

# Social license to operate (SLO) in the Hynet and Humber industrial clusters

September 2023

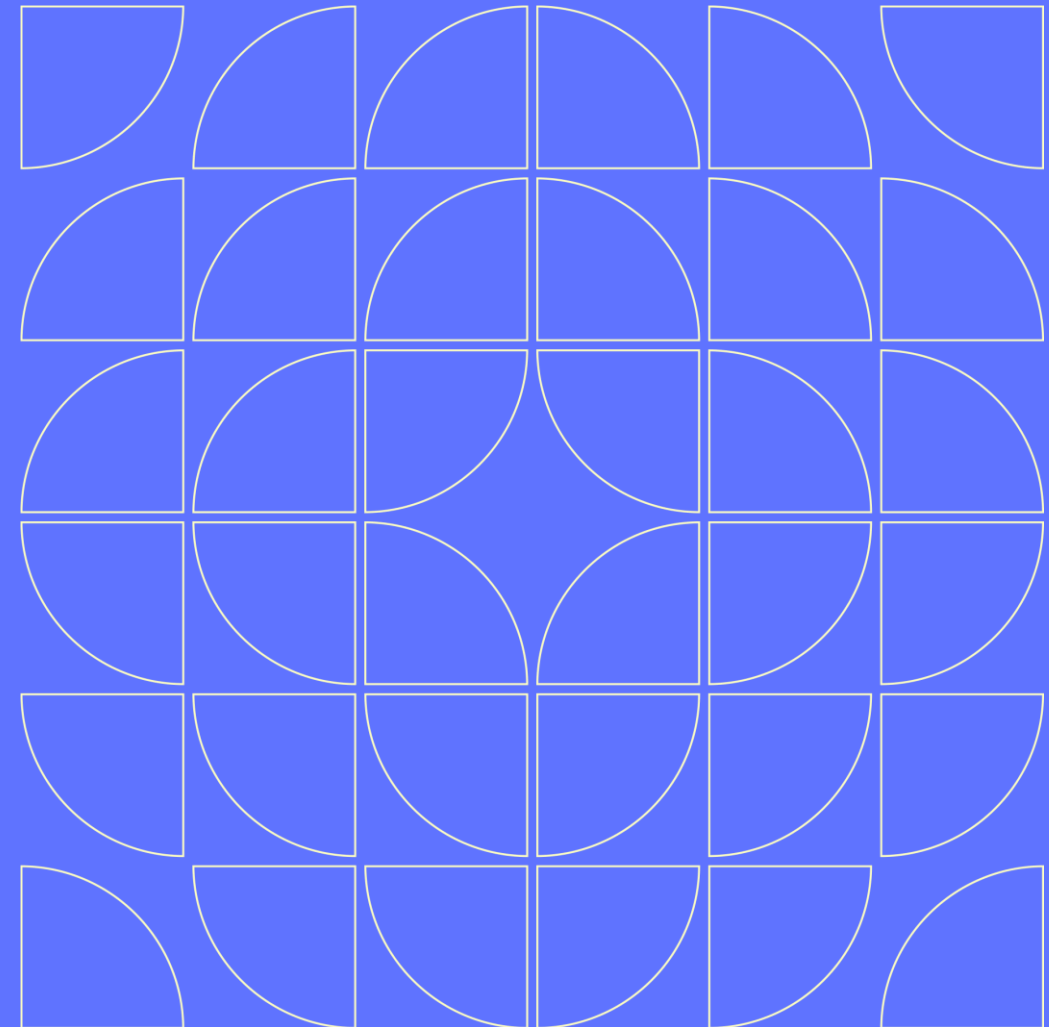
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Tyndall Centre for Climate Change Research

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# Social license to operate (SLO)

**A strong SLO:** high level of ongoing support from different stakeholders on need for and value of decarbonisation technologies  
dynamic, context specific & influenced by events

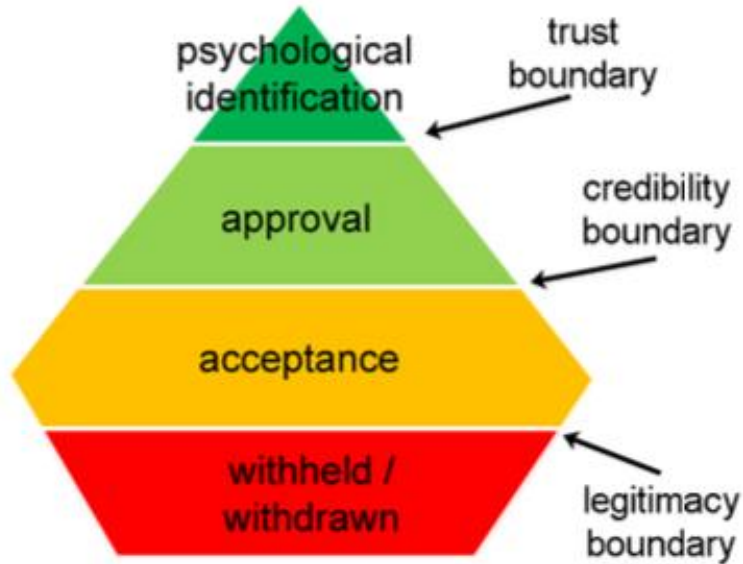
Approaches must be perceived as **credible** and **legitimate** solutions to climate change:

- that it will deliver industrial decarbonisation
- and is the 'right' way to do so - shared understanding, widening involvement, recognising different priorities and perspectives

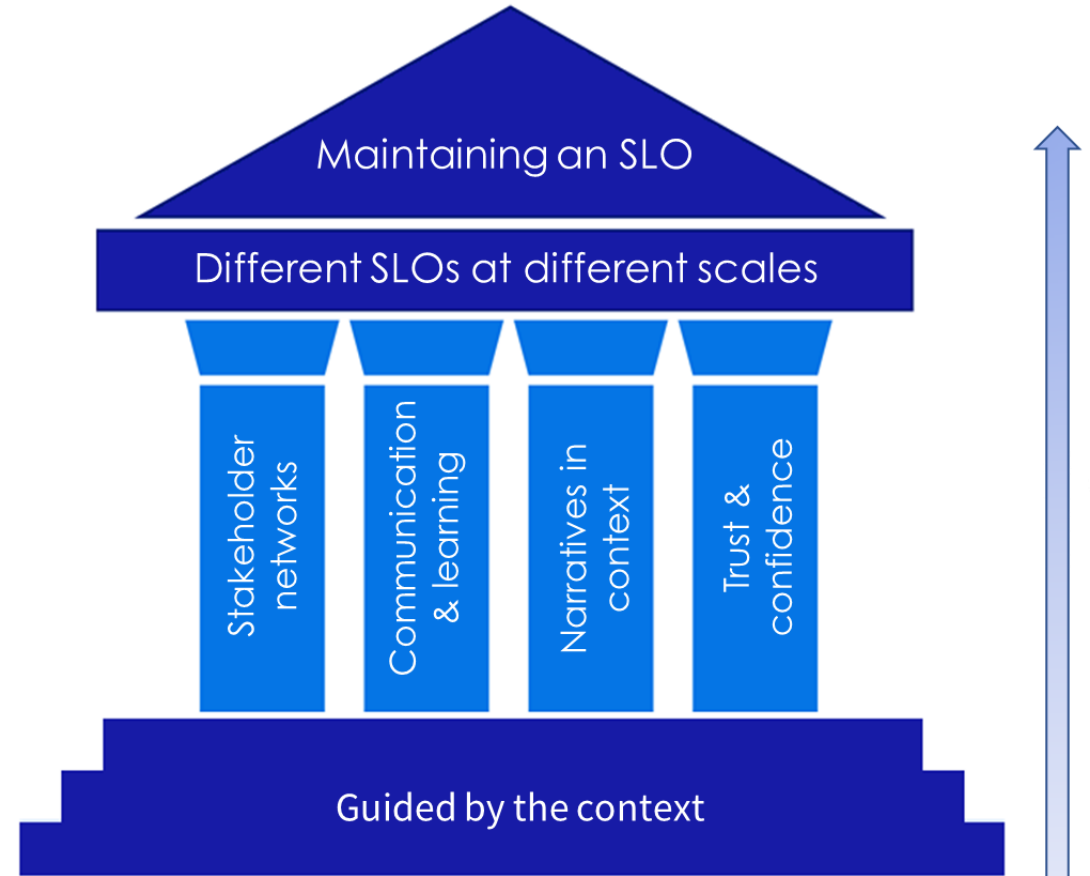
**Trust** - between stakeholders across governance scales: in how projects are delivered, managed and regulated.

**Ongoing support** - Between communities, developers, regulators and decision makers across governance scales

# Social license to operate (SLO)



The "pyramid" model of the SLO proposed by Thomson & Boutilier (2011)



Gough, C., Cunningham, R. and Mander, S., 2018. Understanding key elements in establishing a social license for CCS: an empirical approach. *International Journal of Greenhouse Gas Control*, 68, pp.16-25.

# This project

## Project aims:

- Assess and develop conditions for establishing and maintaining a strong SLO for decarbonising the clusters.
- Extend the SLO approach to consider multiple technologies assembled to deliver industrial decarbonisation at a cluster scale.
- The project employs an iterative process of mapping and deliberation to identify key contextual factors that will influence the SLO



# 1<sup>st</sup> Stakeholder Workshop: Overview

**Strengths:** Good existing physical infrastructure, industrial heritage; common shared vision across partnerships

**Challenges:** Availability skilled workforce; lack of clear UK policy strategy & urgency from Government; building public understanding

**Trust factors:** Party politics; Local institutions building effective partnerships; power to influence; Perceived motivation

## **Hynet NW:**

- Strong industrial desire to decarbonise but challenge to build public understanding of cluster plans

## **Humber:**

- Seeking certainty in business models (longevity and support) and regulation for hydrogen and CO<sub>2</sub>.

# Focus groups: overview

- *Both held in December 2022 (NW & Humber)*
- *9 participants recruited for a spread of age, gender, ethnicity, SE group*
- Discussed plans for industrial decarbonisation in the area, and the associated technologies, in the context of climate change and net zero.



# Focus groups: Summary of focus groups

## **Very little awareness of cluster plans with wider publics:**

- Promotes scepticism and impacts trust.
- Appetite to know more and see evidence / data: performance of other projects, alternative approaches.
- They were generally were supportive of the project plans, with some suggested improvements.
- This is not currently part of national dialogue.

## **Lack of familiarity with ‘Net Zero’**

## 2<sup>nd</sup> Stakeholder Workshop: Overview

### **Some common themes emerged in both regions:**

- Slow pace / delays to UK policy: risk for international competitiveness
- Challenges to improving information and engagement: multiple voices and channels
- Lack of top-down ownership / leadership of net zero
- Making decarbonisation part of the national debate
- Skills and enabling the local workforce



# Summary

Work with stakeholders evidences strong foundations for SLO but wider public support not established:

- Clear recognition of the **need to act on climate change** and the need to decarbonise local industry
- Lack of **awareness** of cluster plans
- Seen as **opportunity for the area**: for industry to thrive, bringing jobs.
- Need for Government leadership, with transparency in awarding contracts.

Upcoming work:

- **SLO blueprint**: looking to identify; transferable insights, signposting for improving legitimacy, credibility and trust.
- **IDRIC Wave 2 project**: Integrated Assessment of BECCS in NW context: Environmental, policy, regulatory and social factors

# Thank you

## Publications

Gough, C., Cunningham, R. and Mander, S., 2018. Understanding key elements in establishing a social license for CCS: an empirical approach. *International Journal of Greenhouse Gas Control*, 68, pp.16-25.

Gough, C. and Mander, S., 2022. CCS industrial clusters: Building a social license to operate. *International Journal of Greenhouse Gas Control*, 119, p.103713.

**Cluster reports** – available from [www.idric.org](http://www.idric.org)

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