Chapter Commitment Framework

Draft for Chapter consultation - 17 June 2026

Purpose and Scope

The need for a strong, credible and aligned network of Chapters is key at a local and international level. This document sets the baseline obligations that Chapters must meet to be recognised and remain aligned with the Chapter Zero Alliance network. It is written to be lean and implementation-focused, providing a set of auditable requirements while preserving Chapter autonomy and the diversity of operating models across our global network.

This document should be read alongside the Charter and any other applicable Chapter Zero Alliance policies. Where the Charter sets out the values, mission and commitments of Chapter Zero Alliance and its Chapters, this document defines the minimum operational standards by which those commitments are upheld.

1. Identity and Purpose

Each Chapter must maintain a clear identity aligned with our collective purpose to 'equip and inspire board directors to lead on climate and nature from the boardroom'. We recognise that climate in this context is used as a proxy for a range of sustainability issues that will be relevant to board directors.

This means:

- The Chapter will operate consistently with the Charter and applicable Chapter Zero Alliance policies.
- The Chapter will maintain a defined geographical focus, agreed with Chapter Zero Alliance, and will not operate in the territory of another Chapter without that Chapter's permission.
- The Chapter will uphold the reputation and standing of Chapter Zero Alliance in all activities.

2. Governance

Chapters are self-governing, autonomous entities. The following minimum governance structures must be in place.

- The Chapter will maintain one named Chapter Lead and notify Chapter Zero Alliance of any change within 14 days.
- The Chapter will have in place either:
    - A steering committee or governing body of at least three members; or

    - A compliant host or fiscal sponsor providing equivalent governance and financial oversight.
- The steering committee or relevant governing body will serve the purpose of:
    - Providing strategic direction; and acting as custodians of the Chapter, including managing continuity of Chapter Leadership and ensuring that Chapter Leadership operates in alignment with the Chapter Zero Alliance Charter.
- If changing host organisation or legal status, the Chapter will notify Chapter Zero Alliance when this process begins and provide a brief note outlining the rationale for the change and the process for selecting a new host organisation. Chapter Zero Alliance will attest to the appropriateness of the new host organisation and certify the change.
- As autonomous entities, Chapters are individually responsible for developing and delivering a sustainable business model.

3. Board Director Engagement

Chapters are responsible for reaching, equipping and inspiring board directors – supported by Chapter Zero Alliance and across the Chapter network. Each Chapter must demonstrate meaningful, sustained engagement with board directors, or the wider governance community relevant to its local context.

This means:

- The Chapter will maintain the capacity and remit to deliver regular, mission-aligned engagement primarily targeting board directors.
- The format of engagement activities is at the Chapter's discretion and may include events or webinars, peer roundtables, board education programmes, working groups, thought leadership tied to board practice, policy engagement, or any other activity relevant to the local needs of the target audience.

4. Integrity and Conduct

Chapters must uphold high standards of ethical conduct, transparency and integrity, in accordance with the values set out in the Chapter Zero Alliance Charter. Chapters and their representatives must actively protect and enhance the reputation of Chapter Zero Alliance and the global Chapter network in their professional conduct.

This means:

- The Chapter will take reasonable measures to avoid associating their own brand or the Chapter Zero Alliance brand with companies or organisations whose behaviour, profile or values are not aligned with our purpose and values.
- The Chapter must not allow companies, individuals or other stakeholders to misuse their association with the Chapter or Chapter Zero Alliance to misrepresent their climate credentials.
- Chapter staff or volunteers will not accept funding, support or gifts in kind that might be construed as a bribe, or that could lead a donor to expect preferential treatment.

- The Chapter will ensure transparency where fees apply to membership, materials or events. Chapter Zero Alliance materials are free to all Chapters, and materials. hosted on Chapter Zero Alliance website are free to all users, operating within a non-profit model, but copyright references must be applied as applicable. Chapters are expected to make their own materials and events as widely accessible as possible and must be transparent where charges apply.
- The Chapter will disclose sources of funding, including in-kind support, to Chapter Zero Alliance on request.

5. Brand

Chapters and Chapter Zero Alliance share collective responsibility for the reputation of brand. All Chapters must comply with applicable brand guidelines.

This means:

- Chapters established before 2026 may continue to use branding in line with their existing agreement with Chapter Zero Alliance.
- Chapters established after 2026 will be expected to use Chapter Zero branding.
- Chapters which use the 'Chapter Zero' brand do so by accepting the terms of a sub-licence managed by Chapter Zero Alliance on behalf of Chapter Zero (the UK Chapter, and the owner of the brand).
- Regardless of individual Chapter brand, all Chapters must uphold the brand standards of Chapter Zero Alliance and must not use the name or logo of Chapter Zero Alliance, the logo of any other Chapter, the World Economic Forum, or any partner organisation without explicit approval.

6. Network Participation and Reporting

Active participation in the global Chapter network is a commitment every Chapter makes upon joining the Chapter Zero Alliance network. Chapters contribute to the collective evidence base and shared learning that strengthens our collective impact.

This means:

- The Chapter will attend regular global network calls and meetings to remain connected and informed with Chapter Zero Alliance and wider network activities.
- The Chapter will join two check-ins per year with the Chapter's Alliance appointed Engagement Lead.
- The Chapter will submit activity updates and impact data in a timely manner as requested by Chapter Zero Alliance (at minimum annually), through the platform or template provided by Chapter Zero Alliance.
- The Chapter will participate and engage in monitoring, evaluation and learning frameworks provided by Chapter Zero Alliance (for example the periodic Network Review).

7. Legal Compliance and Incidents

Each Chapter is responsible for compliance with the laws and regulations of its own jurisdiction. Chapter Zero Alliance must be kept informed of material issues.

This means:

- The Chapter will comply with applicable local laws and regulations, including those governing data protection, non-profit or charitable status, and fundraising.
- The Chapter will notify Chapter Zero Alliance within 48 hours of any material incident, including credible financial irregularity, a safeguarding or serious conduct concern, or regulatory or legal action affecting the Chapter.

Support, Remediation and Status

Chapter Zero Alliance is the sole authority able to confer, suspend or revoke status as a Chapter within the Chapter Zero Alliance network.

Chapter Zero Alliance is committed to supporting Chapters to meet and maintain these requirements and to continue as a Chapter in good standing, including by providing templates, generic and Chapter-specific guidance, curated resources, and efficient mechanisms and processes consistent with Chapter Zero Alliance's own reporting obligations.

If one or more of the Chapter commitments are not met over a sustained period of time, Chapter Zero Alliance will notify the Chapter and arrange a discussion. If appropriate, Chapter Zero Alliance will provide a remediation plan with clear milestones, typically 6-12 months.

Sustained inability to meet minimum requirements or engage with a remediation plan may result in a Chapter's status as an active Chapter within Chapter Zero Alliance being paused. Continued non-compliance may lead to permanent withdrawal of recognition of Chapter status.

Material breaches of this commitment framework will be investigated by Chapter Zero Alliance Team and may be escalated to Chapter Zero Alliance's Board of Trustees.

Conclusion

This Commitment Framework exists not as a ceiling, but as a foundation. It sets the conditions for trust, consistency and collective credibility across a global network of Chapters working to make effective climate and nature governance on boards the norm. When every Chapter operates with integrity, engages its local governance community with purpose, and participates actively in the network, Chapter Zero Alliance's impact is greater than the sum of its parts.