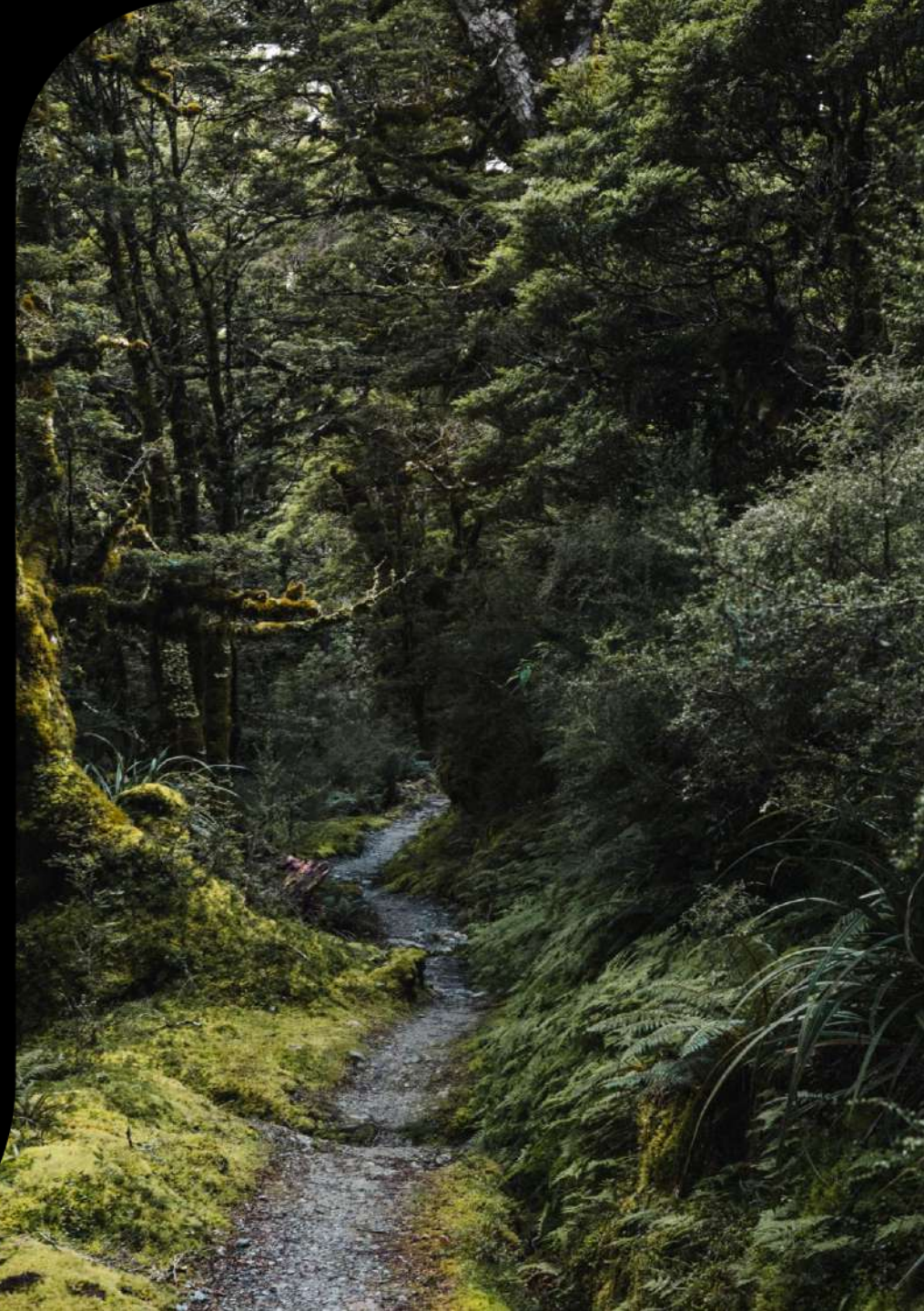


# From Influence To Impact:

Elevating sustainability on the board agenda

Aisha Daji Punga, CEP 2026





**Sustainability professionals play a critical role in climate action, but our influence depends on our ability to translate sustainability into the language of governance.**



If Earth's warming is 2°C this century billions of people livelihoods could be threatened

Climate inaction could cost up to 1/3 of global GDP

Climate impacts will reduce income in all countries across all sectors, affecting all industries



It's important now more than ever...

## The Global Risk Report 2026

In the next two years...  
Extreme weather events  
are rated the 4th

In the next decade...  
The top 3 severe global  
risks are environmental



# The evidence is clear!

1-2% GDP investment could reduce harm by 90%

Investment in both mitigation and adaptation could bring a return of around tenfold by 2100

Businesses incorporating sustainability into strategic frameworks are 1.4x more likely to achieve innovation breakthroughs

82% of surveyed companies reported economic benefits from decarbonisation



New Zealand has a clear, achievable opportunity to improve sustainable economic growth, whilst also reducing emissions – and the economic prize is significant

Per year by 2035 additional

- +\$22.6b GDP
- - 6% emissions

Per year by 2050 additional

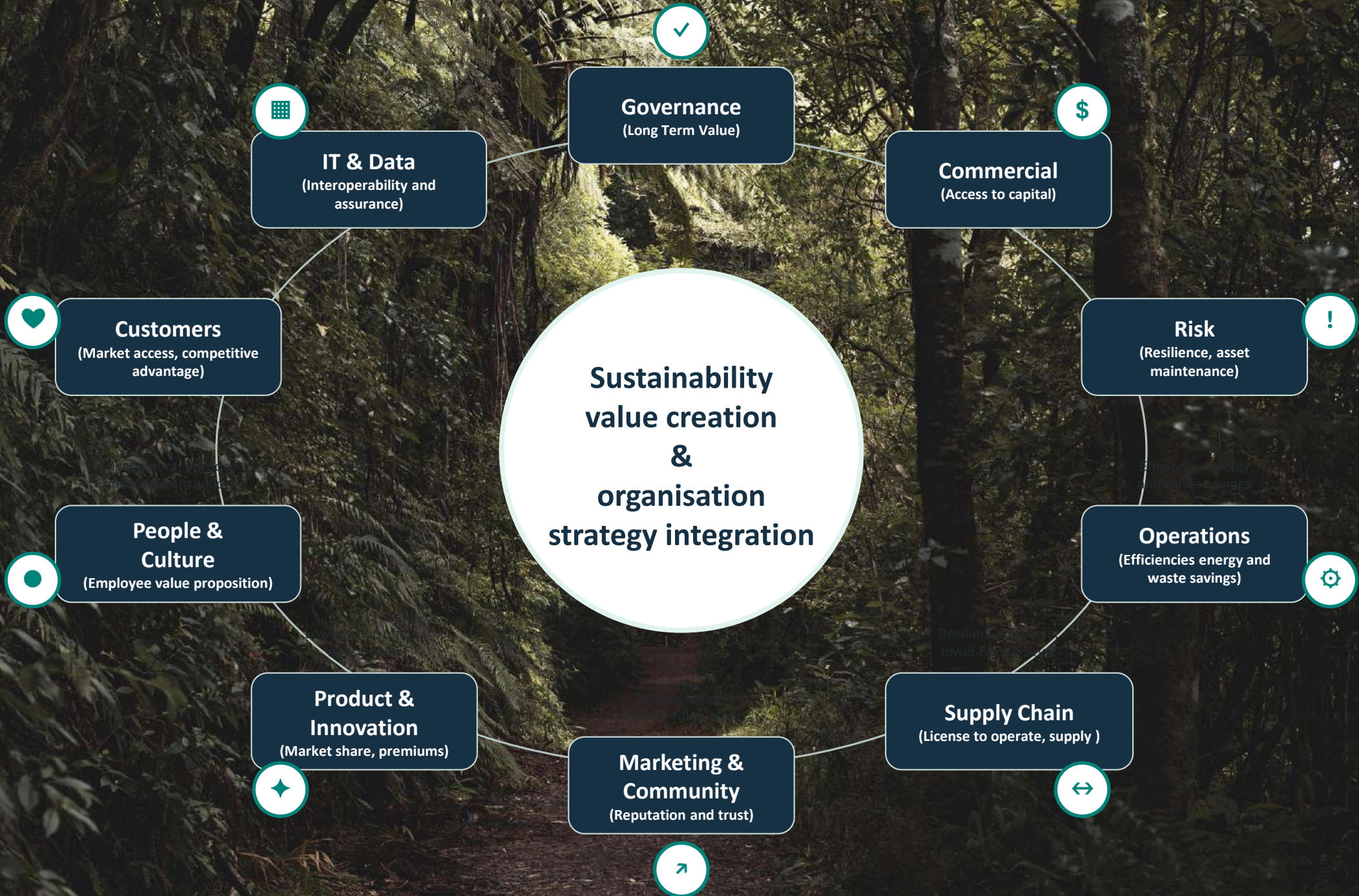
- +\$33.6b GDP
- -22% emissions

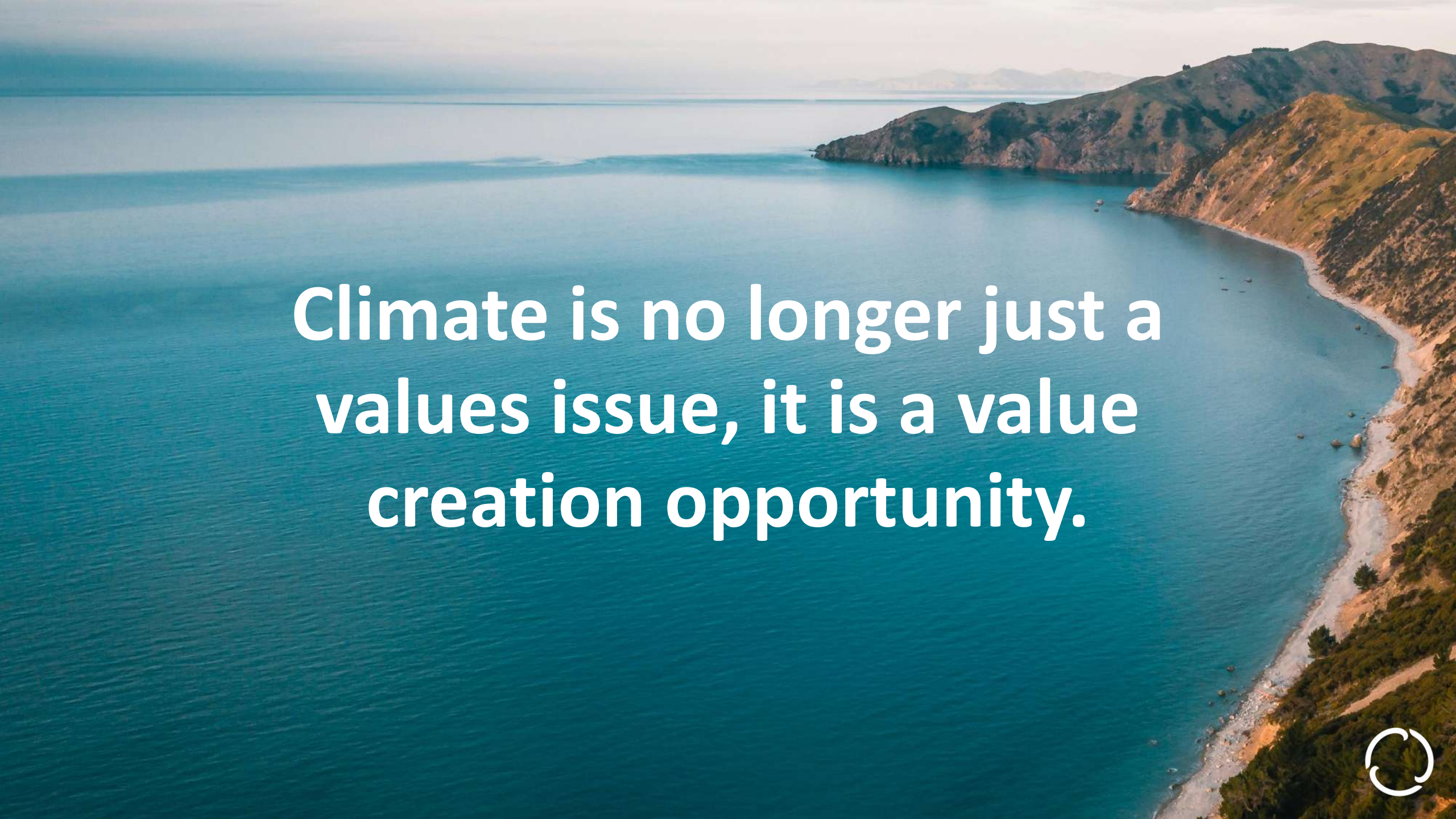




**Measurement gives integrity,  
Reduction gives progress,  
Strategy gives influence.**





An aerial photograph of a coastline. The water is a deep blue, transitioning to a lighter turquoise near the shore. The land is covered in green vegetation and brownish soil, with a few small buildings visible on a hillside. The sky is a pale, hazy blue.

**Climate is no longer just a  
values issue, it is a value  
creation opportunity.**



# Case Study 1: Bluestar

Sustainability as part of better commercial performance

- Understand emission drivers and reduction opportunities.
- Verified data – confidence to act
- Smaller footprint, lower energy intensity, reduce inter site and supplier transport
- Sustainability embedded in the commercial and operational business case
- Positioned as future proofing – growth, resilience, commercial sustainability and competitiveness
- Not sustainability instead of commercial performance. Sustainability as part of better commercial performance
- Board-relevant: when carbon reduction is connected to productivity, capital efficiency, business continuity, customer outcomes and long-term competitiveness





## **Climate governance is not theoretical for Aotearoa New Zealand**

- It affects our exporters
- It affects our lenders
- It affects our insurers
- It affects our customers
- It affects our supply chains
- It affects our national brand



# Case Study 2: Silver Fern Farms

Strategic climate risk, value chain, sustainability integration, and growth

- Strategic climate risk embedded in enterprise risk management and long-term decision-making to 2050
- Sustainability integrated through a clear value proposition addressing priority material issues
- Value chain transformation enabling nature-positive outcomes, circularity, innovation and community impact
- Customer and growth opportunities unlocked through certification and net carbon zero positioning in premium markets



**Sustainability professionals can  
be the bridge between insight  
and board action.**



# Case Study 3: Rhino Manufacturing

Data-driven insights, risk clarity, financial framing and accountable governance

- A robust baseline, identifying emissions hotspots
- Strategic risk and opportunity rather than a cost centre.
- Data was translated into decision-ready insights
- The risks of inaction were clearly articulated
- Pilot was used to de-risk decision-making
- Insights were presented in financial and strategic terms,
- Concise dashboards aligned to core business priorities.
- Board approved a phased decarbonisation roadmap
- Governance structures, metrics board reporting, exec accountability



# Practical tips

1. Start with the board's agenda, not the sustainability agenda
2. Map your value creation and engage your influence circle
3. Turn technical data into decision-ready insight across the business
4. Frame climate and nature as financial and strategic materiality
5. Bring options, not just problems
6. Drive cadence for the board momentum



# Call to action

Turn to your  
neighbour and share 1  
new influence action you  
will take to enhance your  
impact



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