



Offshore Energy Net Zero Culture

Guideline

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- Peter Kavanagh, AOC (Chair)
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- Ryan Fernando, SLB
- Jillian Owen, Apache

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London Office:

62-64 Cannon St, City of London, London EC4N 6AE Tel: 020 7802 2400
Tel: 020 7802 2400

Aberdeen Office:

4th Floor, Annan House, 33-35 Palmerston Road, Aberdeen, AB11 5QP
Tel: 01224 577250

info@oeuk.org.uk

www.oeuk.org.uk

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List of abbreviations and terminology

Abbreviations	Definitions
ASTF	Asset Stewardship Task Force
ERAP	Emissions reduction Action Plan
JV	Join Venture
MER	Maximising Economic Recovery
NSTA	North Sea Transition Authority
NSTD	North Sea Transition Deal
OEUK	Offshore Energies UK
UKCS	UK Continental Shelf

Terminology	Definitions
Net Zero	Net Zero means a target of completely negating the amount of greenhouse gases produced by human activity, to be achieved by reducing emissions and implementing methods of absorbing carbon dioxide from the atmosphere.
North Sea Transition Deal	Signed by the UK Government and the oil and gas Industry in March 2021, committing the industry to early targets for the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions from production against a 2018 baseline and the government identifying potential funding opportunities for early offshore electrification.
Decarbonisation	Decarbonisation is the mitigation, cessation, or reduction of carbon in the atmosphere. It's achieved by switching to energy sources or materials that emit less carbon (and often, by moving away from high carbon emitting fossil fuels) and by counteracting the carbon that's emitted.
Net Zero Culture Maturity Ladder	The maturity ladder is a model designed to help companies begin assessing their Net Zero culture. It is a structured framework that provides a common baseline across the sector, without being prescriptive. The tool's value lies in starting conversations, identifying strengths and gaps, and helping companies plan the next steps on the journey towards Net Zero culture.
Asset Stewardship Task Force	Asset Stewardship Taskforce (ASTF), under the leadership of the North Sea Transition Forum, was established to support the NSTA Strategy in respect of both production and Net Zero obligations by improving asset stewardship in the UK Continental Shelf area.

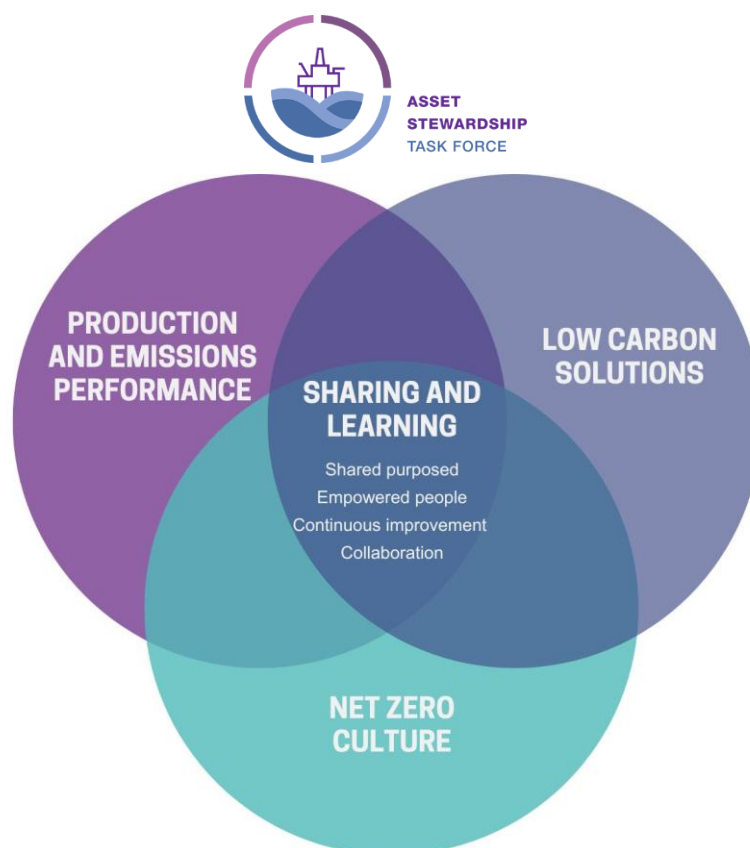
1 Introduction

The Asset Stewardship Taskforce (ASTF), operating under the leadership of the North Sea Transition Forum (NSTD), was established to support the North Sea Transition Authority (NSTA) Strategy in meeting both production and Net Zero obligations. Its mission is to enhance asset stewardship across the UK Continental Shelf (UKCS).

In June 2023, a cross industry ASTF workshop brought together representatives from industry, regulators and œUK. Following this, the ASTF formed subgroups tasked with developing guidance and tools to help industry understand and adopt good practices, supporting the broader goals of the NSTD.

Guidance on JV Hub Strategy and Emissions Reduction Action Plans (ERAPs) has since been published, outlining good practice in production and emissions efficiency. A low carbon power subgroup has also been established to focus on low carbon solutions. Alongside this, the culture group has developed this guidance aimed at supporting organisations on their Net Zero journey.

Figure 1: Asset Stewardship Task Force



Purpose of the culture subgroup

The Culture subgroup was formed to:

- Develop a culture strategy that drives sustainable, continuous improvement in operational efficiency and carbon emissions performance across UKCS assets.
- Shape an industry culture that is forward-looking to 2050, aligned with Net Zero ambitions.

Approach to culture development

The UKCS oil and gas industry has over 60 years of operational experience, during which its safety culture has become globally respected. This evolution, driven by regulation, technology and most importantly, the values and behaviours of its workforce, and serves as a model for developing a robust Net Zero culture.

To achieve this, the subgroup:

- Reflected on successful cultural initiatives within the industry, particularly in safety.
- Created a culture guidance document to elevate emissions culture to the same level of maturity as safety culture.
- Focused on the critical role of leadership in shaping and evolving organisational culture.
- Developed the Principles of Net Zero Culture, which are a set of guiding values and behaviours.
- Developed a culture maturity model, which is a framework to assess and evolve organisational culture

Why this guidance matters

This guidance is built on the belief that the industry already possesses the capability and leadership to rapidly develop a culture that supports Net Zero goals. It aims to:

- Define what good looks like
- Share and spread good practices
- Inspire excellence across organisations

Structure of the guidance

The document is organised around three core principles of culture development:

1. Why we do it: Understanding the need for a Net Zero culture
2. How we do it: Approaches to building and embedding culture
3. What we do: Practical tools and behaviours to support culture change

This structure helps organisations navigate the journey from understanding the rationale to implementing meaningful change.

Tools for culture development

To support the “How and what we do” aspect, the subgroup has developed two key tools:

- Principles of Net Zero Culture: A set of guiding values and behaviours that underpins how we achieve Net Zero targets through cultural improvement. Figure 2 below presents the one page document developed for this purpose. Further details are provided in section 3.
- Net Zero culture maturity model: A maturity model framework to assess and evolve organisational culture. Refer to section 4 for further explanation.

Figure 2: Principles of Net Zero Culture



The ASTF recommends these tools to the wider industry as practical resources to foster consistent, impactful cultural change.

By embracing this guidance, organisations can contribute to a shared industry vision, where Net Zero culture is as deeply embedded and widely embraced as safety culture. The journey to 2050 starts with leadership, collaboration and a commitment to continuous improvement.

2 Net Zero culture development

Net Zero

The UK Government has made achieving Net Zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050 a legal requirement through the *Climate Change Act 2008 (2050 Target Amendment) Order 2019*.¹

North Sea Transition Deal

In support of this national target, the NSTD sets clear emissions reduction goals for the UK oil and gas sector: a 10% cut by 2025, 25% by 2027, and 50% by 2030, compared with a 2018 baseline. The UKCS industry has already exceeded expectations, achieving a 34% reduction in production emissions between 2018 and 2024, reflecting the sector's strong commitment to environmental performance and operational efficiency as part of the energy transition.

To reinforce this direction, the NSTA's Net Zero Stewardship Expectation 11 (SE11)² was published in March 2021, setting out the expectation that the upstream oil and gas industry will minimise greenhouse gas emissions across all activities, including new field developments, existing assets, decommissioning and energy integration. The expectation begins by emphasising the need to "create a culture of GHG emissions reduction within the UKCS."

Cultural development

Culture in the oil and gas industry has evolved over decades through shared learning, regulation and collaboration, most clearly demonstrated in the development of a strong safety culture. Building a Net Zero culture requires the same commitment through clear leadership, consistent behaviours and a shared belief across the industry.

Societal licence to operate

A Net Zero culture is essential for maintaining a societal license to operate because it demonstrates a genuine commitment to environmental responsibility and long term sustainability. As public awareness and expectations around climate change intensify, communities, regulators and stakeholders increasingly demand that organisations actively reduce their carbon footprint. Embedding Net Zero principles into organisational culture builds trust, strengthens reputation and reinforces the industry's credibility in delivering a responsible energy transition.

¹ <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2019/1056/contents/made>

² https://www.nstauthority.co.uk/media/7184/se11_net-zero.pdf

3 Principles of Net Zero Culture

Building on the successful implementation of the Process Safety Leadership Principles in the industry, a set of principles has been developed to support the industry in building a shared approach to cultural transformation aligned with Net Zero goals. These aspirational statements set a high standard of excellence that organisations can strive toward.

These principles provide a framework for Net Zero cultural development with a key component being the role of leadership in setting culture.

Effective leadership shapes the culture of every organisation by setting the standards, values and encouraging appropriate behaviours to support the culture. Given the importance of decarbonisation to an organisation and the industry, positive leadership will be essential in establishing a Net Zero culture using the Net Zero principles as a key enabler.

The Net Zero principles are listed below and explained in detail in the following paragraphs.

The 6 Principles of Net Zero Culture:

1. **Leadership Commitment to Net Zero**
Leaders visibly champion Net Zero goals, embedding them into strategy, decision-making, and daily operations.
2. **Workforce Engagement and Transformation**
Employees are empowered and involved in the transition, with opportunities for learning, innovation, and contribution.
3. **Collaboration and Partnerships**
Organisations work together across boundaries internally and externally to share knowledge, align efforts, and accelerate progress.
4. **Sustainability and Responsibility**
Decisions are made with long term environmental, social, and economic impacts in mind, fostering responsible stewardship.
5. **Transparency and Accountability**
Clear communication and measurable commitments ensure trust and continuous improvement.
6. **Innovation and Technology**
Embracing new technologies and innovative thinking is key to unlocking Net Zero solutions.

Why these principles matter

Establishing shared principles helps create consistency across the industry, enabling organisations to:

- Align culture with strategic Net Zero objectives
- Foster leadership driven change
- Encourage collaboration and learning
- Track progress and maturity over time

Together, these principles form the foundation for a strong, resilient Net Zero culture, one that supports the industry's transition and inspires excellence. The principles have been developed into a one page document which is available to download along with guideline.

3.1 Leadership Commitment to Net Zero

Principle: *We are fully committed to achieving Net Zero and we demonstrate that through strong and active leadership. We integrate expectations for reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, investment in renewable energy, and increasing energy efficiency into our existing operations. We embed decarbonisation and achieving Net Zero objectives into our business processes and investment decisions.*

Leadership commitment is strengthened when organisations establish clear responsibilities at senior level and use policies that encourage Net Zero considerations to influence operational and investment decisions. Setting annual emissions reduction targets alongside safety, production and financial metrics can help maintain a balanced focus. Visible leadership support, resource allocation and clear expectations can create momentum and remove barriers. Integrating Net Zero objectives into strategic planning, procurement and workforce development offers a practical way to align decisions with long term ambitions.

3.2 Workforce Engagement and Transformation

Principle: *We engage our workforce to understand their Net Zero needs and concerns and how they can benefit from the energy transition. We empower our workforce with the information, tools, resources and support needed to foster a culture of Net Zero. We commit to ensuring that every employee has the opportunity and knowledge to actively contribute to our journey towards a lower carbon future.*

Workforce engagement improves when organisations explore employees' needs, concerns and capability gaps before shaping Net Zero initiatives. Providing access to relevant training and clear information can help teams contribute effectively to emissions reduction activities. Involving employees in developing solutions, assessing technologies and identifying operational improvements can strengthen ownership and uptake. Ongoing competence development supports sustained performance as practices evolve. Regular consultation between leadership and staff can help maintain alignment and reinforce commitment throughout the transition.

3.3 Collaboration and Partnerships

Principle: *We actively collaborate in the industry, with governments, industry organisations, regulators, supply chains and partners to reach our common goals. We promote sharing and learning to accelerate the energy transition and cultural change. Working together, we aim to be leaders in climate action and a driving force for positive change.*

Collaboration is strengthened when organisations create structured ways of working with other operators, government, regulators and the wider energy supply chain. Establishing channels for open data sharing, joint problem solving and the exchange of lessons from emission reduction trials can accelerate collective progress. Building collaboration into project design allows external expertise to

shape decisions early. Sharing insight from technology deployments and operational performance across the sector is beneficial, helping avoid duplication and supporting a more consistent transition.

3.4 Sustainability and Responsibility

Principle: *We are committed to responsible oil and gas production seeking alternative low carbon options for all operating and investment decisions in improving our emissions performance. We support local economic growth and supply chains, creating jobs and investing in a low carbon UK energy industry. We promote a decarbonised domestic oil and gas sector that sustains the UK energy industry and achieves Net Zero targets.*

Sustainability is reinforced when organisations develop strategies that align operational activity, investment choices and workforce development with Net Zero goals. Prioritising low carbon and responsible options in procurement and capital allocation can support long term resilience. Clear communication on the importance of Net Zero helps teams understand how these choices contribute to the future of UK energy. Working with local communities and supply chains can create both environmental and economic benefits. Encouraging responsible decision making across the organisation helps create a consistent culture of sustainability.

3.5 Transparency and Accountability

Principle: *We are committed to being transparent and accountable for reaching Net Zero goals. We will measure and report on our emissions performance and track our progress. We seek independent review to ensure credibility of our performance and alignment with Net Zero ambitions and targets.*

The oil and gas industry is subject to a robust regulatory regime that has evolved over the past 60 years and provided transparent insight into the industry's performance. Each year, the oil and gas operators submit a wide range of stewardship data to the NSTA to provide information on performance in areas such as production, costs, wells, emissions, technology implementation and decommissioning plans.

Transparency is achieved when organisations define how emissions will be measured and who is responsible for reporting. A consistent reporting process can give senior leaders a clear view of progress against Net Zero objectives and support informed decision-making. Sharing information externally helps build trust with regulators and stakeholders and independent verification can add credibility to performance disclosures. Regular review at leadership level can keep transparency present in routine governance and encourage continuous improvement.

3.6 Innovation and Technology

Principle: *We encourage and embrace innovation and technology to support Net Zero ambitions. This includes adopting alternative and low-carbon energy solutions to improve efficiency of our operations and using advanced tools and technologies to measure and reduce emissions. We seek continuous improvement and progress in decarbonising our business.*

Over the years, industry has embraced innovation and new technology to solve a wide range of technical, operational, cultural, societal and economic challenges. Innovation and technology will be a key priority to achieve the delivery of low carbon power solutions in the future.

Innovation becomes effective when organisations apply a clear approach to identifying, trialling and adopting technologies that lower emissions. Treating decarbonisation opportunities with the same seriousness as operational, financial or safety considerations can support balanced, evidence led decisions. Incorporating environmental impact assessments into major investments or operational changes allows options to be compared fairly. Capturing lessons from pilots in a structured way enables teams to build on what works rather than repeating isolated efforts and using these insights to inform future adoption can strengthen long-term performance.

4 Assessing cultural maturity

4.1 Introduction

To make genuine cultural change, it is important for companies to understand where they currently are against the Principles of Net Zero Culture. The offshore oil and gas industry in the UK is undergoing a significant transformation to align with Net Zero goals and a culture maturity model can help companies assess where they stand in their journey toward embedding the principles and support the objectives of sustainability, decarbonisation, and innovation into their organisational culture. By providing a structured framework, it enables leaders to identify strengths, gaps, and opportunities, such as leadership commitment, employee engagement, and operational integration. This clarity supports targeted interventions, fosters accountability and ensures that Net Zero ambitions are not just strategic goals but deeply rooted in everyday behaviours and decision making across the business.

A Net Zero cultural maturity model has been developed as a tool that organisations can use to measure development and understand how their culture compares to industry good practice.

4.2 Culture maturity model

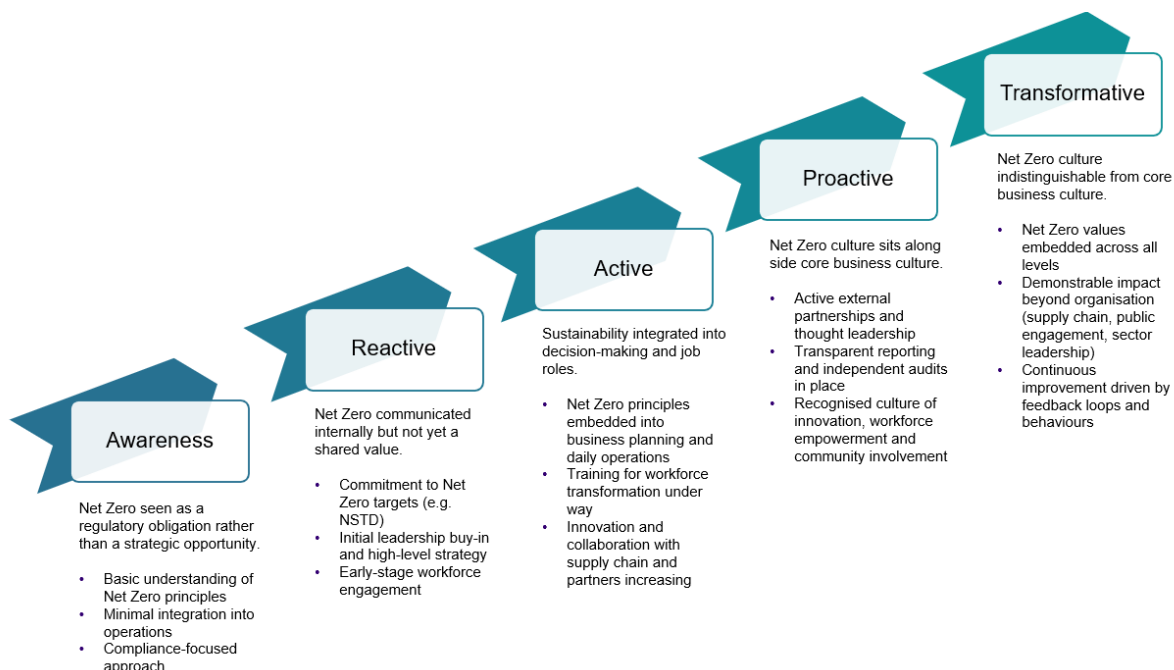
The culture maturity model has been developed into a handy tool which is designed to help companies begin assessing their Net Zero culture. The tool provides a framework for assessing how deeply an organisation has embedded Net Zero principles into its culture and systems. It includes guidance to evaluate alignment with the principles and measure how effectively management systems go beyond basic compliance, as well as criteria to assess values and behaviours that reflect and reinforce cultural maturity. Together, these elements help identify where an organisation stands and how its actions, systems and beliefs contribute to a sustainable Net Zero culture.

The tool includes a maturity ladder with broad statements of how this culture is exhibited at a corporate level, see figure 3 below. It also contains a user guide, scoring matrix and examples of evidence that can be used to support the process.

The tool's value lies in starting conversations, identifying strengths and gaps, and helping companies plan the next steps on the journey towards Net Zero culture.

The culture maturity model tool is available to download on the OEUK website, along with guideline.

Figure 3: Net Zero culture maturity ladder



4.3 Using the Net Zero cultural maturity model

The process is not overly prescriptive and is intended to provide guidance to the industry on what to look for in respect of cultural assessment. Companies using the model are encouraged to adapt the tool to reflect their own context, size and strategy, and to add detail, evidence, or scoring refinements where relevant. The outputs are best seen as a basis for discussion and planning rather than a definitive answer.

Completing the model as a team exercise can bring out a wider range of perspectives and help reduce gaps in understanding. When scoring, it may be useful to draw on different forms of evidence such as policies, reports, training records, communications, or observed behaviours. Above all, the model is intended to prompt conversation and reflection, helping organisations establish a baseline and identify the steps required to support progress.

Organisations are encouraged to use the tool to carry out an honest assessment of their leadership, collective understanding and overall maturity in relation to the Principles of Net Zero Culture.

4.4 Expectation for industry

The Principles of Net Zero Culture provides a “Call to Action” which recommends the industry and companies to establish these as foundational elements in the transition to Net Zero, with the ambition to drive a reduction of emissions, ensure the long-term sustainability of the industry, and contribute to the global effort to mitigate climate change.

The steps below outline the expectation on the industry and companies:

1. **Make the commitment to the Principles of Net Zero Cultural**
2. **Define Net Zero goals:** Align with the NSTD and establish qualitative and quantitative goals for your organisation.
3. **Assess current culture:** By utilising the culture maturity model tool.
4. **Develop action plans:** Set milestones for cultural transformation based on the gaps and your company/organisational objectives.
5. **Monitor and adapt:** Build arrangements to monitor progress in both cultural development and emission reductions, revisiting the maturity assessments as required.

As one of the Net Zero principles is “Collaboration and Partnerships”, the ASTF encourages companies to share their assessments and action plans across the industry and/or with the ASTF. The ASTF can use the feedback to further enhance the tool and support industry wide cultural growth and development.



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