



DENSE & TENSE:

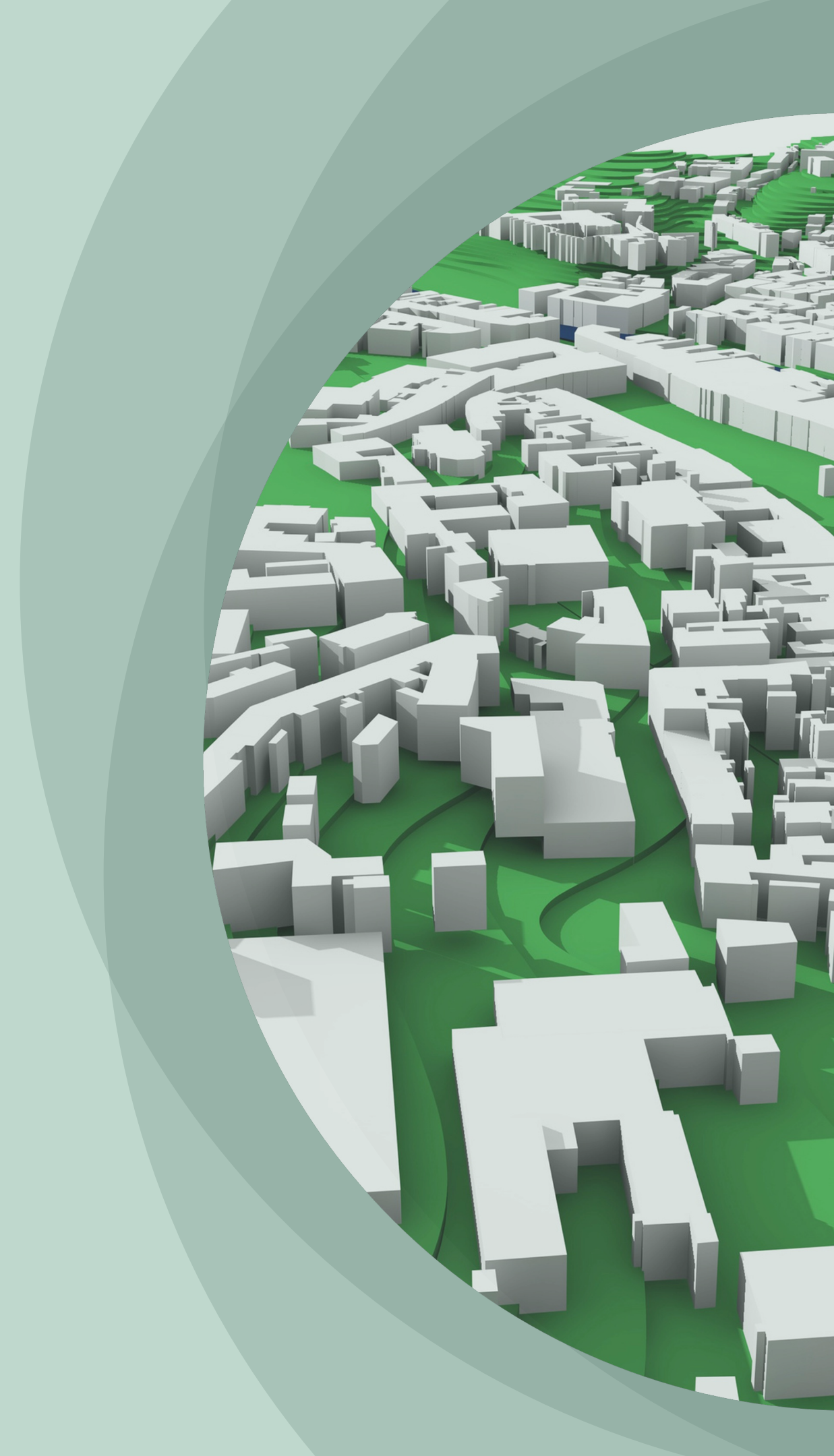
Large Scale Energy Projects in Oulu and The Hague
– Systematic Approach to Engaging the General Public and Key Stakeholders

Stefan Szepesi & Robin Schram – **Jonna Kangasoja & Thomas Banafa** – **Joonas Söderholm**
WesselinkVanZijst (NL) Akordi (FI) City of Oulu (FI)



Program

- Welcome and introduction / Jonna Kangasoja
- Learnings from WarmelinQ project from Gasunie / Robin Schram
- Strategic Stakeholder Engagement as Method / Stefan Szepesi
- Overview of the City of Oulu case / Joonas Söderholm
- Drafting an informed Stakeholder Engagement Strategy / Thomas Banafa
- Questions
- Closing words / Jonna kangasoja





DENSE & TENSE:

Welcome and introduction

Stefan Szepesi & Robin Schram – Jonna Kangasoja & Thomas Banafa – Joonas Söderholm
WesselinkVanZijst (NL) Akordi (FI) City of Oulu (FI)



DENSE & TENSE:

Learnings from WarmelinQ project from Gasunie

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WesselinkVanZijst
strategic stakeholder engagement



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Large Scale Energy Projects in Oulu and The Hague

– Systematic Approach to Engaging the General Public and Key Stakeholders

February 25th 2026

Stefan Szepesi, Robin Schram

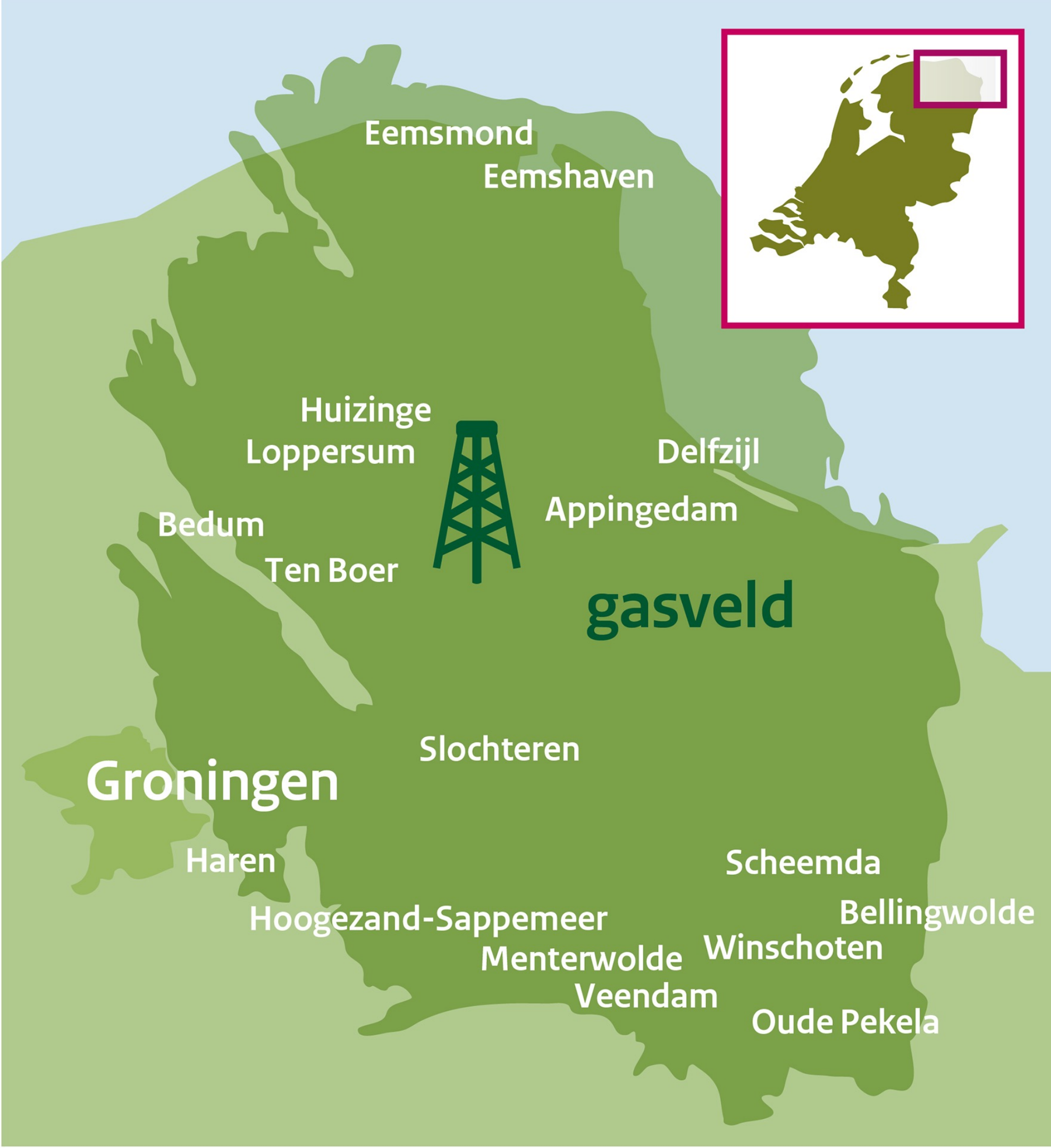
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Learnings from

WarmtelinQ

gasurHE







Natural and Green Gas grid in 2030 and onwards



CO2 grid in 2030 and onwards



Hydrogen grid 2030 and onwards



Heat transport in 2030 and onwards



Legenda

-  Warmtetransportleiding
-  Mogelijke warmtetransportleiding
-  Industriecoluster
-  Woon-/werkgebied
-  Glastuinbouw





Vaassenstraat

P















Some lessons on energy transition projects in urban areas

- Empower the local authorities
- Also engineering and construction need to be stakeholder oriented
- Stay in touch – make it personal
- Be mindful of multilateral stakeholders
- Mirror the profile of your stakeholders
- Adjust the compensation policy to include urban areas
- Commit to a method for strategic stakeholder engagement





DENSE & TENSE:

Strategic Stakeholder Engagement as Method

Stefan Szepesi & Robin Schram – **Jonna Kangasoja & Thomas Banafa** – **Joonas Söderholm**
WesselinkVanZijst (NL) Akordi (FI) City of Oulu (FI)

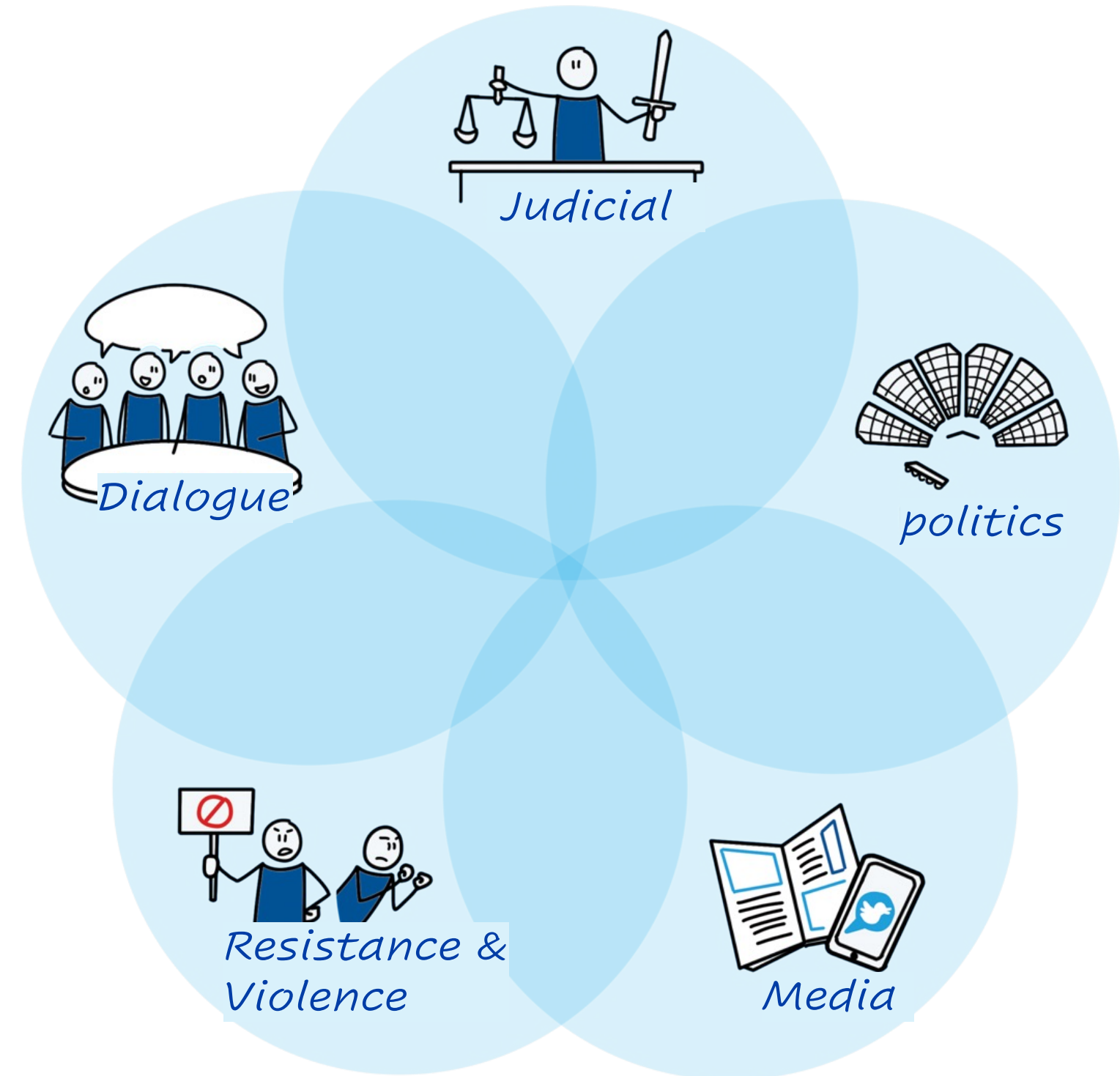


Strategic Stakeholder Engagement as Method



Why SSE?

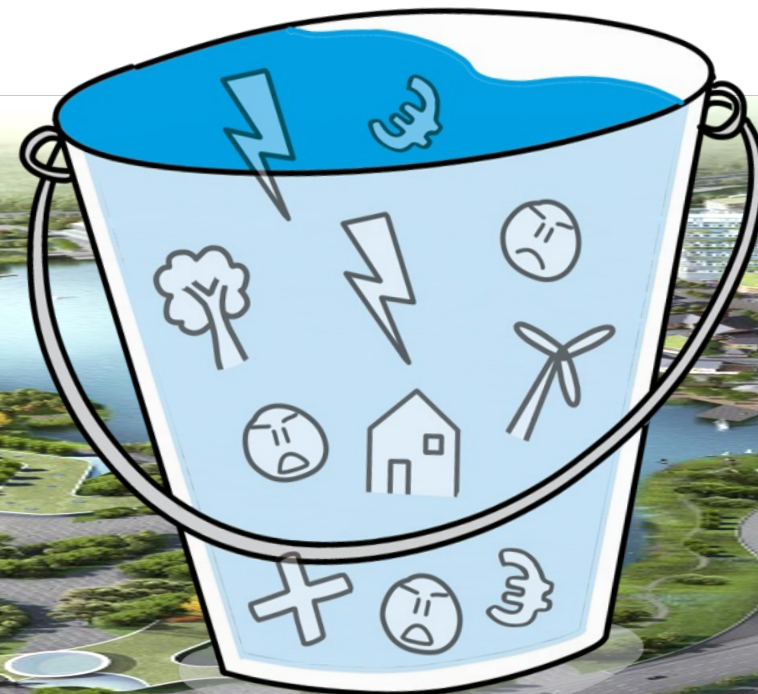
Because dialogue is not the default arena for resolving conflict...



CONFLICTARENA'S



Typical in projects we engage with: the bucket full of misery



- A lot has happened in an area... E.g.:
 - New roads
 - Wind turbines
 - Solar fields
- Now there is something new: a hydrogen pipeline
- Project initiators want to *manage* the drop, stakeholder want to talk about the bucket...



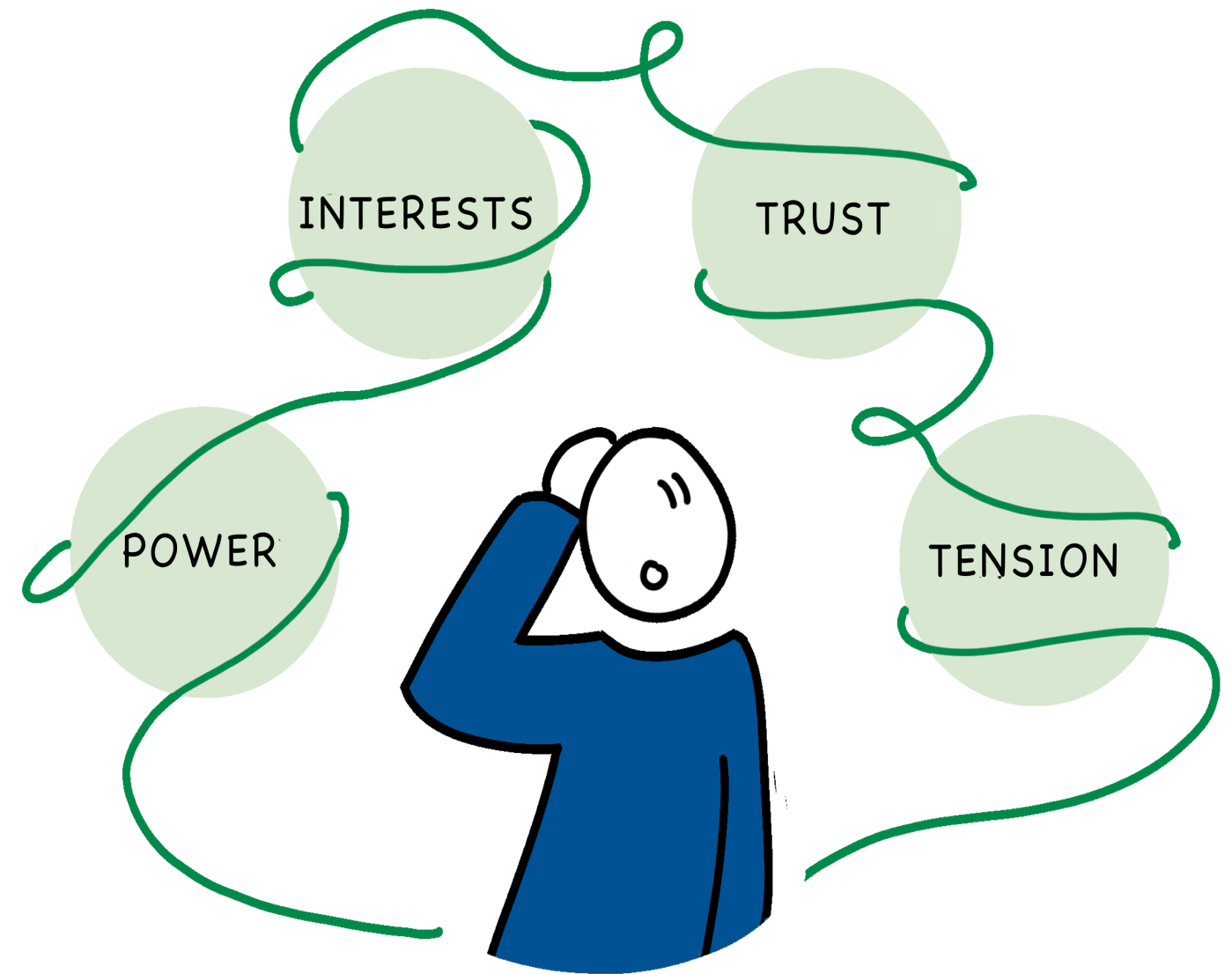


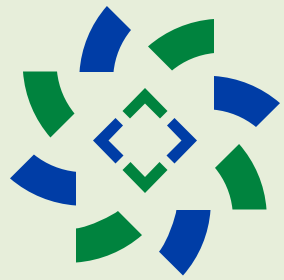
The recurring dilemma

KISS
KEEP IT SIMPLE, STUPID



VS

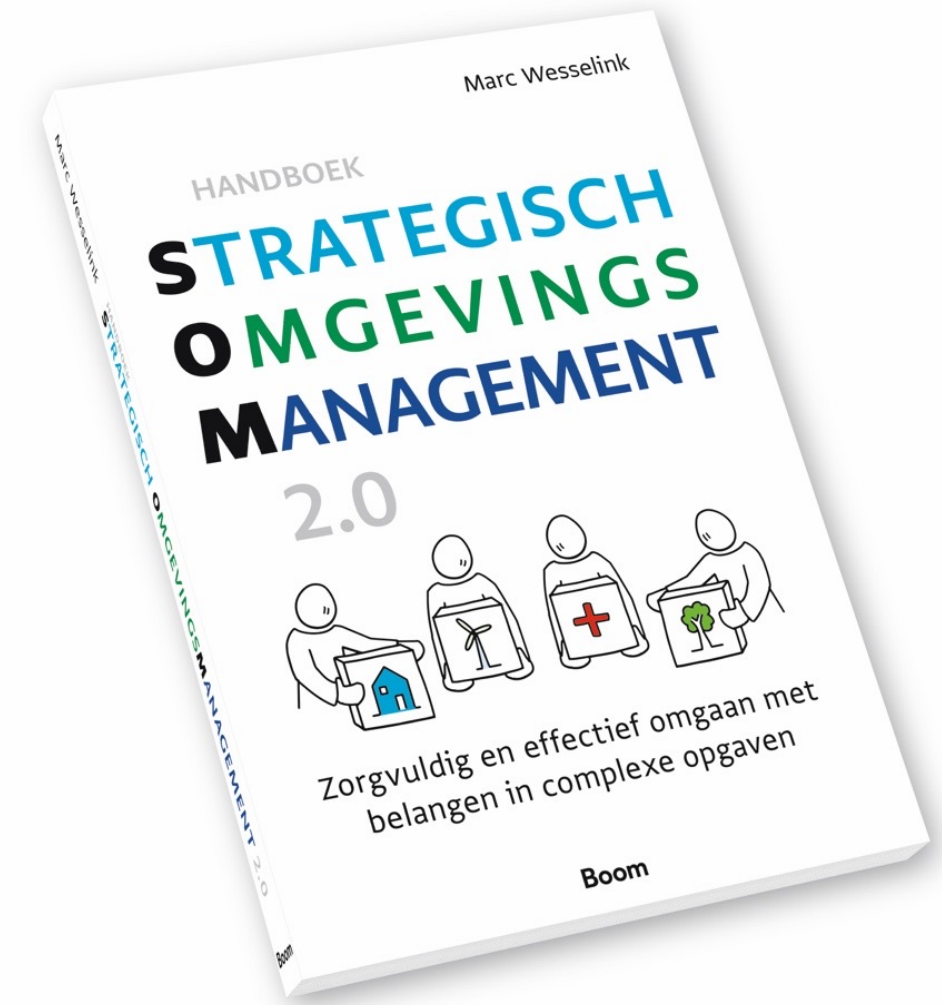
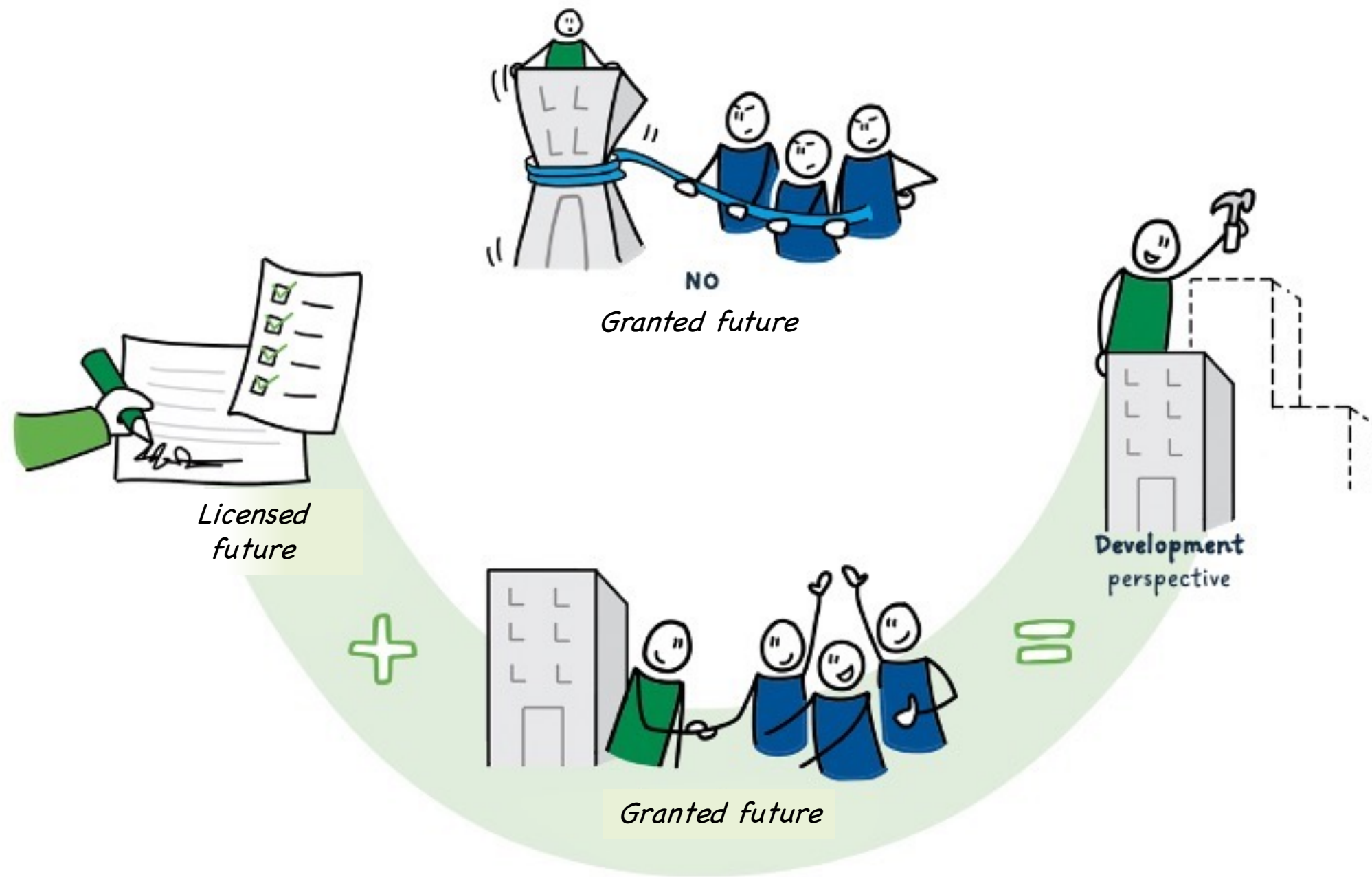




What is SSE?



Perspective = *licensed* + *granted* future



Fourth quadrant
Execution

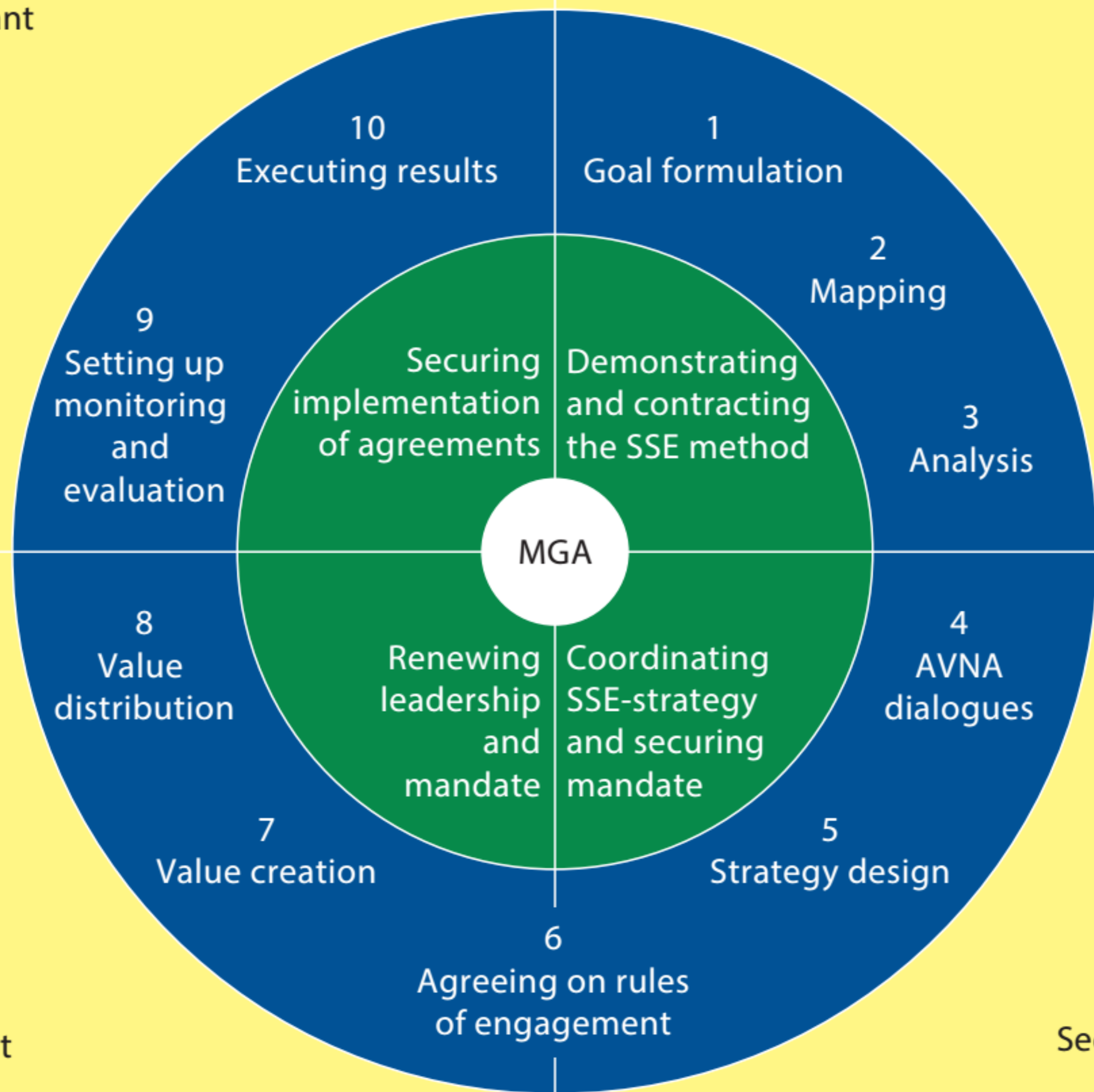
First quadrant
Analysis

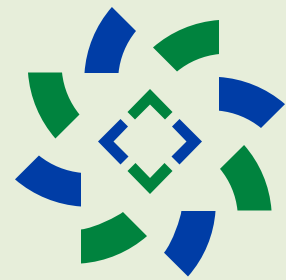
Execution

Preparation

Third quadrant
Consensus

Second quadrant
Strategy



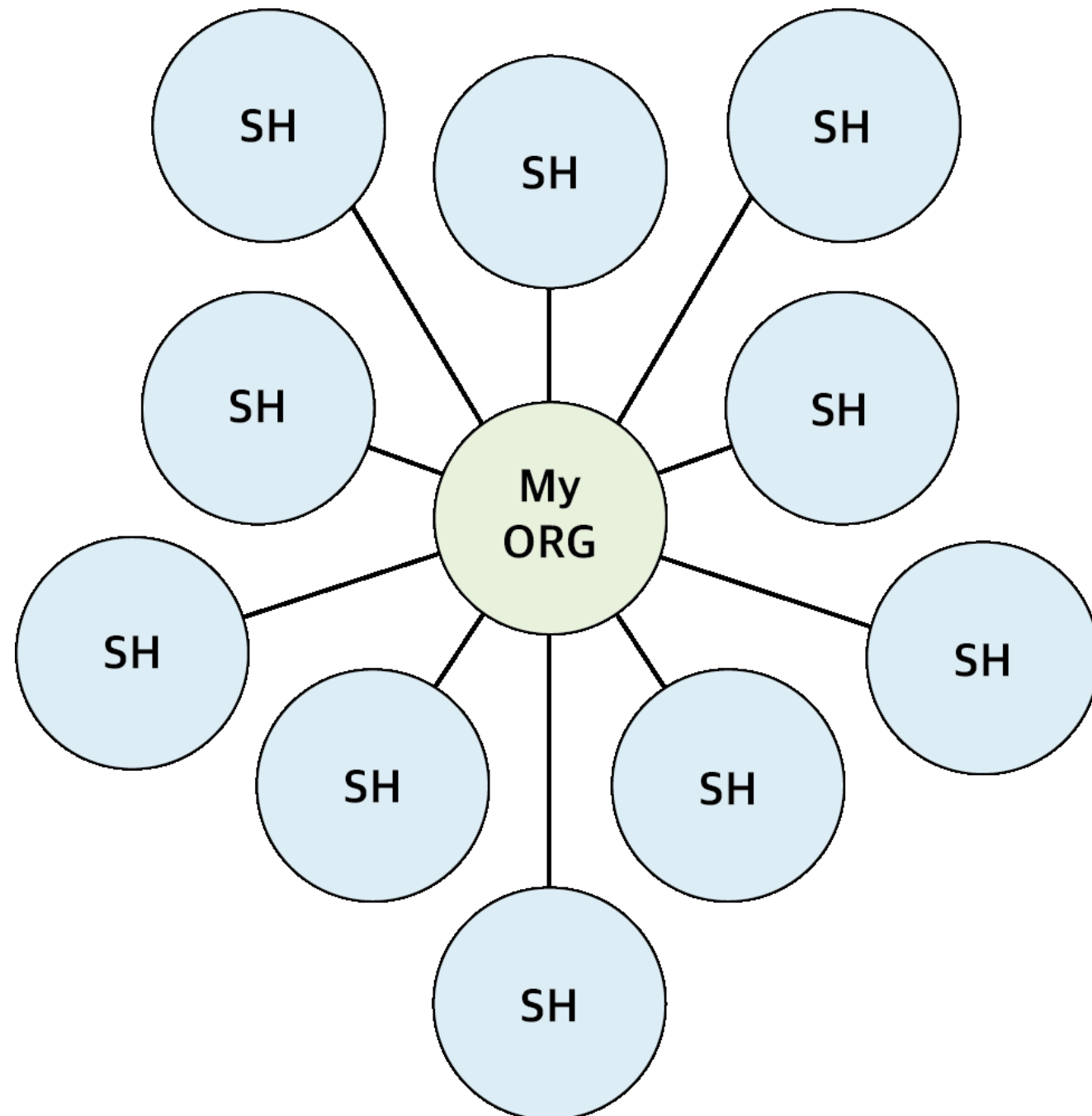


Examples of SSE-instruments

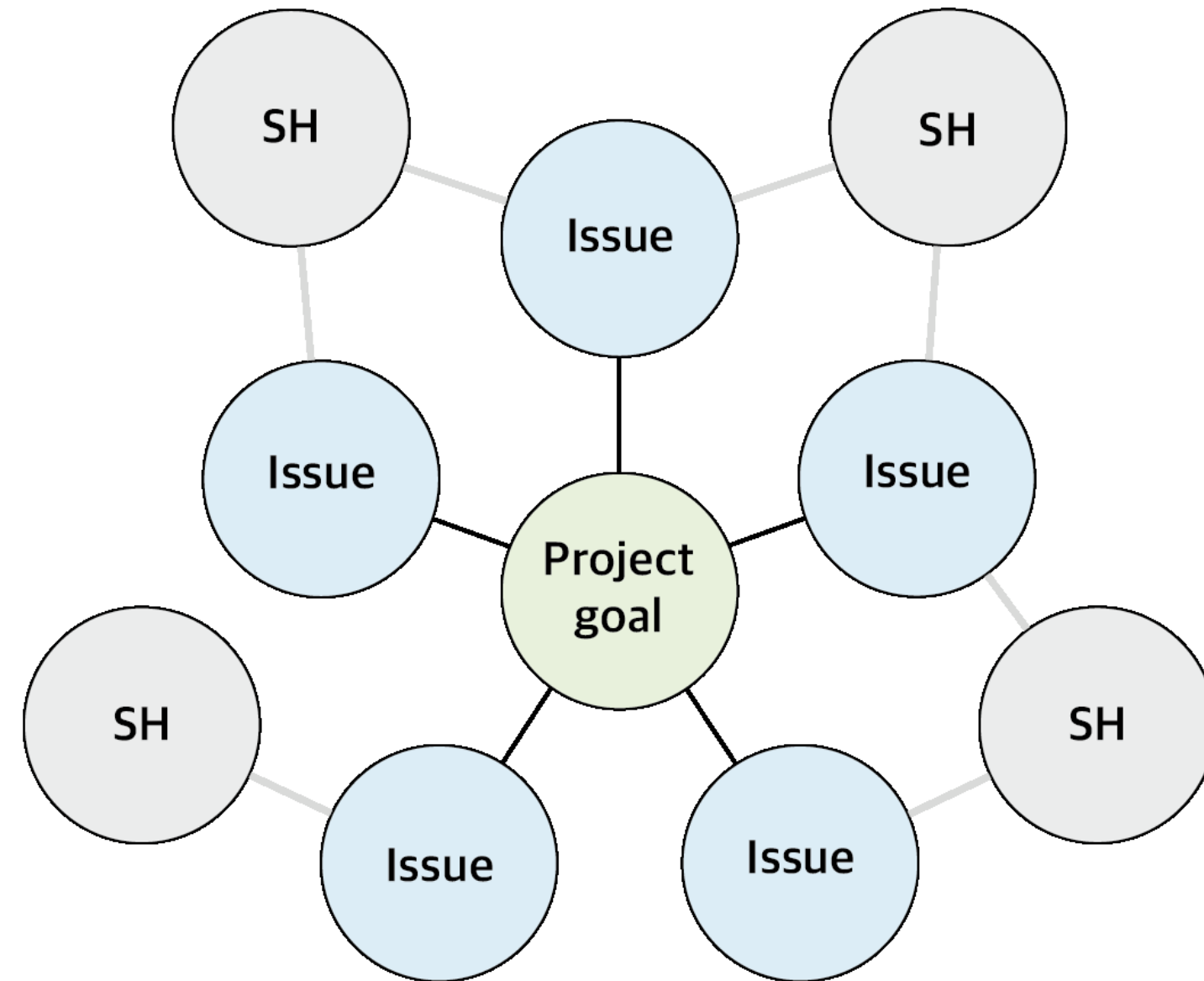


Example: starting differently in SSE

Usual Suspects Approach to Stakeholder Mapping

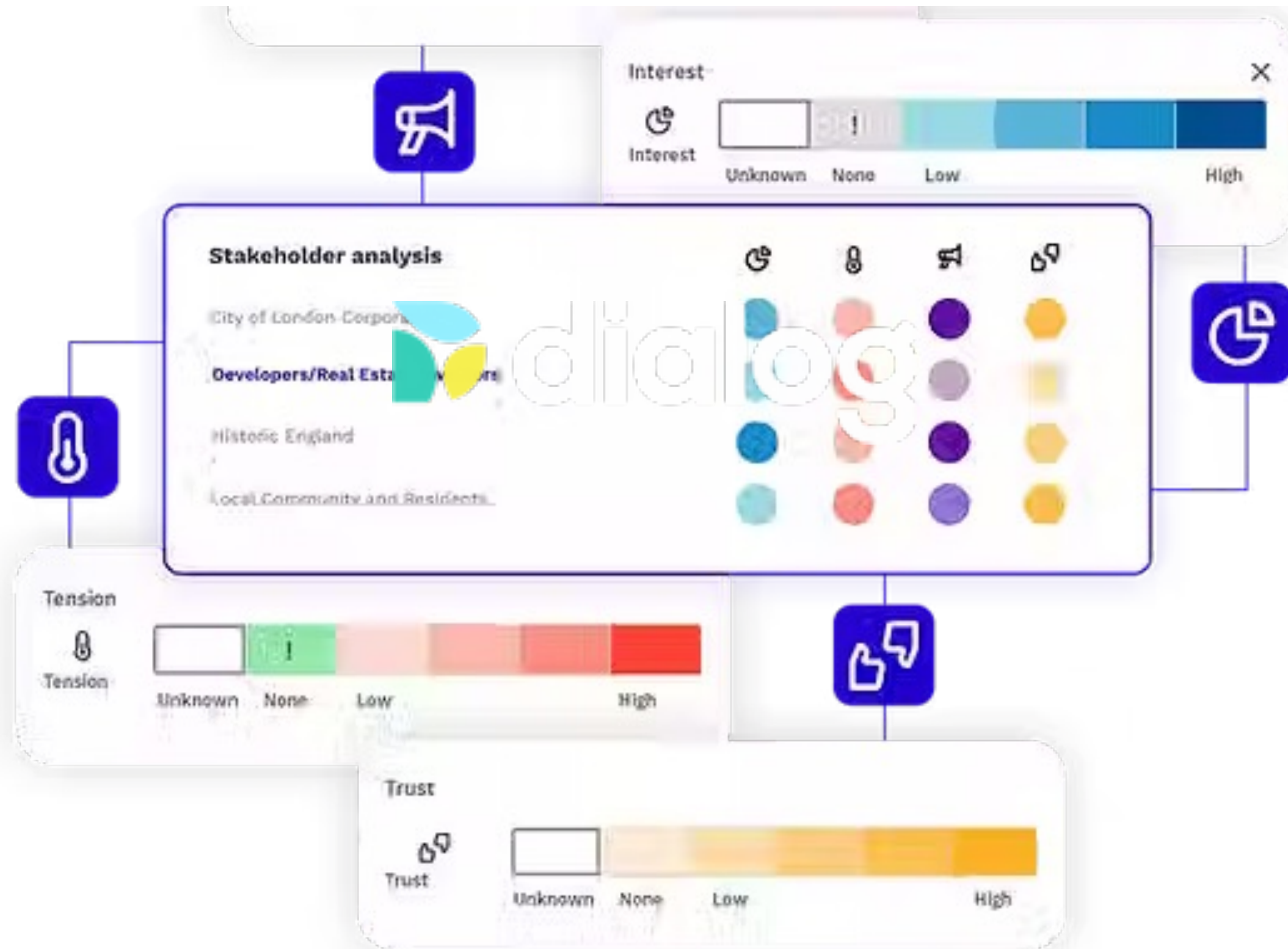


SSE-Method to Stakeholder Mapping





Example: SSE analysis + reporting





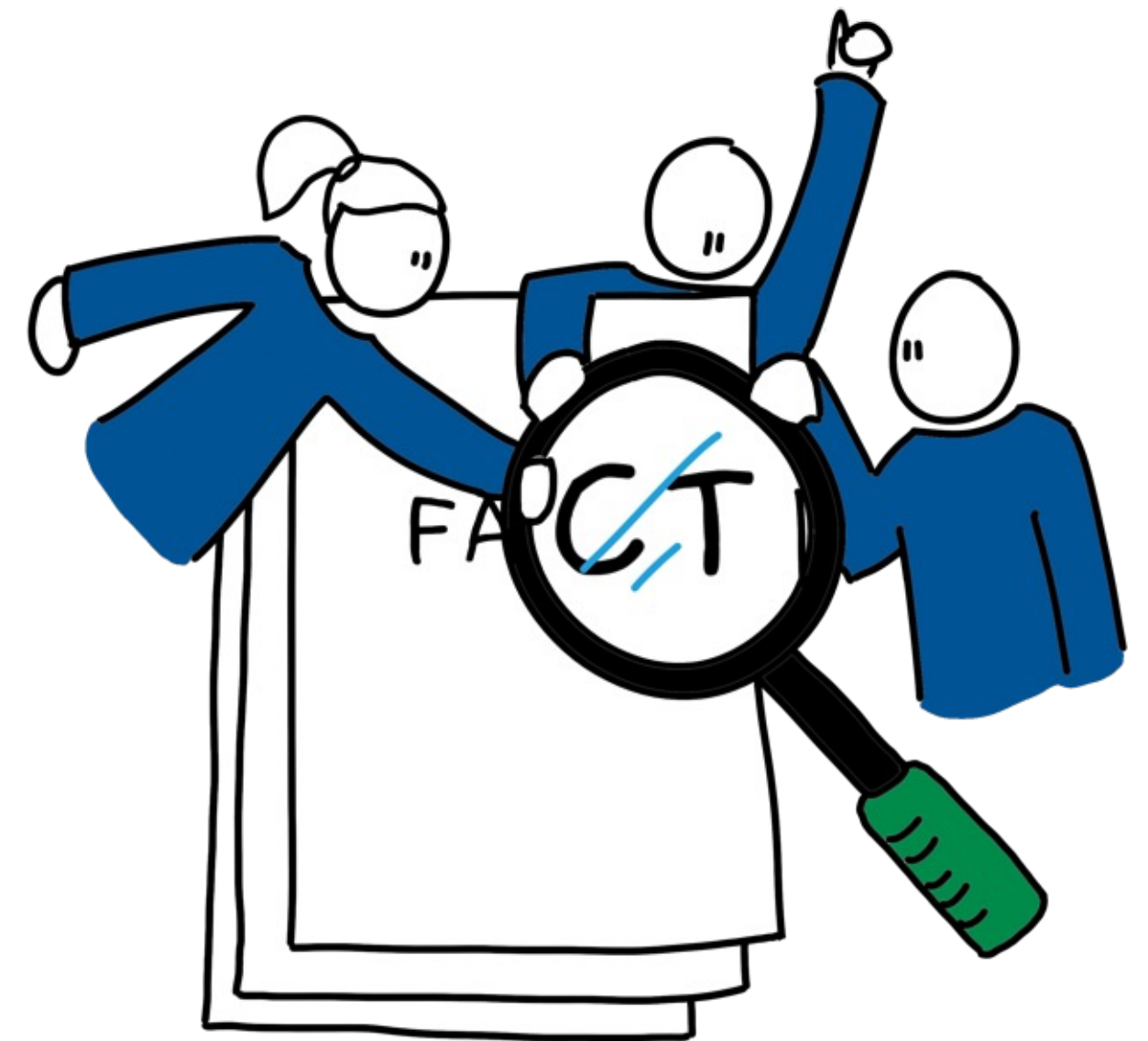
Example: Joint Fact Finding (JFF)

Agree on the facts!

- Do all parties have access to the same information?
- Do all parties acknowledge the same “truth”?
- Which experts are recognized?

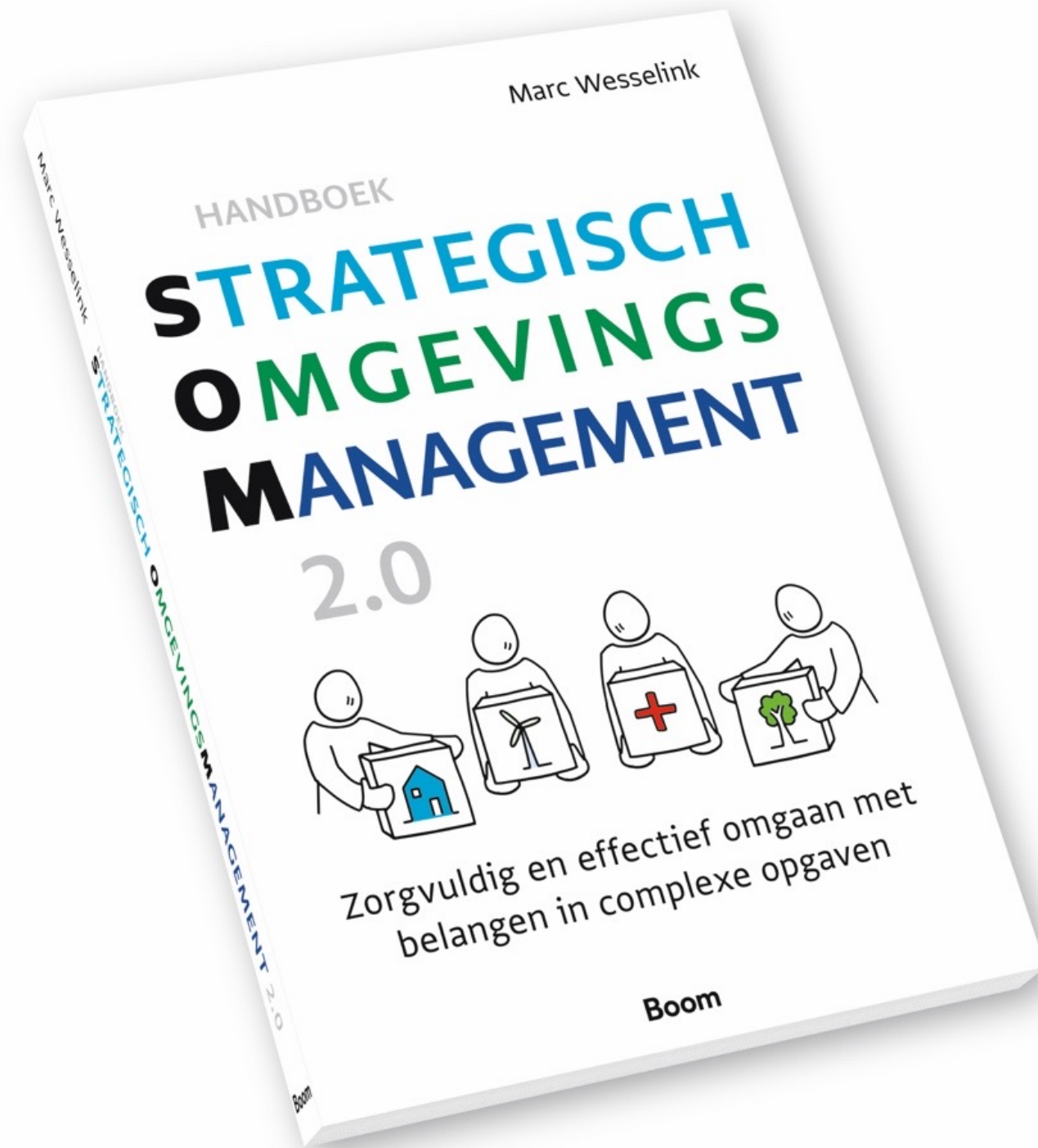
Approach:

- Come to a shared problem definition together
- Formulate a program of requirements together
- Outsource the research together
- Supervise the research together
- Own the results together





Thank you for your attention



Ordering?!



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DENSE & TENSE:

Overview of the City of Oulu case

Stefan Szepesi & Robin Schram – Jonna Kangasoja & Thomas Banafa – **Joonas Söderholm**
WesselinkVanZijst (NL) Akordi (FI) City of Oulu (FI)



Oulu2026
European Capital
of Culture

OULU

The Largest Urban Centre
in the Arctic Europe



OULU TODAY

 **217 556 residents** (12/2025)

 **2 900 new residents** (2024–25)

 **13 900 international residents**

 **140 nationalities**

 **35 300 students**

 **Average age in Oulu 40.1 years**

 **1/3 with academic degree**

 **17 300 company locations**

 **3 200 new jobs** (2023–24)



ICT
15 000



Industry
10 400



Trade
9 200



Education
8 800

Growth Objectives 2030



Population
230 000



Jobs / year
2 000



Private investments / year
330 million €

Oulu is European Capital of Culture 2026

→ oulu2026.eu/en



Oulu2026
European Capital
of Culture



LARGEST E-FUEL HUB IN THE BALTIC SEA REGION



French company Verso Energy aims to build a hydrogen processing plant in Oritkari, Oulu [\(November 2024\)](#)

Hy2gen plans e-fuel plant in Vihreäsaari, Oulu [\(November 2025\)](#)

Three new hydrogen plants planned in Pyyryväinen, Oulu [\(April 2025\)](#)

Oulun Energia and P2X Solutions plan to build a 100MW hydrogen plant in Laanila, Oulu [\(February 2024\)](#)



Strengths of Oulu area

Reliable **electricity grid** and
future **hydrogen network**

Extensive **district heating
network** utilizing waste heat

Biogenic CO₂ available for
hydrogen refinement

Abundant supply of **clean
water**

Abundant availability of
green energy

Onshore and offshore
wind power potential

Growing **solar power
supply**

Ready and developing
**industrial areas for
green industry**

Strong **industrial
heritage**

Vibrant city

World-class energy and
hydrogen **research**

Innovative **business and
research partners**

Universities continuously
producing **new talent**

Oulu green transition infra vision 2030

Four green transition industrial areas with diverse profiles seamlessly interconnect through infrastructure, creating a cohesive ecosystem

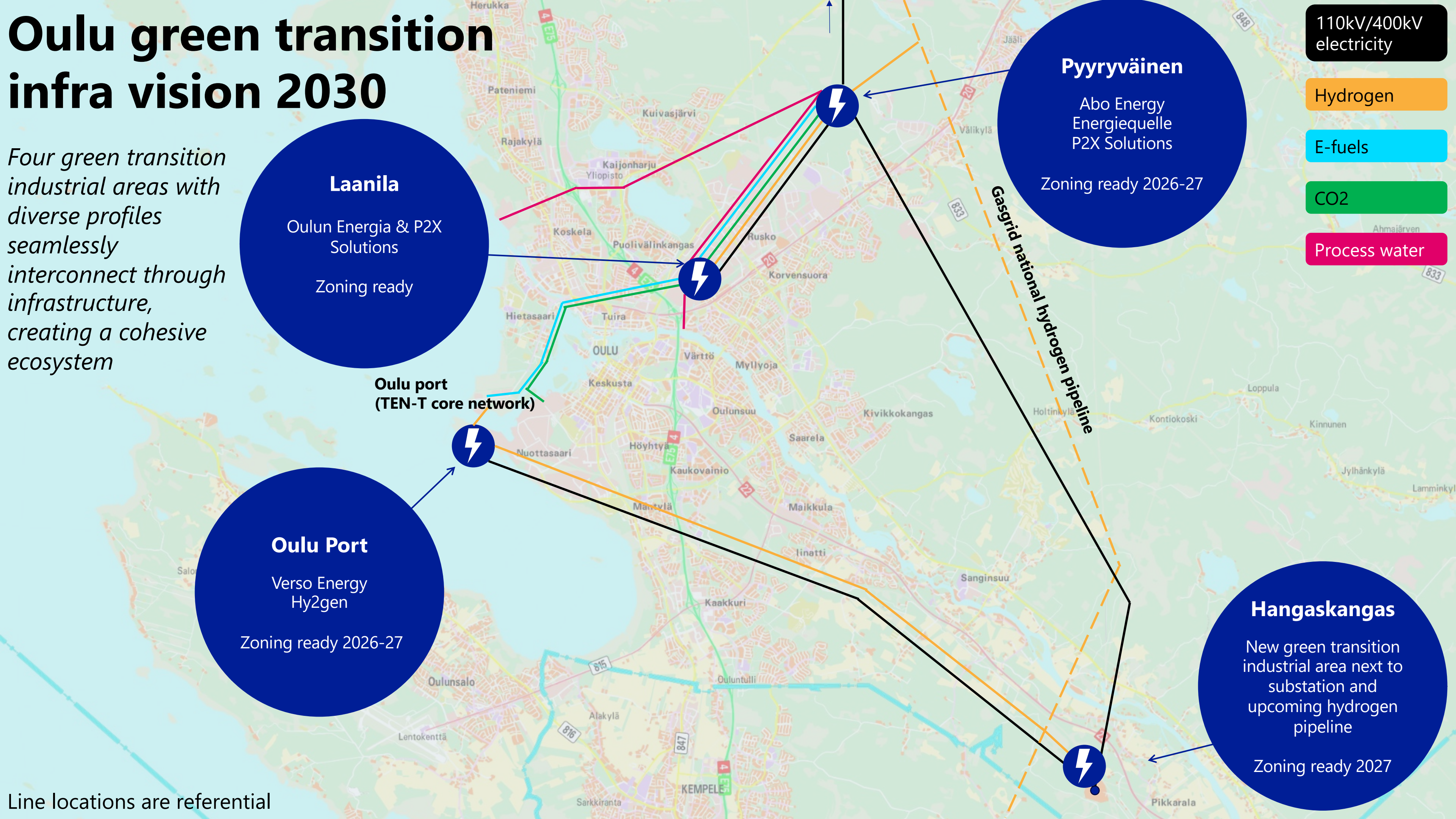
Laanila
Oulun Energia & P2X Solutions
Zoning ready

Oulu Port
Verso Energy Hy2gen
Zoning ready 2026-27

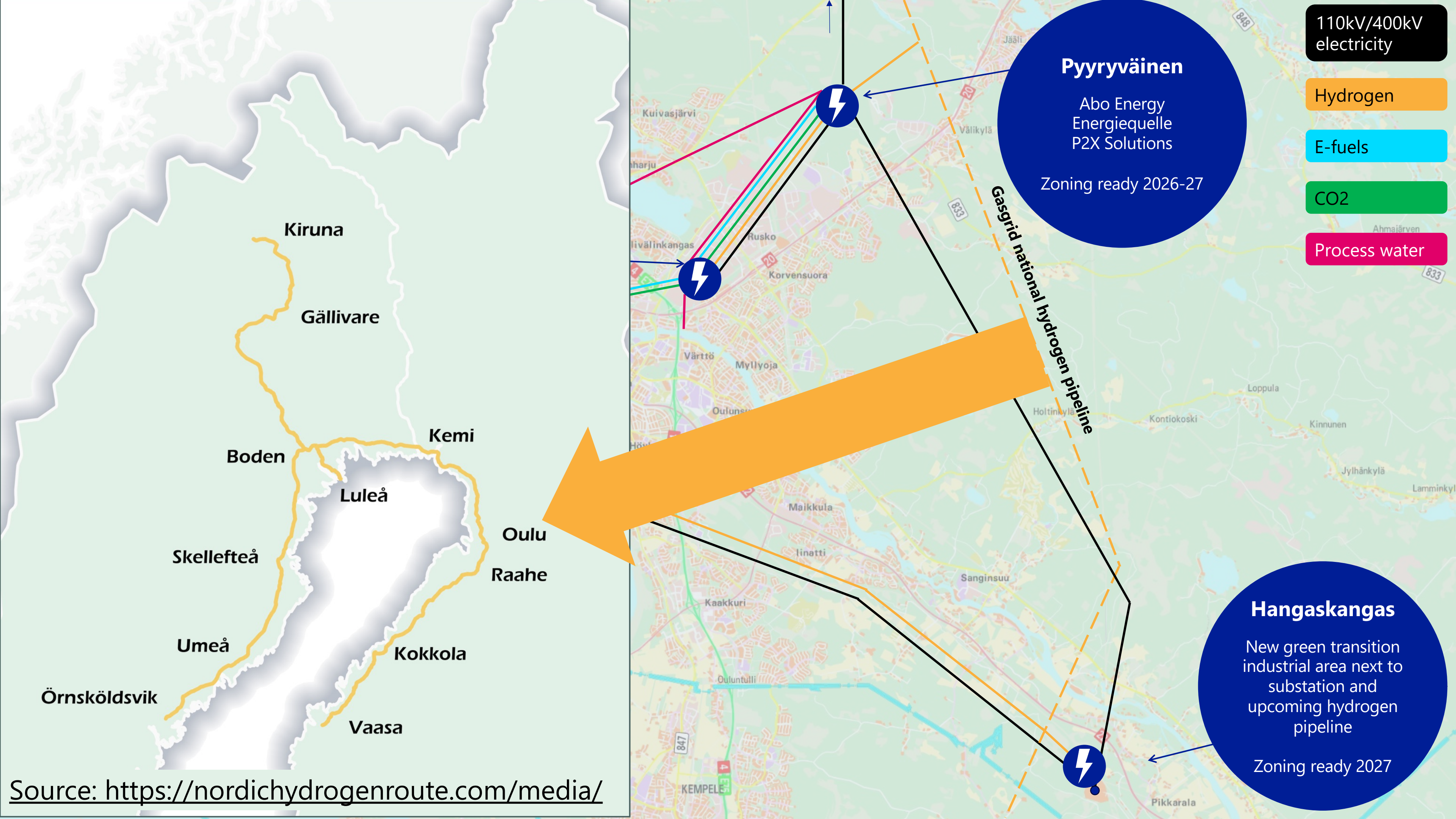
Pyryväinen
Abo Energy Energiequelle P2X Solutions
Zoning ready 2026-27

Hangaskangas
New green transition industrial area next to substation and upcoming hydrogen pipeline
Zoning ready 2027

110kV/400kV electricity
Hydrogen
E-fuels
CO2
Process water



Line locations are referential



110kV/400kV
electricity

Hydrogen

E-fuels

CO2

Process water

Pyryväinen
Abo Energy
Energiequelle
P2X Solutions
Zoning ready 2026-27

Hangaskangas
New green transition
industrial area next to
substation and
upcoming hydrogen
pipeline
Zoning ready 2027

Kiruna
Gällivare
Boden
Skellefteå
Umeå
Örnsköldsvik
Kemi
Luleå
Oulu
Raahe
Kokkola
Vaasa

Wind power in Oulu

Oulu's wind power figures

In total

Currently active turbines

5

Active projects

10

Projects with 10+ turbines

5

Projects with less than 10 turbines

4

Number of turbines planned max.

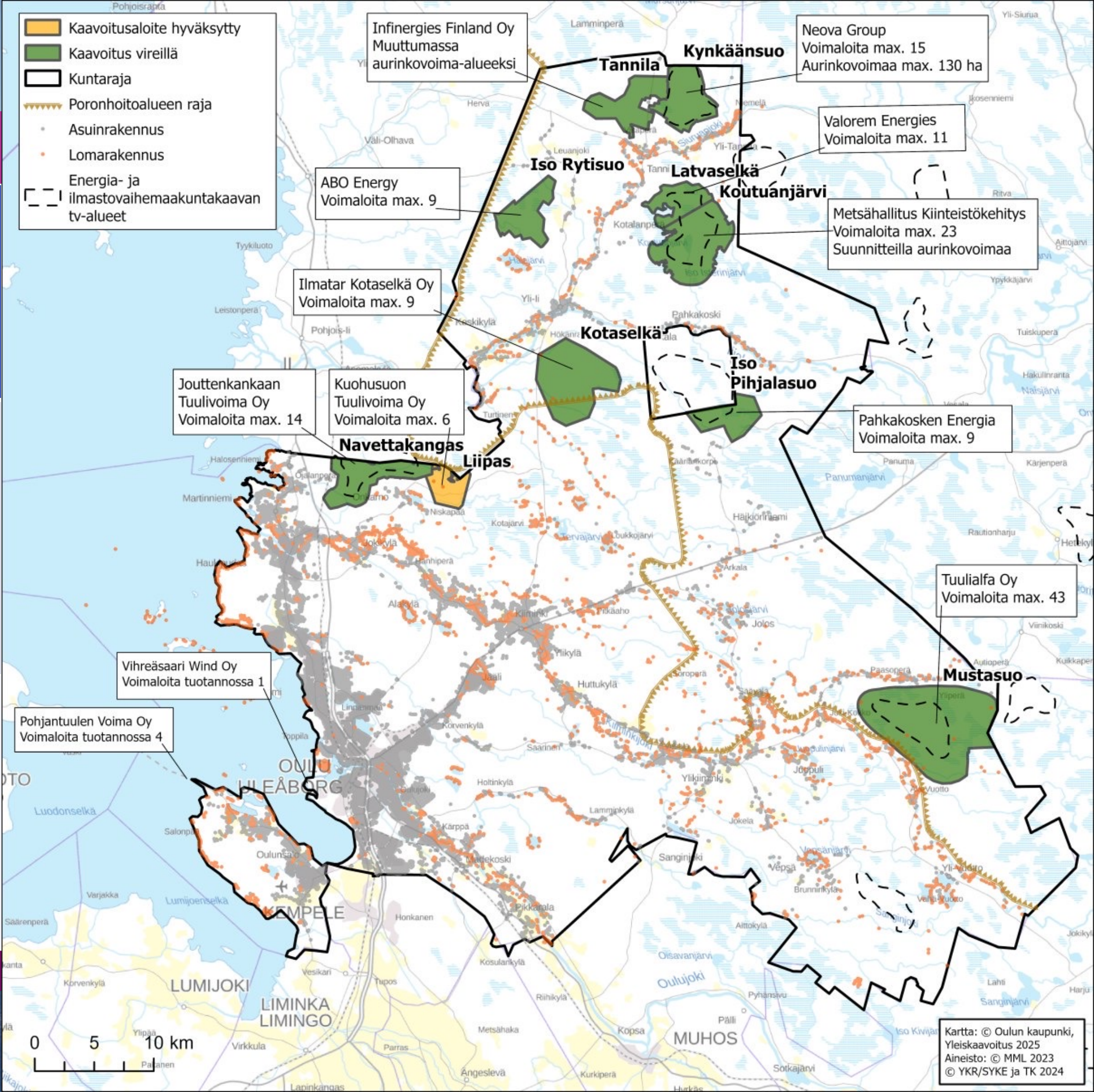
139

One turbine is 6-10 MW

834-1390 MW

Solar power planned into the wind power areas (ha)

130+



Big green transition plans – local acceptance is critically important



- There are currently **six hydrogen production and refining plants** being planned in different parts of Oulu. These **plans are still at an early phase**.
- In addition, **new renewable energy** (solar and wind power) **production is being planned**. For the first projects, EIA has been finished and proposed zoning plan is being prepared.
- **Gaining local acceptance is critically important** for the realization of green transition investments as well as for the city's strategic objectives.
- **Green transition facilities** — or the infrastructure required for them, such as power lines and hydrogen pipelines — **may raise concerns, questions, or perceived risks** related to issues such as safety and health, nature, changes in local identity, and the fair distribution of benefits and burdens.

An aerial photograph of a city in winter, with snow covering the ground and rooftops. In the background, a power plant with several smokestacks is visible, emitting a large plume of white smoke. The sky is a pale, hazy blue, suggesting a clear day. The city's layout is visible, with various buildings and streets. The overall scene is a mix of urban development and natural winter elements.

Akordi & City of Oulu collaboration to increase knowledge and develop a systematic approach

- To anticipate these concerns, ensure a just green transition and support the realization of the green transition projects, **the city wanted to understand what we can at an early phase do** in relation to social acceptance.
- Together with Akordi, we have increased our knowledge and preparedness as well as developed an operating model on **strategic stakeholder engagement**.



OULU

Thank you

Joonas Söderholm

Green transition project manager – City of Oulu

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DENSE & TENSE:

Drafting an informed Stakeholder Engagement Strategy

Stefan Szepesi & Robin Schram – Jonna Kangasoja & **Thomas Banafa** – Joonas Söderholm
WesselinkVanZijst (NL) Akordi (FI) City of Oulu (FI)

Drafting an informed Stakeholder Engagement Strategy

The process and approach in Oulu

The logo consists of three overlapping circles of varying shades of red, with the word "AKORDI" centered in white text within the innermost circle.

AKORDI

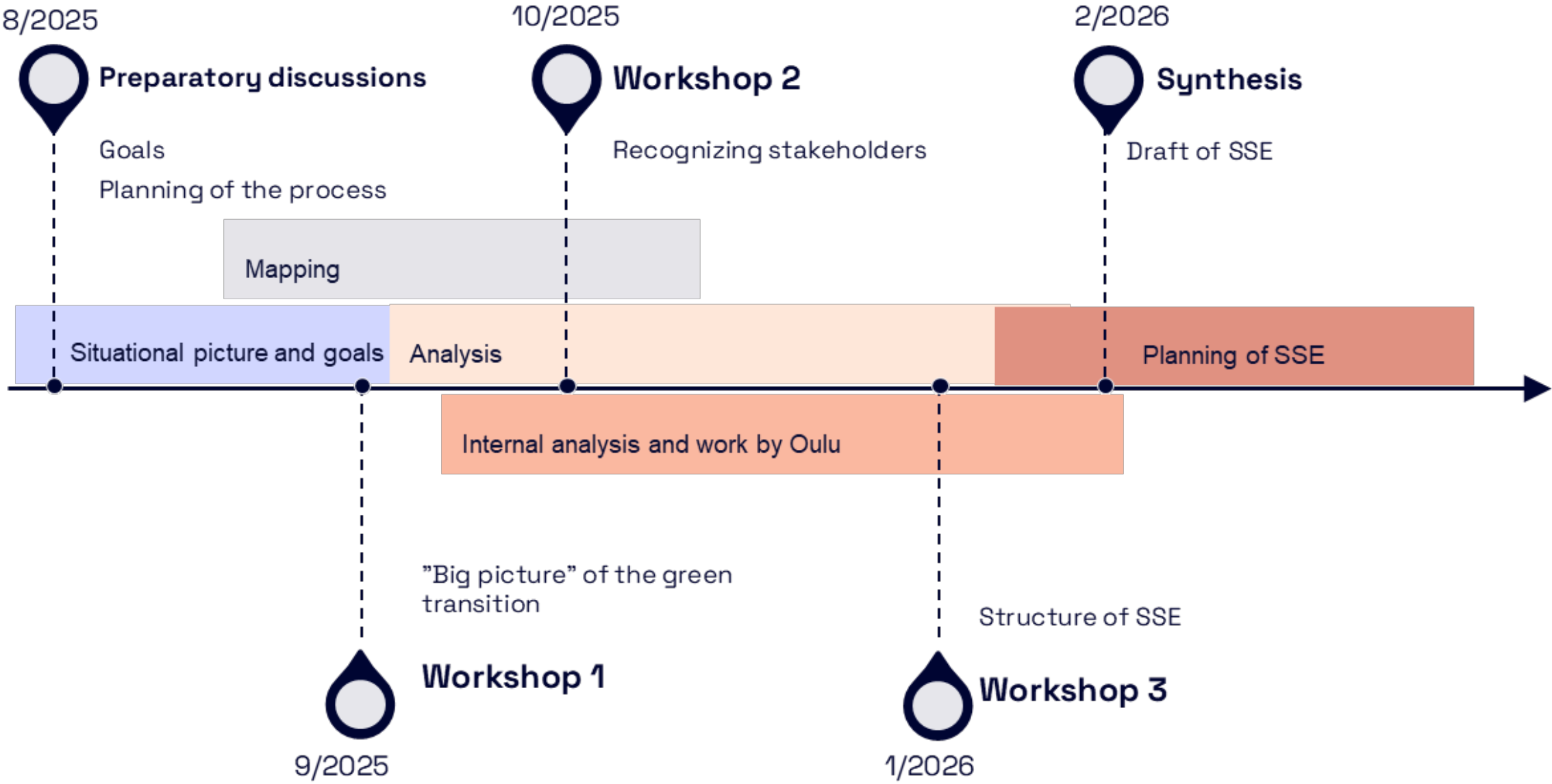
Goals and principles

- Form a common understanding of the green transition.
- Recognize key stakeholders and key tensions.
- Enable just and equitable green transition.
- Build a clear and practical operating model for the city.
- Acknowledgement, Agency, Reciprocity, and Clarity (AARC, Merrick Hoben)

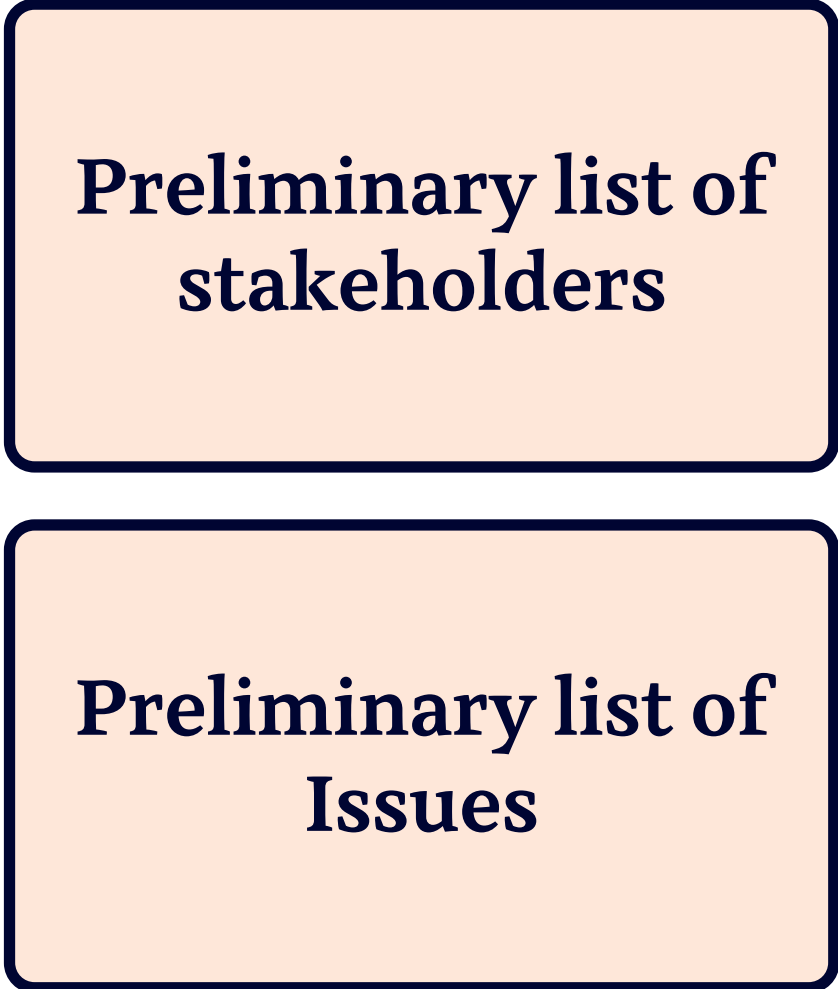
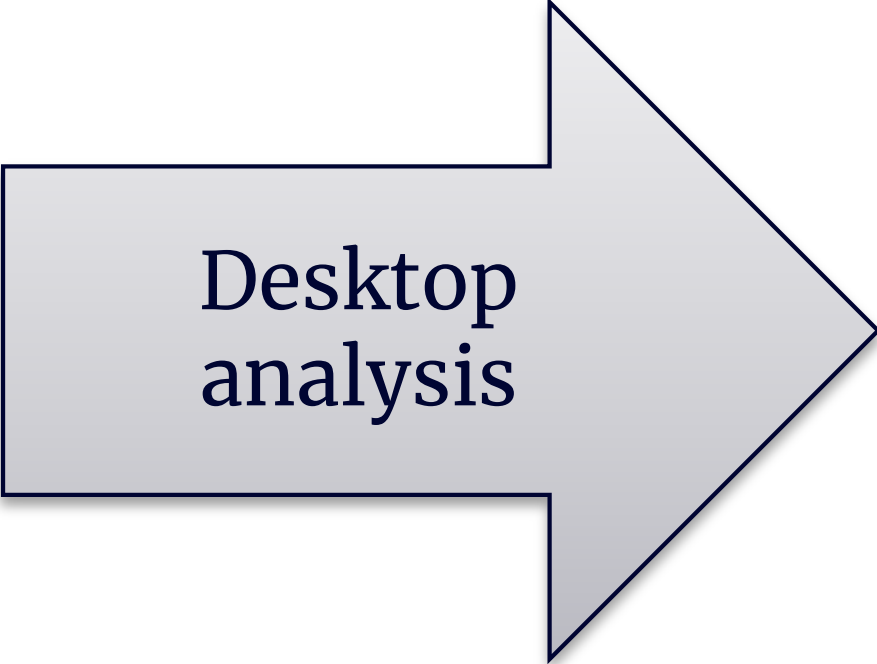
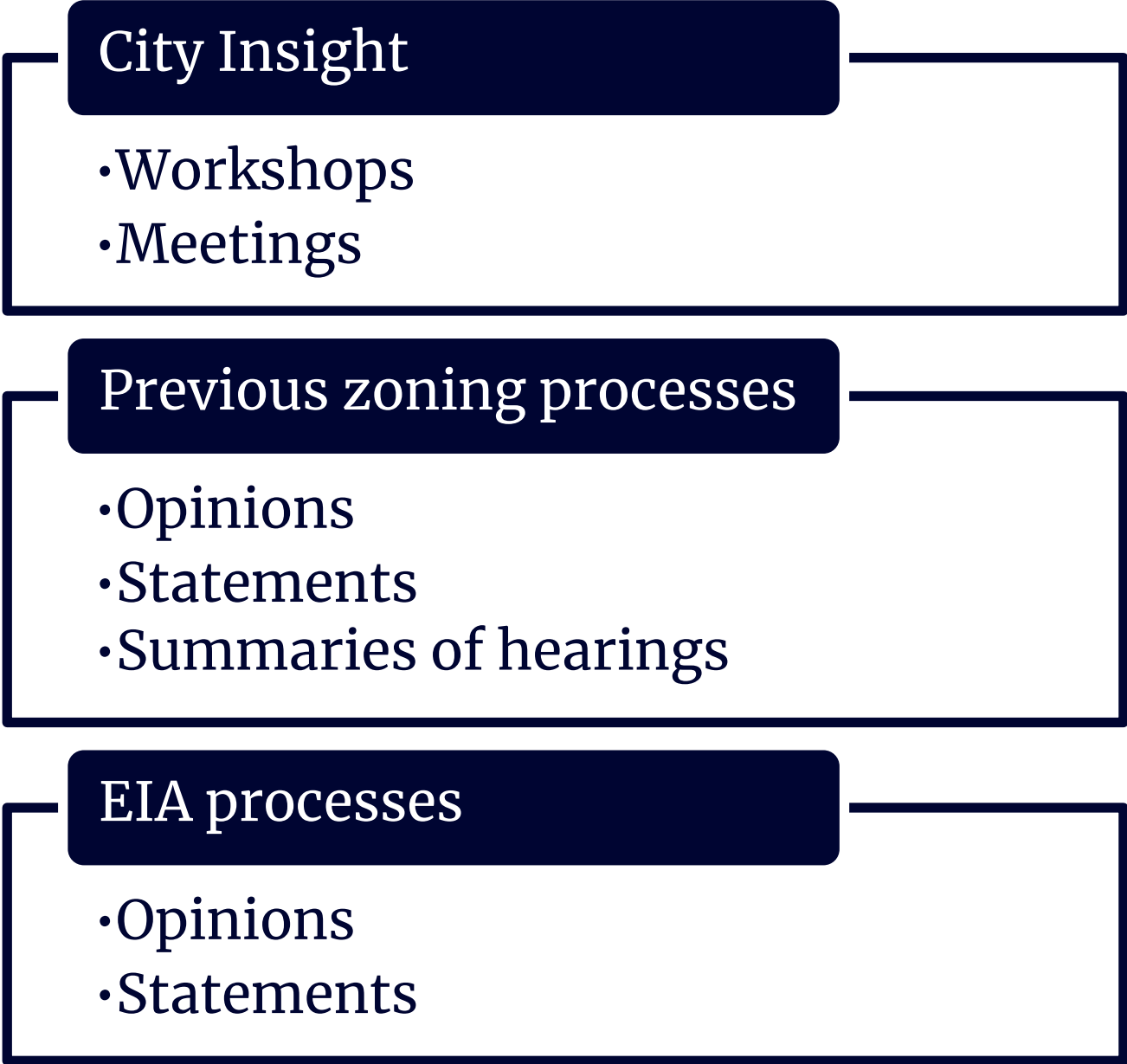


The process

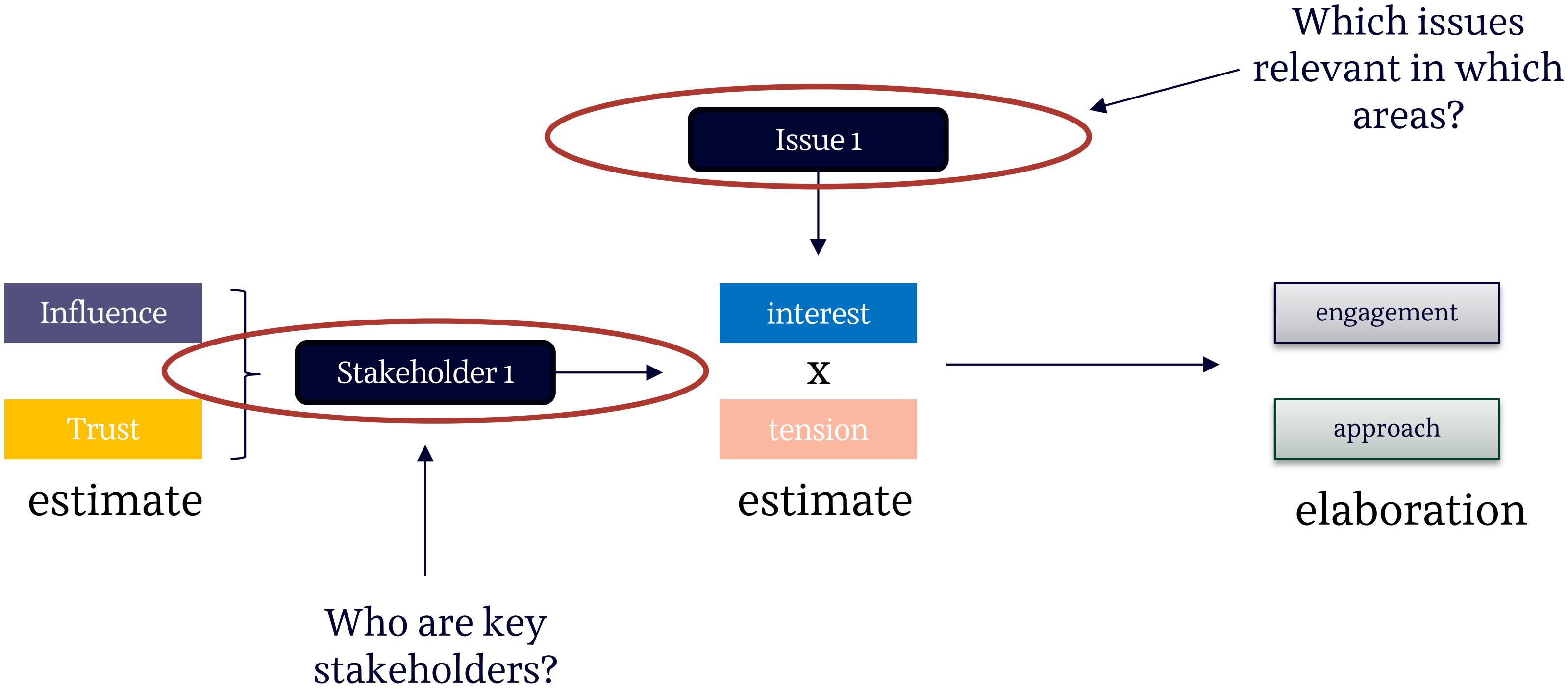
The Stakeholder Engagement Strategy plan has been developed in cooperation with experts from the City of Oulu and Akordi.



Stakeholder and issue mapping



Analysis



Analysis

Sidosryhmä	Totals per			Byrokrazia	Talous	Turvallisuus	Ympäristö
		Inform	Make Voices Heard	█	█	█	█
		advice	Resolve Conflict	█	█	█	█
		advice	Make Voices Heard	█	█	█	█
		Inform	Resolve Conflict	█	█	█	█
		co-produce	Make Voices Heard	█	█	█	█
		co-produce	Resolve Conflict	█	█	█	█
		Co-decide	Make Voices Heard	█	█	█	█
		Co-decide	Make Voices Heard	█	█	█	█
		co-produce	Make Voices Heard	█	█	█	█
		co-produce	Make Voices Heard	█	█	█	█
		co-produce	Make Voices Heard	█	█	█	█
		Co-decide	Make Voices Heard	█	█	█	█
		co-produce	Make Voices Heard	█	█	█	█
		co-produce	Make Voices Heard	█	█	█	█
		Co-decide	Bring Interests	█	█	█	█
		co-produce	Bring Interests	█	█	█	█
		Inform	Make Voices Heard	█	█	█	█
		Inform	Make Voices Heard	█	█	█	█
		Inform	Make Voices Heard	█	█	█	█
		Inform	Make Voices Heard	█	█	█	█
		consult	Make Voices Heard	█	█	█	█
				Byrokrazia	Talous	Turvallisuus	Ympäristö
		Inform	Make Voices Heard	█	█	█	█
		advice	Resolve Conflict	█	█	█	█
		advice	Make Voices Heard	█	█	█	█
		Inform	Resolve Conflict	█	█	█	█
		co-produce	Make Voices Heard	█	█	█	█
		co-produce	Resolve Conflict	█	█	█	█
		Co-decide	Make Voices Heard	█	█	█	█
		Co-decide	Make Voices Heard	█	█	█	█
		co-produce	Make Voices Heard	█	█	█	█
		co-produce	Make Voices Heard	█	█	█	█
		co-produce	Make Voices Heard	█	█	█	█
		Co-decide	Make Voices Heard	█	█	█	█
		co-produce	Make Voices Heard	█	█	█	█
		co-produce	Make Voices Heard	█	█	█	█
		Co-decide	Bring Interests Together	█	█	█	█
		co-produce	Bring Interests Together	█	█	█	█
		Inform	Make Voices Heard	█	█	█	█
		Inform	Make Voices Heard	█	█	█	█
		Inform	Make Voices Heard	█	█	█	█
		consult	Make Voices Heard	█	█	█	█

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Stakeholders

Authorities

- Permit and oversight processes
- Early and systematic stakeholder engagement

Business interests

- Energy and industrial companies
- Local and regional businesses
- Technical and economical issues

Residents and communities

- Active residents and local associations
- Passive residents
- Prior experiences
- Land ownership

Nature NGOs

- Knowledge of environmental impacts
- Expert discussions and public dialogue
- Early engagement

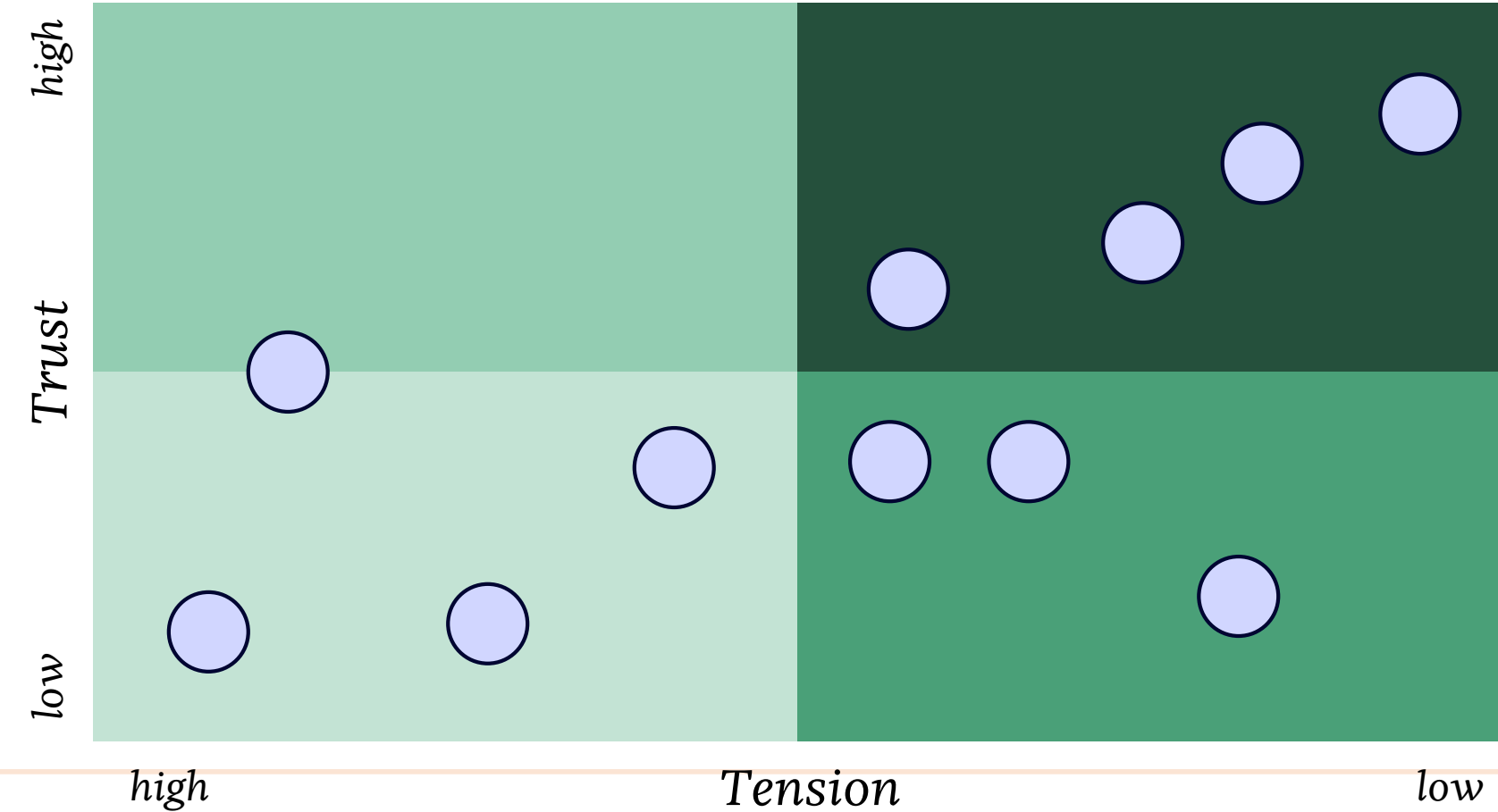
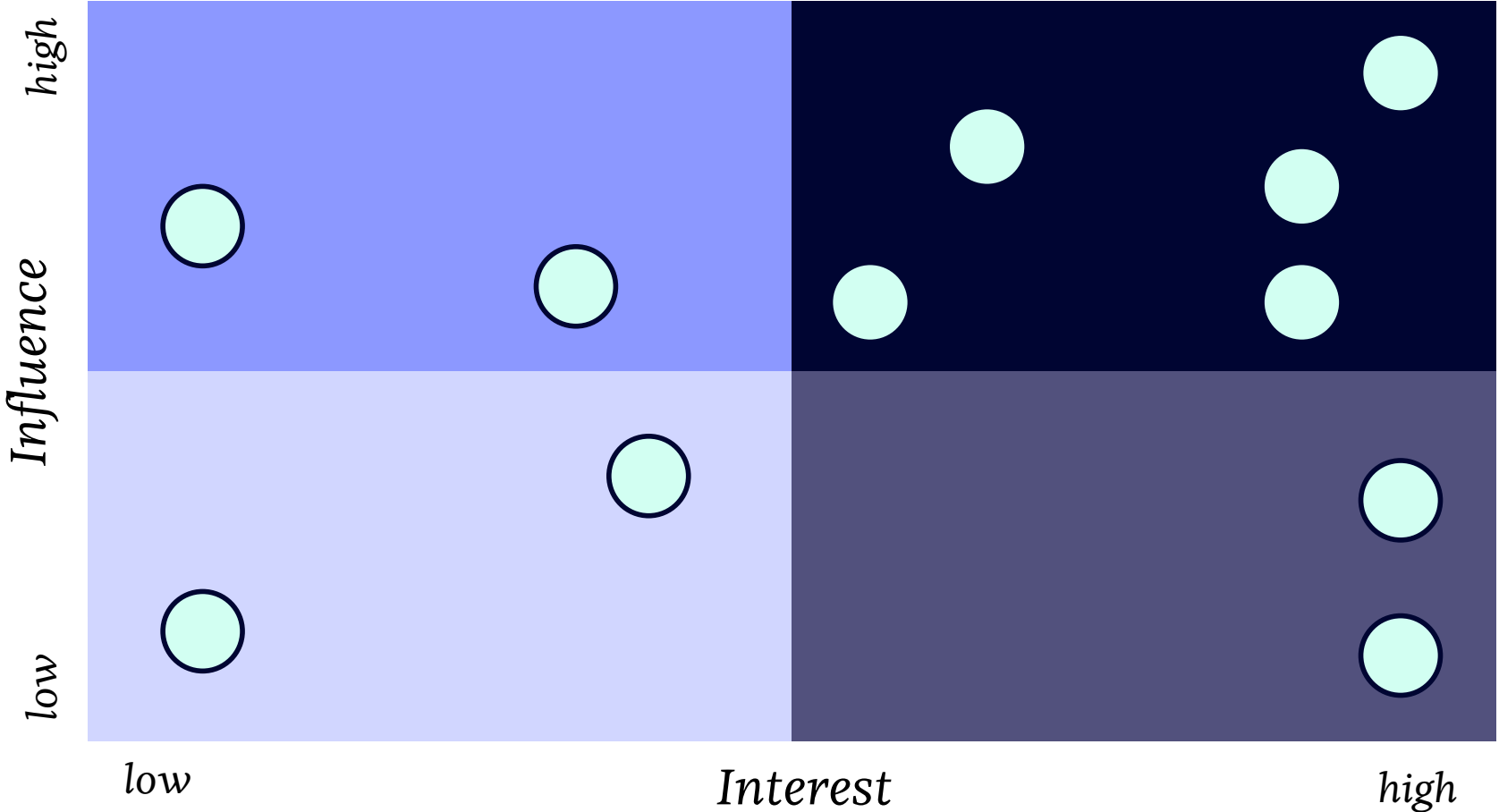
Elected officials

- Political decision-making
- Shared situational awareness and knowledge base

Research and education

- Expertise and research knowledge
- Strengthening knowledge-based discussions

Stakeholders



Issues

Safety

- Risk related to energy infrastructure
- Novel technology
- Proximity to people

Nature impacts

- Biodiversity, scenic values and recreation
- Sufficient assessments
- Lost nature vs. benefits from the projects

Changes in local environment

- Impact on daily lives e.g., increased traffic, noise, and smell
- Personal experiences and local identity

Sharing benefits

- Local negative impact vs. benefits received somewhere else
- Reimbursement for land-owners

Prior experiences

- How prior changes in land use have affected
- Trust in zoning etc. processes

Transparency and availability of information

- Information being hard to understand or hard to access

Levels of engagement

	Explore and inform	Consult	Advise	Decide	Implement
Goals	Improved understanding List concerns	Comments on drafts Priorities	Consensus or majority on recommendations	Consensus-based agreements	Multi-party agreement on implementation
Processes and interventions	Focus groups Forums	Public meetings Workshops	Advisory committees Work groups	Mediated negotiations	Partnerships for Action Implementation and follow-up committees
Examples of stakeholder groups	Education and research Youth and students	Business representatives	Active citizens Nature NGO	Authorities Infrastructure operators	Elected officials Project operators

Integrating with city's processes, organization and resources

Zoning and land use

- Recognize the need for broader engagement
- Integrate engagement with the zoning process

City Communications

- Ensure understandable coherent communication across channels

Community and regional activities

- Outreach for groups normally not active in these processes

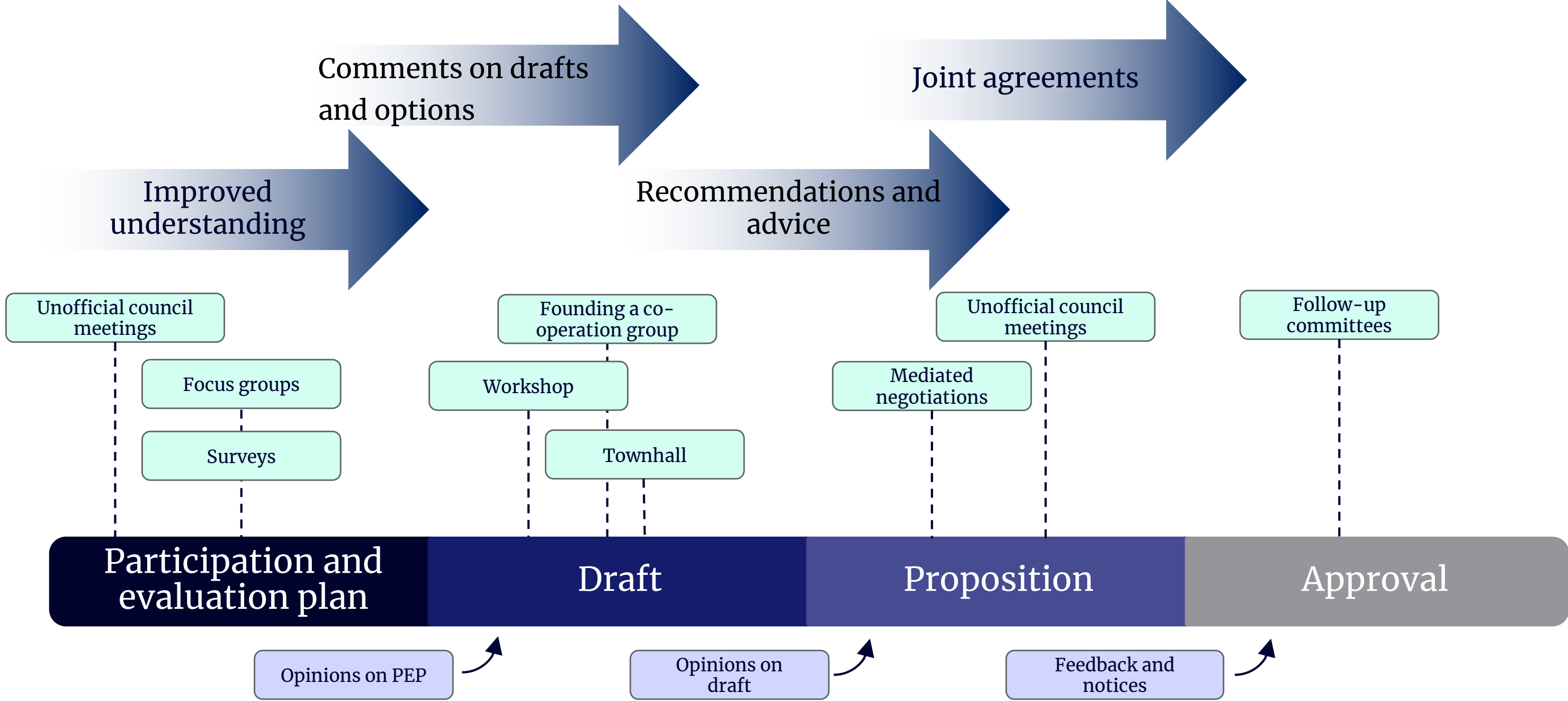
Green transition coordination group

- Coordinate internally between various functions and zoning processes

Business Oulu

- Facilitate communication and dialogue between business interest, companies and the city

Example of zoning: processes and interventions



Result

Lähtökohtia hyväksyttävän ja oikeudenmukaisen vihreän siirtymän toteutukseen

Akordin ehdotus vuorovaikutusstrategiaksi Oulun kaupungille





DENSE & TENSE:

Questions

Stefan Szepesi & Robin Schram – Jonna Kangasoja & Thomas Banafa – Joonas Söderholm
WesselinkVanZijst (NL) Akordi (FI) City of Oulu (FI)



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Closing words

Stefan Szepesi & Robin Schram – Jonna Kangasoja & Thomas Banafa – Joonas Söderholm
WesselinkVanZijst (NL) Akordi (FI) City of Oulu (FI)



DENSE & TENSE:

Thank you! Kiitos! Bedankt!

Stefan Szepesi & Robin Schram – **Jonna Kangasoja & Thomas Banafa** – **Joonas Söderholm**
WesselinkVanZijst (NL) Akordi (FI) City of Oulu (FI)