

## **Social Licence to Operate Methodology to Secure Commercial, Community and Regulatory Approval for Small and Large Scale Fisheries**

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**Abstract :** Futureye has a bespoke social licence to operate methodology which has successfully secured community approval and commercial return for fisheries which have faced regulatory and financial risk. This unique approach to fisheries management focuses on delivering improved social and environmental outcomes to support the fishing industry make steps towards achieving the United Nations SDGs. An SLO is the community's implicit consent for a business or project to exist. An SLO must be earned and maintained alongside regulatory licences. In current and new operations, it helps you to anticipate and measure community concerns around your operations - leading to more predictable and sensible policy outcomes that will not jeopardise your commercial returns. Rising societal expectations and increasing activist sophistication mean the international fishing industry needs to resolve community concerns at each stage their supply chain. Futureye applied our tested social licence to operate (SLO) methodology to help Austral Fisheries who was being attacked by activists concerned about the sustainability of Patagonian Toothfish. Austral was Marine Stewardship Council certified, but pirates were making the overall catch unsustainable. Austral wanted to be carbon neutral. SLO provides a lens on the risk that helps industries and companies act before regulatory and political risk escalates. To do this assessment, we have a methodology that assesses the risk that we can then translate into a process to create a strategy. 1) Audience: we understand the drivers of change and the transmission of those drivers across all audience segments. 2) Expectation: we understand the level of social norming of changing expectations. 3) Outrage: we understand the technical and perceptual aspects of risk and the opportunities to mitigate these. 4) Inter-relationships: we understand the political, regulatory, and reputation system so that we can understand the levers of change. 5) Strategy: we understand whether the strategy will achieve a social licence through bringing the internal and external stakeholders on the journey. Futureye's SLO methodologies helped Austral to understand risks and opportunities to enhance its resilience. Futureye reviewed the issues, assessed outrage and materiality and mapped SLO threats to the company. Austral was introduced to a new way that it could manage activism, climate action, and responsible consumption. As a result of Futureye's work, Austral worked closely with Sea Shepherd who was campaigning against pirates illegally fishing Patagonian Toothfish as well as international governments. In 2016 Austral launched the world's first carbon neutral fish which won Austral a thirteen percent premium for tender on the open market. In 2017, Austral received the prestigious Banksia Foundation Sustainability Leadership Award for seafood that is sustainable, healthy and carbon neutral. Austral's position as a leader in sustainable development has opened doors for retailers all over the world. Futureye's SLO methodology can identify the societal, political and regulatory risks facing fisheries and position them to proactively address the issues and become an industry leader in sustainability.

**Keywords :** carbon neutral, fisheries management, risk communication, social licence to operate, sustainable development

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