

SOCIAL LICENCE TO OPERATE

The Key Citations series was developed to provide a starting point for persons new to the various fields of impact assessment. The references provided are an indicative overview of the field and establish what might be regarded as the core literature. They include a selection of currently available textbooks published by commercial publishers, a selection of journal articles from the last 10 or so years, and key official documents. Some historically significant articles are also included. The means of determining key citations generally include consulting Scopus and Google Scholar and expert practitioners in the field. IAIA members contributing to this series acknowledge possible personal and regional bias and much difficulty in selecting only a few from among many excellent references in their fields.



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INTRODUCTION

“Social Licence to Operate” is a metaphor referring to the extent of approval or acceptability that a project, organization, or activity has with its host communities. This is generally considered in terms of legitimacy, credibility, and trust. Sometimes the term is extended beyond local communities to apply to all stakeholders, including national and international NGOs. The expression came into use in the late 1990s, and became popular in industry and academic circles from about 2010 on. Although Jim Cooney is often given credit for inventing this term, it was actually first used by W.H. Moore in 1996. Nevertheless, Jim Cooney did popularize the concept. Some early publications are given immediately below. With over 1400 papers in Scopus, it is hard to select the key citations, but the list below favors Open Access papers, and ones that link to impact assessment.

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