



Chapter Zero UAE

ADSW Dialogues 2025

**Climate Impact at the Board:
Aligning Governance
with Sustainability**

Post Event Report

Jan 16, 2025
Abu Dhabi Sustainability Week



**Chapter
Zero** UAE
The Directors' Climate Forum



Agenda

Date: Jan 16, 2025

Time: 2:00 PM – 3:30 PM

1.30PM	Participants Arrival and Networking
2.00PM	Opening Statement HH Sheikha Shamma bint Sultan bin Khalifa Al Nahyan
2.05PM	Setting the Scene Karina Litvack, Founding Chair, Climate Governance Initiative
2.20PM	Table Introductions All Participants
2.30PM	UAE Case Studies <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Zouheir Sabra, CEO, BEEAH Capital• Khalid Al Marzooqi, CEO, Tabreed• Salwa Al Maflahi, Executive Director, Sustainability, Aldar
2.45PM	Group Disucussion All Participants

1. Boards Must Cultivate the Right Skillsets to Address Climate Change

Board directors in the UAE must assess their collective expertise to ensure they are equipped to provide effective oversight of climate-related risks and opportunities. This includes understanding climate science, the dynamics of low-carbon transitions across supply chains, and emerging public policy—both globally and regionally. As the UAE advances its Net Zero by 2050 Strategy and hosts major climate events like COP28, boards must ensure their composition reflects diversity in climate-related experience. Where gaps exist, directors should proactively pursue targeted training or bring in external expertise to strengthen board-level climate competency.

2. Boards Must Engage in Active and Informed Dialogue with Executive Management

Effective climate governance requires ongoing, two-way engagement between the board and the C-suite. Boards should steer strategic discussions that explore climate-related risks—both physical (such as heatwaves or water scarcity) and transitional (such as regulatory shifts or market expectations). These dialogues should consider how the organization is positioned under various climate scenarios, particularly in light of the UAE's climate adaptation priorities and the implications of ESG-linked financing. Board oversight should help ensure that long-term resilience and climate ambition are embedded in corporate strategy.

3. Boards and Executives Must Master the Art of Asking the Right Questions

In the UAE, many organizations are still early in their climate capability journeys. Board directors have a crucial role in shaping this trajectory by asking insightful, future-oriented questions that challenge the status quo. These questions should explore opportunities for innovation, decarbonization, and value creation—such as the adoption of clean technologies, development of sustainable products, and entry into green markets. As the UAE introduces more climate-related legislation and ESG disclosure requirements, these regulatory shifts offer a timely opportunity to align internal governance with national and global climate goals.

Pioneering Energy-Efficient Cooling Solutions

As a regional leader in district cooling, Tabreed plays a crucial role in reducing carbon emissions and enhancing energy efficiency across the UAE. By providing sustainable cooling solutions to urban developments, the company significantly lowers electricity consumption compared to conventional cooling methods. Tabreed's commitment to net-zero emissions is evident in its strategic investments in renewable energy, adoption of low-carbon cooling technologies, and collaboration with government entities to align with the UAE's sustainability goals. The company's cooling infrastructure supports key projects such as Masdar City, demonstrating its role in shaping energy-efficient cities of the future.



Khalid Al Marzooqi, CEO, Tabreed: "At Tabreed, our sustainable cooling solutions are reducing energy consumption and emissions across the UAE and beyond. Engaging with Chapter Zero UAE during Abu Dhabi Sustainability Week was a powerful way to share insights and strengthen our collective role in shaping the future of climate-conscious infrastructure."



Driving a Circular Economy and Climate Innovation

BEEAH, a leader in sustainability & innovation, is redefining waste management and resource efficiency in the UAE. With a strong focus on the circular economy, BEEAH has pioneered waste-to-energy projects and operates one of the region's most advanced recycling facilities. The Sharjah Waste-to-Energy Plant, the first of its kind in the Middle East, diverts waste from landfills while generating clean energy. The company has also integrated AI-driven waste solutions and green mobility initiatives to enhance efficiency and reduce its environmental footprint. BEEAH's headquarters in Sharjah, employs an integrated sustainability strategy, including resource efficiency, renewable energy generation, and minimized environmental impact, stands as a model for sustainable architecture and corporate leadership in climate action.



Zouheir Sabra, CEO, BEEAH Capital: "At BEEAH, we are driven by a vision of creating sustainable value through innovation and responsible investment. Participating in Abu Dhabi Sustainability Week, alongside other industry leaders, is a great opportunity to explore transformative solutions and deepen our commitment to driving a cleaner, greener future."

Case Studies: Leading Sustainability Efforts in the UAE

Aldar



Embedding ESG in Real Estate Development

Aldar is a leading real estate developer, investor, and manager in the UAE with environmental, social, and governance (ESG) principles integral to its portfolio-wide business strategy. The company has committed to achieving net zero by 2050, from its supply chain through to emissions associated with waste, water, construction, and tenants. Aldar is integrating green building standards, energy-efficient technologies, and sustainable construction practices into its projects across the UAE, including landmark developments on Saadiyat Island and Yas Island in Abu Dhabi, as well as the communities it is developing in Dubai. Aldar's approach to sustainability leverages smart infrastructure, water conservation measures, and renewable energy integration. The company's green financing initiatives, including the issuance of green sukuk and sustainability-linked loans, underscore its commitment to responsible investment and long-term climate resilience.



Salwa Al Maflahi, Executive Director, Sustainability and Community Impact, Aldar:

"Integrating sustainability into every aspect of our business is key to Aldar's future. The discussions facilitated by Chapter Zero UAE at Abu Dhabi Sustainability Week provided important insights into the latest trends in sustainability and highlighted the collaboration necessary to drive tangible change across industries."

Case Studies: Leading Sustainability Efforts in the UAE

Fertiglobe



Fertiglobe: Decarbonising the Future of Fertilisers Industry

Fertiglobe, the world's largest seaborne exporter of urea and ammonia combined, is spearheading the decarbonization of the fertilizer industry from its base in the UAE. Recognizing the critical role of low-carbon solutions in global food security and climate action, Fertiglobe is embedding sustainability across its business. The company is increasingly investing in low-carbon and renewable ammonia growth initiatives, including renewable hydrogen and low-carbon ammonia, to reduce emissions and support the global energy transition.



Through collaboration, innovation, and climate-forward investments, Fertiglobe is shaping the future of sustainable fertilizers, bringing a positive impact both within the industry and for the communities and sectors that rely on them.

Ahmed El-Hoshy, CEO, Fertiglobe: "Fertiglobe is committed to reducing carbon emissions through the development of low-carbon ammonia and renewable hydrogen solutions. Abu Dhabi Sustainability Week has been an excellent platform for us to showcase our sustainability efforts, while Chapter Zero UAE plays a crucial role in fostering meaningful dialogue among companies seeking to lead in the global energy transition."

The Climate Governance Initiative: Empowering Boards for Climate Action

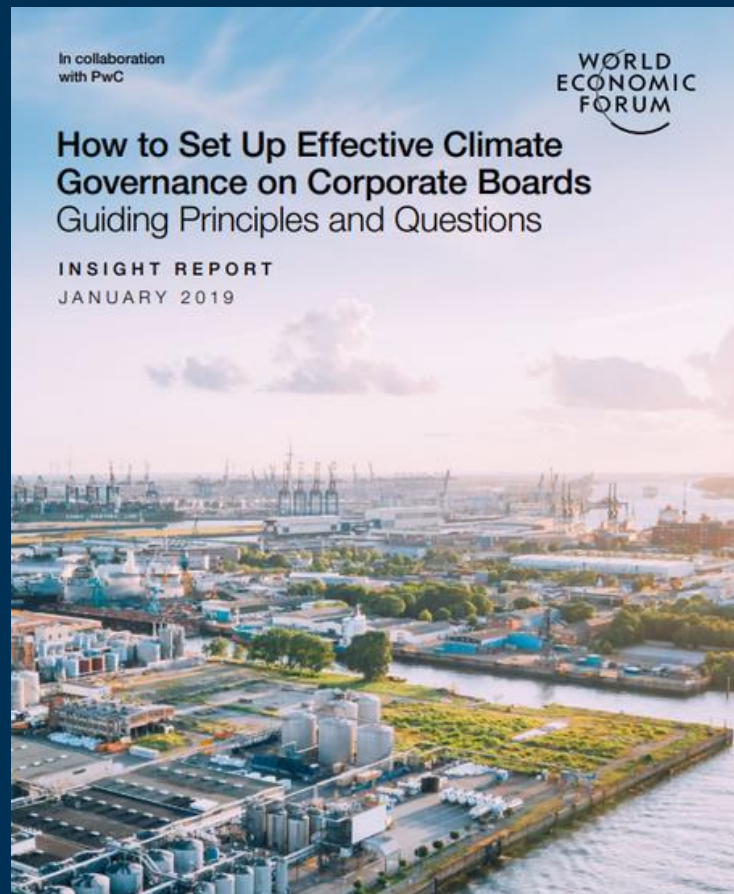
The Climate Governance Initiative is a global movement that aims to drive climate action through improved corporate governance. Recognising that addressing climate change requires leadership at the highest levels, the initiative empowers board members worldwide to integrate climate risks and opportunities into their strategic decisions. The initiative provides resources, frameworks, and expert guidance to help directors understand their critical role in overseeing climate-related issues and ensuring their companies are aligned with the goals of the Paris Agreement.



The Climate Governance Initiative fosters a global network of forward-thinking leaders dedicated to advancing climate governance in their organisations. By supporting boards with practical tools, including training and workshops, it encourages companies to adopt clear, accountable climate strategies that support long-term sustainability. The initiative's impact is being felt across industries, as it inspires directors to prioritise environmental, social, and governance (ESG) factors, and drives systemic change in the corporate world.

Karina Litvack, Ambassador and Founding Chairman, Climate Governance Initiative: "Corporate governance plays a crucial role in addressing climate change, and through the Climate Governance Initiative, we aim to equip boards with the knowledge to lead on this issue. Abu Dhabi Sustainability Week offers a dynamic environment to meet like-minded leaders and cross-sector collaboration to make climate action a corporate priority."

8 principles of effective climate governance



PRINCIPLE 1
Climate
accountability



PRINCIPLE 2
Subject
command



PRINCIPLE 2
Subject
command



PRINCIPLE 4
Materiality
assessment



PRINCIPLE 5
Strategic
integration



PRINCIPLE 6
Incentivization



PRINCIPLE 7
Reporting
and disclosure



PRINCIPLE 8
Exchange



Chapter Zero UAE Advisory Board



**HH Sheikha Shamma
bint Sultan bin Khalifa Al
Nahyan**
President and CEO, UICAA
Co-Founder, Aurora50



HE Khalfan Belhoul
CEO
Dubai Future Foundation



HE Khaled Huraimel
Group CEO and Vice
Chairman,
BEEAH



Mohamed Al Marzooqi
CEO UAE, HSBC



Ahmed Al Calilly
Chief Strategy & Risk Officer
Mubadala Investment
Company



Ibrahim Al Haddad
CEO
Salik

Chapter Zero UAE Steering Committee



Hanan Al Yafei

Executive Director, Mubadala
Chair, Chapter Zero UAE
Steering Committee



Sabrin Rahman

Managing Director - Head of
Sustainability, MENAT, HSBC
Vice-Chair, Chapter Zero UAE
Steering Committee



Katarina Uherova Hasbani

Board Member of INSEAD's Energy
Network Secretary, Chapter Zero
UAE Steering Committee



Dr Ayesha Bin Lootah

Board Director
Emaar Development



Dr Kaiser Naseem

Independent Board
Director



David Haglund

Non Executive Director
Aramex



Zainab Aziz

General Counsel
UAE Independent Climate
Change Accelerators
(UICCA)



Dr Saeed Al Dhaheri

Director
University of Dubai



Dr Cintia Kulzer Sacilotto

Assistant Professor
UAE University

Brief for the Event: Climate change is resulting in risks for businesses in UAE which requires action from Boards

Physical Risks

Temperature increase: 2-5°C increase by 2100
Sea level rise: Impacting UAE coastal areas
Storms / Floods: Increased frequency and severity



Transitional risks

Policy and legal frameworks developing
New technology emerging
Markets changing
Reputational challenges emerging



New legislative context is entering into force in 2025 to drive climate action in UAE and will mandate actions by businesses

Cabinet Resolution No. (67) of 2024, establishing the National Register for Carbon Credits

Mandatory MRV for High-Emitting Entities
Carbon Credit Trading Opportunities via the National Register

Alignment with Global Standards
Potential Regulatory Compliance Costs



Federal Decree-Law No. (11) of 2024 on the Reduction of Climate Change Effects

Climate Neutrality Targets & sector Specific
Mandatory Emissions Measurement & Reporting
Adaptation Plans
Carbon Offset and Incentives
International Standards



International environment is exercising pressure in the direction of climate action for UAE businesses

COP Process

Carbon Market Mechanisms under Article 6
New Collective Quantified Goal on Climate Finance 300 Billion USD annually by 2035
Emphasis on Transitioning Away from Fossil Fuels
Climate Reporting and Transparency



EU Sustainability Requirements

EU Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive
European Sustainability Reporting Standards
EU Sustainability Due Diligence
EU taxonomy for sustainable activities



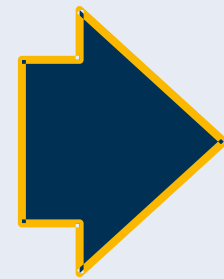
Board Directors are called to reflect both risks and opportunities from climate change

Why now?

The duties of board directors have evolved in relation to climate. Board directors are now expected, and in many jurisdictions legally mandated, to ensure that

1. Your organisation has established appropriate mechanisms and resources to identify and assess significant climate opportunities and risks¹
2. That these issues are properly addressed and disclosed.

It is important for board directors to understand that effective climate governance goes beyond focusing solely on risks, it offers opportunities for your organisation.



What Board Directors need to do

As a board director, you should ensure that **climate risks and opportunities are well understood and are being effectively managed** in a way that is integrated throughout your organisation's governance structures and operational teams.

Whilst appointing specific climate experts (such as a Head of Sustainability or a Sustainability Team) will be useful in driving change, this will not, in itself, deliver the broader climate integration required.

Boards can send a clear message that climate competence is a top priority and take action

Organisation Level Actions for Boards to Oversee

1. Measure its greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions.
2. Report and disclose those GHG emissions and set targets to reduce them.
3. Establish a credible transition plan towards net-zero GHG emissions.
4. Deliver the climate ambitions of the plan, monitoring progress and adjusting accordingly.

Transition plans

provide comprehensive information on the strategies (technical, financial, governance, etc.) that an organisation will follow to achieve its net zero targets and contribute towards a climate-resilient economy.

These must be credible, include interim goals and be transparent to stakeholders.

The plans should be updated every five years, progress should be reported annually and include:

- Short, medium and long-term GHG emission reduction targets.
- Third party verification and auditing methods.
- Adjustments to budgets, capital expenditures, research and development investments.
- Objectives to align all areas of the business to such plans.
- References to trajectories of other organisations from the same sector that have implemented adequate actions.

Climate opportunities could be seized by UAE businesses

Greenhouse gas emissions reduction



Switch to renewable energy



Nature-based solutions



New products and services



Innovative financing solutions



Greenhouse gas removal



Our Partners

