



Assessment of techno-economic feasibility of Carbon Capture and Storage (CCS) on aluminium potlines

Public Summary Report

Report summarising key findings from study prepared for International Aluminium Institute (IAI)

JUNE 2025



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Glossary

Abbreviation	Definition	Abbreviation	Definition	Abbreviation	Definition
CAPEX	Capital expenditure	GCC	Gulf Cooperation Council countries (e.g. Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates)	NPV10	Net Present Value calculated using a 10% discount rate
CBAM	Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism	GTC	Gas Treatment Centre	OPEX	Operating expenditure
CC	Carbon capture	HEX	Heat Exchanger	PFC	Perfluorocarbon (PFC)
CCS	Carbon capture and storage	HF	Hydrogen fluoride	PIA	Pot Integrated Abart
CCUS	Carbon capture, utilisation, and storage	IRR	Internal rate of return	RES	Renewable energy source
CO2	Carbon dioxide	kA	Kiloampere	SO2	Sulphur dioxide
DCF	Discounted cashflow	MENA	Middle East and North Africa	T&S	Transport and storage for carbon dioxide
ETS	Emissions Trading System	mtpa	Million metric tonnes per annum	Tonne	Metric tonne
FEED	Front-End Engineering Design	N/a	Not applicable	tpy	Tonne per year
FID	Final Investment Decision	NOx	Nitrogen oxides	TRL	Technology Readiness Level
		NPV	Net present value	WHR	Waste Heat Recovery

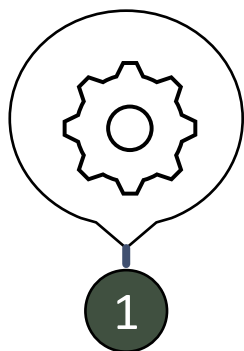
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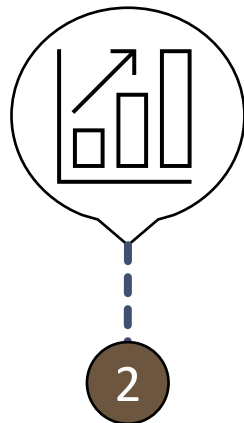
Economic viability of carbon capture on potlines depends on achievable CO₂ concentration and carbon pricing, as well as wider integration challenges



1

Carbon Capture and Storage (CCS) retrofits can enable smelter decarbonisation

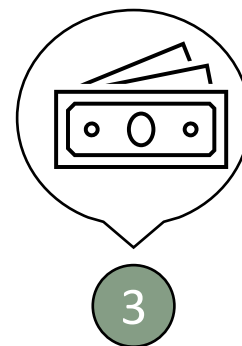
CCS retrofits to existing smelters are a **technically feasible** means to decarbonise direct emissions from smelters, although further research and testing of both CO₂ capture optimisation for smelting and potential smelter modification are required before widespread commercialisation can occur.



2

Extension of carbon pricing is likely the key driver for the CCS business case

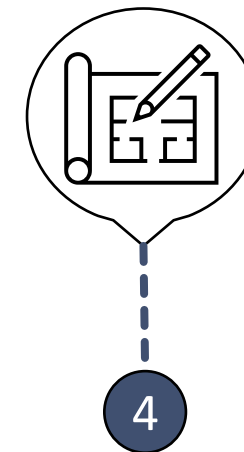
CCS on potlines reduces CO₂ emissions but requires significant CAPEX and OPEX, making carbon pricing a key economic driver for adoption. Assuming technology progress continues to address challenges, a breakeven CO₂ price of between **\$180 and \$205/tCO₂** is required for a representative Middle East smelter CCS retrofit. **This range is subject to significant uncertainty** and regional and site specific differences will increase costs in other locations.



3

Higher CO₂ concentration in flue gas boosts capture efficiency but has technical challenges

Elevating flue-gas CO₂ concentrations from 1% to 3% could **reduce capture costs by 22-32%**, potentially enhancing economic feasibility. This must be balanced against additional smelter costs for elevating CO₂ concentrations which will vary by site, and will need further investigation as new technology solutions are developed.



4

Opportunities for CCS on specific potlines will be site dependent

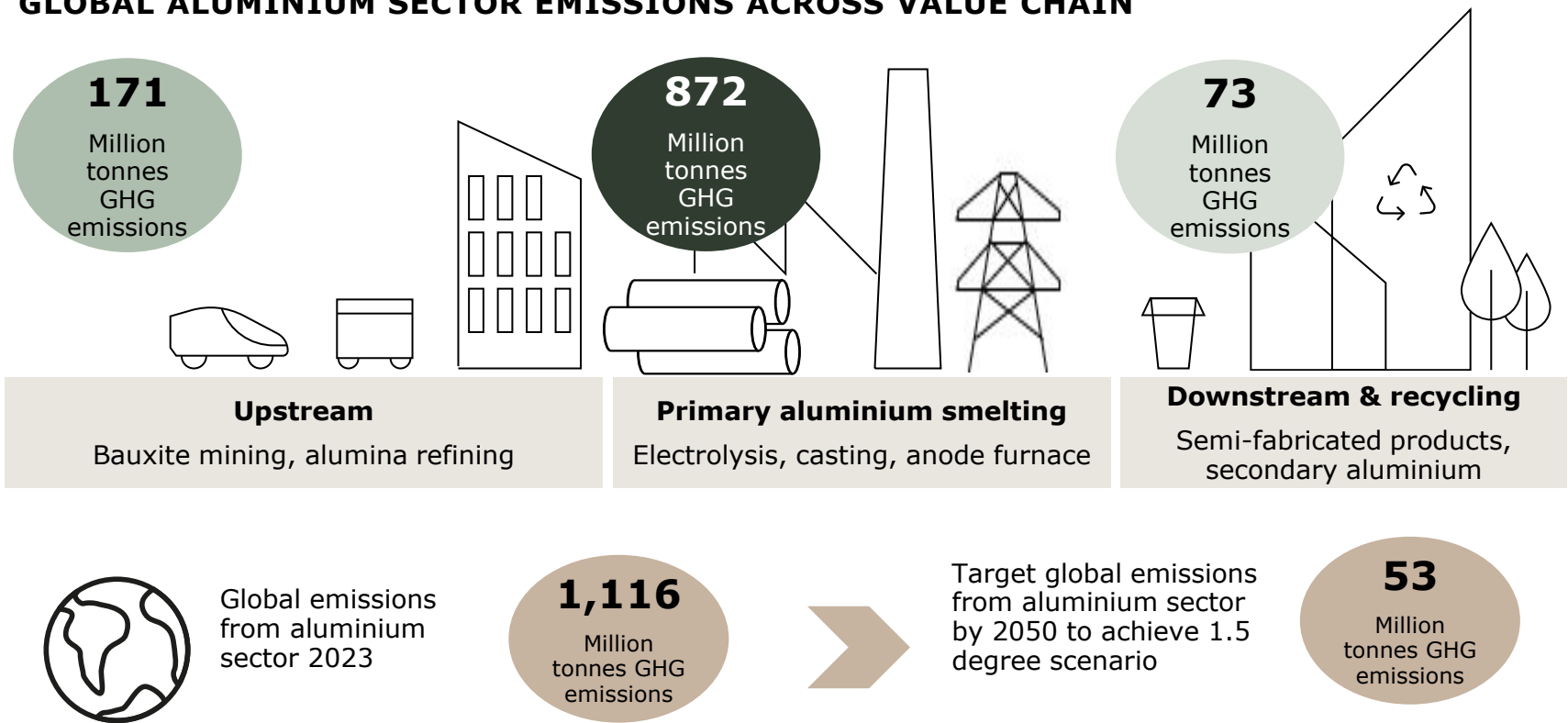
Smelter-specific characteristics will enhance the case for a particular smelter to fit CCS. A favourable policy environment, including political and financial support for carbon capture and carbon price exposure, is likely to be a primary driver. Other site characteristics including available site space and access to CO₂ infrastructure will also be important.

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Reducing carbon emissions from primary aluminium smelters is key to aligning with a 1.5-degree scenario

GLOBAL ALUMINIUM SECTOR EMISSIONS ACROSS VALUE CHAIN



Reducing carbon emissions from primary aluminium smelters is crucial for aligning with a 1.5°C climate scenario.

The global aluminium industry contributes approximately 1.1 billion tonnes of CO₂ equivalent annually, accounting for about 2% of worldwide anthropogenic emissions.

Primary aluminium production accounts for 78% of global aluminium value chain emissions.

The emissions intensity of primary aluminium production has been declining since 2019, indicating improved efficiency and cleaner production methods.

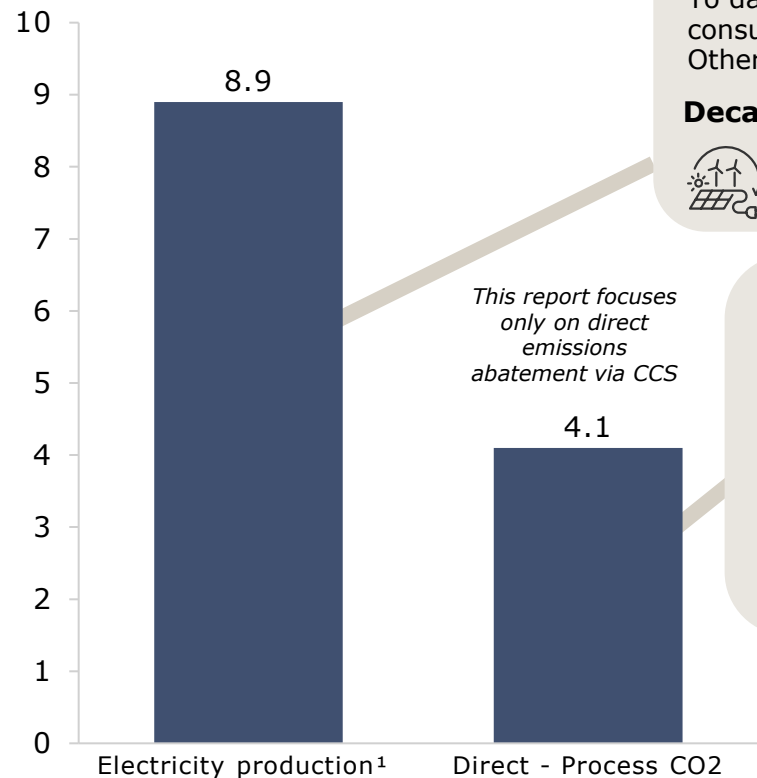
Achieving alignment with a 1.5°C scenario necessitates a further 95% cut in aluminium value chain emissions.

Source: Emissions estimates from IAI and World Economic Forum

Carbon Capture and Storage (CCS) is a significant potential lever to reduce direct and indirect emissions from primary aluminium production

GHG INTENSITY PER TONNE OF PRIMARY ALUMINIUM (2023)

Tonnes CO₂e/tonne primary aluminium
(cradle to gate world average)



ELECTRICITY PRODUCTION

To date the greatest focus for aluminium decarbonisation has been on reducing indirect emissions from electricity consumption. Here Carbon Capture and Storage (CCS) has potential to reduce emissions on power generation. Other levers include the use of other forms of renewable energy and improvements in potline energy efficiency.

Decarbonisation levers



Zero carbon electricity



Energy efficiency



CCS

DIRECT EMISSIONS AT SMELTER

To achieve the last mile of decarbonisation, reduction of direct emissions is required. A key source of direct emissions is from carbon anode consumption in the electrolysis cells of a smelter potline, as well as other process emissions. CCS is a means by which to reduce process emissions from smelter potlines, in addition to other methods such as fuel switching or electrification. Inert anodes and aluminium chloride-based electrolysis with carbon looping also represent alternative methods of decarbonisation.

Decarbonisation levers



Inert anodes



Fuel switching / electrification



Aluminium chloride-based electrolysis with carbon looping



CCS

Source: IAI, Direct – Process CO₂ includes PFC emissions at smelter of ~0.8tCO₂e/tonne, process CO₂ of ~1.6tCO₂e/tonne and thermal energy emissions 1.7tCO₂e/tonne. Includes upstream emissions such as from refining and mining.

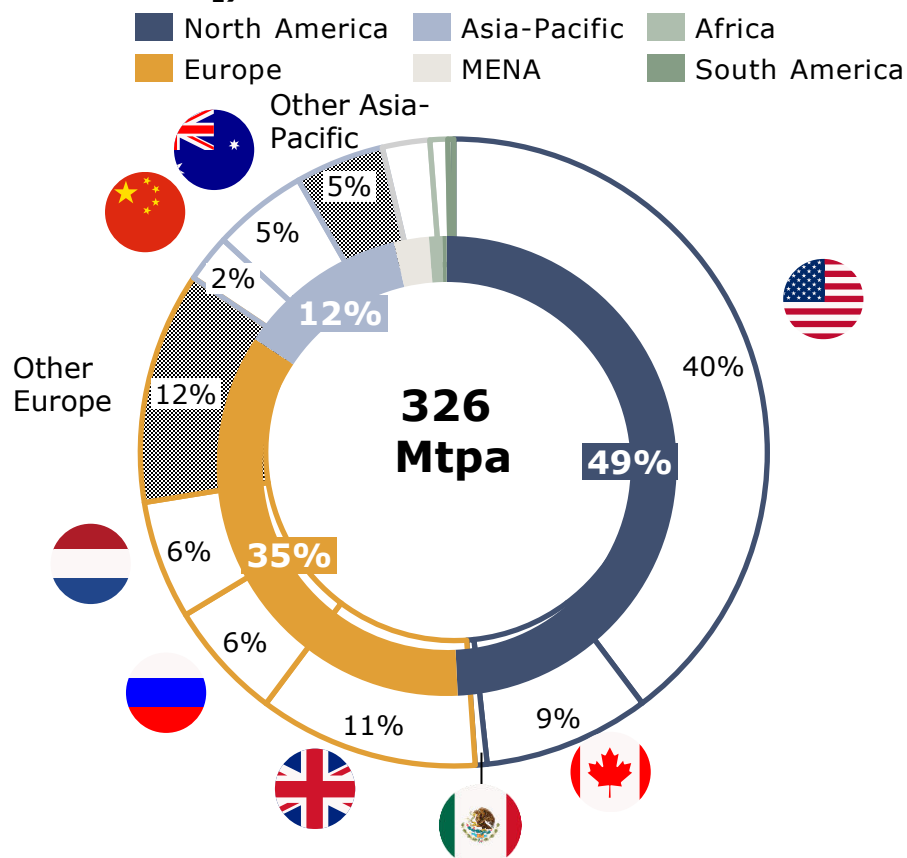
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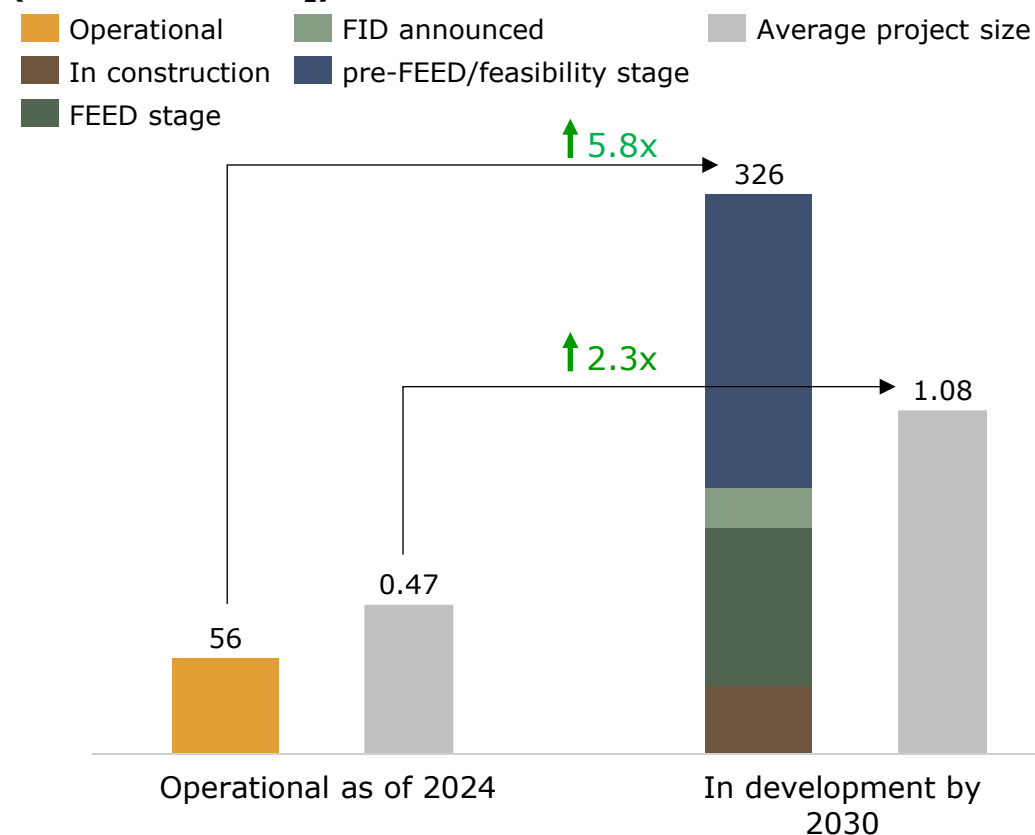
CCS MARKET OVERVIEW

North America and Europe anticipated to be primary regions driving carbon capture advancements worldwide, with interest growing in MENA & Asia

ANNOUNCED REGIONAL CAPTURE CAPACITY BY 2030 (MILLION TPA CO₂)



ANNOUNCED CAPACITY OF GLOBAL CO₂ CAPTURE FACILITIES (MILLION TPA CO₂)



Notes: The displayed data are estimates from publicly available open-source databases. MENA = Middle East and North Africa

CCS STATE OF PLAY IN ALUMINIUM SECTOR

CCS is already being piloted at primary smelters, mostly in Europe and GCC

Smelter	Owner	Partners	Country	Status	Value chain stage	Technology	Timing	Potential Emission Abatement
Hydro Aluminium				Plans for Pilot plant	Potline	Electro-Swing Adsorption	Aim: 2030	N/A
Various sites in Europe	 	 	 	Research, pilots	Potline	Not decided yet	2025-2030	N/A
Aluminium Dunkerque		 		Pilot plant	Potline	Solvent	Industrial deployment by 2028	N/A
Australia's CSIRO				Research	Potline	Solvent	No timelines announced	N/A
Emirates Global Aluminium (EGA)				Pilot plant	Power Generation	Not decided yet	No timelines announced	N/A
Alba				Pilot plant	Power Generation	Not decided yet	No timelines announced	~0.5-1 mtpa

Notes: EGA also looking into CCUS on broader smelting process

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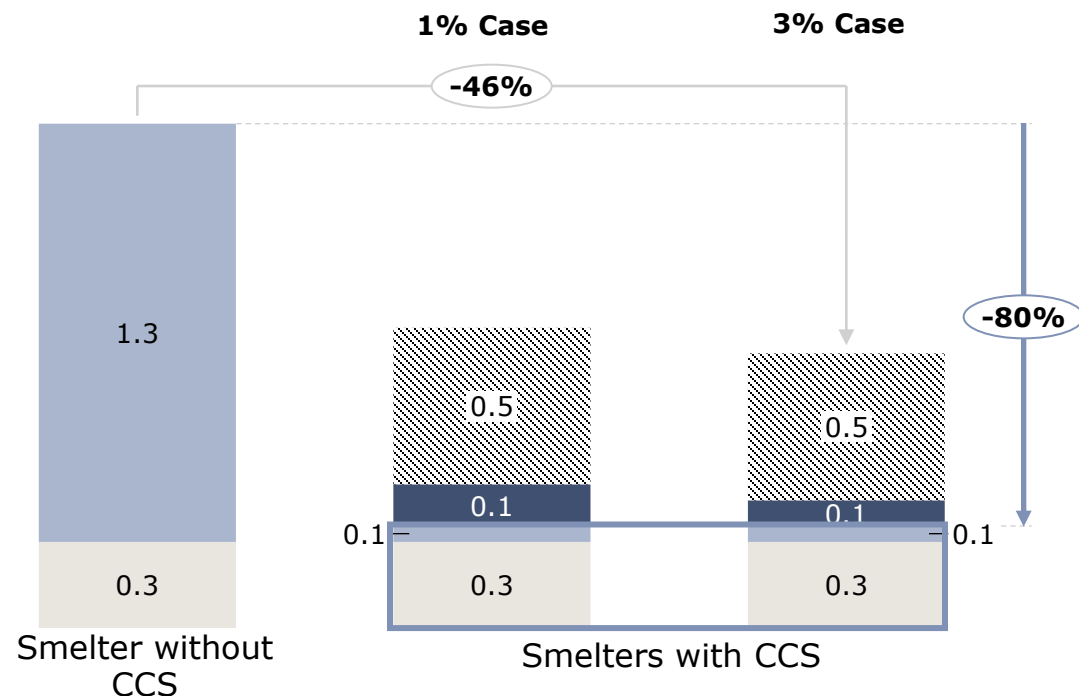
CCS AS ENABLER OF SMELTER DECARBONISATION

CCS can enable a large reduction in smelter direct emissions, but it may need to be applied elsewhere in the value chain to result in “green” aluminium

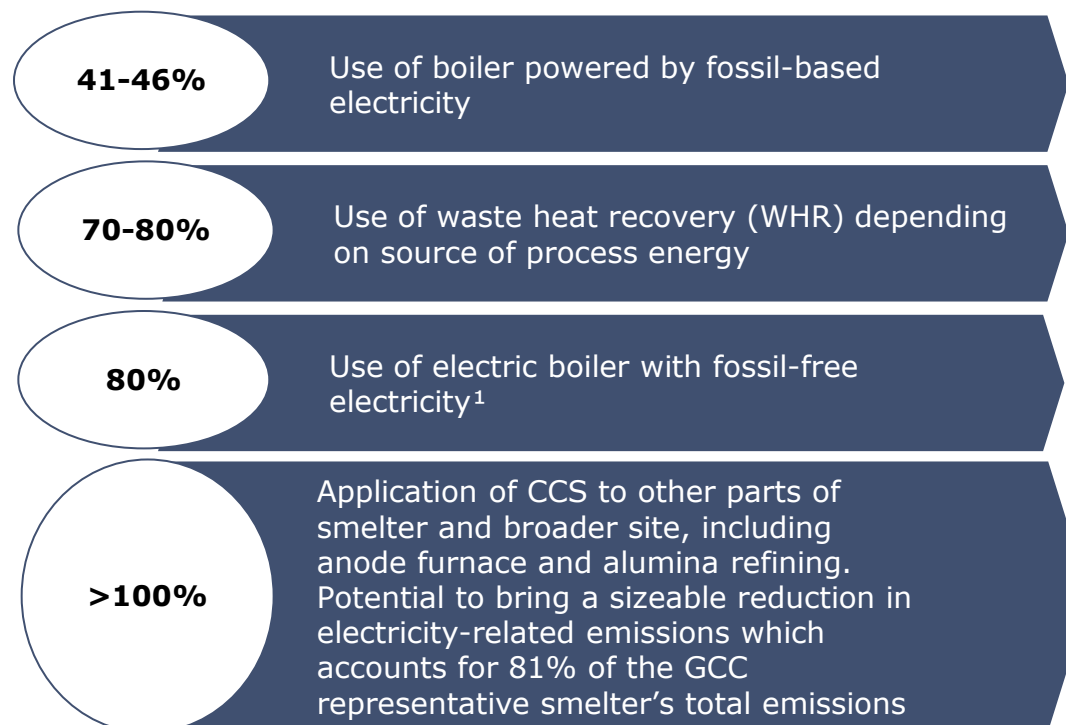
DIRECT EMISSIONS FROM THE SMELTER WITH / WITHOUT CCS

Tonnes CO₂ / tonne primary aluminium (direct emissions only)

 Additional Emissions to power CCS - Using Gas Boiler
  Direct Emissions - Potline
  Emissions to power CCS - WHR
  Direct Emissions - Other



The use of CCS on potlines results in the following **reductions in direct emissions**¹:



¹ % reflect reduction in direct emissions from representative GCC smelter. In excess of 100% represents emissions reductions beyond direct emissions, such as indirect emissions. Reductions beyond direct emissions alone will be needed to meet “green” aluminium levels of ≤ 4t CO₂e/t of aluminium, which are based on lowest current achievable level at commercial scale technology.

Source: AFRY calculations for process emissions from smelting for a generic representative primary aluminium smelter in GCC. Includes PFC emissions and excludes upstream emissions (e.g. from mining/refining).

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POTENTIAL ISSUES IN APPLYING CCS TO ALUMINIUM SMELTERS

Whilst CCS on potlines is technically feasible, it is not without its challenges and further advancements and financial support are needed

CHALLENGES FOR CCS IN ALUMINIUM POTLINES

Challenge	Details	Mitigants/actions required
CO₂ concentration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CO₂ concentration levels from potlines are low at <1 volume percent (vol%). Typically carbon capture (CC) used on processes with CO₂ purity >3-4% Lower CO₂ content in the gas stream leads to higher costs as it is more difficult to extract a unit of CO₂ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Upgrading CO₂ via reduced gas flows and additional sources of CO₂, - options to do this vary by smelter and come with own challenges Collaboration with technology suppliers and aluminium smelters to overcome the challenges of applying CCS to potlines, beyond just CC systems themselves
High volumes and high temperature pot gas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pot gas is high in temperature at 100-160°C, and cooling is required Extremely high potline gas ("pot gas") volume rate means that the size of the CC column would be significantly larger than most of the available units by vendors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Opportunity to utilise high temperature heat, for example through Waste Heat Recovery (WHR) and heat integration Monitor and engage with emerging technologies and equipment capabilities and suppliers
CCS energy consumption	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Electricity costs are often the single largest operating expense of amine-based CC processes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potential of WHR Secure renewable energy to maximise CO₂ abatement
Impurities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Impurities can impact the effectiveness of some carbon capture technologies, including hydrogen fluoride (HF), sulphur dioxide (SO₂) and nitrogen oxides (NO_x). PFCs are not absorbed in the wet scrubbing process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Further testing of solvents for use in CC systems on smelters required
Retrofits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existing smelters will need to accommodate the additional equipment required for CCS on site, requiring space and process integration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Solutions will need to be tailored to different smelters
Access to CO₂ transport and storage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Smelters will need access to CO₂ transport and storage infrastructure – such as suitable geological formations for permanent storage, or a local liquid CO₂ offtaker for utilisation CO₂ transport and storage (T&S) networks are growing globally, but their extent and stage of development varies greatly by location, and they need to scale up considerably to meet future demand 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collaboration with CCS hubs, regulators, and policymakers is essential for economic viability Discuss options with third party T&S operators

Access available subsidies

HIGHER CO₂ CONCENTRATION IN FLUE GAS BOOSTS CAPTURE COST EFFICIENCY

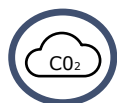
There is no simple means to upgrade CO₂, and technology is still too early stage to understand its full integration costs

POTENTIAL CHANGES



REDUCED AIRFLOWS TO INCREASE CO₂ %

- Reducing gas flows by 50% increases CO₂ concentration to 1.62 vol%; a 75% reduction raises it to 3.35 vol% but both will create additional complexity and cost to implement.¹
- Potential use of heat exchanger technology (HEX) – for example REEL's Pot Integrated Abart (PIA) technology



ADDITIONAL CO₂ SOURCES

- Use of additional CO₂ from other point sources, e.g. anode furnace, refining, or gas-fired power generation, to raise CO₂ concentration



EQUIPMENT MODIFICATIONS

- Potential savings on GTCs and SO₂ scrubbers are offset by the increased complexity of CO₂ absorbers, requiring inter-stage cooling for higher CO₂ concentrations.
- Cell upgrades to manage heat changes are expensive and involve significant redesigns.

IMPACT



IMPACT ON GAS CLEANING SYSTEMS

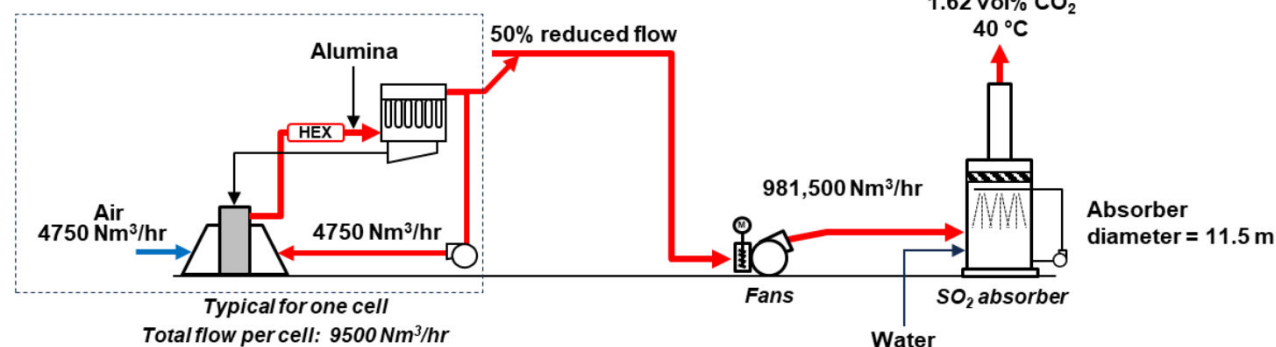
- Smaller gas volumes may push existing gas treatment centre (GTC) compartments beyond their operating limits.
- Alumina flow remains constant, adding strain to the GTC's performance.



OPERATIONAL & SAFETY CHALLENGES

- Higher gas temperatures cause roof emissions and unsafe superstructure conditions.
- Heat balance shifts in cells may require costly lining redesigns.

Case study of REEL: Pot Gas Recirculation Illustration¹



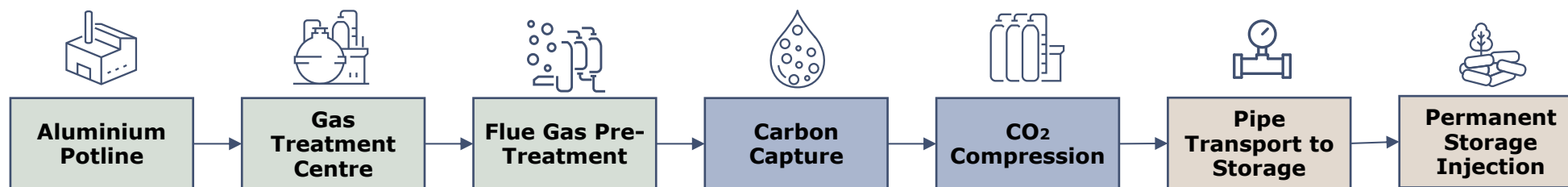
*Source: Broek, Stephan, and Versteeg, Geert, "Towards Carbon Neutral Primary Aluminium Smelting via Carbon Dioxide (CO₂) Capture" from TRAVAUX 52, Proceedings of the 41st International ICSOBA Conference, Dubai, 5 - 9 November 2023. Notes: AFRY presents REEL as an example of one possible means of upgrading CO₂ gas for capture to a higher CO₂%, it does not represent an endorsement by AFRY of this technology or approach

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To assess the techno-economic feasibility of CCS on a potline, the IRR and NPV of a representative existing GCC smelter with/without CCS was calculated

KEY COST ASSUMPTIONS IN TECHNO-ECONOMIC MODELLING



Aluminium production costs	Capture costs	CO2 transport & storage costs
<p>Estimated operating costs of representative 400,000 tpy primary aluminium smelter in GCC</p> <p>Retrofit to existing smelter¹</p> <p>Gas-fired power generation</p> <p>2023 basis</p>	<p>Capture costs estimated by AFRY engineers for 2 scenarios – 1% and 3% vol. CO₂ based on retrofit</p> <p>A 90% capture rate is the industry standard for amine-based carbon capture, balancing feasibility and cost²</p> <div style="border: 1px dashed black; padding: 5px; margin-top: 10px;"> <p>Flue gas upgrading costs variable by smelter</p> <p>Estimate out of scope</p> </div>	<p>Representative costs assumptions for CO₂ Transport & Storage ("T&S")</p> <p>Assumed CO₂ T&S contracted out to a third party</p> <p>Storage on a permanent basis</p>

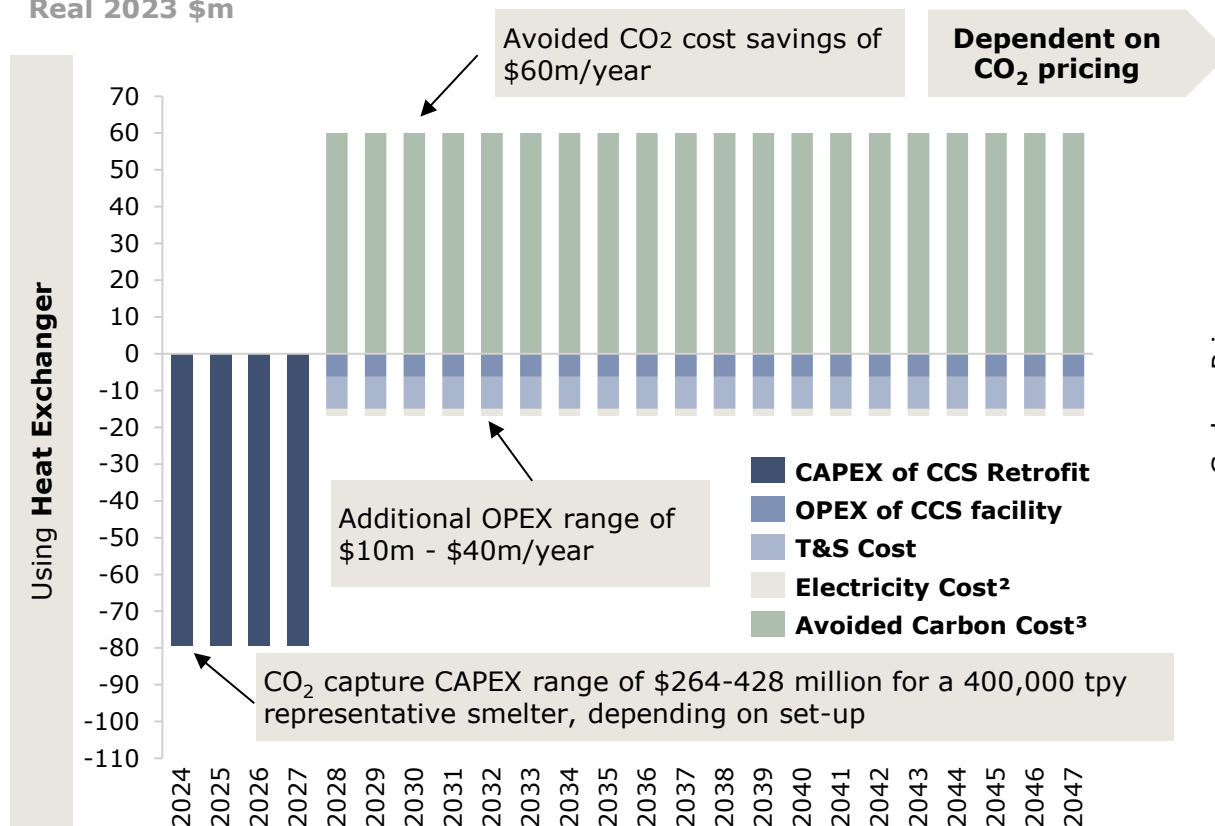
¹ Assumes no space or energy sourcing constraints. ² Assumes separately 91% availability of CC unit accounting for regular maintenance and unexpected downtime.

EXTENSION OF CARBON PRICING IS KEY DRIVER FOR CCS BUSINESS CASE

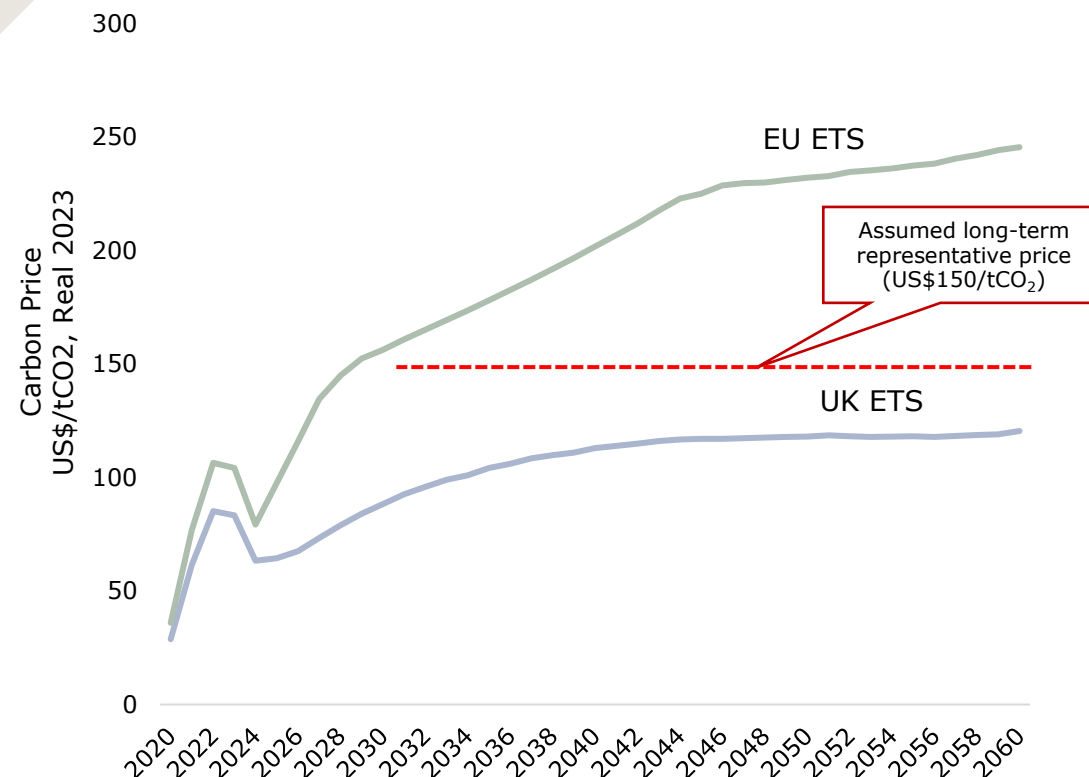
The avoided carbon cost is the main benefit of retrofitting a smelter with CCS, with significant CAPEX and OPEX over the life of the asset

EXAMPLE OF CASHFLOW ANALYSIS FOR CCS RETROFIT¹

Real 2023 \$m



EUROPEAN CARBON PRICE PROJECTIONS (\$/tCO₂, REAL 2023)

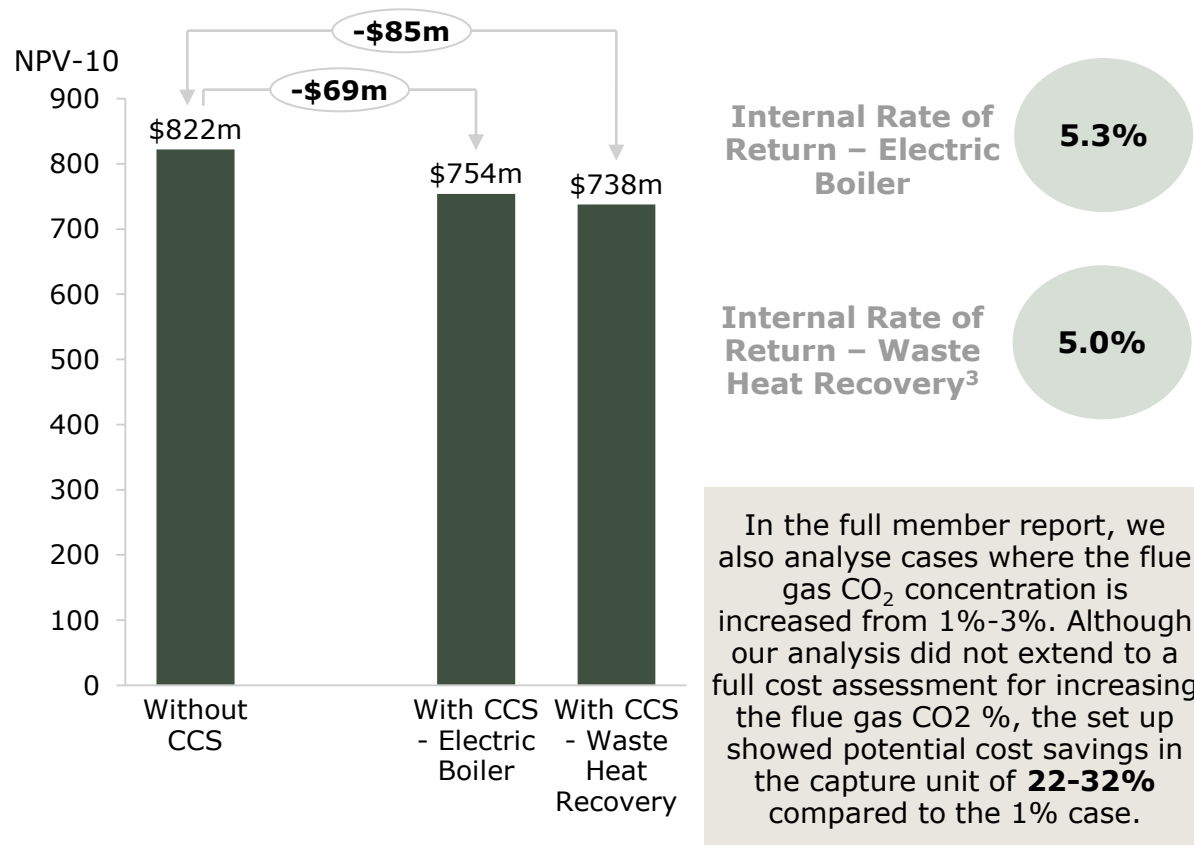


Note: 1) We are showing the cashflow of the difference between the cases without and with CCS for 3% CO₂ excluding costs associated with upgrading CO₂. 2) Does not include extra CAPEX for dedicated renewable energy sources (RES) or additional RES power procurement costs which may arise 3) Avoided Carbon Cost is a positive term as it shows the avoided carbon cost related to the emissions capture with the CCS.

HIGHER CO₂ CONCENTRATION IN FLUE GAS BOOSTS CAPTURE COST EFFICIENCY

Assuming carbon price of \$150/t, 1% cases show a negative NPV10 with an IRR of ~5% showing that CO₂ price is insufficient incentive without support

NET PRESENT VALUE DIFFERENCE: 1% CO₂ CONCENTRATION^{1 2}



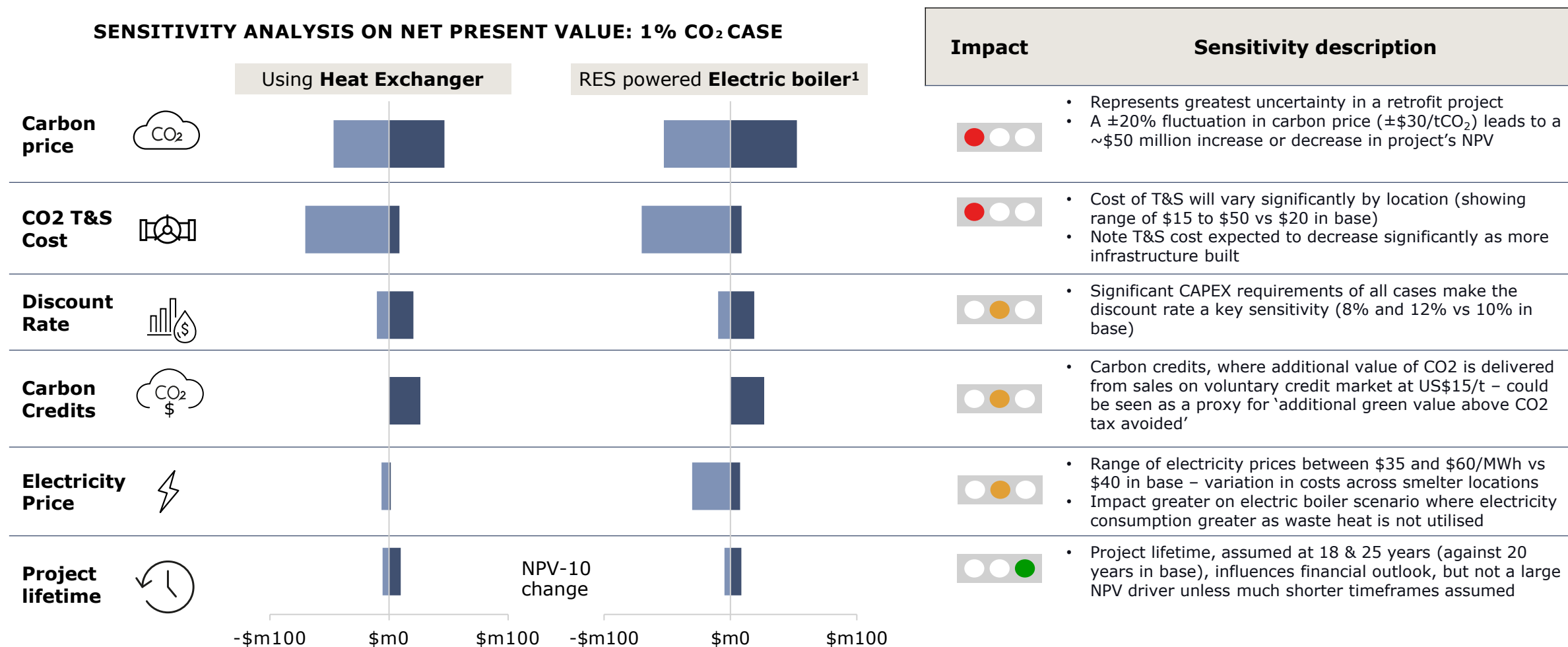
COMMENTARY

- Assuming a CO₂ price of \$150/tCO₂ the IRR of the CCS investment is <10% i.e. the NPV10 of the project is negative.
- The **breakeven CO₂ price** in the set-ups with 1% CO₂ concentration of flue gas is always higher than \$150/t
 - \$181/t for the lowest cost case considered – electric boiler with electricity for boiler and capture supplied by renewables; and
 - \$205/t for the highest cost case considered - waste heat recovery (WHR) system, with electricity for capture supplied by gas.
- Other cases with 1% CO₂ concentration typically fell between these two set-ups, but noting that using an electric boiler powered with gas had a significant detrimental effect on the project by dramatically lowering the CO₂ benefit (see slide 14)
- The cases considered and assumptions made are subject to significant uncertainty at this stage. The following slide analysis some of the key uncertainties and their impact on the project NPV.

Notes: 1) We have not taken into account in this analysis the CAPEX of the smelter itself as this would be a retrofit. 2) All monetary units are in real 2023 terms; 3) Project examined multiple approaches to generating heat for CO₂ capture process including new boiler and technologies to recover waste heat from the potline process.

OTHER KEY DRIVERS OF CCS BUSINESS CASE

The biggest drivers reviewed which could affect the NPV of the smelter are the carbon price and the CO₂ T&S cost



Notes: 1) Does not include extra CAPEX for dedicated RES or additional RES power procurement costs over and above the assumed market power price which may arise

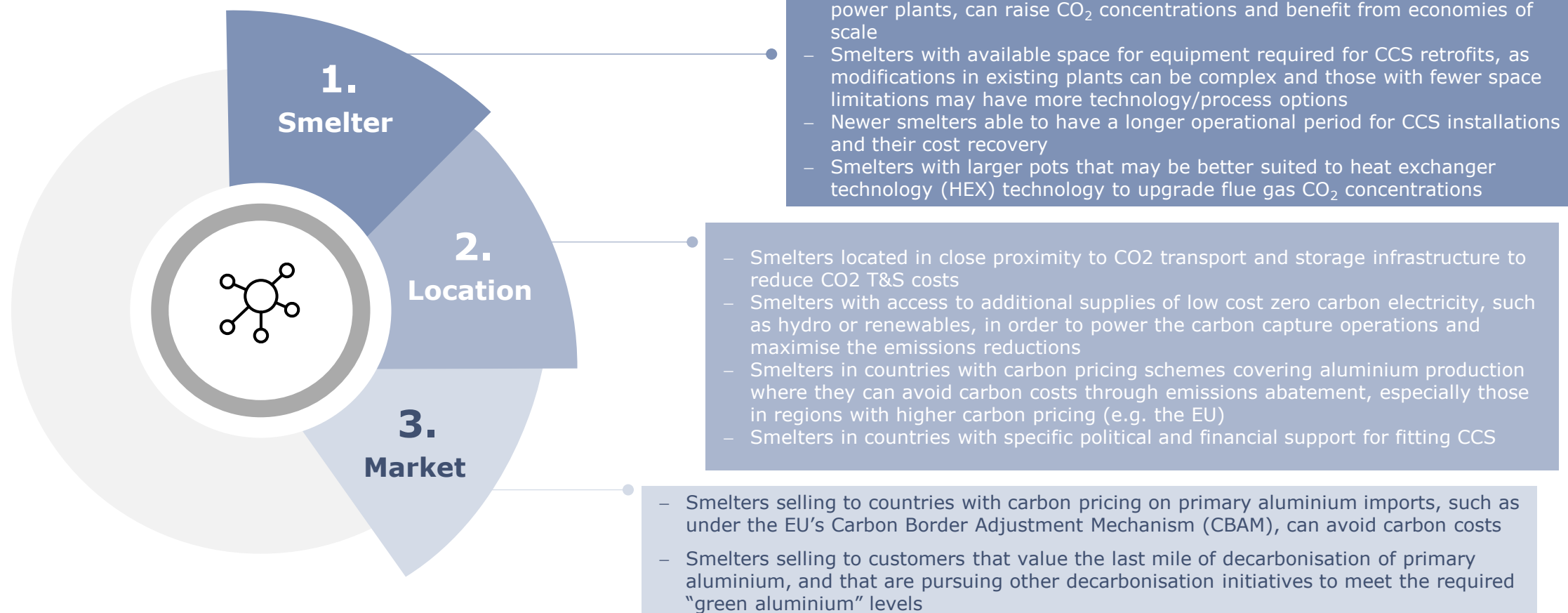
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OPPORTUNITIES FOR CCS ON SPECIFIC POTLINES WILL BE SITE DEPENDENT

Smelter-specific characteristics including policy setting, site characteristics and access to CO₂ infrastructure will drive the individual opportunity

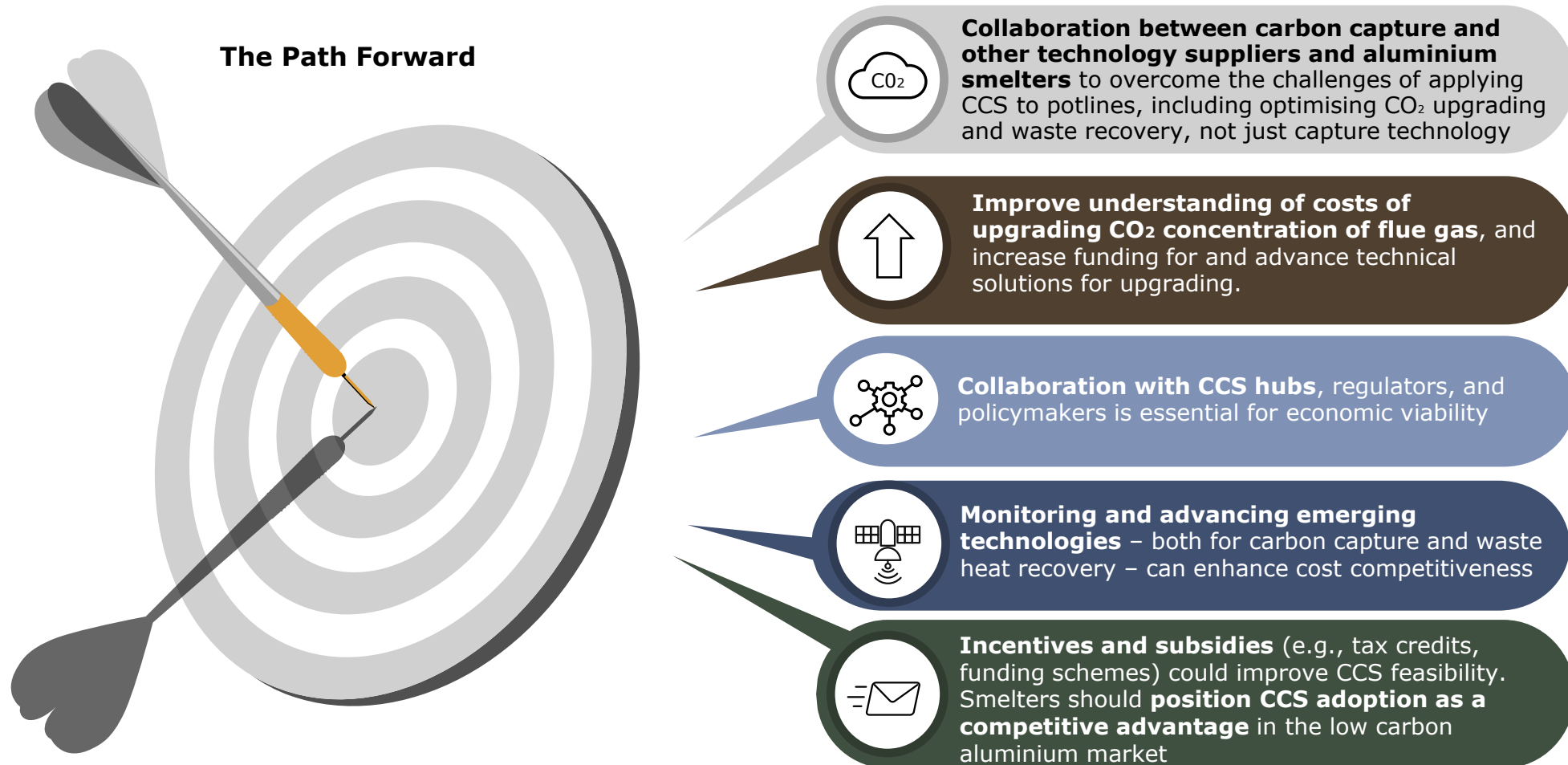
SMELTER CCS USE CASE: SITE OPPORTUNITY DRIVERS



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CCS is a last-mile decarbonisation tool, requiring policy support, technology advancements, and incentives to enhance feasibility and competitiveness



KEY CONCLUSIONS

CCS for aluminium potlines is technically feasible but challenges remain to achieve technical and economic viability and widespread adoption



Technical Viability

- CCS technology is rapidly advancing with growing global adoption across many industries.
- In the primary aluminium industry to date, the focus has been initially on indirect emissions, as the main source of emissions. However, in order to achieve the “last mile” of decarbonisation, primary aluminium smelters need to reduce direct emissions from potlines.
- There is increasing interest from aluminium smelters to fit CCS, with a range of potentially applicable technologies for potlines, although many are only at pilot stage.
- CCS retrofits to existing smelters are a technically feasible means to decarbonise direct emissions from smelters, subject to space and other constraints.
- Challenges remain for the application of CCS technology to smelters, meaning that further technical research and testing and modifications to smelters are still required before widespread commercialisation of CCS in smelters occurs.



Challenges

- CCS units significantly increase energy consumption and operational expenses.
- Dilute CO₂ emissions from smelting processes mean that strategies to increase the flue gas CO₂ portion can reduce capture costs. However, reduced gas flows pose operational/safety challenges, particularly if cell re-design required.
- Utilising waste heat could potentially reduce the energy costs of carbon capture, vis-a-vis reliance on more conventional electric boilers.
- Flue gas containing impurities require pre-treatment, adding complexity and costs to CCS.
- Amine-CCS technology whilst in use today needs adapting to aluminium, for example, further testing to optimise solvent selection is required.
- Carbon capture and any additional equipment (such as heat exchangers for heat recovery) have a large equipment footprint that some smelters may struggle to accommodate.
- Limited infrastructure for CO₂ transport and storage necessitates collaboration with emerging CO₂ hubs to overcome logistical barriers.

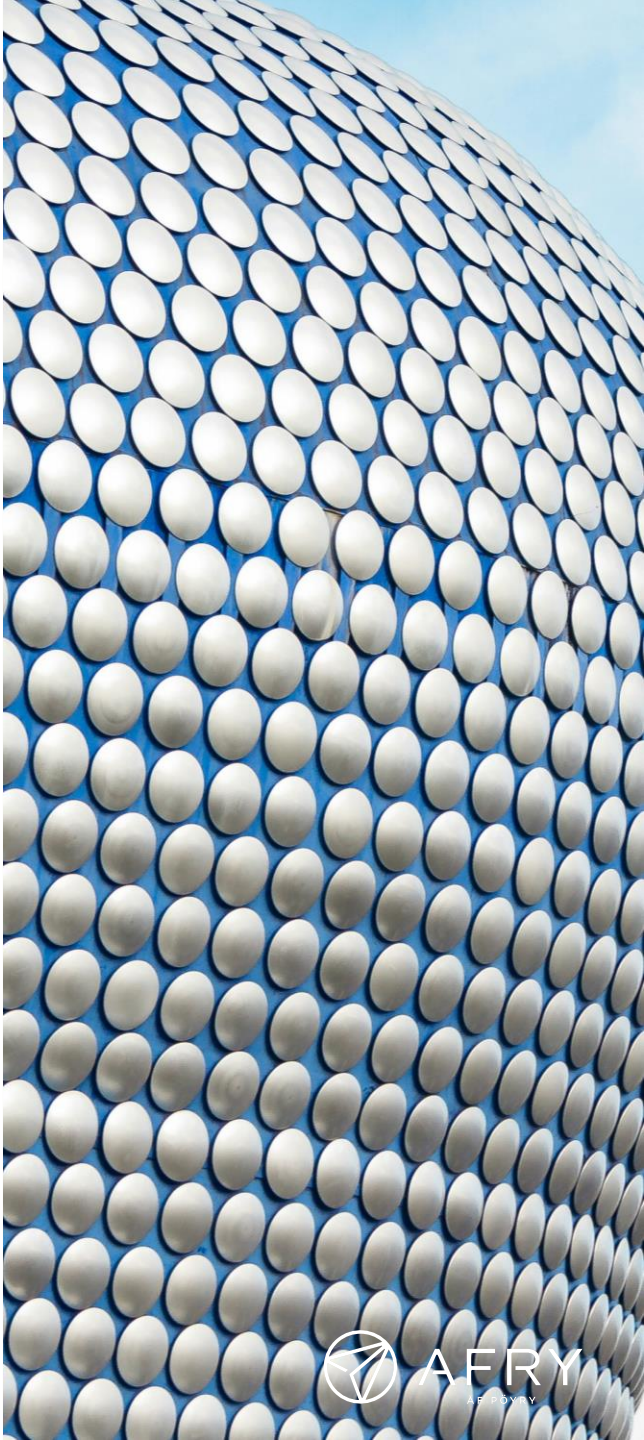


Economic Viability

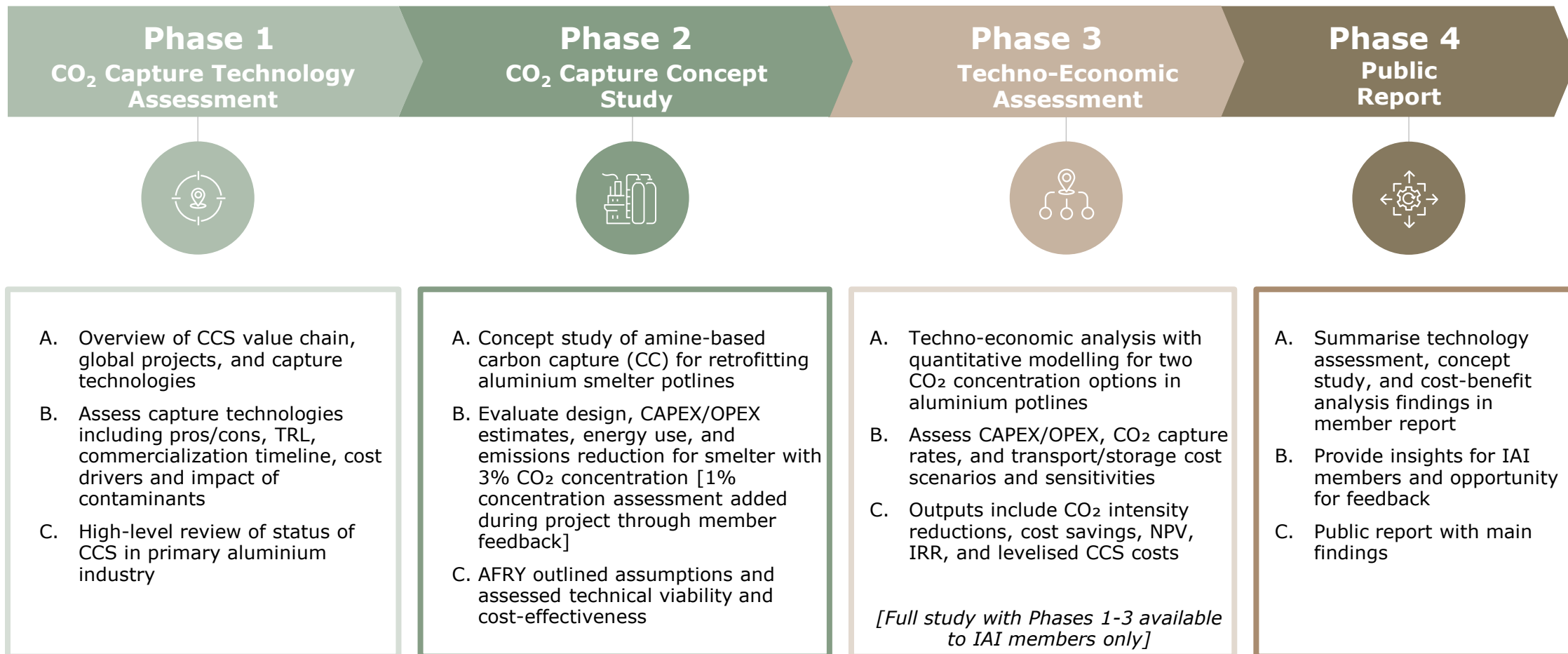
- CCS on potlines reduces CO₂ emissions but requires significant CAPEX and OPEX, making carbon pricing the key economic driver for adoption. A minimum breakeven CO₂ price of **\$180 and \$205/tCO₂** is required for a positive NPV, if other subsidy or revenues remain limited.
- Elevating flue-gas CO₂ concentrations can **reduce capture costs by 22-32%**, potentially enhancing economic feasibility. This must be balanced against additional smelter costs for elevating CO₂ concentrations which will vary by site and will need further investigation as new technology solutions are developed.
- Smelters operating in regions with established carbon pricing or facing significant new CO₂ costs stand to gain most from implementing CCS.
- Extra revenue may come through premiums for low carbon aluminium, although CCS on potlines alone may not be sufficient to get to low carbon aluminium benchmarks (e.g. <4tCO₂e/t Al).
- Adding CCUS to other co-located parts of the value chain could improve economic viability – e.g. refining, anode furnace, and captive power.

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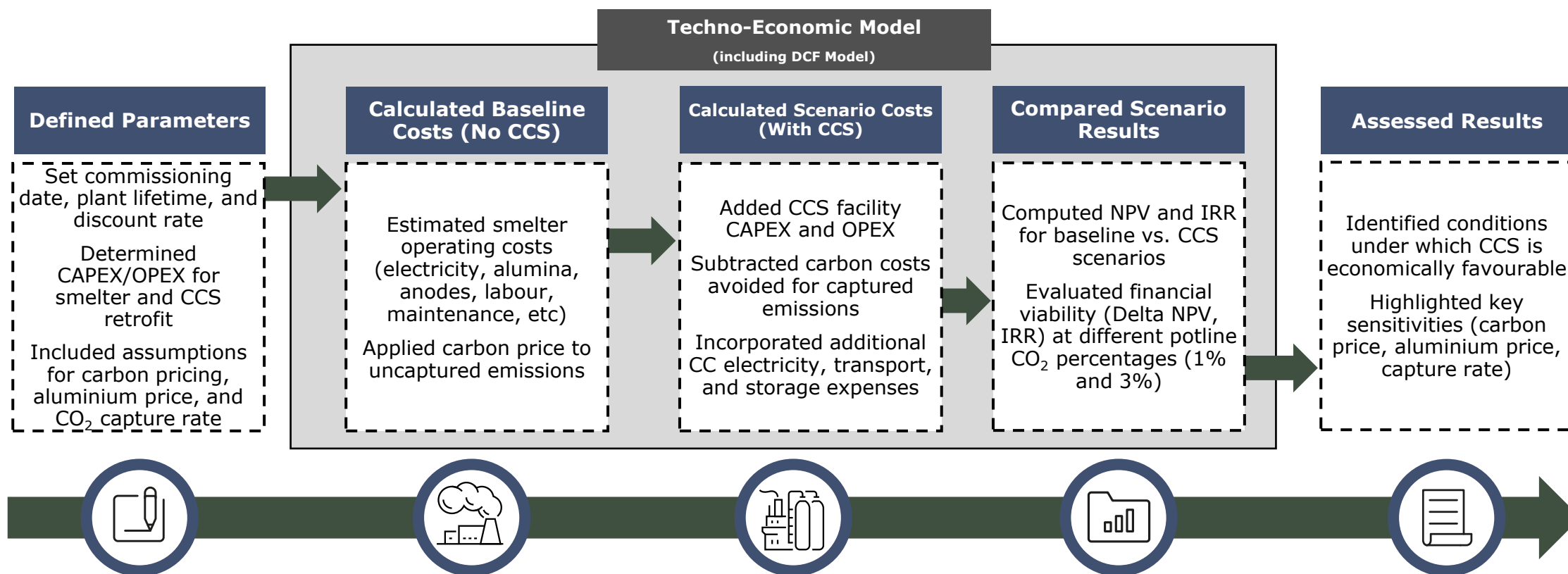


International Aluminium Institute (IAI) commissioned AFRY to undertake phased techno-economic analysis of CCS on aluminium smelter potlines



AFRY assessed CCS retrofitting viability by comparing it to a baseline smelter scenario using a DCF model with set assumptions and costs

We defined the parameters for input into the techno-economic model, a simplified discounted cashflow (DCF) model¹, calculating costs with and without CCS for the representative GCC smelter, comparing the scenarios and assessing the results of these calculations.



¹ Pre-tax basis

AFRY AT A GLANCE

AFRY is a global engineering and advisory company offering expertise across CCUS and metals and mining

AFRY AT A GLANCE

EMPLOYEES GLOBALLY

~ 19,000

NET SALES

€ 2.1 bn

NUMBER OF COUNTRIES
WITH OFFICES

> 50

NUMBER OF COUNTRIES
WITH PROJECTS

> 100

AFRY CORE EXPERTISE



Engineering



Design



Digitalisation



Management Consulting

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RELEVANT AFRY EXPERTISE



Energy



Mining and Metals



Carbon removals



Power-to-X – CCUS/H2

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Assessment of techno-economic feasibility of CCS on aluminium potlines for IAI

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This report represents a summary of an independent report by AFRY Management Consulting (UK) Ltd.

Special thanks for their invaluable contribution to the work to:

- **The International Aluminium Institute (IAI) and its members**
- **Stephan Broek – President, Kensington Technology Inc.**