

Meeting Summary

London

Interoperability Roundtable

Hosted by ResponsibleSteel and HILT CRC

Australia High Commission, London, 7 September 2026



The *London Interoperability Roundtable*, hosted by ResponsibleSteel at the Australian High Commission with the support of the Heavy Industry Low-carbon Transition Cooperative Research Centre (HILT CRC), brought together members of ResponsibleSteel and its partners. Experts attended from Europe, China, Australia and beyond – representing seven steel-producing and mining companies, seven standards organisations, six government offices, four research organisations, and five civil society organisations – to explore progress in greater interoperability between steel climate standards to support the development of global markets for low-emission steel.

The event took place against the backdrop of two major interoperability initiatives: ResponsibleSteel's partnership with the Chinese Iron and Steel Association (CISA) and its separate partnership with the Low Emission Steel Standard (LESS). Together, the memberships of the three organisations represent the majority of global steel production, underlining the potential significance of these efforts to build a more connected and coherent landscape for low-emission steel markets.

The programme featured perspectives from **Jiang Wei, Secretary General, China Iron and Steel Association (CISA)**; **Dale Seymour, Independent Board Director, ResponsibleSteel**; **Åsa Ekdahl, Director of Climate Advocacy, worldsteel**; **Associate Professor Emma Aisbett, Australian National University**; **Jenny Selway, CEO, HILT CRC**; **Amy Jackson, Director of Programmes, ResponsibleSteel**; **Carmen Oswald, Secretary General, Low Emission Steel Standard (LESS)**; **Feng Chao, Deputy Secretary General, CISA** and **Simon Sharpe, S-Curve Economics**. The roundtable was chaired by **Annie Heaton, CEO, ResponsibleSteel**, and inspired contributions from around the table.



Together, speakers examined both the strategic rationale for interoperability and the practical steps required to make it work across different markets and policy environments.

A strong theme of the roundtable was that interoperability is **increasingly a market requirement rather than simply a nice-to-have**. As governments develop 'green steel' labels, procurement policies, industrial support mechanisms and trade measures, participants noted that the increasingly fragmented landscape of standards adds complexity for producers, buyers and policymakers alike. Greater interoperability is widely seen as a means of reducing friction, improving comparability and supporting international trade in low-emission steel.

Rather than advocating for a single global standard, much of the discussion focused on enabling the core elements of credible standards – **the key elements of accounting rules, the assurance protocols and the definitions** – to be interoperable so that steel data transparently calculated and credibly assured can be used within the schemes of different jurisdictions.

Distinctions between different components of standards systems were a recurring theme. While policy thresholds and product classifications may legitimately vary between regions, there was considerable support for prioritising alignment on emissions measurement, accounting and verification methodologies. Associate Professor Emma Aisbett's presentation highlighted her work on **modular accounting approaches as a practical pathway towards interoperability**, allowing information to move between systems even where overall frameworks differ.

Presentations highlighted ongoing practical work between ResponsibleSteel, CISA and LESS to develop practical **co-calculation and assurance mechanisms** that enable production realities certified under one scheme to be understood, referenced and compared within another scheme. Participants discussed how common approaches to data, accounting and verification could help organisations operate across multiple jurisdictions without duplicating effort.



Credible assurance was a key theme. As one participant highlighted, **"A standard is only as good as its implementation"** and emphasised the need for a strong assurance system with oversight of auditors and a database to enable its application. Several other participants strongly agreed.

The discussion reinforced the close relationship between standards development and market creation. Industry representatives noted that decarbonisation investments will require stronger demand signals, policy certainty and mechanisms that allow emissions reductions to be recognised and valued across markets. A number of participants identified that **consensus is needed on what level of 'low emissions' should be accepted or rewarded as 'good'**, and therefore building consensus on how to define this is vital to ensure fairness and progress.

Examples were given of policies that would depend on such alignment, including **subsidies** for new technologies, **lead markets** to incentivise progress, **international offtake agreements**, and **tariff exemptions** for the first 100mt of green steel to cover the cost for first movers. Participants noted that greater alignment would not only support policy implementation but reduce the risk of creating isolated or competing market systems and avoid greenwashing so that claims of 'low-emission steel' remain credible, comparable and understandable for buyers, investors and policymakers.



By the close of the meeting, there was broad agreement that the conversation is moving from whether interoperability is needed to how it can be **implemented in practice**.

While challenges remain, participants identified two important but separate workstreams for future work – areas which ResponsibleSteel will continue to progress with interested stakeholders:

1. Developing a common interoperability system for emissions accounting and measurement, supported by transparent criteria, practical calculation tools and credible assurance or verification mechanisms; and
2. Separately, working on claims, thresholds and what should count as 'good enough' low-emission steel. Acknowledging that different countries may need different thresholds because of varying infrastructure, development stages, energy options and scrap availability, nonetheless a shared global understanding is still necessary in order to differentiate low-emission steel in a way that facilitates globally interoperability in market claims.

