

# Industrial transition: governing the commitment

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Proposed decision: to adopt a common evidence standard for all communications on industrial transformation.

## The problem to be solved

An investment announcement, an intention to decarbonize and an improvement actually measured do not refer to the same state of the project. However, they often come together in the same promise. Risk arises when employees, residents or customers understand an achieved result where the company describes a conditional trajectory.

## Recommended decision

The executive committee must validate three levels of formulation: what is achieved, what is committed and what remains an ambition. Each public commitment has an operational owner, dated evidence and a review trigger. The communications department organises this coherence; it does not certify technical data alone.

## What management needs to decide

Provide a coordinating mandate for communication with operations, procurement, finance and public affairs. Authorize publication of major dependencies without revealing sensitive information. Provide a decision point before each major announcement and follow up on commitments after publication.

### DECISION POINT

Would we be able to explain publicly a delay with the same facts as those used to announce the project?

# The transition depends on others

An organization rarely controls the timing that it communicates. Credibility begins with a precise description of what it controls.

## Investment does not remove vulnerability

The IEA's 2026 outlook highlights the continuing concentration of refining and the importance of trade restrictions for critical mineral supply chains [1]. For communication, the implication is practical: an announcement of future capacity must be checked against the real availability of inputs, equipment and skills. This sectoral finding does not establish the exposure of a particular company without examining its own contracts.

## Align three timelines

The industrial timeline follows studies, authorizations, construction and commissioning. The financial timeline follows investment decisions and their conditions. The public timeline starts as soon as a territory, customer or media interprets an announcement. When these rhythms diverge, the communication must explain the steps, not artificially shorten the duration of the project.

## Evidence must match the scope

A decrease observed on a process does not necessarily apply to a complete product, site or group. An improvement in intensity may coexist with an increase in total volume. Before building a narrative, it is therefore necessary to specify the unit, scope, period and method. The presentation of these limits protects understanding; it does not remove anything from the value of demonstrated progress.

### DECISION POINT

Reputation becomes fragile when the story changes scale faster than the results.

# Build a register of commitments

A communications dashboard is not enough; a chain of responsibility is needed that links each formulation to a decision and evidence.

## Start with high-profile claims

Identify visible commitments in executive communicationses, press kits, website, business presentations and recruitment documents. Prioritise claims that combine high exposure with weak supporting evidence. The number of formulations counts less than their importance for the decisions of the affected audiences.

## Making validation workable

For each claim, record a data owner, the exact formulation allowed, the source, date and events that make an update necessary. A validation must result in a clear state: publishable, publishable with qualifications, or to be suspended. Avoid collective validations that no one can then explain the reasoning.

## Preparing for internal disagreements

If operations consider a timetable uncertain and commercial development wants a firm date, the committee must explicitly decide on the acceptable level of commitment. The communication sets out possible interpretations and proposes a formulation. It does not turn an unresolved disagreement into a deliberately vague sentence.

| Project status | Minimum evidence               | Useful wording                 |
|----------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Completed      | Measured result and scope      | Describe the observed result   |
| Under way      | Decision, resources and stages | Describe what has started      |
| Targeted       | Assumptions and dependencies   | Present a conditional ambition |

### DECISION POINT

Who can invalidate this promise, and within what period is it corrected?

# Test three scenarios before the announcement

These scenarios are illustrative exercises and do not describe a real business or sector forecast.

## Scenario 1 - A supplier becomes unavailable

Critical equipment arrives late. The teams know that the announced commissioning is compromised, but no revised schedule is yet reliable. The correct answer starts with confirmed impact, continuity measures and the next re-evaluation deadline. The committee decides which should be informed as a matter of priority, what contractual commitments are involved and when public communication becomes necessary.

## Scenario 2 - Local communities question the benefit

A project presented as a creator of value is asked about water, nuisance or local employment. Answering only by its national interest leaves the lived concern unanswered. It is necessary to specify the expected effects at the territorial level, document the uncertainties and identify what can still change. Consultation must focus on real choices; the CNDP distinguishes the influence of the public on the decision and the final responsibility of the decision-maker [2].

## Scenario 3 - A statement is contested

A third party compares an environmental promise to data published elsewhere by the group. The response team checks the scope of each figure before contesting the criticism. If ambiguity comes from the company, it corrects the formulation and explains the change. If the scopes differ, it shows this difference without automatically assigning a hostile intention to the interlocutor.

### DECISION POINT

The response must remain consistent between the site manager, the chief executive, line managers and public documentation.

# Dialogue with local communities is a decision-making process

The quality of a relationship is not measured by the number of meetings organised, but by how the questions received are dealt with.

## Recognise distinct expectations

Employees ask what changes in work and skills. Local authorities look at infrastructure and effects. Local residents question nuisances and remedies. Clients expect continuity and demonstrable characteristics. A general presentation can open the discussion, but it must lead to appropriate responses based on the same factual basis.

## Show room for manoeuvre

Distinguish what is decided, what is still open and what depends on another authority. This distinction avoids promising negotiation on a fixed element or, conversely, presenting as irreversible an option that is still open for discussion. It gives public affairs a role of understanding institutions and constraints, without confusing dialogue with automatic support.

## Close the feedback loop

Keep a record of the questions, answers and commitments made. Unsolved topics must remain visible with a deadline and a manager. A change of project can improve the relationship if explained; prolonged silence on a known issue can damage it even when the project progresses correctly. The committee receives the blocked points, not only a report of the meetings.

### DECISION POINT

A stakeholder map, a question register and a short list of still open decisions.

# Media, executive communications and visibility in AI

The same industrial reality must remain intelligible when it becomes an interview, a web page or an answer generated by an AI.

## Give the media verifiable facts

Prepare a fact sheet for each announcement: decision taken, calendar, scope, means engaged, dependencies and technical contact. A site visit or an exchange with an expert is useful when it allows to verify a precise statement. It does not replace the documentation. The leader's message must explain the choices and their consequences, without replacing the technical assessment.

## Building a coherent public base

The GEO program here consists of making reference information accessible, attributed and up to date. Pages must distinguish group, subsidiaries, sites and projects, indicate their dates and link announcements to updates. An old ambition should not remain the only document available after a change of schedule. SEO and useful content remain relevant foundations in Google's AI features [3].

## Measure accuracy rather than mere presence

To make up a small set of questions representative of employees, partners and territories. To keep the date, service queried, language and answer obtained. To identify the scope errors, obsolete data and sources cited. The results are limited observations: they do not predict all future answers and do not guarantee any citations. The correction relates first to controllable information.

### DECISION POINT

The proportion of priority commitments that are supported by easily accessible evidence and a visible update date.

# A 90-day work programme

The proposed schedule is an organizational approach and must be tailored to the size of the project, applicable obligations and available resources.

## Days 1 to 30 - Setting the Base

Communication and operations identify priority promises and missing evidence. Procurement describes sensitive dependencies; finance confirms the status of investments. Public affairs map administrative decisions and interlocutors. The expected result is a validated registry, not a new slogan.

## Days 31-60 - Test the message

Organize an exercise on a project delay and public challenge. Ask different teams to answer the same question, then compare facts, dates and commitments expressed. Correct deviations in reference sheets and validation process. Test also the feedback circuit of field questions: useful information must reach the decision-maker before becoming a media surprise.

## Days 61 to 90 - Publish and establish monitoring

To update the most exposed pages, prepare spokespersons and publish any evidence that may be available. To establish a regular review of commitments and a mechanism for correction. The first report to the committee presents the resolved inconsistencies, those that persist and the decisions expected. It specifies the limits of measurement and the means necessary to sustain the approach.

### DECISION POINT

No major announcement is published without the owner of the evidence, explicit assumptions and review process.

# What the committee should monitor

The dashboard must show the reliability of public communications and the decisions still needed.

## Four signals to be examined

Follow the coverage of the commitment register, the evidence that has become obsolete, the response time to sensitive questions and the differences in channel formulation. Presenting volumes and their basis of calculation: a percentage without a defined scope can mask a weakness on a major commitment.

## What these measures do not prove

Accurate content does not mechanically lead to support. A local disagreement is not necessarily a communication failure. The measures are used to detect a problem of understanding, consistency or response; industrial choices and their impacts remain to be discussed in substance.

## The decision to be entered in the minutes

Validate the registry manager, review of priority commitments and the public correction rule. Ask the next committee for an example of a consolidated promise and an example of voluntarily revised wording, both of which make the change in practice observable.

A credible transition links ambition, funded decisions, evidence with a defined scope and an ability to explain variances.

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## Sources and reference points

[1] IEA — Global Critical Minerals Outlook 2026, Executive summary

[2] Commission nationale du débat public — Foire aux questions

[3] Google Search Central — AI features and your website

Analysis and recommendations by Belief System. Scenarios are illustrative. Sources provide context; they do not constitute endorsement of our recommendations.