



# Commercial Inflection Point Scale

Elemental’s Commercial Inflection Point (CIP) scale is a framework used to indicate a technology’s degree of commercial readiness. The CIP scale is designed to capture the major milestones to bring a technology from idea to mass market adoption. The scale is numbered 1 to 8, with 8 being the most commercially mature.

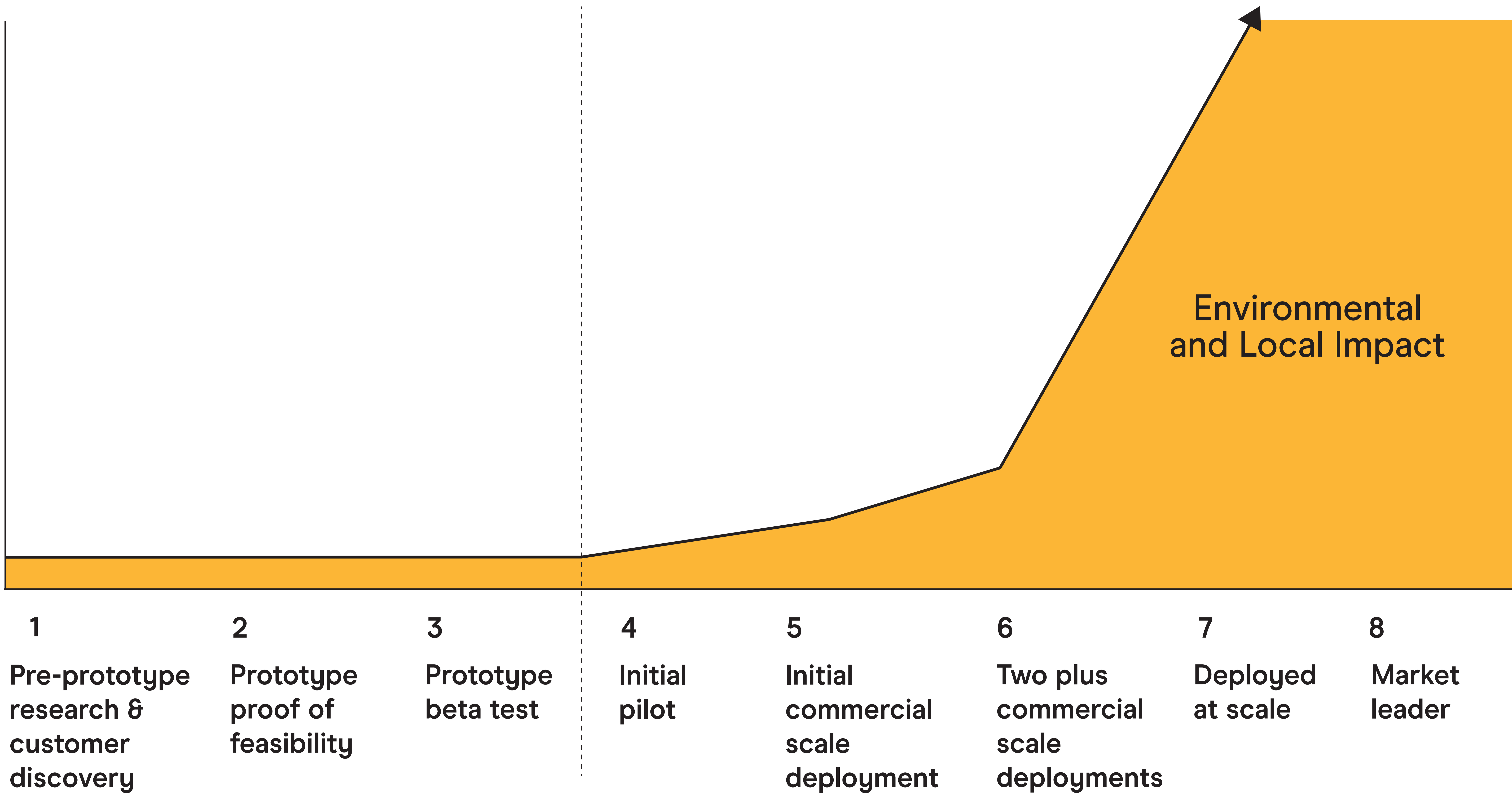
Commercial Inflection Point (CIP)	Description
1. Pre-Prototype / Research	Solution is in the early stages of ideation and development. Commercial applications have been identified and technology solutions are being explored. Founders are developing ideas for local impact.
2. Prototype Proof of Feasibility	Solution components and processes are being designed and tested in a lab setting. Company is confirming the technology viability of the prototype. Founders have a clear sightline to local impact if their company scales but may be at different stages of setting values and culture.
3. Prototype Beta Test	Solution prototype is being tested with a small potential customer base before being released to real world settings. Company is ready to deploy solutions for demonstration in an operational environment, but commercial and operational drivers have yet to be tested in the field. Company is engaging with local stakeholders to better understand the needs and opportunities in the places they want to deploy.
4. Initial Pilot	Solution is deployed in small-scale pilots in a real-world setting. Company is using early technical and commercial results to drive interest for first commercial deployment and inform further product and market development. Company is designing and implementing workforce development strategies, engaging local partners, and exploring education or other stakeholder engagement activities.
5. Initial Commercial-Scale Deployment	Solution is deployed in a commercial-scale project with a customer or partner for the first time. Company is using results to prove viability in real world settings and generate additional commercial traction. Company is continuing to strengthen team culture, develop local partnerships, and evaluate outcomes.
6. Two+ Commercial Scale Deployments	Solution is deployed at the commercial scale with at least two paying customers. Company is using technical and financial results to further inform growth plans in terms of team/board composition, local impact, product, market, and sales strategy.
7. Deployed at Scale	Solution is deployed at commercial scale with a repeatable business model in a significant number of markets or with a significant number of customers. The business is continuing to expand, grow sales and revenue, and is likely gaining market share—while continuing to deliver measurable environmental and economic impact.
8. Market Leader	Solution is delivering significant value to customers. The sales process is repeatable with predictable revenue in multiple customer segments and/or multiple markets. The solution is gaining market share and the company is broadening its product offerings and support services. An engine to generate new jobs and measurable environmental and economic benefits has been created.

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Created by Elemental Impact



Revenue



Technology Readiness Level (TRL)



The Commercial Inflection Point Scale (CIP) visualized in relation to the Technology Readiness Level (TRL). The graph illustrates the correlation between revenue and environmental impact as a company progresses along the scale.

Our novel Commercial Inflection Point (CIP) scale captures the major milestones from ideation to mass market adoption.

By expanding the traditional measuring stick for company growth, the CIP scale 1) helps entrepreneurs navigate commercialization, and 2) helps investors successfully invest before, through, and after the commercialization gap in funding. This extended scale, capturing something closer to the true journey of a climate startup, gives entrepreneurs and investors a common language that helps unlock funding and accelerate impact.

The CIP scale is a blend of commercial and technical milestones and is applicable for hardware and software companies.