

RESPONSIBLE TAILING MANAGEMENT

Making the Social License to Operate Tangible



Social License to Operate (SLO)

A short introduction

The concept is referring to the need for community approval in order to execute mining projects. This “Social License to Operate” can be as important as legal licenses or permits.

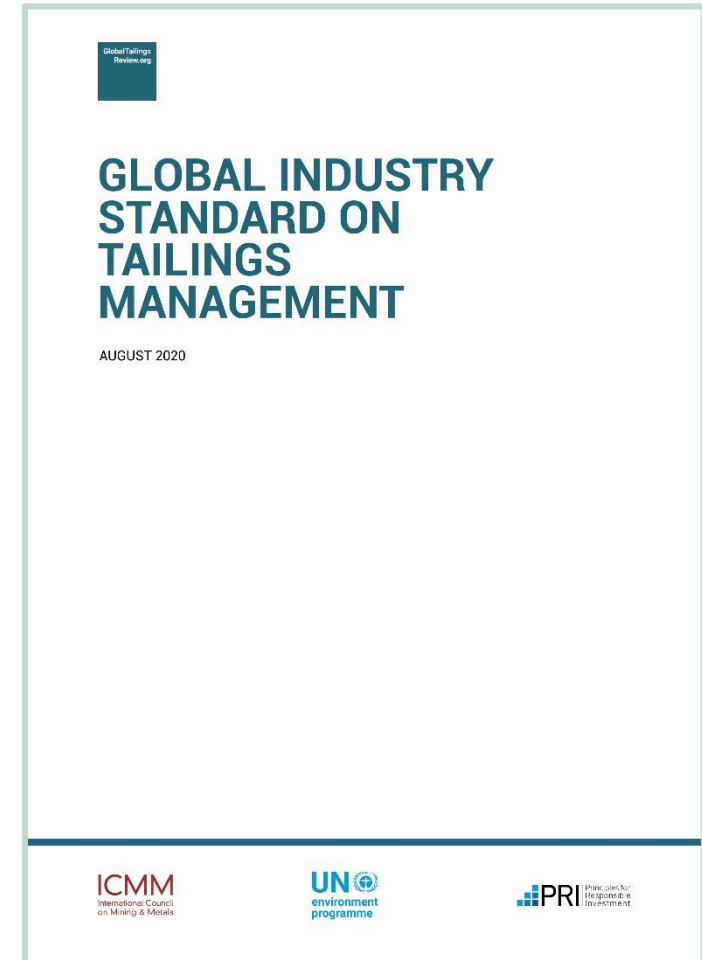
(Boutilier 2021)

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Occurrence and gaps

“Demonstrate that project-affected people are meaningfully engaged throughout the tailings facility lifecycle in building the knowledge base and in decisions that may have a bearing on public safety and the integrity of the tailings facility. The Operator shall share information to support this process.”

(Requirement 1.3. under “Affected Communities”,
Global Tailings Review 2020)



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Filling the gaps – research interest

Which factors shape the relationship remaining tailing pond projects build with the local community?

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Filling the gaps – data base



The workshop with locals. Source: TU Clausthal, Andre Bertram

Data base:

- 16 interviews with selected stakeholders of the local community
- 1 workshop with members of the local community
- Various newspaper publications

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Filling the gaps – preliminary results

1. Local experiences with large-scale industrial projects

“These experiences [*with contamination*] have been made again and again, and it must be said clearly, that large companies [...] did not always communicate openly and the dangers were clearly played down. And in this respect, of course, special attention will be paid [*by the local community*] to ensure that this does not happen again, regardless of who is on the site.”

(member of a local district association, 2022)

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Filling the gaps – preliminary results

2. Local perceptions of tailing ponds



The tailing pond in Goslar, Source: TU Clausthal

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Filling the gaps – preliminary results

3. Conceptions of time frames regarding the tailing

"If there's danger now, how long should we wait?"

(citizen at the workshop, 2022)

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4. The specific meaning of the local mining history



The Rammelsberg mine, UNESCO World heritage site. Source: Wikimedia Commons, Norbert Kaiser

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Filling the gaps – preliminary results

5. Expectations regarding involvement

“Citizen participation these days, or citizen hearings, or the communication of information is terribly annoying and time-consuming, but you can't do without it. And then it's better to have too much than too little. [...] Nothing is worse than when the public has the impression that something is being done behind our backs and we don't know what exactly is going on.”

(member of a local historical society, 2021)

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Filling the gaps – further steps

Our recommendation for the tailing recycling community:

When tackling a tailing management project, it is advisable to be aware that your relationship with the local community has multiple dimensions. We recommend to consider jointly with community actors, how your project impacts the local community and how the local community impacts your project.

References

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Moffat, K. and A. Zhang, “The paths to social licence to operate: An integrative model explaining community acceptance of mining.”, *Resour. Policy*, **39** 61-70 (2014).



Source: TU Clausthal

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