

# Empowering board directors to drive climate action

*Director perspectives from across the globe*

**Global Impact Study Findings 2025**





# Introducing the Climate Governance Initiative

**Our mission is to mobilise corporate boards around the world to accelerate the transition to net zero and build climate resilience.**

The Climate Governance Initiative works with a global network of board directors across diverse sectors and industries. Our Chapters are active worldwide and currently reach over 100,000 board directors.

Through this expanding network, we are working towards a future where all major boards have climate capability. The Climate Governance Initiative promotes the implementation of the [World Economic Forum Principles for Effective Climate Governance](#).

Huge progress has already been made in helping board members to steer their organisations towards a sustainable future.

Our ongoing role is to support our network in delivering further sustainability imperatives and to engage a wider pool of board directors to move forward with us on this journey. Behind all of our activities lies a single, driving question: "What if every company had a climate target and a plan to meet it?"

The Climate Governance Initiative and Kantar, the world's leading tech-enabled marketing data and analytics company, have collaborated on this research to understand the impact of the Initiative's work through its global network, and how board members around the world are empowered to deliver climate impact in their organisations.



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# The board opportunity to influence sustainability is clear



Our study finds that, with regard to sustainability, board directors feel they are well positioned to have a tangible impact on their organisation's direction.

In addition, 89% of board directors surveyed believe it is part of their role to influence their board on climate action. They use this influence to help integrate climate into the board's business strategy, as well as to mitigate risks. The climate context also presents opportunities for innovation and business growth.

To implement this well, however, the vast majority (88%) of board directors recognise that addressing climate challenges requires new forms of leadership from the boardroom.

**96%** of board directors believe their board is able to influence their organisation's direction on climate change.

Board motivations: board directors' opinions	Agree*
Climate requires new forms of thinking and leadership from the boardroom, the executive and the workforce	88%
Climate represents opportunity and innovation for business	84%
The risk associated with greenwashing is felt keenly across the board. By greenwashing we mean making false or misleading statements about the environmental benefits of a product or practice.	76%
Climate is driving new forms of collaboration and partnerships	75%
Climate will transform our business model over the longer term	69%
Climate is central to our policy agenda and government relations	56%
Climate is central to our business strategy today	55%
Climate is primarily a matter of regulation and compliance	38%

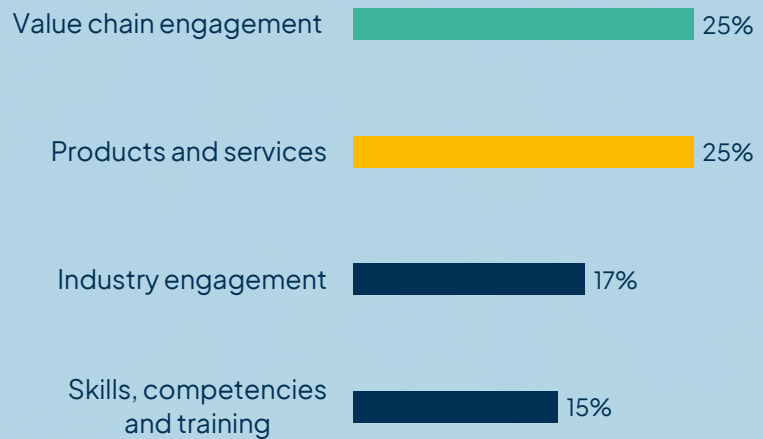
“We have our board of directors trained in the ESG space because there are new risk factors that we are held liable for.”

**Board Director, Singapore**

We can see from the table on the previous page that the climate challenge offers a platform to introduce novel behaviours, to develop new internal corporate skills and to leverage these for growth. However, evolving thinking, adopting new leadership, collaboration techniques and setting up new partnerships and business models are, by their very nature, new areas for many.

There are several climate issues which are high priorities for the board, but where board members feel less able to wield influence: notably value chain and product and services development. This is exactly why the Climate Governance Initiative exists: to help bridge this gap, shape new skills and to help smooth the transition to sustainability-driven business models.

**Size of gap between perceived issue importance x ability to influence:**

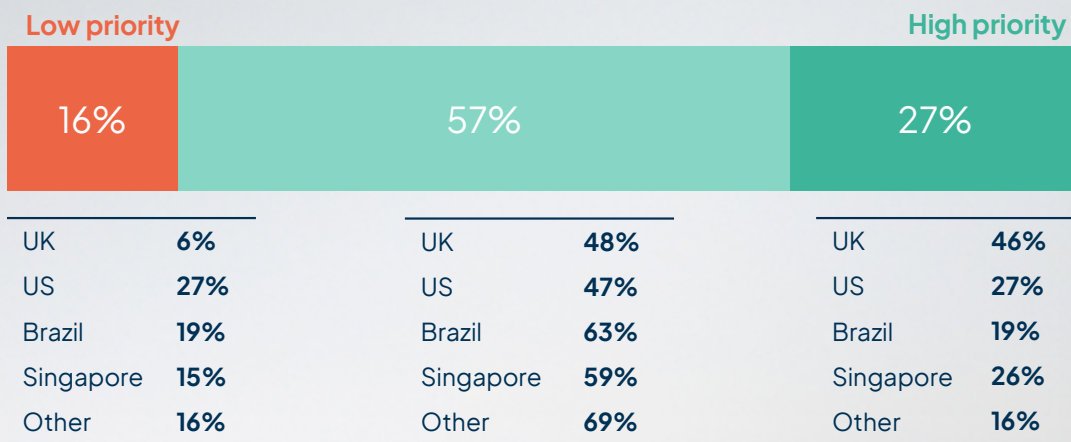


# Given the opportunities it offers, climate is seen by boards as a strong and important priority

A significant majority of board directors (**84%**) say that climate action is a mid-high priority on their board's agenda.

However, the challenge for many businesses remains in transforming this openness around sustainability into informed climate action. To address the value-action gap, it is critical to provide support as businesses progress on their sustainability journeys.

## How much is climate action seen as a priority by the board?



“The existing construct of the board lacks a certain degree of awareness and understanding in the space, so I should help educate and bridge that.”

**Board Director, UK**

“Climate is fundamental to our business plan, and I would not be an effective board member if I would not work closely with the board on climate challenges, opportunities and transition.”

**Board Director, UK**

# Engagement with local Chapters drives boardroom action on sustainability



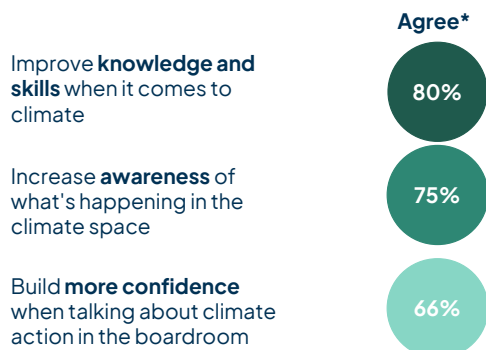
Amongst board directors who are a part of the Climate Governance Initiative’s global network, 60% report that they are “highly engaged” with their local Chapter.

Additionally, self-reported engagement is even higher (78%) for those who have been a member for over a year, demonstrating that Chapter members find this an increasingly beneficial and rewarding relationship over time.

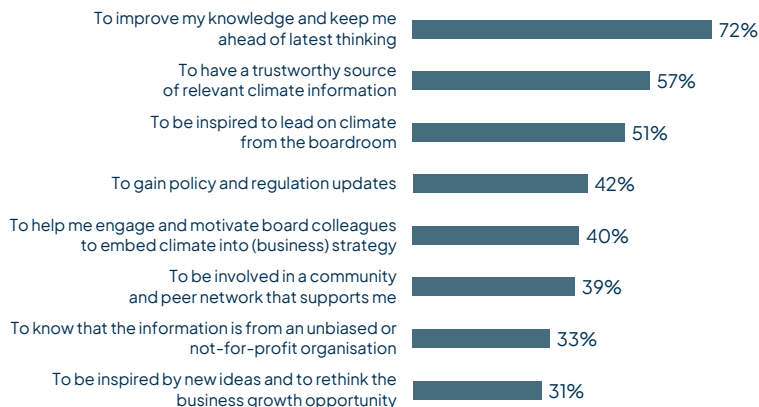
At a macro level, Chapter members report three overall benefit areas which their local Chapter’s tools, resources and events have enabled within their businesses.

Board directors report the most significant impact of engaging with Chapter content has been: firstly, to improve their knowledge of climate issues, secondly to ensure that this knowledge is kept up to date. Beyond the benefits of the tangible materials themselves, a the third benefit is to offer inspiration and to motivate the board directors in their efforts to effect positive change.

## Engaging in local Chapter’s tools, resources and events helped board directors...



## Which are the most important when it comes to engagement with your Chapter?



“For me, the best part about the Initiative is having instant access to globally leading materials, activities and programmes – this resonates with people in my position.”

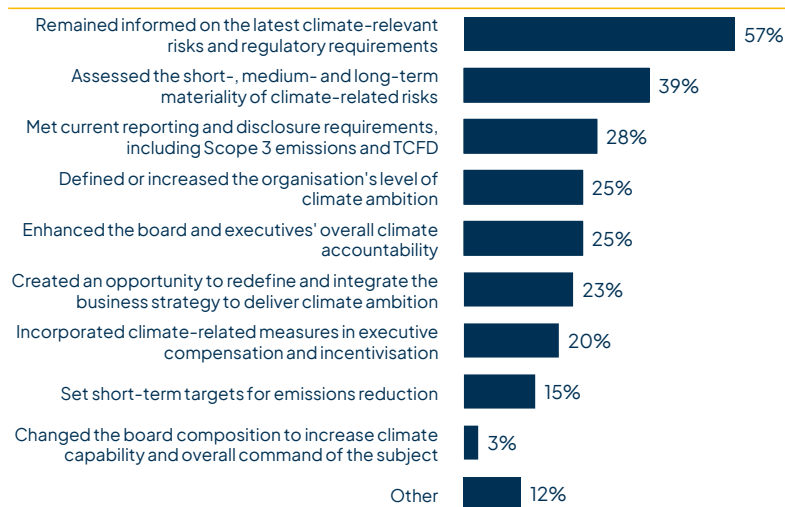
**Board Director, Singapore**

# From providing support, to measuring impact



The main actions taken in the boardroom that have been driven by engagement with the local Chapter include: staying up to date on the latest climate risks and regulatory requirements (57%) and assessing the materiality of climate-related risks (39%).

## Actions taken in the boardroom assisted by engagement with the local Chapter



“Chapter Zero (the Chapter in the UK) has helped me share climate news, environmental webinars and live events with board colleagues.”

**Board Director, UK**

In terms of impact, **44%** of board directors report having taken action in the boardroom as a direct result of inspirational engagement with local Chapters.

This increases to:



when board directors have been a member for longer than one year.

And to:



when board directors are highly engaged with their local Chapter.

“I’ve found it’s very useful to exchange the challenges and opportunities in climate.”

**Board Director, Brazil**

# Influencing continuous climate action in businesses

When it comes to areas of focus for 2025, board members reported that they will prioritise strategy and business models alongside oversight and reporting, in addition to other key focus areas pertaining to climate and sustainability.

The finding that board directors are focused on considering climate in the context of overall business strategy is particularly significant, and is likely to be effective in making impactful change.

Key focus areas pertaining to climate and sustainability include:



Our role as the Climate Governance Initiative is to continue to provide support in those key areas that our members have identified as important to them, and which can benefit from external support.

Board members reported that they particularly appreciate in-depth guidelines and examples for developing transition plans, case studies, and tools and resources for building the business case for sustainability.

This valuable insight will inform the Climate Governance Initiative’s work to empower board directors to take action, with the right programme of events, resources and tools.

## What can board members do?

**Learn more** and develop your climate knowledge by visiting the Climate Governance Hub, our key resource hub for board directors.

**Visit the Climate Governance Initiative website** <https://climate-governance.org/join-a-chapter/> to contact your local Chapter and get involved.

**Spread the word by sharing this report** with your board and with your LinkedIn network.

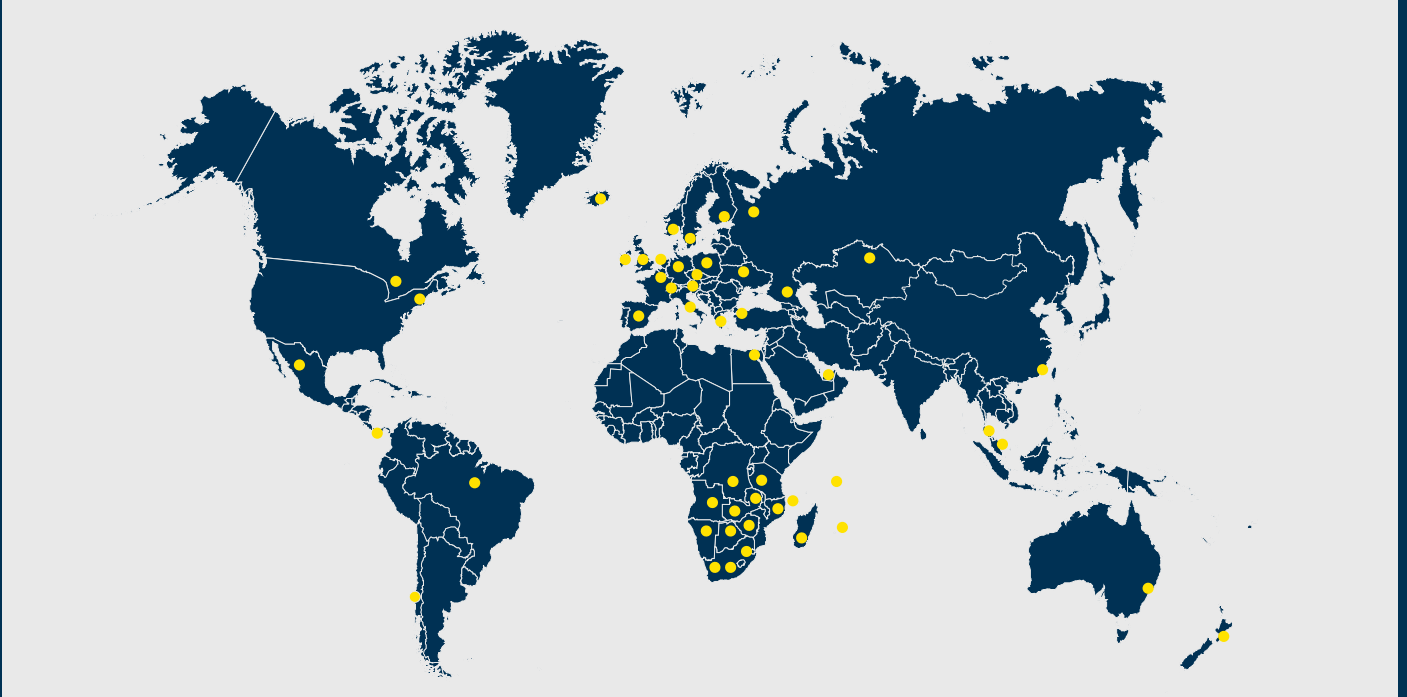
**Grow the network** of climate-conscious business leaders by bringing a boardroom colleague along to a local Chapter event or inviting them to a virtual event to kick start the conversation.

### Our Strategic Action Areas:

- Support the network.
- Deliver effective climate governance content.
- Drive focused, impactful growth.

# About the Climate Governance Initiative

The Climate Governance Initiative is a non-profit dedicated to mobilising boards to accelerate the transition to net zero and build climate resilience. We develop and support a global network that empowers and mobilises board directors on every continent to take climate action by enhancing their knowledge and skills in climate governance. We are a rapidly growing global network of Chapters, reaching more than 100,000 chairs, non-executive and independent directors.



## About Kantar

Kantar is the world's leading tech-enabled marketing data and analytics company and an indispensable brand partner to the world's top companies. We combine the most meaningful attitudinal and behavioural data with deep expertise and advanced analytics to uncover how people think and act. We help clients understand what has happened and why and how to shape the marketing strategies that shape their future. The Sustainable Transformation Practice operates at the intersection of business, people and social & environmental issues.

## Research methodology

Kantar conducted 24 in-depth Vision Interviews with board directors across a range of sectors in six countries: the UK, US, Australia, Singapore, Germany, and Brazil between June and November 2024. Additionally, a quantitative impact survey was carried out in the same six markets. In total, 242 board directors responded, of which 69 were Chairs. Data has been weighted to ensure each market contributes equally to the overall figure, with a weighted base of 48 per country. This prevents skewing and provides a more accurate global representation.

## Key contacts

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**For more information please visit:** <https://climate-governance.org/>