

February 6, 2024

**ELECTRONIC MAIL**

**To:** Impact Assessment Agency of Canada

**Subject: Request for Advice - Committee for the Regional Assessment of Offshore Wind Development in Newfoundland and Labrador**

Dear Stewart Lindale,

The federal Ministers of Environment and Natural Resources and provincial Ministers of Industry, Energy and Technology, Environment and Climate Change and for Intergovernmental Affairs established a Committee, pursuant to subsection 93(1) of the *Impact Assessment Act* (the IAA), to conduct the Regional Assessment of Offshore Wind Development in Newfoundland and Labrador.

On March 23, 2023, the Regional Assessment Agreement was posted on the Canadian Impact Assessment Registry Internet site: [Regional Assessment of Offshore Wind Development in Newfoundland and Labrador \(iaac-aeic.gc.ca\)](https://iaac-aeic.gc.ca). This commenced the 18-month work period for the Committee.

In accordance with section 5 of the Committee's Agreement, and with section 23 of the IAA, the Committee can request specialist or expert information or knowledge, from any department or agency<sup>1</sup>, which must then be made available to the Committee. This may include providing information, knowledge or advice related to any matter relevant to the Regional Assessment.

Attached to this correspondence is the Request for Advice form that contains further detail on the request. The Committee requires your department to respond no later than March 4, 2024. You can contact the Committee to discuss the due date if needed. Your department is encouraged to provide as much detail as practicable in responding to the questions in this request.

As per the Committee's [Operational Procedure](#), the information submitted to the Committee in response to this Request for Advice will be made public on the Canadian Impact Assessment Registry Internet Site. Please do not include any information that cannot be shared publicly. The Committee's [Confidentiality Procedure](#) outlines the procedures in place regarding participants confidential information.

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<sup>1</sup> All subsequent references to department mean department or agency.

If you have any questions regarding the regional assessment process or this request, please do not hesitate to contact the Committee at <email address removed> .

Sincerely,

The Committee for the Regional Assessment of Offshore Wind Development in Newfoundland and Labrador

/Attachment

**ATTACHMENT: February 6, 2024**

**Advice Record**

**Response due by March 4, 2024**

Regional Assessment of Offshore Wind Development in Newfoundland and Labrador

Department/Agency	Impact Assessment Agency of Canada
Lead Contact	Stewart Lindale, Director of Regional and Strategic Assessment
Email	<email address removed>

**Overview of Request:**

Within the Regional Assessment Agreement, there are multiple references to the Committee identifying, considering, and/or analysing cumulative effects. The Committee understands the Agency views regional assessments under the IAA as a means to assess cumulative effects. The Committee has also heard throughout the engagement process to date that participants have high expectations for analysis of cumulative effects in this Regional Assessment.

The Committee notes that the Agreement for the Regional Assessment of Offshore Oil and Gas Exploratory Drilling East of Newfoundland and Labrador similarly included analysis of cumulative effects. That Committee spoke to the challenges of this requirement in their Final Report (February 2020):

*“... cumulative effects are inherently complex and challenging to assess and manage. While a Regional Assessment approach provides a more holistic and proactive approach to considering cumulative effects compared to project-specific assessments and decisions, the inevitable uncertainty around the nature, intensity and spatial and temporal distribution of future activities and their effects, and of environmental responses to various types and levels of past and future disturbance, continues to pose key challenges in that regard.”*

Despite the Agency’s identification of regional assessments as a means to address cumulative effects, and the previous Committee’s identification of this area as a key challenge, this Committee is unaware of any guidance document on this topic. The Committee notes that there is a *Policy Framework for Assessing Cumulative Effects under the Impact Assessment Act* (May 2023) specific to impact assessments of projects under the IAA.

The Committee has also been informed that Brent Parker, Director General of Review Panels and Regional and Strategic Assessment for the IAAC, has given a presentation on *How Cumulative Effects are Being Addressed in Regional Assessments* at the Cumulative Effects Assessment and Environmental Management, Eastern Canada Conference on November 7, 2023.

**Request:**

The Committee requests the Agency’s advice on how to assess cumulative effects for this Regional Assessment, in order to meet the terms of the Agreement. If a guidance document is forthcoming, the Committee welcomes the Agency’s description of that guidance to the extent the Agency is willing to share the information publicly. The Committee is also interested in receiving a copy of Brent Parker’s presentation and may follow-up with additional questions following review of that presentation.

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Name of Departmental / Agency  
Responder

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Title of Responder

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Date