

May 10, 2024

**ELECTRONIC MAIL**

**To:** Impact Assessment Agency of Canada

**Subject: Consulting Expert Authorities About Ongoing Work Related to Cumulative Effects – Committee for the Regional Assessment of Offshore Wind Development in Newfoundland and Labrador**

Objective:

To support the Impact Assessment Agency (the Agency) as they plan a meeting between the Committee for the Regional Assessment of Offshore Wind Development in Newfoundland and Labrador (Committee) and expert authorities working on cumulative effects.

Context:

The Committee wrote to the Agency on February 6, 2024, to request their advice on how to assess cumulative effects to meet the terms of the Regional Assessment Agreement. Included in their response, the Agency indicated the Committee has significant discretion on the consideration and analysis of cumulative effects, pointed the Committee to existing guidance and resources, and offered to organize a discussion with federal authorities working on cumulative effects.

Proposed Meeting Focus and Forthcoming Information Requests:

Since requesting the above advice, the Committee has been actively considering cumulative effects. At this stage, the Committee could benefit from departments providing them with the following information and a follow-up meeting.

The Committee will issue information requests to appropriate departments requesting items like the following:

- An overview of any previously completed cumulative effects assessments in the Focus Area and /or Study Area including information such as the name of the study, list of all valued components assessed, findings of the study in bullet form, and a link to study protocols and final reports.
- Information on any other existing or planned human activities that could impact valued components assessed under the Regional Assessment in the Focus Area (air quality and GHGs, marine fish and fish habitat, avifauna, marine mammals, and sea turtles, protected and special areas, fisheries and other ocean uses, visual aesthetics and viewsapes, acoustic environments, physical and cultural heritage, health, communities and economies).
- A list of any datasets and associated metadata that could be used for a cumulative effects assessment of the above valued components in the Focus Area and a discussion on the availability of relevant long-term data and/or analysis.

A meeting should follow up on these items and include discussion on:

- An overview of any existing programs or initiatives related to cumulative effects that could be leveraged to fill data and research gaps.
- Discussion on how to contribute to the management of cumulative effects effectively and reasonably under a regional assessment.

The Committee would benefit from meeting with departments providing this information, including those involved in programs, research, assessments, or other relevant work in the Regional Assessment Focus Area that could feed into their consideration of cumulative effects. This could also involve departments more broadly working on cumulative effects issues within the marine environment in Newfoundland and Labrador or Canada to better understand existing programs that could be used to address potential research gaps. Finally, although the Agency's initial offer indicated they could coordinate a meeting with federal authorities working on cumulative effects, including provincial authorities with any of the above noted information would be equally beneficial.

Next Steps:

The Secretariat will administer forthcoming information requests outlining the above requests to relevant departments. As much as possible, this information should be provided before a meeting.

A meeting on the subject could take place on the afternoon of June 19. Two hours should be allotted for the meeting, and it should take place virtually to accommodate participants' various locations. Departments including ECCC, NRCan, DFO, Parks Canada, Transport Canada and any other identified federal departments, as well as the relevant provincial government departments, with cumulative effects files or experts, will be engaged through the Committee's Secretariat. The Secretariat will reach out to the established one windows of these departments, requesting they identify any appropriate participants for the proposed meeting.

We request the Agency identify appropriate participants from their department as well as reach out to their contacts in other federal and provincial departments, and to any other known participants with expertise or information on the above subjects, on whom they advise should attend the meeting. Once participants are identified, the Secretariat will schedule a meeting on behalf of the Committee.