

# Summary of Interim Report for the Regional Assessment of Offshore Wind Development in Nova Scotia

In April 2022, the Minister of Environment and Climate Change announced a decision to undertake a [Regional Assessment of Offshore Wind Development in Newfoundland and Labrador and Nova Scotia](#). The Committee for the [Regional Assessment of Offshore Wind Development in Nova Scotia](#) (the Committee) was established in March 2023 to carry out the assessment, and now releases its preliminary findings in this Interim Report. The Committee's findings include:

- a summary of the research conducted to date;
- a description of the engagement undertaken to complete this report;
- maps showing proposed potential future development areas; and
- the process used to identify and select these areas.

The Committee has also provided early non-spatial recommendations<sup>1</sup> in advance of their Final Report.

To produce the Interim Report, the Committee drew on research and expertise from Advisory Groups, government departments and agencies, fishing groups, Indigenous leadership and communities, non-governmental organizations, offshore wind developers and other participants. Critical to this exercise was the input and feedback received through the Committee's engagement activities from September 2023 to January 2024. These included open house events and meetings which focused on introducing the regional assessment process, providing information and answering questions, and gathering input on future potential areas for offshore wind development in the study area.

The Interim Report identifies six areas for potential future offshore wind development:

- Sydney Bight
- Canso Bank
- Middle Bank
- Sable Island Bank
- Emerald Bank
- Eastern Shore

The Committee also provided early recommendations around some key areas:

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<sup>1</sup> Non-spatial recommendations refer to recommendations related to action plans and processes as opposed to spatial maps or geography.

1. Creation of a Nova Scotia Offshore Wind Collaborative Research Initiative to:
  - identify research programs related to the potential development of Nova Scotia's offshore wind industry;
  - prioritize research and identify pathways to funding;
  - establish research timelines; and
  - use results to inform approval processes.
2. Avoid exempting proposed projects from the impact assessment process until the effects of offshore wind development on marine ecosystems and the fishing industry are better understood.
3. Develop a governance strategy and framework for compensation and fisheries co-existence.

The next steps for the Regional Assessment involve a second engagement program in spring 2024, featuring community open house events and meetings to discuss specific subjects including:

- discussions of the six potential development areas proposed in the Interim Report;
- potential effects of offshore wind development activities—positive and adverse, including [cumulative effects](#); and
- mitigation measures to avoid or reduce potential adverse effects and create and maximize potential positive effects.

Information gathered during this second phase will be considered in the Draft Final Report on the Regional Assessment of Offshore Wind Development in Nova Scotia. The draft report will be posted to the Regional Assessment Registry site in September 2024, for a 60-day public comment period. The Committee will review all comments received, complete revisions to the draft report, and produce a Final Report on the Regional Assessment of Offshore Wind Development in Nova Scotia. The final report will be submitted to Canada's Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Minister of Energy and Natural Resources, and Nova Scotia's Minister of Natural Resources and Renewables in January 2025 and will also be posted to the Regional Assessment Registry site.