



Manaaki Whenua
Landcare Research

Methodological and analytical approaches to gauge social licence to operate

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Methodological and analytical approaches to gauge social licence to operate

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1 The Research Project

Social licence to operate (SLO) is a concept that is growing in usage across multiple sectors within New Zealand. However, despite this increase in usage, its meaning and application are still poorly understood and can lead to conflict if social expectations are not met. This research seeks to identify criteria that define SLO and to evaluate methods which can be used by Manaaki Whenua – Landcare Research (MWLR) to assist organisations to understand and develop SLO.

1.1 Approach taken – Information sources

This research drew on several sources of information to achieve its aims. Key issues and criteria relating to SLO were drawn from a review of the international literature.

Additional insights into SLO were obtained from interviewing researchers working on SLO (within MWLR and externally – see Table 1). Interviews followed a semi-structured approach, (see appendix 1 for the interview schedule) and were conducted either in person or via Skype or Zoom.¹

Table 1. Summary of interviews

Source of interviewee	# Researchers interviewed
MWLR	2
New Zealand (non-MWLR)	3
Australia	1

Interviewees were also asked their views on methods to assess SLO. In addition, a 1-day workshop was held with 13 MWLR social researchers and Kairangahau Māori (Māori researchers) to identify the methods MWLR has capability or expertise in for carrying out SLO research. This internal expert group assessed the company's in-house capabilities and explored potential processes for engaging with organisations on/about SLO.

¹ This research project was approved by Manaaki Whenua - Landcare Research Social Research Ethics (1819/16). All interview participants received a Personal Information Sheet outlining the purpose of the research and information on the interview process. All the participants gave informed consent to participate in the research.

2 Social Licence to Operate - Key Issues

Social licence to operate (SLO) is broadly defined as the "...ongoing acceptance or approval of an operation by those community stakeholders who are affected by it" (Moffat et al. 2016, p. 44), which "...may be revoked at any stage of a project based on changes in perceptions and reflective of the relationships between a company and its external stakeholders" (Mercer-Mapstone, Rifkin, Moffat, et al. 2018, p. 33). However, the term is not universally accepted:

I still think that there is some resistance to the term social licence, not everybody likes that. So, people might talk about it using different terminology. There's often sort of, I think a bit naïve, but there's often a dismissal of it as green washing or kind of tick a box, say you've done this, whatever, don't have to engage. Where, I prefer to think about it more as true engagement, so it just depends on the reception of the term, whether people are actually working on it. I would say every sector is working on engagement issues, communication issues, transparency issues, legitimacy issues, trust issues. That's definitely important across the board. Whether they are specifically naming it up as social licence is another matter. (Transcript #4)

Another researcher we interviewed preferred to use the term 'social contract' over social licence to operate because it could be more easily defined in the literature and enabled boundaries to be determined when developing social relationships:

I like to see something that you can stick a pole in and say, "That's what it is". So that's where law has actually been very useful for us, that defines the boundaries of the relationship, it tells you why you should be having that relationship, and then how you should be going about it. That is not a social licence. I mean, it comes into, you could say it's part of a type of social contract if you want to go down that way, but I don't even know that that's - it is sort of helpful, so I'm happier with a social contract, at least it's theorised in the literature much more clearly. Social licence, no. (Transcript #5)

Regardless of how it is interpreted, social licence to operate is a concept that is growing in usage across multiple sectors within New Zealand and internationally:

... the marine environment, fishing and agriculture... were the most frequent mentions just ahead of oil and gas and energy. And there's a few other references but just a handful. But we've also seen it in a terrestrial context, we've seen it referred, used in reference to the dairy industry, forestry; those are the ones that come to mind at the moment. (Transcript #2)

...the concept has probably gotten more traction, and it's starting to be looked at by a number of different areas. (Transcript #4)

Increasingly, organisations are recognising that they need to do more than just meet their minimum legal and regulatory requirements if they want to operate effectively – they also need to address societal concerns around the social, economic, environmental and cultural impacts of their activities. As Edwards & Trafford (2016, p. 167) argue, it

...is clear is that regulatory approval for an activity does not necessarily equate to social approval of that activity. Regulation provides, at most, an indication of the minimum standard that a particular activity or operation must meet. Regulation and societal expectations operate quite independently of each other.

Legal licence and social licence form a two-track approval process. Failure to meet legal requirements can result in costly fines and potential legal suspension of operations. Failure to comply with social expectations can result in costly conflicts and possible suspension of operations (Hall et al. 2015).

Boutilier (2014) uses the life cycle of social issues (Post et al. 2002) as a framework for understanding the relationship between legal licence and social licence (Table 2). A key point from this research is that laws can be changed and/or programmes affected by the social pressure generated if social expectations are not met. Even a shift from stage 1 to stage 2 can result in significant increased costs to an organisation due to stakeholder conflict (Boutilier 2014).

Table 2. Lifecycle of social issues (adapted from Boutilier (2014))

Legal Licence	SLO
Stage 1: Awareness and changing stakeholder expectations	Minority withdrawing the social licence
Stage 2: Political Action	Creation of a more powerful coalition to press the government to withdraw the legal licence
Stage 3: Government action	Government legitimises the views of social licence with holders by launching a debate or a study on the adequacy of the existing legal framework for the issue
Stage 4: Legal implementation	Leads to either a withdrawal of the legal licence or the imposition of more conditions upon it

The way one party sees SLO influences how they approach the concept – and this can be a barrier to successfully achieving SLO. Studies have found that the understanding of SLO differs across, and even within, organisations (Bice 2014; Hall et al. 2015).

What we found is, it is so much variation in how this term [SLO] is being defined and used and the approach is being taken to assume social licence that I certainly wouldn't call it dichotomy; there's just a multiplicity of understanding out there. And I'm not sure I could even characterise it as most of the industry of one type and most of the community another type. It's just all over the place. (Transcript #2)

Organisations often see SLO as a risk management exercise (Mercer-Mapstone, Rifkin, Moffat et al. 2017). This transactional approach means that organisations can underestimate/recognise the amount of stakeholder engagement and relationship-building required to build and maintain a SLO. Communities grant a SLO (Prno 2013), and this is generally done on the basis of the perceived quality of the relationship (Thomson & Joyce 2008; Prno & Slocombe 2012; Hall et al. 2015).

These disparate ways of looking at SLO can lead to conflict as social expectations are not met due to the different values and practices inherent in the range of approaches. Furthermore, these differences can also mean that any measures used to gauge SLO may be misleading because of the various interpretations of what SLO is. Based on their interpretation of the concept, organisations may believe they are building and maintaining SLO, only to find that their approach misses the mark with the communities and stakeholders with whom they are engaging:

...the aquaculture issue is one particular example where they thought that they were doing a fantastic job in terms of social licence, but it was very one-way; they thought that their communication and information strategy was giving them social licence. And, then they tried to expand, and it was a major blow-up basically, and they realised they essentially had no social licence. So, they completely had to redesign their engagement and now they do, do community workshops, community panels, talks, supporting community initiatives, all sorts of things. So, they've completely changed their approach, so that one-way wasn't sufficient and it's no longer sufficient into the future. And, there are a number of different industries which are variously along the same path. (Transcript #4)

Trust is central to SLO (Prno 2013; Moffat & Zhang 2014; Mercer-Mapstone, Rifkin, Louis et al. 2018). Social licence to operate requires organisations to conform to established norms (legitimacy) – be they legal, social, cultural, formal or informal (Thomson & Joyce 2008) – and involves the sequential building of credibility and trust over time with affected communities of interest (Fig. 1). In building trust, communities must feel safe not only with organisations but with researchers they might be interacting with. According to one researcher, safe practice extends to all facets of the research, including the publication of data:

I think social licence to me would be making sure that Manaaki Whenua as a whole has a good set of standards in place in the way that we conduct ourselves and do research, and that we're doing it to the highest standards that we can and that people are actually trained up on methodologies and feel confident on those methodologies to be able to work with other people. And that's right through from having meetings, interviewing, right through to the write up of information and how we handle intellectual property rights and everything. It's quite a continuum from just sitting down in a meeting to where we actually have results and we're writing them up and interpreting them and analysing them. So, for me, people want to feel safe when they work with agencies like us and know that we're handling all of that information correctly. Then what we do with it afterwards too, like even publication. And I guess it's

making sure we've got social licence to give that assurance out there that we actually know what we're doing. (Transcript #6)

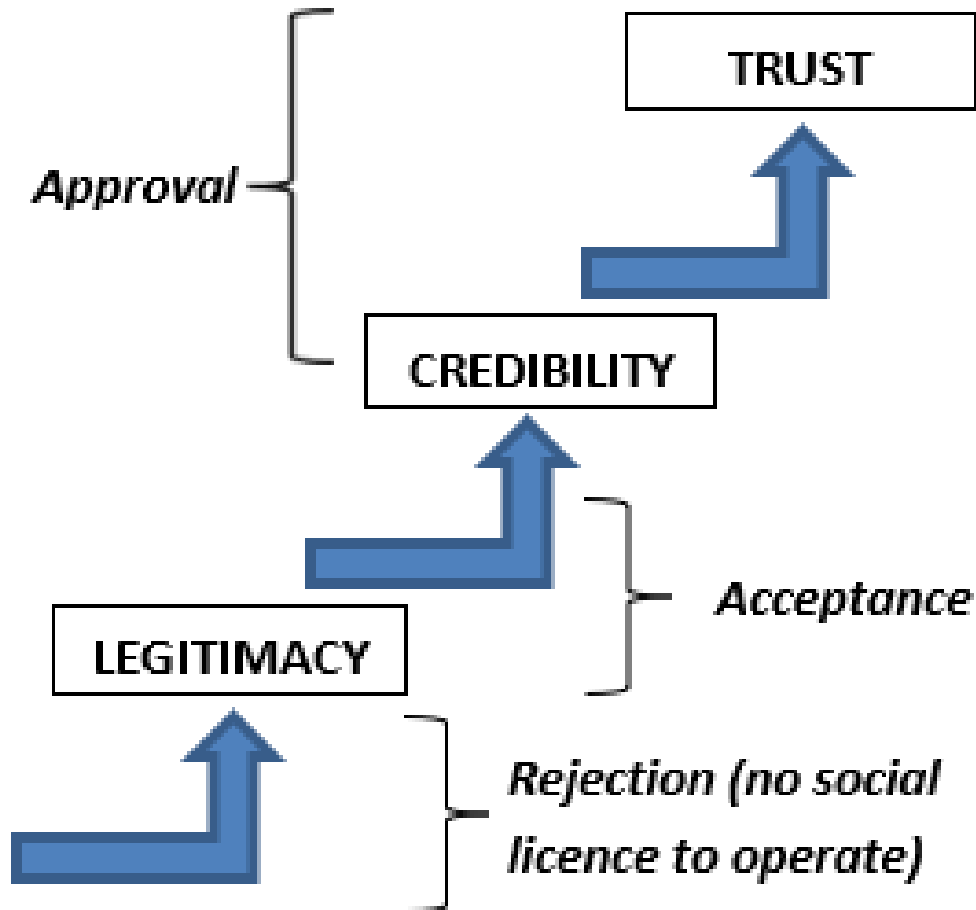


Figure 1. Developing SLO (adapted from Thomson & Joyce 2008).

Table 3 outlines some of the key criteria that contribute to trust and SLO. These criteria are consistent across the literature, although, as shown in Table 3, some studies place more focus on some criteria than others. This difference in focus is due to the context of the study. Prno (2013) notes that context is key to SLO. Because SLO is issued by communities and stakeholders (Prno 2013), understanding the different perceptions, values, practices and expectations of these communities and stakeholders is important for organisations in their bid to develop SLO:

... you really need to build up awareness of what groups and what stakeholders there are, what groups that have a stake, and then what issues and kind of key problems or key concerns they each have. And, that's the first crucial step... (Transcript #4)

Table 3: Key criteria that contribute to trust and SLO

Criteria	References
Developing genuine relationships	Davenport et al. 2007; Prno 2013; Hall et al. 2015; Mercer-Mapstone, Rifkin, Louis et al. 2017, 2018; Mercer-Mapstone, Rifkin, Moffat, et al. 2017, 2018; Baines & Edwards 2018
Shared values and interest	Davenport et al. 2007; Prno 2013; Metcalf et al. 2015; Mercer-Mapstone, Rifkin, Louis et al. 2017
Approaches to communication & engagement	Prno 2013; Bice 2014; Metcalf et al. 2015; Mercer-Mapstone, Rifkin, Louis et al. 2018; Mercer-Mapstone, Rifkin, Moffat et al. 2018; Baines & Edwards 2018
Integration of local concerns and knowledge	Davenport et al. 2007; Prno 2013; Bice 2014; Metcalf et al. 2015; Mercer-Mapstone, Rifkin, Louis, et al. 2017
Procedural fairness	Davenport et al. 2007; Hamm et al. 2013; Moffat & Zhang 2014; Metcalf et al. 2015; Mercer-Mapstone, Rifkin, Louis et al. 2017, 2018
Perceptions of technical competence	Davenport et al. 2007; Hamm et al. 2013; Metcalf et al. 2015; Macaulay 2018

Society is not homogeneous and therefore social licence is not a single licence granted by communities, but a '...continuum of multiple licences achieved across various groups within society' (Dare et al. 2014, p. 189). Overt permission from all relevant public 'communities' is exceedingly rare, if not impossible to achieve. While the term licence suggests a specific permission, many positive programmes may only ever receive a reluctant tolerance. Importantly, SLO is not a permanent concept but is subject to change as opinions and perceptions change (Gluckman 2016). This means that SLO is something that needs to be continually managed for, rather than obtained. This implies that different levels of engagement will be required with different stakeholders (Boutilier 2014; Quigley & Baines 2014), and how organisations approach SLO is likely to change with each application (Prno 2013; Hall et al. 2015).

As noted above, while the criteria for SLO are becoming more clearly understood, how they are approached and implemented is still an issue. A recent assessment of the international SLO literature notes that the structured model of strategic dialogue is the prominent approach taken by organisations to SLO engagement, rather than a reflective model of learning dialogue (Mercer-Mapstone, Rifkin, Moffat et al. 2017). Strategic dialogue is a more product/goal-orientated, time-constrained process, often associated with the transactional approach to engagement (primarily one-way communications). This unidirectional dissemination of information, what Mercer-Mapstone, Rifkin, Moffat et al. (2017, p. 139) describe as 'doing to' rather than 'doing with' stakeholders, limits opportunities for learning and relationship building (Mercer-Mapstone, Rifkin, Moffat et al. 2017). On the other hand, reflective dialogue, involving multiple and diverse perspectives, is thought to encourage mutual learning relationships (Mercer-Mapstone, Rifkin, Moffat et al. 2017):

I don't think community uses social licence to operate particularly much, it's much more of a business, and industry thing from my perspective, but I think they do see it as a different thing. So, community's keen to hold industry to

account, and they're keen to have better transparency and engagement, access to information and access to decision-making, and to see the outcomes. So, that's again the procedural justice kind of component. Whereas, industry is sort of more about trying to minimise that engagement and just do what they have to do. So, it's kind of, it's a different framing and that's why that negotiation is so important, so that there are some agreed aspects which work for both sides. It's really important that social licence is two-way or multiple ways. (Transcript #4)

... for some people it's a communication problem rather than an engagement problem and a relationship problem; and rather than appreciating that those communities have interest and perspectives that are valid and should be listened to, their perception is oh, we just need to tell them what we're doing and in a more effective way... (Transcript #2)

There are many diverse methods available to evaluate trust and the criteria that contribute to SLO. For example, IAP2 (2014) list 20 engagement methods that can be used to assess SLO. Researchers interviewed as part of this project also reiterated this point:

It's a whole spectrum, and there's different types of tools and activities that can work along that kind of process, and yeah, really, it's just a matter of which key issue and which key group and what action there is for true engagement and change. (Transcript #4)

The implications are that it is not *what* methods are used to evaluate SLO that are important, rather it is *how* they are used to assist organisations to understand and develop SLO.

2.1 Synergies with kaupapa Māori approaches

Our research also shows that SLO has synergies with kaupapa Māori research. A Māori researcher commented that kaupapa Māori research requires a social licence to engage with individuals, communities, and organisations, and this includes building credibility and reciprocity when establishing relationships, e.g. empowering communities to build capacity or leaving something tangible for the community when the project is completed:

Well I probably am seeing it much more from a Māori perspective, but we've got very, very strict protocols in place whenever we're doing any sort of social research out there with agencies through to communities and individuals. So we do have a quite strict sort of almost rule-based process that we have to get used to and work through, and I guess that to me is some sort of social licence, having the skills and abilities and competence to be able to go out there and do this sort of research with people, different communities and making sure the work is done really well and ethically, following a good set of protocols and processes... I used to do a lot of work up on the East Coast with Ngāti Porou. I was up there for way over 12, 15 years, but I haven't been up there for about 10 years. But I noticed whenever I meet them now, the relationship is as solid as when I was up there, even though there's been

multiple agencies that have worked with them since that time. We set things up enough for them to understand the genuine nature of what we were trying to achieve, and a lot of what was around building their capacity. It wasn't just building ours. And so, I put a huge amount of effort – that's what I do with a lot of the Māori projects is that I'm always thinking 'what am I going to leave behind?' (Transcript #6)

Eight key principles guide Kaupapa Māori research (Pohatu 1996; Smith & Reid 2000; Pihama 2001). These principles include: Tino Rangatiratanga (self-determination), Taonga tuku iho (cultural aspiration), Ako Māori (culturally preferred teaching and learning practices), Kia piki ake i ngā raruraru o te kainga (socio-economic mediation), Whānau (extended family structure), Kaupapa (collective philosophy of vision, aspiration, and purpose), Te Tiriti o Waitangi (Treaty of Waitangi), and Ata (growing respectful relationships):

... So, if I said to you that one of the principles was Rangatiratanga you're going to go, 'What? What the heck is that?' But you might map it across to something else and say, 'Yeah, no that's exactly how this works when I'm working with farmers or I'm working with just general stakeholders I do the same sort of thing but I don't do it quite like that.' So, I think something to raise when you run your workshops is how could we bring Kaupapa Māori, if we're working more specifically with Māori groups in the future or – that's for any project in the whole company [MWLR]. (Transcript #6)

While there may be synergies between SLO and Kaupapa Māori research in terms of trust, respect, building relationships and credibility, this is an area that needs further research and development from Kaupapa Māori specialists:

A: I mean I've always felt it's a very specialist methodology. It's our process. As soon as you're working with Māori or you're trying to design research with Māori, then you kick into this Kaupapa Māori area. So, it may be within social licence or it may actually be sitting next to it, but it actually contributes to social licence but from a Māori angle.

Q: It works through trust though, doesn't it?

A: Very much so. (Transcript #6)

3 A Preliminary SLO Engagement Model

This section outlines a process for engaging with organisations around SLO. A SLO Engagement Model has been designed to assist with the engagement process (Figure 2). The model is intended as a guide and can be adjusted depending on the needs and understanding of the organisation as there is no one-size-fits-all approach. This model draws on the output of the MWLR social research workshop and is informed by both western and indigenous views of engagement:

... [Kaupapa Māori Research] is about developing genuine relationships, ...at the beginning of a project and making sure those are followed right through from the beginning of the project to the end. (Transcript #6)

Relationships: Constructive relationships between organisations and their stakeholders sit at the heart of processes aiming to establish or maintain SLO (Mercer-Mapstone, Rifkin, Moffat et al. 2018). As noted earlier, SLO is granted by communities based on the perceived quality of the relationship. Relational quality is more important to SLO than transactional quality. Therefore, relationships resulting from two-way communication are of higher importance for building and maintaining SLO. Relationships are integral to the entire process outlined in this model. Recognising the importance of relationships, and the quality of those relationships, is a key step in an organisation's efforts to build and maintain SLO.

Broadly, the SLO model consists of four phases (Fig. 2 and Table 4):

- 1 Socialising
- 2 Hearing
- 3 Integrating
- 4 Reflecting



Figure 2. Social Licence to Operate (SLO) Engagement Model developed from the MWLR workshop.

Each phase comprises several interconnected steps. The steps are not necessarily linear in sequence as there may be a need to revisit earlier steps depending on the outcome of each step. As shown in Figure 2 and Table 4, **Reflecting** runs across all the steps. Organisations need to reflect on actions in each stage and how it impacts on the next, or subsequent, phase(s). Another key component of this SLO Engagement Model is getting organisations to reflect on how each step impacts on their **Relationships**.

1. Socialising: Socialising the concept of SLO with the organisation. As noted above, parties can see SLO in different ways and therefore have different ideas as to what it is. The socialising phase of the model is about ensuring a common and accepted understanding of the concept. This phase has three steps:

- Introduction to SLO
- Purpose
- Context

The **Introduction to SLO** involves exploring the concept of SLO with the organisation to ensure they understand what the concept is and that this concept is what they are interested in. In addition, this concept would also consider the implications of relational and transactional relationships and what is and is not negotiable. The next step involves determining the **Purpose** behind why SLO is required; what issues are driving this purpose and what criteria can be used to measure success. Understanding the **Context** is the third step in this phase. Identifying the level of commitment, which stakeholders are considered important, what has already been done and what engagement has taken place are key aspects of this step. Leadership support is also essential as well as considering the scale at which SLO is being sought and any power imbalances or contestation over rights that may exist (c.f. Le Heron et al., 2019a).

2. Hearing: Hearing the views of the stakeholders and understanding their expectations is essential in building and developing SLO. This phase revolves around engaging with stakeholders, identifying their aspirations and assessing possible partnerships. As noted above, SLO is issued by communities and stakeholders, so understanding their perceptions and expectations is important for those wishing to develop a SLO. This phase has three steps:

- Engagement
- Aspirations
- Partnerships

An engagement plan with a clear purpose and criteria that measure the impact or level of success with stakeholder engagement should be designed. This plan will enable levels of influence/interest and engagement to be determined for each stakeholder. As part of the engagement plan, stakeholder **Aspirations** will be identified to ensure that the right questions are being asked in relation to SLO and to identify a goal or vision to work towards. Finally, the **Partnerships** step is about working collaboratively with stakeholders, building trust, and maintaining connections.

3. Integrating: Co-developing the views and expectations of the stakeholders into the organisation's processes and procedures in a way that fosters SLO and promotes participative and learning opportunities. This phase has three steps:

- Synthesising
- Implementation
- Future planning

Synthesising: Collecting and evaluating data so that stakeholders' views can be integrated into an organisation's processes and procedures. Analysis of the data will contribute to a more in-depth understanding of the stakeholder/organisation relationship. The findings from this analysis will enable stakeholder views to be **implemented** (or applied) in the organisation's processes and procedures in more participatory ways that encourages mutual learning relationships.

SLO exists at different scales and time frames so the process needs to be continually managed for, rather than obtained. Therefore, an element of **Future planning** is required to ensure the ongoing process of managing the cycles of SLO is sustainable and that there is a plan for how to maintain continued and meaningful engagement.

4. Reflecting: Because working towards SLO is a dynamic and evolving process – learning opportunities are important and need to be fed back into the process in a continuous **reflecting** step. Reflection enhances double-loop learning (Argyris 2004), which '...occurs when... new information results in modification of an organisations underlying norms, policies and objectives' (Kilvington & Allen 2010). Here, reflection is seen '...as a series of learning cycles – diagnosing what matters, designing what could be, doing what can be done and developing a deeper understanding of what has worked, what has not, and the significance of this, through evaluation (Kilvington & Allen 2010). Reflecting can help organisations assess progress and gain insights that will help them inform and build trusting relationships and SLO. Valuing and respecting differences is key to any collective project (Le Heron et al. 2019b, p.8) so it is important for organisations to embrace diverse worldviews and knowledges so that any inequalities, power imbalances, or assumptions can be identified and addressed. Otherwise there may be a breakdown in trust.

Monitoring and evaluation methods should be set up at the outset of the project as part of this process.

Table 4 provides guidelines of the types of questions to consider (Level 2) and the potential range of methods/theories that can be applied by researchers (Level 3) when an organisation is seeking SLO.

Table 4: Questions and methods/theory to consider when using the SLO Engagement Model

	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
	Phases	Steps	Questions to consider
BUILDING REFLATIONSHIPS	SOCIALISING	Introduction to SLO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is your understanding of SLO? • Are we on the same page? • Is this the right concept? • What are the implications of relational or transactional relationships for SLO? • What is negotiable and non-negotiable?
		Purpose (and goals)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why do you want SLO? • What are you trying to achieve with SLO? • What issues are driving this purpose? • What criteria can be used measure success?
		Context	<p>Organisation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is your organisation ready? • Is there political will for change? • Leadership – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is there leadership support? Who has the power for decision making? What is the reputation or standing of the leaders? • Commitment – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How committed is the organisation? <p>Scale</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the history of the problem? • Are there historical international approaches with similar issues? • What are the local issues? • Is there data? <p>People/Stakeholders/Relationships</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who do you need SLO from? • Which relationships are the most important? • What are the existing networks with iwi and stakeholders? • How do you communicate with iwi and stakeholders? • Is there existence of power politics and struggles over rights?
			<p>Methods/theory to consider that utilise MWLR skills and expertise</p> <p>Enquiry methods that draws out the organisation’s understanding of SLO and identify any constraints e.g. hui, workshop, survey, interviews, focus groups, Infinity exercise, I3,</p> <p>Identifying or capturing the intention of the organisation to engage e.g. is it a ‘doing to’ or a ‘doing with’ purpose. Use enquiry methods that draw out organisational beliefs, values and practices e.g. document analysis, discourse analysis, institutional analysis, practice analysis, interviews</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding the culture of the organisation, the global setting and the local communities you want to engage with e.g. is there an appetite for participatory approaches to SLO and engagement? If not, why not? What assumptions and world views are shaping how your organisation creates and maintains relationships? • IAP2 – four factors affecting the context: global, national, regional trends; community, organisational, personal • Stakeholder mapping model: organisation, co-hosts, interest groups and public. • Orbits of public participation • Stakeholder analysis matrix • IAP2 spectrum of participation • Timeline mapping, Problem tree, Multiple perspectives • Methods may be co-designed to identify and understand who the stakeholders are; their relationships with the organisation and their level of involvement, e.g. stakeholder analysis, workshops, hui, social media analysis
			REFLECTION

Level 1 Phases	Level 2 Steps	Questions to consider	Level 3 Methods/theory to consider that utilise MWLR skills and expertise
HEARING	Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Which iwi do you need to engage with? • What is your level of engagement with iwi and stakeholders? • Are the stakeholders influential or of interest? • What are the stakeholders' views on these issues? • Who's knowledge is valued? • Are diverse worldviews being considered? • Who's voice is missing? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rubrics • IAP2 Levels of participation • Stakeholder Matrix • IAP2 Community engagement model • Influence/interest mapping • Outcome spaces • Kaupapa Maori framework <p>Structured/unstructured dialogue</p> <p>Building trust and maintaining relationships – developing partnerships and working together with stakeholders to establish areas of common ground.</p> <p>Enquiry methods that enable a co-design focus. A range of methods/theory can be used, e.g. Action research, Focus groups and Interviews, Systems mapping, Storytelling, Boundary objects theory, Participatory mapping, Social media analysis, Data analysis, Partnership rubrics, Problem tree, Rich picture, Active listening, Dialogue, Stakeholder analysis, Organisations mapping, Network theory, Interest/influence mapping, 3 knowledges, Outcomes spaces framework.</p>
	Aspirations	<p>Identifying aspirations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are you asking the right questions? • Are these the issues that are of actual concern to iwi and stakeholders? If not, what questions should you be asking? • What benefits/trade-offs are acceptable to iwi and stakeholders? • How will your organisation navigate contested stakeholder interests? • What principles will guide decisions about trade-offs and reallocation of influence or benefit? 	
	Partnerships	<p>Connecting and building relationships</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What makes a good partnership? i.e. understanding that partnerships have implicit objectives relating to partnership formation, dynamics, relationships among partner members, and collective action aims that are integral to the effectiveness of attaining their outcomes • What type of relationships are needed? i.e. not just transactional but relational • What are the commonalities and connections? • How will the organisation show they are hearing – what practices of active listening will be put in place? 	
INTEGRATING	Synthesis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How will you analyse/process/synthesise the information? 	<p>Integrating is the main doing part of the process – the data capture and analysis. Co-develop methods with iwi or stakeholders, e.g. Wānanga, hui, Interviews, Scenario planning and assessment, Wind tunnel analysis, Succession planning, Theory of change, Programme logic.</p>
	Implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the process of moving forward collectively? • How will you implement any necessary changes in your organisation's processes and practices? 	
	Future planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How will you monitor/evaluate the relationships/partnerships? • How will you sustain the process and practices, including engagement, over the long term? And when personnel change on either side; what succession planning is in place? • Has the SLO process worked for you and your organisation? 	
REFLECTING	Monitoring and evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the implications for developing and sustaining SLO? • What have you learnt – bigger picture/overview? • How is your organisational practice adapting in response to what you have learnt? 	<p>Debrief, review, and learn: Evaluation and learning are integral to operational design and integration. Because SLO is a dynamic and evolving process methods that allow learning opportunities to be continuously evaluated and fed back into the process, e.g. Reflective practice framework, evaluation plan.</p>

4 Recommendations

- Pilot the engagement model with a case study to test its suitability
- Continue development of the model. The next iteration should further develop the methods (level 3), with links to capacity/skills within MWLR
- Undertake further research and development with MWLR Kaupapa Māori specialists into the synergies between SLO and Kaupapa Māori approaches.

5 Conclusions

Social licence to operate (SLO) is a concept that is growing in usage across multiple sectors within New Zealand. However, despite this increase in usage, its meaning and application are still poorly understood and can lead to conflict if social expectations are not met.

This research identifies criteria that define SLO and outlines some of the key issues that surround the concept. A key finding of this research is that it is not *what* methods are used to evaluate SLO that are important, rather it is *how* these methods are used to help organisations understand and develop SLO.

A preliminary process is presented that can be used by MWLR to help organisations understand and develop SLO. This process applies equally to MWLR. To ensure the organisation maintains its Strategy 2022 aim of a 'credible and trusted voice in contributing evidence in matters of public concern', there needs to be a good understanding throughout MWLR as to what SLO is and the importance of maintaining MWLR's SLO when navigating the various different interests of stakeholders we work with and for.

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Appendix 1 – Interview schedule

Questions

We are interested in the way SLO is conceptualised/perceived ...

So how did you come to be working in the SLO space?... what is your story so far?

What are your considerations about SLO?

In what contexts have you heard (or not heard) people talking about SLO? i.e. What are the politics of SLO?

What do you think are the key criteria?

How do you think SLO is perceived by:

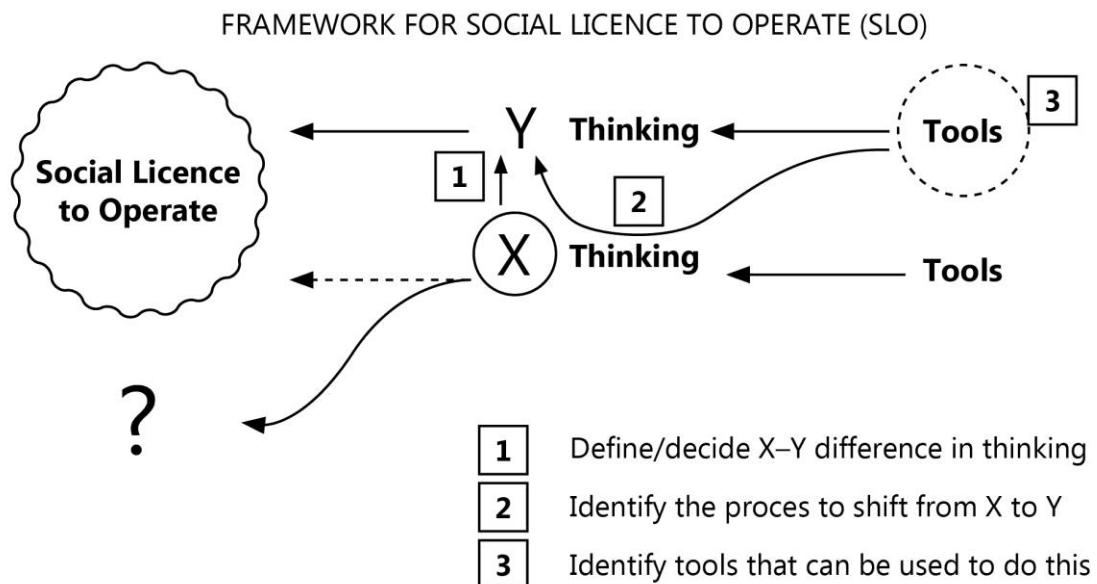
Agencies?

The public?

Do you think they view SLO differently? If yes, please explain more.

What methods/approaches do you think would be useful to assess SLO?

[Show the SLO concept diagram – Dean to explain the thinking]



What do you think about the diagram?

When we talk about tools - what methods/approaches/tools do you think would be useful to assess/evaluate SLO?

Any final thoughts you would like to share with us on SLO?