

Regional Assessment of Offshore Wind Development in Nova Scotia

Fisheries Participation Plan

UPDATED: August 31, 2024

Contents

1.0	Introduction.....	3
1.1	Engagement Objectives	3
1.2	Regional Assessment Background.....	3
2.0	Identification of Fisheries Participants.....	4
2.1	Advisory Groups.....	4
3.0	Engagement Planning.....	5
3.1	Communications to Participants	5
3.1.1	Provincial and Federal Agencies	5
3.2	Engagement Approach.....	6
3.2.1	General Engagement Sessions	7
3.2.2	Fishing Organizations and the Fishing Industry	7
3.2.3	Fisheries and Other Ocean Users Advisory Group	7
3.2.4	Provincial and Federal Agencies	7
3.2	Timing of Engagement	8
3.3	Engagement Topics	8
4	Confidentiality	8
	Appendix A: Key Links	9
	Appendix B: Fisheries and Other Ocean Uses Advisory Group.....	10
	Appendix C: Roster for Fisheries and Other Ocean Uses Advisory Groups.....	11
	Appendix D: Fisheries Engagement Activities and Tracking Log	13

Please note that the Committee's working language is English.

This Participation Plan is available in French upon request

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1.0 Introduction

Under the conditions of the Committee’s Agreement and the Terms of Reference (TOR), the Committee has prepared this Fisheries Participation Plan (FPP; the Plan) to outline its approach for, and to track, specific engagement opportunities with fishers, fisheries associations and the fishing industry to engage in the conduct of the Regional Assessment for Offshore Wind Development in Nova Scotia (RA).

There are three participation plans that have been developed for this RA. In addition to the Public and Stakeholder Participation Plan, the Committee has also developed:

1. Indigenous Participation Plan
2. Public and Stakeholder Participation Plan

All three plans are posted to the Canadian Impact Assessment Registry (the Registry). Additional information on the Committee operational procedures and the confidentiality procedure is complementary to all three participation plans and are available on the RA Registry page:

<https://www.iaac-aeic.gc.ca/050/evaluations/proj/83514>.

Links relevant to the information provided in this Plan are provided in Appendix A.

1.1 Engagement Objectives

The overall objective of engagement during the RA is to collect information, including Community knowledge and scientific information from Indigenous and non-Indigenous fishers, fisheries organizations and the fishing industry that will inform the Committee’s analysis and recommendations for the RA.

To facilitate this overall objective the Committee will strive to:

- Encourage fishers, fisheries organizations and the fishing industry to actively participate in the RA;
- Identify various opportunities for participation in the RA for fishing related groups; and
- Establish an open and constructive dialogue with fishers, fisheries organizations and the fishing industry.

1.2 Regional Assessment Background

On April 5, 2022, the Minister of Environment and Climate Change (the Minister) announced that a Regional Assessment of Offshore Wind Development in Nova Scotia would be carried out under the *Impact Assessment Act (IAA)* to help inform future project-specific federal impact assessments for offshore wind projects in these areas. Early planning included an engagement program conducted in the summer and fall of 2022 to provide information on the regional assessment process and to gather feedback to inform the development of a draft Agreement and TOR. The draft Agreement and TOR underwent a public review and comment period in October/November 2022 and final versions were posted to the Registry when the RA was announced in March 2023.

A five-member, independent Committee was established pursuant to subsection 93(1) of the *IAA*. The Committee will conduct the RA in accordance with the *IAA*, the Agreement, and the TOR. A Secretariat

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Fisheries Participation Plan
 UPDATED: August 31, 2024

was also established to provide administrative and technical support to the Committee during the conduct of the RA.

2.0 Identification of Fisheries Participants

During the planning phase, the Agency undertook a widespread exercise to develop comprehensive stakeholder lists; one for government stakeholders (federal and provincial agencies), and one for non-government stakeholders including those who identified as fishers and/or belonging to any interested fisheries organizations or the fishing industry. This exercise involved reaching out to various federal and provincial government departments, and other organizations, such as the Canada Nova Scotia Offshore Petroleum Board, to develop distribution lists of fishers and fishing associations. Through outreach emails and engagement sessions completed during the planning phase, all participants were encouraged to continue to participate and to inform any additional groups or individuals they thought may be interested.

The Agency also undertook a media campaign using radio and social media advertising to raise awareness of a regional assessment planning phase. The contact list has grown from these efforts, and the Committee and its Secretariat will continue to add to the list as the RA progresses. Anyone wishing to be added to the Contact List to receive regular updates and information related to the RA, please contact: OffshoreWindNS-EolienneExtracotiereNE@iaac-aeic.gc.ca.

2.1 Advisory Groups

The Agency also initiated a preliminary call for interest, in February 2023, for individuals with expertise in one or more fields related to the RA to indicate their interest in participating on one or more Advisory Groups during the conduct of the RA. Responses to this call for interest were used to further identify organizations or individuals interested in participating in the RA. The Advisory Groups are:

- Indigenous Knowledge Advisory Group
- Scientific and Community Knowledge Advisory Group
- Fisheries and Other Ocean Uses Advisory Group

A description of the Fisheries Advisory Group is provided in Appendix B. The purpose of the Advisory Groups is to enable the Committee to bring together multiple subject matter experts with different perspectives to discuss specific topics of interest (e.g., marine birds, fisheries, marine mammals). These discussions will be more focused and comprehensive than general engagement approaches. The Committee will seek assistance from Advisory Groups to:

- identify, provide, and support the use of Indigenous knowledge, Community knowledge, and scientific information in the conduct of the RA, as appropriate; and,
- identify and evaluate information and knowledge gaps and recommend approaches to address these gaps.

Expressions of Interest for Advisory Groups will be accepted from individuals throughout the conduct of the RA. An Expression of Interest Form is posted on the Registry site and a link is provided at the end of

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Fisheries Participation Plan
 UPDATED: August 31, 2024

this document in Appendix A. An updated list of Advisory Group members for the Fisheries and Other Ocean Uses Advisory Group is provided in Appendix B.

3.0 Engagement Planning

3.1 Communications to Participants

Engagement will be with individual fishers, fisheries organizations and the fishing industry that have commercial fisheries information, fisheries knowledge or fisheries interests relevant to the RA. This will include fishers, fisheries organizations, the fishing industry and members of the Fisheries and Other Ocean Uses Advisory Group. Engagement on fisheries will also take place with relevant government departments.

Note that for Indigenous fishery participants, this engagement will focus on commercial fisheries. Engagement on Traditional fisheries, Treaty fisheries, and fishing for food, social and ceremonial purposes will be done under the Indigenous engagement process and is covered within the Indigenous Participation Plan.

Participants can submit questions and comments, including requests to be added to the (non-government) Contact List, can be sent to the Committee via the RA email: OffshoreWindNS-EolienneExtracotiereNE@iaac-aeic.gc.ca or via the public commenting tool, available on the RA Registry page. The email and the public commenting tool are monitored regularly by the Secretariat and any communications received will be forwarded to Committee members on a weekly basis. All correspondence will be posted to the Registry (subject to any confidentiality considerations). These tools can be used during any point of the RA process.

General Committee communications (e.g., general information, updates etc.) are sent via the RA email. Updates and other relevant information are also posted to the RA Registry page for public access and review and may include but are not limited to:

- Participation Plans
- Committee Meeting Summaries
- Monthly Updates of the Committee
- Committee Procedures
- Engagement Materials
- Frequently Asked Questions
- Reports

3.1.1 Provincial and Federal Agencies

The Contact List will be used to communicate general information to federal and provincial authorities regarding fisheries, namely Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) and the Nova Scotia Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture. However, the Committee will use direct written correspondence when formally requesting information or advice from federal and provincial agencies. These requests for information will be posted to the Registry.

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Government departments can attend larger open engagement sessions and can participate in the Fisheries and Other Ocean Users Advisory Group as they have extensive knowledge, data, and expertise to be considered. The Committee also may hold individual meetings with government agencies on specific topics or initiatives related to fisheries in the Study Area.

3.2 Engagement Approach

The Committee has identified various ways and methods to approach engagement based on feedback and views gathered during the planning phase of the RA, and from comments submitted as part of the public comment period on the draft Agreement and TOR.

During the conduct of the RA, the Committee will be committed to working with fishers, fishing organizations and the fishing industry to support and tailor involvement based on feedback throughout the conduct of the RA. Engagement approaches may therefore be modified or new approaches integrated, and this Plan will be updated accordingly.

In general, engagement activities could include, but are not limited to:

- Communications (to the Committee) via the public comment tool on the RA Registry site;
- Communications (to and from the Committee) via the general RA email;
- Communication (from the Committee) via official notices and updates posted to the RA Registry site;
- General engagement sessions/information sessions, either in-person or virtual; and/or
- Focused Advisory Group meetings on a particular topic of interest, as determined by the Committee.

Engagement sessions will be offered in-person and/or virtually throughout the RA. The Committee understands the logistical task involved in scheduling engagement sessions with fishing individuals and groups and the need to consider fishing seasons. The Committee will strive to provide as much advance notice as possible and multiple options for days and times for public sessions to facilitate maximum participation.

Background materials considered relevant to upcoming discussions and agendas will be distributed beforehand and draft meeting notes will be circulated to all attendees for review following each meeting/session.

The Committee recognizes that time and capacity of fishers, fishing organizations and the fishing industry is limited. Where possible and acceptable, the Committee is open to meeting with multiple organizations at one time, or attending general fisheries meetings already in place, to reduce the number of meetings, material review and feedback required by participants. Options will be explored throughout the conduct of the RA.

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Fisheries Participation Plan
UPDATED: August 31, 2024

All engagement sessions and meetings will be logged in Appendix D of this Plan, which will also act as part of the public record of engagement.

3.2.1 General Engagement Sessions

General engagement sessions will include a larger public invitation for participation via a general email to the Contact List; and/or a notice on the RA Registry page; and/or a posting in the *Information Sessions* section of the RA Registry page. Where possible, media options (e.g., Facebook and Twitter; local news and radio) will also be utilized.

Anyone can participate in these general sessions.

3.2.2 Fishing Organizations and the Fishing Industry

The Committee will also meet with fishers, fishing organizations and/or fishing industry groups in a one-on-one setting.

The Committee will engage with these groups in the manner that is most efficient to conduct its work and that considers the timing restrictions related to various fishing seasons in Atlantic Canada.

Engagement may involve individual meetings with these groups on specific topics related to the fisheries and may also include briefing sessions where groups may provide the Committee with background information relevant to fisheries.

3.2.3 Fisheries and Other Ocean Users Advisory Group

Advisory Group sessions will involve invitations to members that have submitted an Expression of Interest Form and have shown relevant expertise (i.e., those with fishing experience, knowledge of fish species, fish movements etc.). The Expressions of Interest will be used to develop a roster of experts that the Committee will refer to and select from based on the topic to be discussed.

The composition and activities of the Advisory Group may therefore vary from time to time, based on the needs, work or expertise required and requested by the Committee during the conduct of the RA. There will be no set schedule for Advisory Group meetings; it will be decided on an as-needed basis.

3.2.4 Provincial and Federal Agencies

The Committee may hold individual meetings with key government departments on fisheries related topics including briefing sessions where government departments may provide the Committee with background fisheries information or data relevant to the RA.

Government departments may also attend larger open engagement sessions and can participate in the Fisheries and Other Ocean Users Advisory Group if they have demonstrated relevant expertise.

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3.2 Timing of Engagement

There is no pre-determined schedule for engagement sessions, general meetings, or meetings with the Advisory Group. As the RA progresses the Committee will conduct engagement based on information needed and feedback from fishers, fishing organizations and the fishing industry.

3.3 Engagement Topics

In conducting their analysis, the Committee will engage on topics as per section A1.6 of the TOR, which includes:

- existing environmental, health, social and economic conditions;
- information and knowledge gaps;
- positive and adverse effects, including cumulative effects of future offshore wind development activities;
- effects on any Indigenous peoples, and any impact that they may have on the rights of the Indigenous peoples recognized and affirmed by section 35 of the *Constitution Act, 1982*;
- mitigation and follow-up measures;
- existing legislation, regulations, guidelines and standards, and associated approvals or authorizations;
- sustainability and climate change;
- intersection of sex and gender with other identity factors; and
- scientific information, Indigenous knowledge — including the knowledge of Indigenous women — and Community knowledge.

The Committee may, based on its analysis and engagement activity, further refine, or add to the list of components listed above.

4 Confidentiality

The Committee will endeavour to be as transparent as possible with the information it considers in the conduct of the RA. As such, if a Participant holds information relevant to the RA that they want to share with the Committee but wishes for that information to remain confidential, the Committee will follow the process outlined in the *Procedures for Requesting Confidentiality*.

Additional information related to confidentiality is provided on the RA Registry page in the Committee's *Confidentiality Procedure*.

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Appendix A: Key Links

RA Registry: <https://www.iaac-aeic.gc.ca/050/evaluations/proj/83514>

Confidentiality Procedure: <https://www.iaac-aeic.gc.ca/050/evaluations/document/152086>

Operational Procedures: <https://www.iaac-aeic.gc.ca/050/evaluations/document/152087>

Final Agreement and Terms of Reference: <https://www.iaac-aeic.gc.ca/050/evaluations/document/147038>

Preliminary Call for Interest for Advisory Group Members: <https://www.iaac-aeic.gc.ca/050/evaluations/document/146787>

Expression of Interest Form (for Advisory Groups): <https://www.iaac-aeic.gc.ca/050/evaluations/document/146788>

Public Comment Tool: <https://www.iaac-aeic.gc.ca/050/evaluations/proj/83514/participation>

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Appendix B: Fisheries and Other Ocean Uses Advisory Group

The Fisheries and Other Ocean Uses Advisory Group will assist the Committee by:

- Providing knowledge, information, and advice regarding current and potential fishing activity, and potential interactions between fishing activity and offshore wind development activities
- Advising on approaches for avoiding or minimizing adverse effects and creating or maximizing opportunities for positive effects on fisheries and other ocean uses
- Gathering and analyzing relevant data and information and conducting analyses
- Providing input on the development, implementation and updating of the Public, Fisheries and Stakeholder Participation Plan

This Fisheries and Other Ocean Uses Advisory Group will be comprised of individuals and representatives from organizations, including Indigenous Peoples and Indigenous organizations, engaged in commercial, traditional, and recreational fisheries, in inshore, mid-shore, and offshore areas. This advisory group will also include those with experience / expertise in other ocean uses including, but not limited to, tourism, marine shipping, offshore energy, research, and aquaculture.

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Appendix C: Roster for Fisheries and Other Ocean Uses Advisory Groups

Affiliation	Contact Person(s)
Rhenus Logistics Canada	Aaron Mulrooney
Natural Resources Canada (NRCan)	Anica Madzarevic
Coldwater Lobster Association	Bernie Berry
Fishing industry Nova Scotia, various groups and experience	Brian Giroux
Shell Canada Energy/Atlantic Canada Offshore Developments (ACOD)	Candice Cook-Ohryn
Siem Offshore Canada	Chris Pitts
Mersey Consulting Ltd.	Craig Chandler
Brazil Rock 3334 Lobster Association	Daniel J. Fleck
Baird & Associates	Dave Anglin
DOF Subsea Canada	David Long
Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO), Maritimes Region	Emma Marotte
Membertou First Nation/SBM-DP Energy Indigenous Affairs Advisor	Eric Christmas
Oceans North	Gemma Rayner
Guysborough County Inshore Fishermen's Association	Ginny Boudreau
SOAR - Sustainable Ocean Applied Research	Greg Trowse
LeeWay Marine	Greg Veinott
Coldwater Lobster Association	Heather Mulock
Oceana Canada	Isabelle Jubinville
Seafood Producers Association of Nova Scotia (SPANS)	John Salsbury
Canadian Coast Guard, Atlantic Region	Kate Hendry
Canadian Coast Guard, Atlantic Region	Quinn Gallagher
Guysborough County Inshore Fishermen's Association	Melinda Cole
East Coast Environmental Law	Tina Northrup
East Coast Environmental Law	Mike Kofahl
Dalhousie University	Mohamad Alikhani
Kwilmu'kw Maw-Klusuaqn Negotiation Office (KMKNO)	Patrick Butler
Waterford Energy Services Inc. (WESI)	Phil Nash
Northgreen Capital Inc.	Philip S. Bassil
Coldwater Lobster Association (LFA 34 Advisory Committee Co-Chair)	Robert Harris
Maritime Fishermen's Union	Ruth Inniss
Kleinschmidt Associates	Stephanie Landers
Coldwater Lobster Association	Tommy Amirault
Nova Scotia Swordfishermen's Association	Troy Atkinson
Kings College	Ian Stewart
Nexus Coastal Resource Management	Chris Milley
Cape Breton Fish Harvesters	Stephanie Macleod
ECCC	Michael Hingston

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Fisheries Participation Plan
 UPDATED: August 31, 2024

Affiliation	Contact Person(s)
DND	CarolLee Giffin
NS Fisheries Alliance for Energy Engagement	Kris Vascotto
Atlantic Groundfish	Vanessa Byrne
PEI Fisherman's Association	Ian MacPherson
PEI Fisherman's Association	Mark Arsenault
MFU 4	Amy Hayne
Fat Tuna Fisheries, Ltd.	Duane Boudreau
Atlantic Groundfish Council	Vanessa Byrne
Perennia	Gregor Reid
Baird and Associates	Fred Scott
Fisher	Jordan David
Xodus Group	Delia Warren
PEI Fisherman's Association	Tyler Power

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Appendix D: Fisheries Engagement Activities and Tracking Log

Activity	Date	Topic(s) Discussed
MILESTONE: Regional Assessment Initiated (March 23, 2023)		
Meeting - Fisheries Advisory Committee (FAC) of CNSOPB and NS Fisheries Alliance for Energy Engagement	June 19/20, 2023	Introductory meeting for Committee members, update on the early progress of the RA, and to question/answers from fisheries stakeholders about the RA, and Advisory Groups
Briefing	June 21, 2023	Briefing provided by the Canada Nova Scotia Offshore Petroleum Board (CNSOPB) to inform the Committee about CNSOPB Fisheries Advisory Committee
<i>Virtual Open House Sessions</i>	<i>Early July 2023</i>	<i>Open House Sessions offered virtually to provide an introduction to the Regional Assessment process and the Committee members, and to answer questions</i>
Meeting of the Fisheries and other Ocean Users Advisory Group	July 27, 2023	Introductory Meeting to discuss Advisory Group feedback and current focus. <i>NOTE: Based on feedback from Indigenous participants the Indigenous Knowledge Advisory Group will cover fisheries related to Food, Social and Ceremonial and Treaty Fisheries</i>
Meetings with Fisheries Associations	September 21/25, 2023 October 3, 2023	Preliminary discussions with Area 18 Crab Fishermen's Association; North of Smokey Fishermen's Association; Gulf Nova Scotia Fleet Planning Board; and Association des Crabiers Acadiens to discuss the Regional Assessment and potential locations for future offshore wind development and areas of fishing activities
<i>In-Person Open House Sessions</i>	<i>October 2023</i>	<i>Open House Sessions offered in Guysborough, Sheet Harbour, Port Hawkesbury, Inverness, Sydney, Digby, Yarmouth and Shelburne, Nova Scotia. Focus was to provide information on offshore wind and the Regional Assessment and to gather input on potential future locations for offshore wind development in the Study Area</i>
Meeting - Guysborough County Inshore Fisheries Association	October 11, 2023	Preliminary overview of fisheries and concerns and discussion around the Regional Assessment process
<i>In-Person Open House Sessions</i>	<i>November 2023</i>	<i>Open House Sessions offered in Wolfville and Dartmouth, Nova Scotia, Charlottetown, PEI, and Moncton, New Brunswick. Focus was to provide information on offshore wind and the Regional Assessment and to gather input on potential future locations for offshore wind development in the Study Area</i>
Meeting - NS Fisheries Alliance for Energy Engagement	December 11, 2023	Overview of the work done to date by the Alliance to help identify potential areas where offshore wind could or could not work with respect to the fishing industry and activity taking place offshore.

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Activity	Date	Topic(s) Discussed
Feedback Request to Fisheries and other Ocean Users Advisory Group	December 2023	Request for feedback on potential future areas of future offshore wind development in the Study Area. NOTE: Feedback received is now posted on the Regional Assessment Registry page , and will be used to help inform the Interim Report.
<i>In-Person Open House Sessions</i>	<i>January 2024</i>	<i>Open House Sessions offered in St. Peter's, Cheticamp and New Glasgow, Nova Scotia. Focus was to provide information on offshore wind and the Regional Assessment and to gather input on potential future locations for offshore wind development in the Study Area</i>
Meeting – Clearwater Seafoods	January 17, 2024	Overview of Clearwater operations and fisheries
Meeting – North Sydney Fishers	February 2, 2024	Overview of fishing areas, seasons and species as well as discussions on ice and considerations of overall fishing activities
Meeting – NS Fisheries Alliance for Energy Engagement	February 5, 2024	Presentation and discussion of Alliance submission on fisheries information to inform on potential areas for future offshore wind development
Meeting – Ocean Pride Fisheries	February 9, 2024	Overview of the sea cucumber fishery including background, location, and an understanding of research
MILESTONE: Committee submits Interim Report to Ministers (March 23, 2024)		
Feedback Request to Fisheries and other Ocean Users Advisory Group	April 2024	Request for feedback on effects of offshore wind development.
Meeting – NS Fisheries Alliance for Energy Engagement	April 10, 2024	Discussion on Interim Report
Meeting of Advisory Groups	April 16, 2024	Discussion on Interim Report
<i>In-Person Open House Sessions</i>	<i>April/May/June 2024</i>	<i>Open House Sessions offered in Port Hawkesbury, Sydney, Cheticamp, Charlottetown (PEI), Yarmouth, Shelburne, Guysborough, Sheet Harbour, New Glasgow and Dartmouth. Focus was to engage on proposed future locations for offshore wind development in the Study Area (as proposed in the Interim Report) and gather input on what should be considered for mitigation and monitoring measures.</i>
Meeting - Guysborough County Inshore Fisheries Association	June 6, 2024	Overview of fisheries and concerns and discussion around data collection
Meeting – Cape Breton Fishers	July 22, 2024	Overview of Regional Assessment on discussion on fisheries concerns
Meeting – Ocean Pride Fisheries and W.T. Grover Fisheries	July 25, 2024	Overview of sea cucumber fishery and discussion on fisheries concerns
Meeting - Guysborough County Inshore Fisheries Association	August 13, 2024	Overview of fishery concerns and discussion around data collection
Meeting – Louisbourg Seafoods	August 15, 2024	Overview of whelk fishery and discussion on fisheries concerns
Meeting – NS Swordfishermen's Association	August 19, 2024	Overview of long-line fishery and discussion on fisheries concerns
MILESTONE: Committee submits DRAFT Final Regional Assessment Report to Ministers (October 2, 2025)		

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Activity	Date	Topic(s) Discussed
MILESTONE: Review and Comment Period of the DRAFT Final Regional Assessment Report (October 2, 2024 – December 2, 2024)		
MILESTONE: Committee submits Final Regional Assessment Report to Ministers (January 2025)		

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