

THE SOLENT CLUSTER

HOW TO...

ESTABLISH POLICY FOR DECARBONISATION

The UK urgently needs to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions to mitigate climate change. Policy, at a local and national level, has a major role in shaping our decarbonisation pathway, and realising potential socioeconomic benefits. Decarbonisation offers multiple benefits in addition to mitigating the effects of climate change, including creation of jobs and business growth.

STEP BY STEP GUIDE

1. UNDERSTAND THE DATA

Understanding current emissions data and the carbon footprint of the area or organisation you are focussed on sets a baseline. From there targets can be set whether that is building on established good practice, or starting something new. You can find case studies to establish best practice and learn from others.

2. INVOLVE THE COMMUNITY IN DEVELOPING POLICY

Decision makers should co-design the vision with diverse groups and communicate it in a coordinated and consistent way. Consider those affected by the policy, how it affects them and their response to the proposals. This could be through a series of plausible futures workshops where the socioeconomic benefits of decarbonisation activities are considered.

The Industrial Clusters represent an incredible opportunity for local communities, individual regions, and the UK to affect real change. Government, businesses and individuals can support Industrial Clusters in a variety of ways to push forward work on decarbonisation policy and action.

3. DEVOLVE POLICY MAKING AWAY FROM THE CENTRE

Regional stakeholders would like more Local Devolved Government control over decarbonisation policy. This allows for customised approaches for the local area and allows space for innovation and experimentation on a smaller scale than national policy. It also increases the opportunities for engagement and collaboration with the people most affected.

4. COLLABORATE TO BUILD TRUST

Building trust between different sectors enables collaborative working. Collaboration brings people together with different expertise and perspectives giving a richer overall data set, policy and action group. Workloads can be shared with each partner contributing their own unique strengths.

As trust builds, more open dialogue can be achieved where issues can be brought to the table early on and conflicts resolved constructively. In the context of decarbonisation policy, this allows for greater ownership and ultimately achievement of the policy put forward.

5. CONSIDER THE OPTIONS

Consider wider decarbonisation options including industrial decarbonisation. Consider also the social, cultural and economic impacts of industrial decarbonisation and how these might vary depending on the pathways chosen for decarbonisation. Consider jobs, training and education linked to different decarbonisation choices, and the co-benefits and disbenefits associated with each potential pathway. Weigh up nature based and behaviour-based solutions against technological ones. Balance mitigation with offsetting.

6. COMMUNICATE CLEARLY

Once the policy is established, communicate it clearly to different stakeholder groups using methods that will reach them, language that will be understood and explaining the impact at a granular level. Continue to communicate as the policy is implemented, showcasing the benefits as a result, and being honest where things have not worked as expected and the policy requires review. Revisit the policy regularly to ensure it remains relevant.

TIPS AND TRICKS

Universities are well placed to support policy makers and Industrial Clusters to design and deliver an extended remit, applying social science principles and best practice on community co-creation, participatory decision making, systems thinking at a regional scale and the modelling of future scenarios.

LINKS AND FURTHER INFORMATION

[The Solent Cluster](#) Working towards a lower carbon future

[Innovate UK](#) UKRI

[Sustainability and Resilience Institute \(SRI\)](#)
[University of Southampton](#)

[IDRIC's Social Science Projects](#) | IDRIC