, subject-matter experts and experienced directors who support our kaupapa. We deliver practical resources and learning opportunities grounded in the New Zealand governance context, informed by emerging practice across the Chapter Zero network.

As our community has grown, we have expanded our reach through more online events, strengthened director-to-director engagement, and contributed to wider governance conversations through submissions and collaboration across the climate governance ecosystem.

Over the past year, our focus has continued to shift from awareness and planning towards action and application. This has included deeper support on transition planning, sustainability reporting and

strengthening understanding of how climate-related change is shaping trade exposure, risk oversight, strategic direction and capital allocation. We have also placed greater emphasis on climate risk and opportunities being embedded into core governance processes, including strategy, audit and risk oversight, and assurance, rather than treating it as a standalone issue.

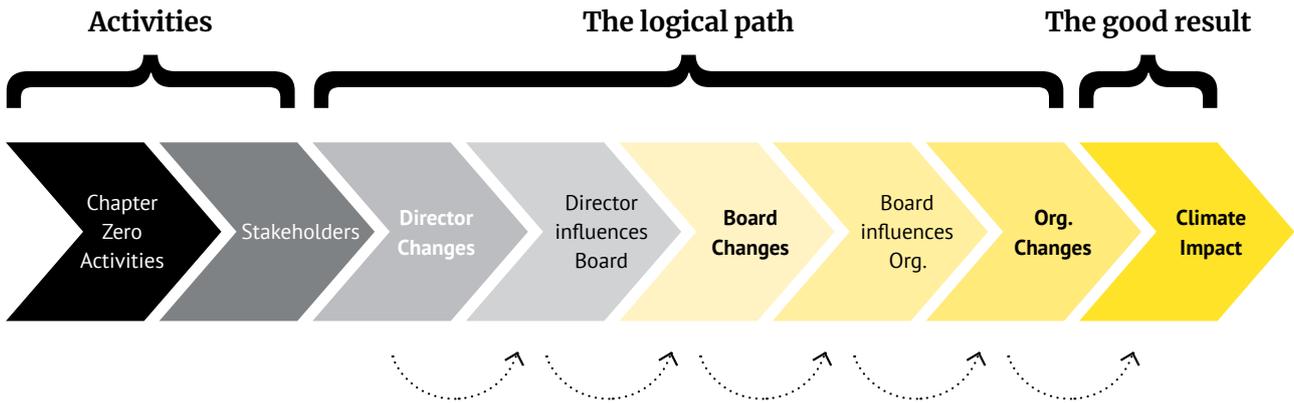
This move towards practical boardroom application was reflected in the 2025 Climate Forum, which incorporated a live board scenario and was complemented by an increased use of case studies in our newsletters throughout the year.

Our Impact Model provides an ongoing framework for reflecting on where we are making the greatest difference, and where further support is needed as expectations, risks and opportunities continue to evolve.

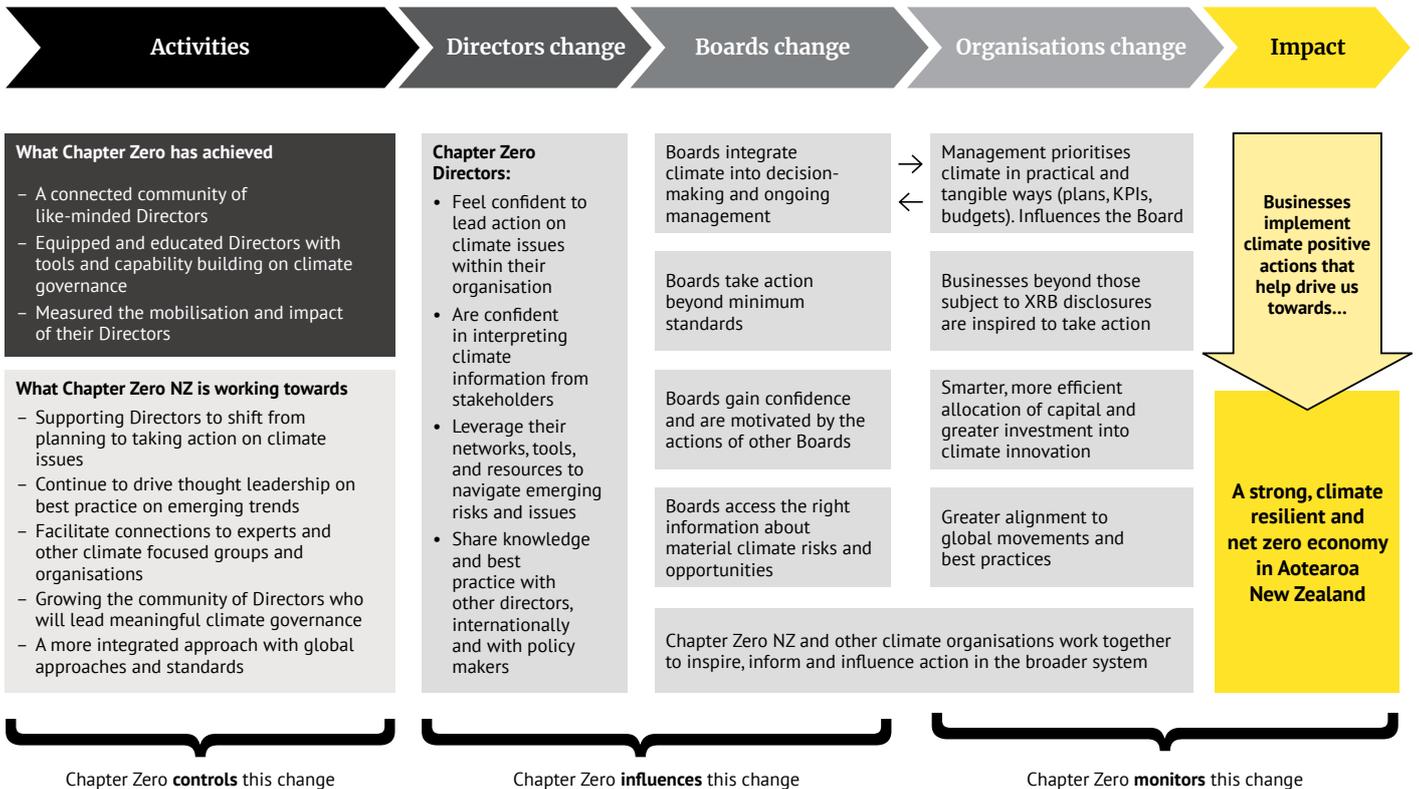
## What Chapter Zero is working towards

- Supporting directors to shift from planning to taking action on climate issues
- Continuing to drive thought leadership on best practice on emerging trends
- Facilitating connections to experts and other climate-focused groups and organisations
- Growing the community of directors who will lead meaningful climate governance
- A more integrated approach with global approaches and standards

## The core of Chapter Zero NZ's Impact Model



## Chapter Zero NZ Impact Model



# 05 Supporting directors' and boards' change

## a) Leading action on climate issues

### Bespoke Resources

#### **Sustainability reporting: A guide for boards and leadership**

Developed in collaboration with KPMG, with expert contributions from Dentons and Anthem, this interactive guide provides boards with a practical, step-by-step approach to sustainability reporting. Designed for both reporting and non-reporting entities, it helps directors navigate evolving frameworks, build internal capability, avoid greenwashing risks, and ensure reporting creates strategic value rather than becoming a compliance exercise.

#### **Leading the charge: A director's guide to energy transition**

Produced in association with Dentons with expert contribution from Jonathan Kay CMIInstD, this resource offers directors practical guidance on navigating New Zealand's energy transition. Combining national and international insights with real-world case studies, it supports boards to understand the strategic, regulatory and economic dimensions of transition, ask better questions, and take "no regrets" actions to build resilience and competitiveness.

#### **Stewardship and sustainability guide**

Developed by Chapter Zero NZ for the Christian Savings Conference, this guide supports faith-based boards to navigate climate and nature-related governance responsibilities through a values-based lens of stewardship and intergenerational care. It outlines key physical, transition and reputational risks, and provides practical steps to embed environmental oversight into strategy, risk management and board practice.

#### **Climate change: Science snapshot 2025 – An overview for New Zealand directors**

Developed in partnership with Earth Sciences NZ, this guide provides directors with a clear, science-based overview of how the climate is changing globally and in Aotearoa. It distils complex evidence into a concise format, helping boards understand physical climate drivers, sectoral impacts, and how scientific insight can inform strategy, risk oversight and decision-making.

### Workshops, webinars and site visits

In 2025, we significantly expanded our webinar programme, increasing from four to 10 online events. This included a popular three-part transition planning series co-hosted with Alec Tang MInstD from KPMG, as well as two joint webinars with Climate Governance Initiative Hong Kong focused on nature and transition planning.

We also continued to deliver practical, director-focused engagement through climate governance workshops based on the Chapter Zero NZ Board Toolkit. Three workshops were held during the year, with two incorporating site visits to the Rosedale Wastewater Treatment Plant and Watercare's Māngere Wastewater Treatment Plant, providing directors with the opportunity to see climate action and resilience planning in practice.

Through the IoD branch network, climate governance events were also run in Christchurch and Auckland, with a focus on decarbonisation and the implications for directors and boards.

Additional highlights included a well-attended event hosted by foundation partner Hobson Leavy on building a high-performing, climate-capable board, reflecting the growing focus on governance capability and board readiness across the director community.

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*“Climate and nature are no longer the domain of activists or policymakers. They are governance issues, business issues and economic issues.”*

– **Ross Buckley CMIInstD, Chapter Zero NZ Steering Committee Chair**



## Thought leadership

We share case studies, insights and practical governance guidance through the monthly Chapter Zero NZ newsletter, alongside our website and LinkedIn presence. Together, these channels support directors and boards to stay informed on the evolving climate and sustainability landscape and to strengthen governance leadership in this area.

We also contribute climate- and nature-related content through the IoD's wider communications, including the online Boardroom platform and the CEO's fortnightly Director Download e-newsletter, helping to connect Chapter Zero NZ insights with the broader director community.

Throughout 2025 we published and shared articles focused on the governance implications of climate-related change, with an emphasis on integrating these issues into core boardroom disciplines. Topics included risk oversight, sustainability reporting, supply

chain disruption, asset management, energy transition, investment, innovation and organisational resilience, as well as the strategic and regulatory dimensions of transition planning.

Our digital engagement continued to grow over the year. The Chapter Zero NZ newsletter reaches more than 2,300 subscribers, and our LinkedIn community expanded to over 3,450 followers, reflecting strong interest in practical, director-focused climate governance content.

In December, Chapter Zero NZ transitioned to a new home on the main IoD website. Supporters can still access us through [www.chapterzero.nz](http://www.chapterzero.nz), which now redirects to a new landing page within the IoD site. This move has made it easier to find climate resources, register for events and search all governance content in one place. Chapter Zero NZ's content remains open-access and easy to navigate, supported by a more seamless user experience and enhanced search functionality.

Image by:  
Annie Spratt on Unsplash

## b) Gaining confidence in interpreting climate information

### Professional development

#### **Climate Governance Forum**

In 2025, we delivered our second Climate Governance Forum, bringing directors together for a full-day programme focused on the practical governance challenges and opportunities of climate change and the transition ahead. Held in-person and online, the forum provided a valuable opportunity for directors to hear from experienced governance leaders and subject-matter experts, and to engage with peers on what climate-smart decision-making looks like in today's boardrooms.

Sessions throughout the day explored the realities of navigating transition headwinds, the emerging adaptation landscape, and the strategic role boards play in shaping resilience, investment and long-term competitiveness. The programme included insights on innovation opportunities such as geothermal and green hydrogen, as well as a dedicated session on directors' duties and the evolving legal and fiduciary context.

A key feature of the forum was an interactive live board scenario, giving participants the opportunity to test climate governance decision-making in a simulated boardroom setting. The day concluded with a forward-looking perspective on electrification and the opportunities for climate innovation in Aotearoa.

A **Climate Forum Reader** featuring curated articles and resources was also prepared to support directors and their organisations to strengthen governance oversight and apply insights beyond the event.

#### **Climate Governance Credential**

Climate literacy is an increasingly important area of lifelong learning for directors as organisations face growing expectations to navigate climate-related risks and opportunities.

In 2025, we launched our first digital badge: the Climate Governance Credential. Available exclusively to IoD members, this annual credential enables directors to demonstrate an ongoing commitment to climate governance learning and capability.

To qualify, members complete 10 CPD points in climate-related learning, including structured and unstructured activities within the IoD's existing CPD framework.

The credential provides a visible signal of responsible governance and can be shared as a verified digital badge through Credly by Pearson, supporting directors to showcase their learning to stakeholders and peers.

#### **Climate Change Governance Essentials course**

The Climate Change Governance Essentials (CCGE) course continues to support directors seeking a deeper understanding of climate governance. Accredited through the Chapter Zero Alliance, CCGE is independently reviewed to ensure it remains practical, relevant and aligned with evolving expectations of directors.

Delivered in a blended learning format, the course provides participants with tools, resources and guidance, alongside opportunities to apply learning through a case study and facilitated workshop. This supports directors to build confidence in integrating climate considerations into strategy, risk oversight and boardroom decision-making. In 2025, we delivered three on-line and three in-house courses.

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*“I realise that this is an ever-changing area and also a complex area, but it gave me the foundation to know what I don't know and where to go...”*

– CCGE course participant, 2025

## c) Leveraging networks, tools and resources

### Regional events

In 2025, Chapter Zero NZ expanded its director engagement beyond Auckland, delivering climate governance events across Wellington, Christchurch and Auckland. This year's programme placed a stronger emphasis on deeper-dive conversations, bringing directors together to explore how climate and sustainability are reshaping governance, strategy, risk oversight and long-term value.

In March, we hosted Minister of Climate Change Hon Simon Watts alongside the newly appointed Chair of the Climate Change Commission, Rt Hon Dame Patsy Reddy DistFInstD, for a discussion on climate policy, economic thinking and the evolving transition landscape.

In May, former Minister for Climate Change Hon James Shaw MInstD joined directors in Wellington to examine how boards can navigate short-term uncertainty while maintaining focus on long-term climate risks, resilience and competitiveness.

We held our first major Christchurch event in August, featuring David Downs CMIInstD, CEO of New Zealand Story, and a panel of local governance leaders exploring how sustainability, purpose and positioning can strengthen trust, reputation and global advantage.

In November, we welcomed global corporate sustainability leader Michael Kobori, former Chief Sustainability Officer at Starbucks and VP of Sustainability at Levi Strauss & Co, for a fireside discussion with Ross Buckley CMIInstD on how boards can embed sustainability into core business strategy and translate values into performance.

Together, these events reflected the growing demand from directors for practical, boardroom-relevant insight and peer learning as expectations continue to evolve.

### Steering Committee

Chapter Zero NZ is guided by a **Steering Committee** of experienced governance and business leaders who volunteer their time, energy and expertise to support this work. Representing a broad range of sectors and perspectives, they provide the IoD with invaluable insight into the climate- and nature-related challenges being navigated at board tables across Aotearoa.

The Steering Committee also supports Chapter Zero NZ's events, submissions and director engagement by contributing to discussions, connecting with supporters, and helping to identify priority areas for directors.

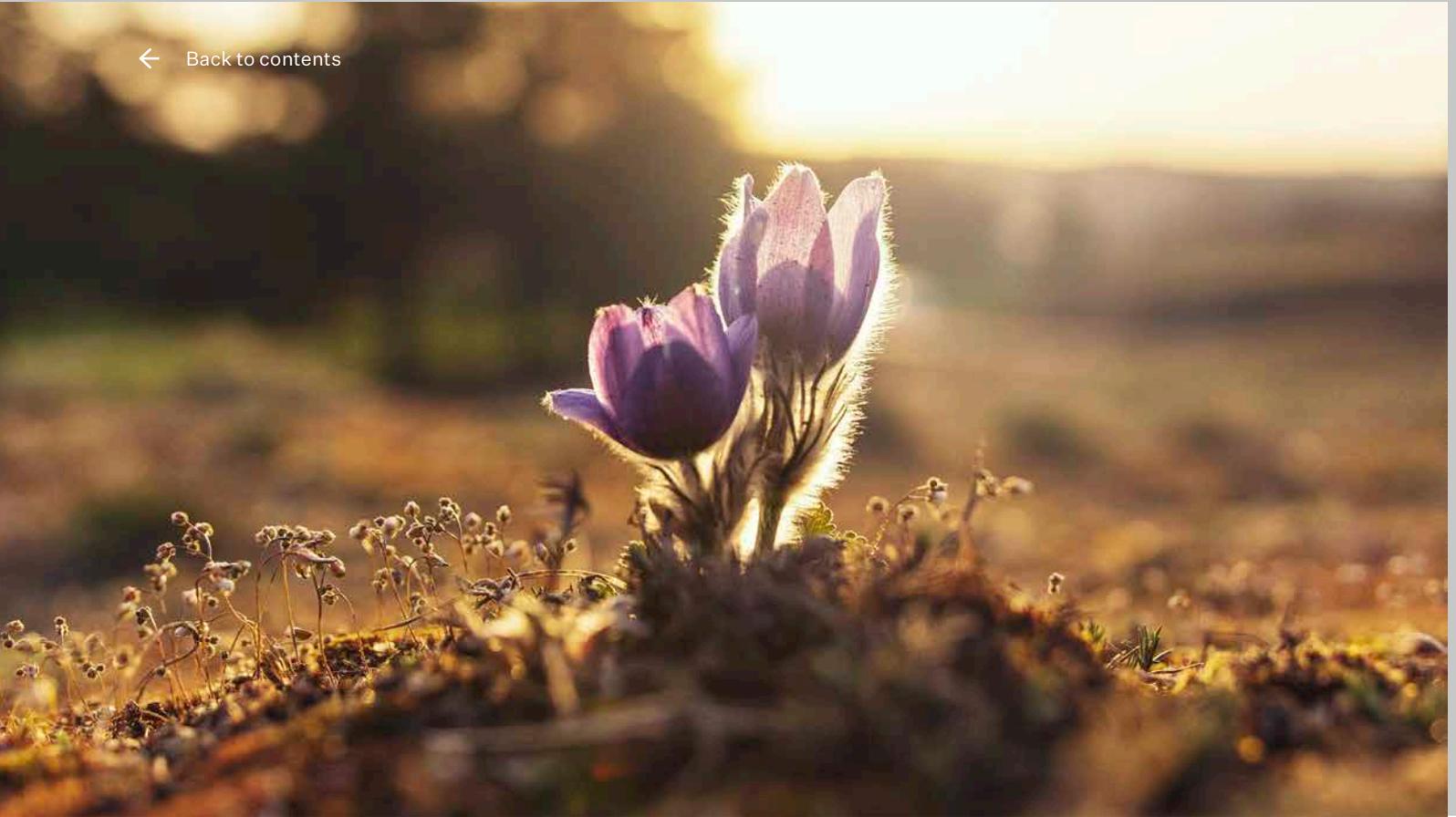
### Working Group and collaborators

Chapter Zero NZ is supported by a Working Group made up of representatives from foundation partners, technical advisors and other organisations contributing to climate knowledge and capability. The Working Group brings valuable experience and practical insight to support the development of resources, articles, reports and director-focused events.

Alongside this group, we have collaborated with a wide range of directors and organisations to support the delivery of webinars, the production and sharing of guidance, and the strengthening of connections across the climate governance ecosystem. These partnerships help promote the exchange of ideas, emerging practice and practical approaches to the challenges and opportunities of climate change.

### Part of the global network

Launched in March 2022, Chapter Zero NZ became part of the global Climate Governance Initiative, now the **Chapter Zero Alliance**. Today, the Alliance connects 34 chapters, with more than 100,000 members across over 70 countries. Being part of this international network provides valuable opportunities for collaboration, shared learning and the exchange of emerging governance practice across jurisdictions.



## Relationships

In hosting Chapter Zero NZ, one of the IoD's aims is to contribute meaningfully to New Zealand's climate response through a strong governance lens. We continue to build relationships across the public sector, government agencies, academic institutions, think tanks and scientific bodies, as well as with experts and communities working on climate and nature-related challenges. Engaging with a broad range of stakeholders enables the IoD to help translate a growing body of knowledge into practical, board-relevant guidance.

Working alongside other organisations also supports shared understanding of the role of directors in climate governance. These connections strengthen the development of useful resources and help reinforce the importance of collaboration, co-leadership and an effective board-management partnership in navigating transition and resilience.

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*“We’re doing this to grow our business; to manage risk, drive productivity and unlock value. As long as we stay focused on that, we can’t be accused of doing the wrong thing.”*

– **Michael Kobori, Chapter Zero NZ breakfast, November 2025**

## IoD Leadership Conference

Nature featured prominently at the 2025 IoD Leadership Conference through two dedicated sessions. In a Fast Facts presentation, Izzy Fenwick MInstD invited directors to consider nature as every organisation's most critical supplier – underpinning water, land and air systems – yet one that has too often been treated as free and limitless. As climate change places increasing pressure on ecosystems, she encouraged boards to lift capability, demand better data, and embed nature-related considerations into governance and risk oversight.

The conference also included an interactive breakout session hosted by Aotearoa Circle, *Exposing nature-related risks hiding in plain sight*. Using a staged mock board scenario, directors explored how nature dependencies can create material operational, financial and insurance impacts, even in sectors not traditionally seen as nature dependent.

Together, these sessions offered practical insight into how boards can begin integrating nature-related risk into strategy, enterprise risk management and board agendas.

Image by:  
Ales Maze on Unsplash

## d) Sharing knowledge and best practice

### Advocacy and support

Our submission and advocacy work remains an important way to ensure the director voice and a climate governance perspective are reflected in the development of climate legislation, regulation and policy.

In 2025, Chapter Zero NZ made eight submissions across key climate reporting, assurance and sustainable finance reforms. Early in the year, we provided feedback to the Financial Markets Authority (FMA) on proposed amendments to assurance requirements and temporary class exemptions for climate-reporting entities. We also contributed to the development of New Zealand's draft sustainable finance strategy through a submission to the Centre for Sustainable Finance.

A significant focus of our advocacy related to climate-related disclosure settings, including director liability provisions, reporting thresholds and the need for a balanced approach that supports high-quality reporting while enabling directors to fulfil their duties with confidence. This included submissions to MBIE on capital markets reform, feedback to the External Reporting Board on international alignment and proposed amendments to climate and assurance standards, and further engagement with the FMA on exemptions for entities incorporated in foreign jurisdictions.

In December, we made a submission to the Finance and Expenditure Committee supporting reforms to clarify and reduce director liability settings in climate reporting.

Alongside our written advocacy, we continued to engage directly with key decision-makers, including meetings with the Minister for Climate Change.

### Knowledge exchange

Alongside the resources we produced, we shared a wide range of national and international research, reports and governance insights through our articles, newsletters and communications. These perspectives helped directors stay informed on emerging climate and nature governance practice, including New Zealand's evolving climate reporting regime, sustainable finance and investment trends, insurer expectations, supply chain disruption, and the governance implications of adaptation and resilience.

We also drew on insights from **Governing in the Age of Disruption: Climate Change**, a report developed through the Global Network of Director Institutes. Authored by the Institute of Directors New Zealand as part of this global collaboration, it draws on international director perspectives to explore how boards are responding to climate-related risks, disclosure expectations and strategic opportunities. It provides practical questions to help boards strengthen climate oversight and navigate long-term climate risk and opportunity.

The materials we highlighted drew from government, regulators, research bodies and leading global initiatives. This included reports from the Ministry for the Environment, NZIER and Te Waihanganga, alongside international board-focused guidance from organisations such as the Cambridge Institute for Sustainability Leadership, the World Business Council for Sustainable Development and the Taskforce on Nature-related Financial Disclosures.

We shared insights from professional services and sector leaders, including KPMG, Marsh, Hobson Leavy, Mindful Money, the Sustainable Business Council, Dentons, Forsyth Barr, Anthem and Aurecon, supported by contributions from collaborators across law, communications and sustainability practice.

Together, these resources complemented our own work and supported directors to ask better questions, anticipate change and embed climate and nature considerations into strategy, risk oversight and long-term value. They also reflect our ongoing role in translating key international developments into board-relevant insight for the New Zealand director community.

# 06 Monitoring impact

## Director Sentiment Survey 2025

The annual *Director Sentiment Survey 2025*, produced by the IoD and ASB, has been collecting data from directors for 12 years on a wide range of governance issues. The survey provides valuable insights into core focus areas, priorities and emerging challenges. The 2025 survey was conducted in August and September and captured the views of 900 respondents.

In addition to monitoring key metrics such as supporter growth and event engagement (refer page 5), the Director Sentiment Survey is used to measure and track climate governance and Chapter Zero NZ's broader impact across the IoD's 10,700+ members.

### Economic performance

Directors were asked to select up to three factors they viewed as the biggest impediments to national economic performance. In 2025, the top three were global economic growth/geopolitical uncertainty (45.2%), political/policy uncertainty (40.9%) and cost of living/inflation (40.3%). Productivity was also a major concern (29.5%). Climate change was selected by 5.8% of directors, indicating it was less prominent than immediate economic and geopolitical pressures.

Directors were also asked to identify the single biggest organisational risk facing their organisation. In 2025, the top risks were economic conditions (20.2%), political/policy uncertainty (14.2%) and global economic growth/geopolitical uncertainty (11.4%). Demand, which had ranked highest in 2024, dropped to 8.8%. Impacts of natural hazards/climate change were selected by 1.4% of directors as their organisation's single biggest risk.

### Strategic issues

Directors selected up to three key strategic issues their boards were paying attention to. Balancing short-term viability with long-term issues was again the top strategic issue (62%). AI and digital acceleration ranked second (38.5%), while changing stakeholder expectations and behaviours ranked third (36.6%), down from recent years.

The increasing costs and impacts of natural hazards and climate change were identified by 12.7% of

directors as a top strategic issue. Government organisations were the only group to rank climate change impacts within their top three priorities (28.6%), highlighting sector differences.

The survey indicates that natural hazard and climate-related impacts remain on board agendas but are being weighed alongside other strategic pressures.

### Climate governance in board practice

Short-term pressures appear to be pushing climate and environmental issues further down the board agenda. However, the Director Sentiment Survey shows a substantial proportion of boards continue to engage on these issues, even amid ongoing financial and operational constraints:

- 41.7% of directors said their boards regularly discuss environmental or nature impacts and dependencies
- 36.6% reported being engaged and proactive on climate change risks and practices
- 24.4% said their organisations voluntarily report on climate, nature or sustainability risks
- 45.6% said their boards regularly review the adequacy of their approach to physical climate and environmental risks, such as storms, floods and droughts

Taken together, the findings reinforce the need for embedding climate and environmental considerations within core enterprise risk management and board assurance processes, rather than treating them as standalone or episodic issues. As physical impacts intensify, boards will need consistent governance rhythms to test preparedness and resilience over time.

Organisational differences were also evident, with listed companies and local authorities generally more engaged, reflecting greater exposure to regulatory expectations and physical risk.

While the 2025 results suggest that board engagement has softened across several measures, many directors continue to prioritise climate and environmental oversight.

### Not-for-profit insights

Not-for-profit directors made up 29.6% of the 900 respondents to the 2025 Director Sentiment Survey, providing a snapshot of governance across the sector.

The separate Not-for-profit Insights report highlights notable variations between NFP directors and the wider governance community, including in climate and environmental engagement.

- 33.7% of NFP directors reported their boards regularly discuss environmental impacts and dependencies, compared with 46.0% across all other organisations.
- 25.5% of NFP directors said their boards were engaged and proactive on climate change risks and practices, compared with 42.3% across all other organisations
- 11.1% of NFP directors said their organisations report on climate-related risks and impacts, up slightly from 9.3% in 2024, though still lower than other organisations.

These results suggest that while climate governance is emerging within the sector, NFP boards remain more strongly focused on their specifically defined purpose and social value, with wider sustainability considerations still developing within governance oversight.

## Summary

Climate change remains an enduring issue for boards, but one that can slip down the agenda during periods of financial and operational pressure and uncertainty. The complexity of the challenge, pace of change and long-time horizons continue to be barriers to sustained action.

The Director Sentiment Survey results reflect the wider global picture, with economic and geopolitical concerns dominating boardroom focus, even as climate-related physical impacts and disruption continue to intensify.

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## Climate Forum pulse survey

A pulse survey conducted at the 2025 IoD and Chapter Zero NZ Climate Forum, undertaken in partnership with Hobson Leavy, provided a snapshot of how directors are approaching climate governance capability and oversight.

Just under half of respondents (49.4%) said their board includes climate or sustainability capability in its skills matrix, while 40.4% reported it does not and 10.1% said it is planned. Responsibility for climate governance also varied: 35.6% said the full board leads oversight, while others pointed to management, the chair, a committee chair or a designated climate champion. One in five respondents (20%) reported no clear leadership responsibility.

Nearly half (47.1%) said their board approaches climate primarily through a risk management lens, while 36.8% balance risk and opportunity and 16.1% focus mainly on opportunity and value creation.

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## Climate Change Governance Essentials

The Climate Change Governance Essentials course continues to support directors to build practical capability in climate governance. In 2025, we delivered six courses – three public courses and three delivered in-house – and analysed participant feedback across the year.

Participants were asked whether the course activities deepened their understanding of the content being discussed. An average of 95.5% of participants either agreed or strongly agreed.

Participants were also asked whether they came away with new learnings and knowledge they could apply in their role. An average of 95.5% of participants either agreed or strongly agreed.

These results highlight the ongoing value of structured climate governance learning in strengthening director confidence, understanding and boardroom application.

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## Conclusion

Taken together, the monitoring metrics provide a fuller picture of climate governance progress and pressure in 2025. Participation indicators show strong and growing engagement with Chapter Zero NZ's work, including supporter growth, increased on-line event registrations and continued uptake of practical resources and learning opportunities.

At the same time, the Director Sentiment Survey highlights that board-level attention to environmental oversight and proactive climate governance softened across several measures, suggesting constrained capacity and competing priorities in a challenging operating environment. The modest rise in voluntary reporting, alongside new baseline measures on physical risk preparedness, indicates that expectations around climate accountability continue to increase, even as consistency of governance practice remains uneven and governance capability and accountability structures continue to evolve.

Overall, these insights reinforce the ongoing demand for practical and peer-to-peer director support and the importance of embedding climate and environmental considerations into core boardroom processes and capability development over time.

# About Chapter Zero New Zealand

The Institute of Directors New Zealand (IoD) is proud to host Chapter Zero New Zealand, the national chapter of the Chapter Zero Alliance. Chapter Zero NZ supports directors to strengthen climate and nature governance in the boardroom, equipping boards with the knowledge, tools and confidence to respond to evolving risks, opportunities and long-term value considerations.

Chapter Zero NZ is grateful for the support of our key partners, who provide guidance and expertise to help us serve the director community.

## Key contact:

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Institute of Directors  
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## Foundation Partners



## Partner

