

Monthly GSS News Digest

Governance, Sustainability and Stewardship

March 2026



1

Glass Lewis Publishes Inaugural Stewardship Survey Report



2

Hong Kong Companies are Noticeably Improving Their Boards



3

Circular Economy Reinforced as a Core Industrial Strategy



Glass Lewis Publishes Inaugural Investment Stewardship Survey Report

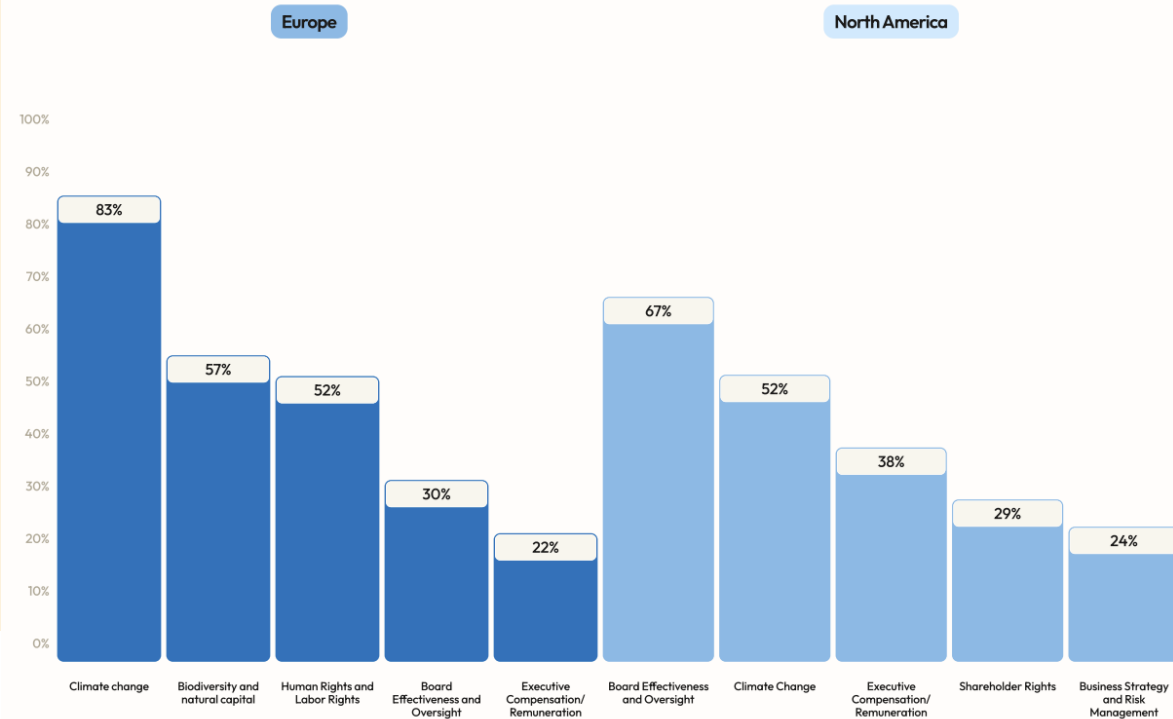


Key Highlights

- **First survey of its kind on investor stewardship**
 - Published in March 2026 based on a Q4 2025 survey of asset managers and asset owners globally representing trillions in AUM.
- **Key findings:**
 - On engagement priority topics, climate change and board effectiveness occupy stewardship agendas.
 - On organizational approach to stewardship, more than half use a hybrid stewardship model where they combine baseline market expectations for the majority of companies and focused engagements with a subset of companies.
 - On the operational model, the vast majority still track engagements using "siloes spreadsheets/general purpose tools."

Engagement Priorities Converge on Climate and Governance, but Diverge by Region

Engagement activity focuses on climate change and board effectiveness and oversight, reinforcing their central role in stewardship agendas. At the same time, in line with broader market trends, regional differences emerge with European investors placing relatively greater emphasis on sustainability topics, while North American investors focus more on traditional governance issues.



Hong Kong Companies are Improving Their Boards

- In March 2026, the 2025 Hong Kong Spencer Stuart Board Index was released. This index provides a detailed study of board governance practices for companies in the Hang Seng Index (HSI) and Hang Seng Composite LargeCap Index (HSLI).
- The study includes examination of the board structure and composition, diversity, committees, meetings, remuneration and board evaluation.

Key findings:

- Among HSLI companies, 59% of independent non-executive directors (INEDs) were appointed within the past five years and more than 40% of new directors in 2025 are INEDs.
- INEDs of HSLI companies hold an average of 2.2 public directorships.
- INED compensation increased 13% to US\$112,000 and was up 17% among HSLI companies to US\$116,000.

- The percentage of female directors rose from 19.2% in 2023 on both indexes to 21.7% on the HSI and 22.9% on the HSLI in 2025.
- 65% of HSI companies and 68% of HSLI companies now have two or more female directors
- Only 42% of new INEDs are women, down from 53% in 2023.

- Board evaluations (both internally and externally facilitated) have increased from 37% in 2023 to 45% in 2025, while HSI companies were steady at 42%.

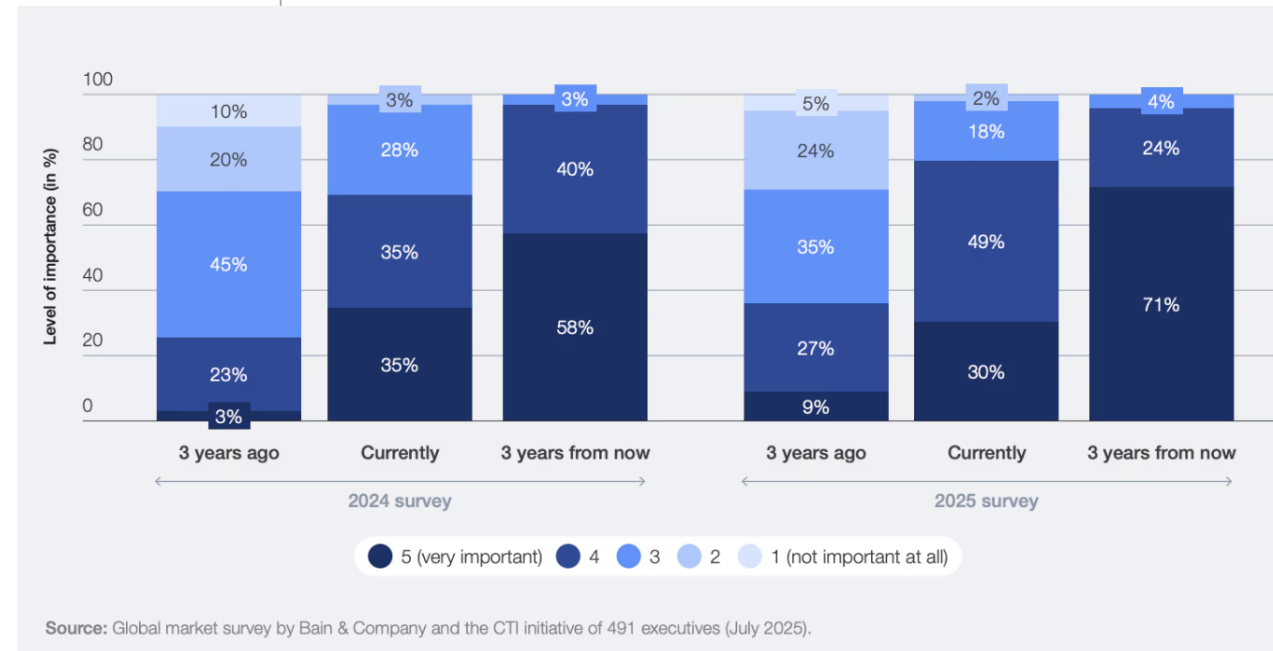
Source: <https://www.spencerstuart.com/research-and-insight/hong-kong-board-index>

Circular Economy Reinforced as a Core Industrial Strategy



- The discussions at the World Economic Forum (WEF) Annual Meeting 2026 revolved around the circular economy's renewed strategic relevance.
- Business and government decision-makers *"reinforced"* circularity as core industrial strategy for resilience, competitiveness and sustainability.
- Nearly 80% of business leaders now say circularity is important or very important to their organizations, up from 36% three years ago. It is expected to rise to 95% within the next three years.
- The rising salience of circular economy is reflected in the European Union's upcoming Circular Economy Act and in China's 15th Five-Year Plan.
- Circular economy is no longer framed as *"cost avoidance"* but now perceived as *"value creation"* (especially in terms of expected generation of new jobs).

FIGURE 2 | How important is circularity for your organization for the given time frames?



Source:
<https://www.weforum.org/stories/2026/03/circular-economy-economic-industrial-strategy/>

Contact us

✉: info@valoriscatalysts.com

LinkedIn: [Valoris Stewardship Catalysts](#)

Website: www.valoriscatalysts.com

