

Roadmap

toZero 

Brands to Zero

by ZDHC

2026 ZDHC Brands to Zero Report

Benchmarking corporate governance and verified
supply-chain implementation across the ZDHC Signatory
Brand community

Tracking
progress
Together.



This report consolidates the 2026 Brands to Zero assessment findings across all ZDHC Signatory Brands, based on implementation performance during the 2025 reporting year.

Table of Contents

Chapter 1: Who we are	01
Chapter 2: Executive summary	02
Chapter 3: Brands to Zero Methodology	06
Chapter 4: The 2026 Brands to Zero Champions	08
Chapter 5: Brands to Zero Relevance to Reporting and Disclosure	09
Chapter 6: The Benchmark: Contextualising Brand Performance	10
Chapter 7: Beyond Compliance	13

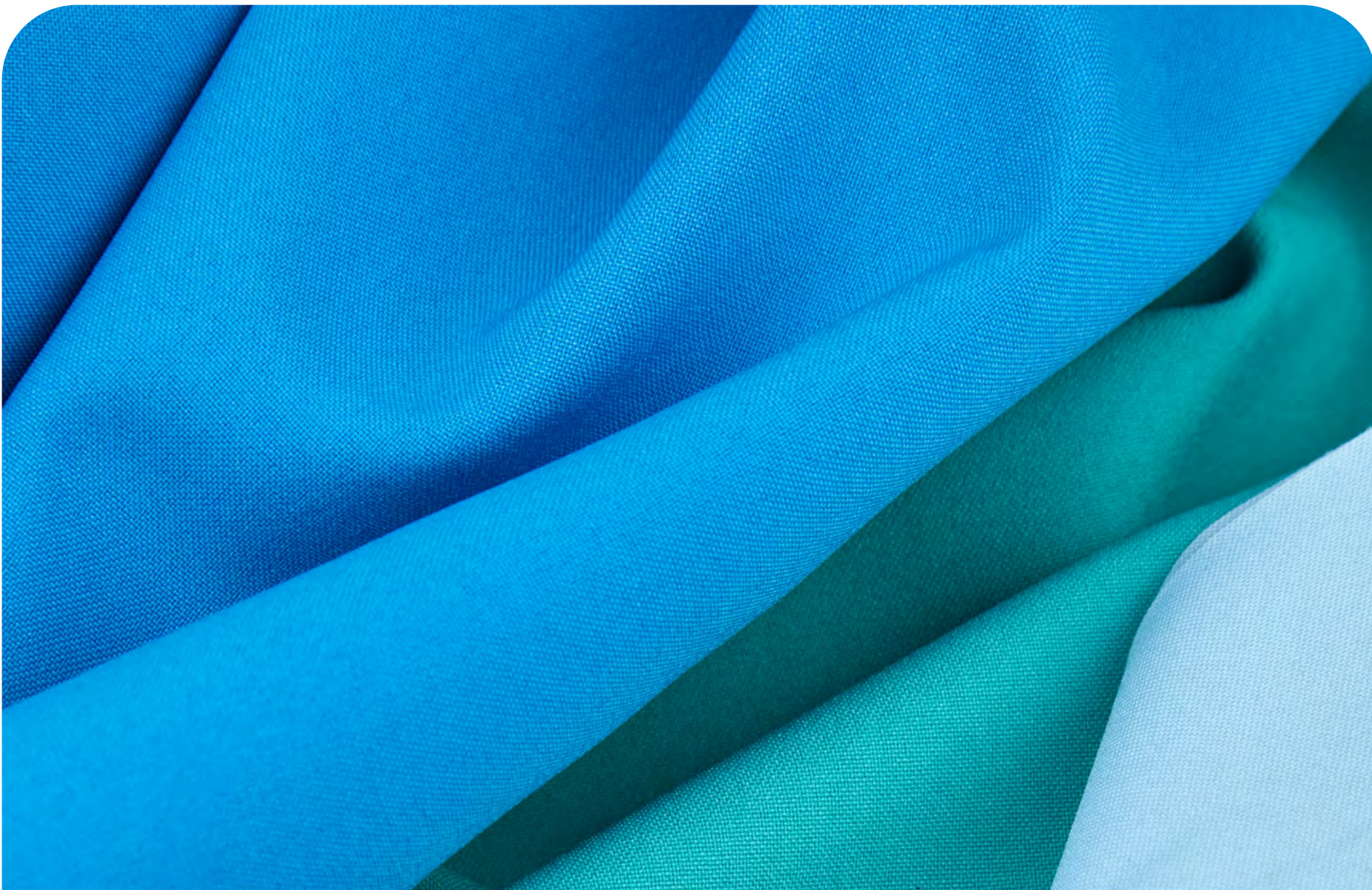
Paving
the way
Together.

Chapter 1

Who we are

ZDHC is a multi-stakeholder organisation that brings together brands, suppliers, chemical formulators, solution providers and other partners to make safer chemistry the norm, preventing harm at source. Our programmes, tools and standards are shaped by industry experience, scientific expertise and open dialogue, so that no single perspective sets the direction alone, and transparency, credibility and accountability guide how they evolve.

Each year, ZDHC publishes a Brands to Zero Report and an Impact Report.



Our mission

Is to lead global value chains to the highest standards of sustainable chemical management, driving resource efficiency and circularity.

Our vision

Is a world where better chemistry protects life, land, air and water.

Our goal

Is for 100% of chemical formulations used across the ZDHC community, and 70% of those used across the global industry, to conform to the ZDHC Manufacturing Restricted Substances List (MRSL) by 2030.

Chapter 2

Executive Summary

Brands to Zero is the mandatory annual assessment run by ZDHC, the multi-stakeholder organisation behind the Roadmap to Zero Programme, and it measures how well each Signatory Brand governs sustainable chemical management and implements it throughout its suppliers.

Chemical management is increasingly a corporate governance, value-chain risk and disclosure issue rather than a topic for sustainability teams alone. Brands to Zero assesses whether companies have translated their chemical-management commitments into governance, business processes and demonstrable implementation across their supply chains.

This report provides insights into the aggregated results of those assessments for the 2025 reporting year.

Every brand in the programme receives its own confidential report scoring its individual performance, and this public report combines those results into a single, anonymised picture of how the Signatory Brands¹ are doing.

The assessment looks at two dimensions: (1) whether a brand's commitment is set at the board level and built into the business, and (2) whether that commitment shows up in verified results across its suppliers. Brands to Zero, therefore, measures the distance between corporate commitment and verified implementation.

The evidence sits in the ZDHC Gateway, the shared platform where suppliers document the verified conformance of their wastewater and chemical use, based on formulators registering their chemicals used in textile, leather and footwear production and certified against the ZDHC MRSL. This system allows brands to monitor supplier performance in phasing out hazardous substances rather than take it on trust.

There are **four key elements** measured in the Brands to Zero assessment:

01

Corporate governance: board-level oversight, accountability and strategic commitment.

If a brand has made sustainable chemical management part of its strategy at the board level and built it into how the business is run and how it makes purchasing decisions, rather than leaving it to a sustainability team alone.

02

Due diligence implementation: supplier requirements, internal ownership, purchasing processes, monitoring and corrective action.

Has the brand turned the commitment into a working system? Clear supplier requirements, defined roles and responsibilities for who owns chemical management internally, and processes to support implementation, monitor performance and follow up on gaps.

03

Hazardous chemicals phase-out: evidence of implementation of the ZDHC MRSL through supplier chemical inventories and InCheck.

ZDHC MRSL conformance via InCheck; assessing the degree of conformance with the ZDHC Manufacturing Restricted Substances List (MRSL) of the chemical inventory used in production via the Gateway platform.

04

Water quality targets, wastewater performance and discharge: performance against the ZDHC Wastewater and Sludge Guidelines through ClearStream.

ClearStream wastewater performance: whether the water leaving a factory meets the ZDHC standard for safe discharge.

¹ The ZDHC Committed Community of Brands refers to 64 Signatory Brands and 23 Friends of ZDHC

Brands are independently assessed by KPMG Netherlands as the appointed third-party Brands to Zero Assessor, and each brand is placed at one of three levels, **Pioneer**, **Accelerator** or **Champion**, with the bar raised each year. In the 2026 assessment, 21 brands reached Champion Level, demonstrating that sustainable chemical management is integrated into corporate processes and implemented at scale, as evidenced by primary supply chain data, compared with 15 Champions in the previous assessment. The Champion Brands range from global leaders to smaller brands, which confirms that buying power is not the deciding factor; the right policies and thorough implementation are.



Three insights stand out this year, two from the data and one from the broader legislative landscape:

01

Evidence is becoming as important as commitment.

Brands are credited only for progress they can substantiate with credible evidence and primary factory data from the Gateway, while verified progress across the community remains low.

02

Follow-through is the next step.

Requirements and monitoring have both risen to 91% (from 75% and 87% a year earlier), and 74% of brands now go further by actively helping suppliers improve, which aligns with the improvement plan demanded by CSDDD.

03

Credible sustainability claims increasingly depend on demonstrable implementation.

As rules on environmental claims tighten, brands need to link their claims to evidence, and public claims of ZDHC progress should be reserved for those who can substantiate them.

For finance and reporting teams, it's clear that the same data can feed directly into regulatory and investor frameworks. It supports pollution and water disclosures under the EU Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive (CSRD) and its European Sustainability Reporting Standards (ESRS), value-chain due diligence under the Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive (CSDDD), and the Principal Adverse Impact (PAI) indicators on emissions to water and hazardous waste reported under the Sustainable Finance Disclosure Regulation (SFDR). The ZDHC Roadmap to Zero Programme offers Brands one implementation system for multiple corporate uses beyond risk management and due diligence. This is also reflected in Brands to Zero.

A 2025 ZDHC-Quantis study found that specific sustainable chemical management interventions modelled in the study could reduce selected nature-related impacts by 80-96%.

This report is written for **three readers:**



Sustainability and sourcing teams

Understanding implementation maturity, peer performance and improvement opportunities.



Boards, executive management and risk committees

Understanding whether environmental commitments are embedded in governance, sourcing and operational decision-making.



Investors, finance teams and ESG analysts

Understanding management-system quality, value-chain evidence and relevance to sustainability disclosures and environmental risk.

ZDHC Historical Context: From Risk Management System to Due Diligence Implementation to Nature Programme

Large-scale, sustainable chemical management within brands did not begin for regulatory compliance; it emerged as a business priority in 2011, when the Greenpeace Detox campaign put the fashion industry's chemical footprint under public scrutiny. Beyond protecting brand reputation, activism prompted the ZDHC Roadmap to Zero Programme as a voluntary industry initiative.

The ZDHC Committed Community of Brands continues to grow, driven by the business case for due diligence and data-driven implementation. Even if brands fall out of scope and may not directly face a raising of the bar across regional regulations, international frameworks such as the CSDDD and CSRD, and updates to the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) and the Sustainability Accounting Standards Board (SASB). These developments mean stakeholder demands have grown and brands now have to demonstrate how environmental impacts are identified, managed and reported.

The 2030 ZDHC Impact Strategy has set the direction to future-proof our framework: a science-based, hazard-focused system that makes sustainable chemical management practical, scalable and useful for brands, suppliers, regulators and investors alike. ZDHC's own role is shifting with it, from setting streamlined supply chain requirements to connecting policies, factory data, tools and evidence into a single approach that helps the industry reduce risk while protecting life, land, air and water.



Chapter 3

Brands to Zero Methodology: From Corporate Commitment to Supply Chain Implementation

All ZDHC Signatory Brands undergo the annual Brands to Zero assessment, which evaluates them against a set of key performance indicators (KPIs) and is independently assessed by KPMG Netherlands as the appointed third-party Brands to Zero Assessor. The aim is to bring consistency in how the Roadmap to Zero Programme is implemented and to support improvements by measuring and benchmarking brands' performance.

The two parts of the assessment

- **Corporate-level governance and strategy, whether commitment is board-level and embedded** across the business.
- **Verified supply-chain performance**, measured through ZDHC MRSL conformance (InCheck), Gateway registration and ClearStream wastewater performance.

Together, they show where good chemical management is adding value and where risk still sits.

The emphasis is on implementation rather than ambition. Credible performance depends on supply chain transparency and primary factory data from the Gateway, which in turn determines how effectively a brand resources supplier engagement, monitoring and corrective action.

Scoring segments and performance areas

Most Brands to Zero KPIs allow brands to define the speed, scale and ambition of implementation according to their internal capacities. Essential KPIs ensure that recognition reflects demonstrable brand-led implementation rather than supplier performance alone.

Performance area	Weight in segment
Corporate Level Segment · 269 points · based on OECD Due Diligence Guidance	
Supply Chain Engagement	48%
ZDHC Commitment	16%
Corporate Policy and Strategy	15%
Business Integration	15%
Internal Enablement	6%
Supply Chain Performance Segment · 360 points · adoption, monitoring, corrective action	
Chemical Management Practices	32%
ZDHC MRSL	24%
ZDHC Gateway Chemical Module	21%
ZDHC ClearStream Reporting	12%
ZDHC Wastewater Guidelines	11%

Independently assessed. Every assessment is independently assessed by the appointed third-party Brands to Zero Assessor (KPMG Netherlands). Critical KPIs gate each level in addition to point-based benchmarks; criteria are reviewed and raised annually.

The three levels:
Pioneer, Accelerator, Champion

The assessment assigns each brand one of three levels. The levels are milestones, not endpoints: criteria are reviewed annually, and the bar is raised over time, so even Champions are expected to keep advancing.

Pioneer

ZDHC committed; Governance and basic implementation systems established around the ZDHC Gateway

FOUNDATIONS ESTABLISHED

Accelerator

Due diligence processes and supply-chain implementation operating across a meaningful to material proportion of the value chain.

IMPLEMENTATION AT SCALE

Champion

Chemical management embedded into corporate and purchasing processes, supported by implementation at scale.

INTEGRATED

A **Pioneer** has the foundations in place: is committed to the ZDHC guidelines, uses platforms with measurable progress, and has a due diligence system aligned with the Brands to Zero methodology, itself based on the OECD Due Diligence Guidance and, in turn, the CSDDD.

An **Accelerator** is implementing at scale, driving supply chain due diligence through the ZDHC platforms and working towards its sustainable chemical management goals, with progress underpinned by an assessed calculation model.

A **Champion** has integrated sustainable chemical management into its business, with due diligence established at scale across the supply chain and underpinned by an assessed calculation model.

Chapter 4

The 2026 Brands to Zero Champions

The Champion Level reflects demonstrated organisational integration and supply-chain implementation rather than company size or purchasing power. In the 2026 assessment, based on implementation performance over the reporting year 2025, the following Signatory Brands reached the Champion Level:

To reach Champion Level, a brand has to meet the essential KPIs at every level, run an assessed calculation model, and back its progress with primary factory data from the ZDHC Gateway. The diversity of the 2026 Champion cohort suggests that organisational capability, governance and implementation discipline can be as important as purchasing scale. Because the criteria are raised each year, Champions are expected to keep improving to hold their level.

The 2026 cohort of 21 Champions is up from 15 the year before, reflecting a widening group of brands implementing at scale. Behind the 21 Champions sits the wider ZDHC committed community of brands, vendors, suppliers, chemical formulators, and solution providers contributing to the Roadmap to Zero Programme, with much of the implementation carried out by suppliers themselves.

adidas	ASOS	BURBERRY LONDON ENGLAND	DECATHLON	F&F	G-STAR RAW
H&M	BOSS HUGO BOSS	INDITEX	KOMAR	LEVI STRAUSS & CO.	lululemon
LVMH	Marc O'Polo	MARKS & SPENCER LONDON	new balance	next	Nike
PRIMARK®	PUMA®	VS&Co VICTORIA'S SECRET & CO.	The 21 Champion brands		

Chapter 5

Brands to Zero Relevance to Reporting and Disclosure

The ZDHC Roadmap to Zero Programme offers Brands one implementation system for multiple corporate uses beyond risk management and due diligence. This is also reflected in Brands to Zero.

The corporate-level assessment is built on the OECD Due Diligence Guidance for Responsible Business Conduct, which aligns it with the EU Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive (CSDDD). Alongside governance, it draws on verified supply-chain and primary factory data, which supports, though does not on its own satisfy, the evidence base for several frameworks:

Ø

CSRD and ESRS E2 to E5

The EU Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive and its environmental standards on pollution, water, biodiversity and resource use. ZDHC MRSL conformance and ClearStream wastewater data provide inputs to the pollution and water disclosures.

Ø

CSDDD

The EU directive requires large companies to identify and address environmental harm in their value chains. Supplier engagement and evidence of continuous improvement provide data to support conformance to this directive.

Ø

SFDR PAI 8 and PAI 9

The principal adverse impact indicators on emissions to water and hazardous waste (and radioactive waste ratio), reported under the EU Sustainable Finance Disclosure Regulation. Brands to Zero data makes the underlying figures more complete and easier to trace, with investors setting the final calculations **within their own scope and method.**

One Dataset, Four Frameworks

ZDHC datapoint	SFDR	ZDHC datapoint	Due diligence
ZDHC MRSL conformance (InCheck)	Supports PAI 8/9 traceability	E2-5 Pollution – substances of concern	OECD Module 8; CSDDD value-chain due diligence
Gateway registration and coverage	Input to PAI 8 – emissions to water	E2 Pollution; E3 Water and marine resources	OECD Module 9
ZDHC MRSL conformance (InCheck)	Traceability of underlying figures	Value-chain data quality (ESRS 1)	CSDDD monitoring evidence
Corporate Level Segment score	Governance context for PAI reporting	E2-1 policies; governance disclosures	OECD Due Diligence Guidance; CSDDD alignment
Corrective action practices	Adverse-impact management	E2-2 actions and resources	OECD remedy step; CSDDD remediation

Brands to Zero data supports, but does not, by itself, satisfy these disclosure requirements. Investors and reporting companies set the final calculations within their own scope and method. Full CSRD reporting, for instance, needs coverage across all the relevant ESRS, which a Brands to Zero assessment alone does not provide. But brands that implement, monitor and evaluate well can draw on their Gateway data to support that reporting. OECD mapping above relates to the OECD modules within the OECD Due Diligence Guidance for Responsible Supply Chains in the Garment and Footwear Sector.

ZDHC metrics also map to the chemical, waste and water categories used by the main ESG ratings and data providers: MSCI, S&P Global CSA, Sustainalytics, Moody's and CDP Water Security (see the ZDHC investor section: zdhc.org/for-investors). This makes Brands to Zero relevant not only as an implementation benchmark, but as evidence of the quality of environmental management systems and underlying value-chain data.

References: CSRD (Directive (EU) 2022/2464) and ESRS E2–E5 (Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2023/2772); CSDDD (Directive (EU) 2024/1760); SFDR (Regulation (EU) 2019/2088), PAI indicators per Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2022/1288; OECD Due Diligence Guidance for Responsible Business Conduct (OECD, 2018) and OECD Due Diligence Guidance for Responsible Supply Chains in the Garment and Footwear Sector (OECD, 2018).

Chapter 6

The Benchmark: Contextualising Brand Performance

Benchmarking across the community reveals a consistent pattern amongst the strongest performers. Regardless of size, they tend to share a common set of practices:

- Strong supplier relationships, built through communication, monitoring and evaluation, and by offering suppliers more than a minimum set of requirements.
- Collaborative engagement that offsets limited or inconsistent buying power, supporting suppliers through the transition rather than mandating it.
- Executive ownership and organisational accountability that underpin ZDHC policies and implementation, protecting supply chain stability, development and progress.
- Clear, common language for ZDHC goals, policies and requirements, especially in day-to-day supplier engagement.

ZDHC has also published guidance for brands that are not yet part of the programme, drawing on seven years of Brands to Zero assessments. It gives newcomers a practical starting point, on the principle that it is easier to build the right policies from the outset than to establish new ones later. A brand that joins as a Friend of ZDHC gains access to the Gateway, where it can draw on primary factory data and build an auditable model to report its progress.

For brands on the Roadmap to Zero journey, Brands to Zero gives a credible, independently assessed understanding of governance, implementation maturity and supply chain performance. The KPIs show the level a brand can aim for, and anonymised benchmarking against the community average shows where it currently stands.

Average scores by assessment level achieved

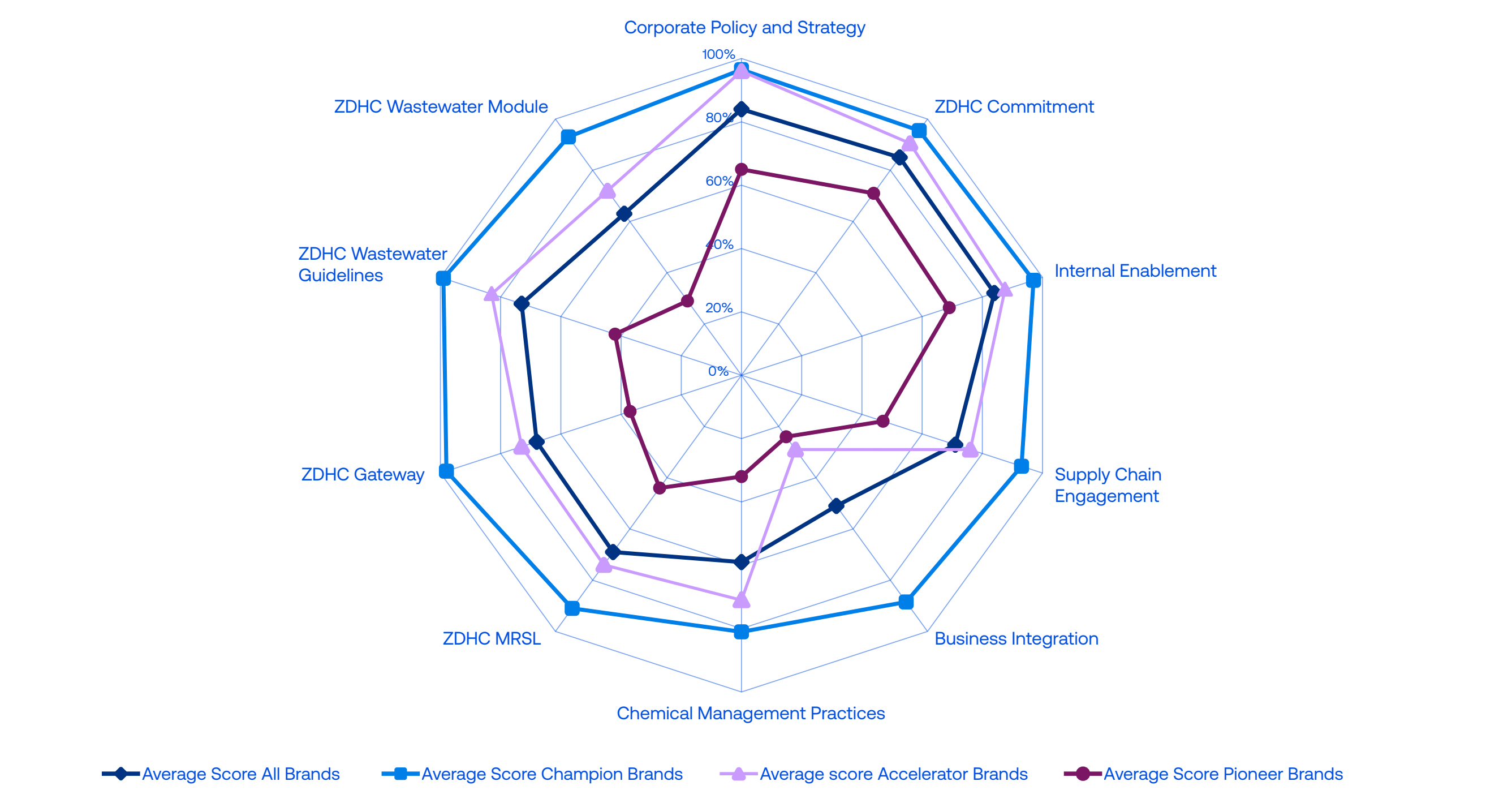


Figure 1 : Where each level stands
Average score per level across the ten performance areas, against the Signatory Brand community average.

Peer comparison helps brands identify where additional investment in systems, people and supplier engagement may be required. The Brands to Zero benchmark complements their own evaluations done based on ZDHC Gateway data on a brand’s supply chains. Gateway data is increasingly available directly to a brand's own teams, with dashboards coming soon. Nonetheless, the Brands to Zero Report is the only official benchmark that provides insights into e.g. top performers and average peer performance.

ZDHC has analysed anonymised data over several years to understand trends in corporate governance and supply chain performance. This is a clear measure of implementation results and, more broadly, of a brand's capacity for due diligence at scale, captured by metrics such as the proportion of a brand's suppliers completing ClearStream wastewater testing or the average ZDHC MRSL conformance (InCheck) across their chemical inventories.

Key Insight 01

Primary Factory Data - Moving from Commitment to Evidence

Brands to Zero puts primary factory data at the heart of the assessment. Brands need to provide clarity on their scoping, meaning if they meet the expectations in terms of implementing the Roadmap to Zero Programme at scale, following the principles of materiality. Through the Gateway, brands can monitor and respectively report (verified) primary factory data of their connected suppliers, and a brand is credited only for the progress it can support with that data. That balance of trust and third-party assessment protectsthe programme's credibility.

The same principle reinforces brand accountability: No implementation, no credit. At each level, the essential KPIs require that claimed progress be supported by genuine implementation and due diligence, not by policies or supplier requirements alone. A brand may therefore take credit for progress reflected in its suppliers' Gateway data, where it can demonstrate the actions it has taken to enable and support that progress.

Key Insight 02

The Implementation Gap

Three data points from the ZDHC InCheck

The ZDHC InCheck is the tool that measures MRSL implementation at the supplier facility level, and it is central to the 2030 goal of full MRSL conformance.

Types of Brands	Brands to Zero 2025	Brands to Zero 2026
Brands with InCheck requirements ZDHC Commitment	75%	91%
Brands with InCheck monitoring	87%	91%
Brands with InCheck follow-up	60%	74%

The direction of travel is encouraging. In 2025, every Signatory Brand was committed to the MRSL, but only 75% required suppliers to prove it through InCheck, even though 87% were monitoring InCheck data. 2025 results indicated implementation gaps between a) governance and requirements and b) only monitoring supplier data and systematically engaging suppliers in implementation. The 2026 results show that these gaps have largely closed: 91% of brands now follow up on their ZDHC MRSL commitment by requiring InCheck data from suppliers, which is consistent with 91% of brands monitoring this incoming supplier data. Requirement setting and monitoring are in line.

A second implementation gap remains. The principal remaining implementation gap is no longer requirements setting or monitoring; it is active supplier engagement in corrective action.

This is also reflected in the whole Brands to Zero Performance Area, Business Integration, where the spider diagram shows that the average Accelerator Scoring is barely above Pioneer Level. **Lack of executive ownership and organisational accountability** that underpin ZDHC policies and their implementation risks undermining supply chain development and progress.

Key Insight 03

Outlook: Claims and References

Globally, the rules on sustainability communication are rapidly evolving, alongside closer scrutiny from regulators (the EU Green Claims Directive and the Empowering Consumers for the Green Transition Directive (EmpCo)), investors, and NGOs, which now expect or require environmental claims to be backed by evidence, clear methods, and verifiable data. Broad statements about 'safer chemicals' or 'responsible chemical management' will be challenged if they cannot be tied to a recognised framework and credible data.

For chemical management, the Roadmap to Zero Programme is that framework. Because its guidelines are public, brands need to be clear about which claim they are making: simply using ZDHC guidelines, participating in the programme, or reporting verified implementation data. Keeping those apart protects both the programme's integrity and the brand's own credibility, and the ZDHC Referencing and Claims Framework, now in development, is designed to draw exactly those lines.

Increased scrutiny need not result in reduced sustainability communication. Instead, it increases the importance of precise, proportionate and evidence-based claims. It is understandable but risky: investors, customers and regulators increasingly want to see not just ambitions but the systems behind them, and staying silent hides tangible progress at the very moment transparency is becoming an advantage.

The better answer is to communicate more clearly, not less, explaining how chemicals are managed, which frameworks are followed and the evidence behind each claim. This matters to finance as much as to marketing: investors, lenders and insurers increasingly judge the quality of a company's management systems alongside its results, and confidence comes from governance, standardised processes and reliable data rather than targets alone. A brand that implements the Roadmap to Zero Programme and has it assessed through Brands to Zero demonstrates that chemical management is built into its operations rather than bolted on.

As disclosure becomes more regulated, credibility is becoming a business asset, and implementation will count for more than aspiration. The brands investing in it now will be best placed to communicate with confidence, meet regulatory expectations, and demonstrate to investors that their performance rests on recognised governance, sound methods, and verifiable evidence. As sustainability disclosure becomes more evidence-based, implementation credibility is increasingly a corporate asset.

Assessed progress

Brands engaged in Brands to Zero can make the most extensive claims about programme implementation and progress across their supply chains, supported by independent assessment

ZDHC Roadmap to Zero participation

All brands participating in the Programme can self-report participation and performance using credible data generated through the ZDHC Gateway

ZDHC ClaimCheck

Brands publicly aligning with the SCMF can register their claims, creating visibility into MRSL alignment beyond the committed ZDHC community

(coming end 2026)

An open Sustainable Chemical Management Framework (SCMF)

The SCMF is publicly available to everyone, encouraging broad industry adoption and implementation of the ZDHC MRSL and guidelines



Chapter 7

Beyond Compliance: Measuring Environmental Outcomes

The ZDHC Roadmap to Zero Programme and the Gateway provide brands and suppliers with the data and insights on the degree to which hazardous chemicals were effectively substituted and how wastewater parameters, meaning the wastewater quality, improved. The harder question and the one that matters most for materiality and impact is whether all that effort translates into tangible environmental improvement.

In 2025, ZDHC and the sustainability consultancy Quantis published Protecting Supply Chains and Natural Capital: The Power of Safer Chemistry (roadmaptozero.com/zdhc-quantis-report-2025), the first science-based measure of the impact that sustainable chemical management has on nature. The modelling found that the specific intervention scenarios assessed could reduce selected nature-related impact indicators by up to **80 to 96%**.

To reach that figure, the study looked at practical changes a factory can make, such as **switching to safer chemicals, improving how it treats its wastewater, and cutting its air emissions**, and translated them into environmental measures that investors and companies already use, including freshwater ecotoxicity, eutrophication, water use and climate change.

The Quantis report shows that implementing sustainable chemical management can deliver measurable environmental gains. The study also found that its main limitation was the lack of primary factory data, a gap that the Brands to Zero programme is working actively to close.

Ultimately, consistent implementation at scale ensures that individual poor performers do not undermine the progress of a brand’s supply chain. By connecting implementation to impact, brands gain a clearer understanding of the materiality of insufficient implementation and can rely on their multi-stakeholder initiative to support the impact case with science, leaving them to focus their efforts where they are strongest. The same data then supports credible reporting under frameworks such as CSRD/CSDDD and SFDR.

Brands to Zero establishes whether the systems required for sustainable chemical management are being implemented at scale. The next stage of ZDHC's impact approach is to strengthen the connection between this implementation evidence and measurable environmental outcomes.



Glossary

Term	What it means	Term	What it means
Roadmap to Zero Programme	The ZDHC Roadmap to Zero Programme is at the core of ZDHC. Guidelines and guides from the Programme have been consolidated into a digitalised framework that serves the entire ZDHC Committed Community within the textile, apparel, leather and footwear industries. It facilitates the respective community and participation stakeholder system for implementation.	Primary factory data	Data originating directly from a factory and reported, rather than derived from estimates or secondary sources. Where applicable, specific ZDHC processes may provide additional verification or a third-party assessment on it. ZDHC Roadmap to Zero related data is held in the Gateway.
ZDHC MRSL	The ZDHC Manufacturing Restricted Substances List: the industry-agreed list of hazardous substances that must not be intentionally used in production.	ZDHC Signatory Brand	A brand/retailer that has formally committed to the implementation of the ZDHC MRSL and the Roadmap to Zero Programme by signing with ZDHC and contributing to its development.
ZDHC InCheck	The tool measures ZDHC MRSL implementation at the factory level and provides a summary of a chemical inventory's ZDHC MRSL conformance, which is central to measuring the 2030 goal of full ZDHC MRSL conformance.	Friend of ZDHC	Brands and retailers with access to parts of the Roadmap to Zero Programme, mainly using the Gateway. They don't participate in Brands to Zero.
ZDHC ClearStream	A standardised ZDHC wastewater performance report used across the global Roadmap to Zero community and based on the ZDHC Wastewater and Sludge Guidelines. It helps suppliers identify non-conformities and plan root cause analysis and corrective actions.	ZDHC Brands to Zero	All ZDHC Signatory Brands undergo the annual, independent assessment. The aim is to bring consistency in how the Brand Roadmap to Zero Programme is implemented and to support improvements by measuring and benchmarking brands' performance on both corporate-level governance and supply-chain implementation. There are 3 levels awarded: Pioneer, Accelerator, and Champion.
ZDHC Gateway	The platform that holds and enables sharing of value chain implementation and conformance data. Formulators register ZDHC MRSL conformant chemistry, which factories link to uploaded chemical inventories (InCheck). Wastewater laboratories upload ClearStream data. Brands connect with their factories and monitor data of their value chains.	Assessed calculation model	The brand's method for calculating its implementation progress as quantitative KPIs, as part of the Brands to Zero assessment.
Primary factory data	Data originating directly from a factory and reported, rather than derived from estimates or secondary sources. Where applicable, specific ZDHC processes may provide additional verification or a third-party assessment on it. ZDHC Roadmap to Zero related data is held in the Gateway.	CSRD	Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive (EU): requires large companies to report on their sustainability performance.

Term	What it means	Term	What it means
ESRS E2–E5	European Sustainability Reporting Standards (ESRS) on pollution, water, biodiversity and resource use - the detailed environmental rules under CSRD.It facilitates the respective community and participation stakeholder system for implementation.	SASB	Sustainability Accounting Standards Board: industry-specific standards for reporting financially material sustainability information.
CSDDD	EU Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive: requires large companies to identify and address human-rights and environmental harm in their value chains. While the CSRD focuses on disclosure, the CSDDD mandates active risk management across the value chain	Green Claims Directive	An EU directive, currently in the legislative process, requires environmental claims to be substantiated with evidence.
SFDR / PAI	EU Sustainable Finance Disclosure Regulation. Principal Adverse Impact (PAI) indicators are the metrics investors must report on the negative impacts of the companies they invest in.	EmpCo	Empowering Consumers for the Green Transition Directive (EU), which targets misleading environmental claims made to consumers.
OECD Due Diligence Guidance	The international reference framework for how companies should identify and manage risk in their supply chains.	Quantis	The sustainability consultancy (a BCG company) behind the 2025 study quantifying the nature benefits of ZDHC's tools.
ESG ratings	Third-party scores (e.g. MSCI, Sustainalytics) that investors use to compare companies' environmental, social and governance performance.	Green hushing	Choosing to say little or nothing about sustainability to avoid scrutiny, the opposite risk is overstating claims/greenwashing.
GRI	Global Reporting Initiative: a widely used voluntary framework for sustainability reporting.		

General disclaimer

Whilst ZDHC takes every reasonable effort to make sure that the content of and information contained in this Brands to Zero Report 2026 is as accurate as possible at the time of publication, ZDHC makes no claims, promises, or guarantees about the accuracy, completeness, or adequacy of the contents of this document. In no event will ZDHC (and/or any related ZDHC majority-owned legal entities) or the Directors or staff thereof be liable, and ZDHC expressly disclaims any liability of any kind to any party for any loss, damage, or disruption caused:

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Roadmap

to Zero



by ZDHC

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Published October 2026

