

# **Regional Assessment of Offshore Wind Development in Newfoundland and Labrador**

## **Public, Fisheries and Stakeholder Participation Plan**

**PREPARED BY: THE REGIONAL ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE**

Date: August 1, 2023

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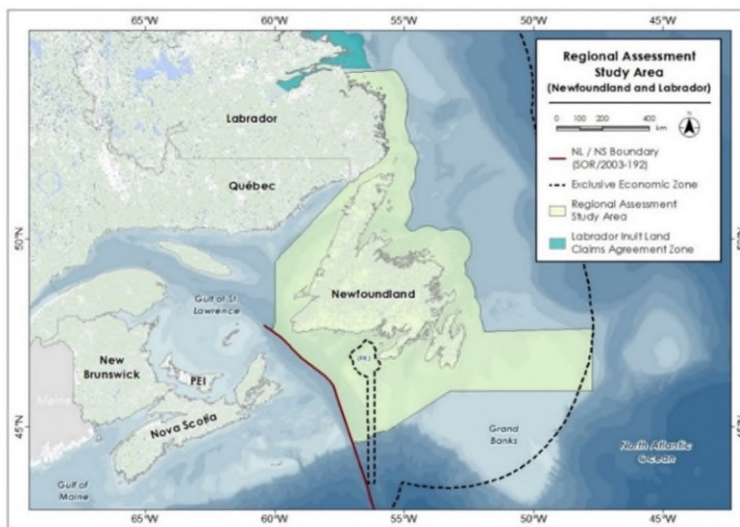
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# 1 Introduction

The federal Minister of Environment and Climate Change (“the Minister”) released the [final Agreement and Terms of Reference](#) (“the Agreement”) and appointed an independent [Committee](#) for the Regional Assessment of Offshore Wind Development in Newfoundland and Labrador (the RA) on March 23, 2023. This RA will be conducted over an 18-month period with two report components. The first report component submitted to the Ministers<sup>1</sup> within 12-months of the Committee’s appointment, and a final report (with all components), submitted to the Ministers within 18-months of the Committee’s appointment (Section 4 Schedule. The Study Area for the RA is provided in Figure 1.

The Committee has prepared this Public, Fisheries and Stakeholder Participation Plan (“the Plan”) to outline its approach to provide meaningful opportunities for members of the public, fishers and fishing organizations and other stakeholders to engage in the conduct of the RA. The Committee is also developing an Indigenous Participation Plan (IPP) in collaboration with Indigenous peoples under a separate cover. This plan and the IPP will be posted to the Canadian Impact Assessment [Registry](#) (“the Registry”) and updated regularly by the Committee, with advice from the Advisory Groups, to ensure that participants are aware of planned participation approaches and upcoming activities.

Figure 1: Regional Assessment Study Area (Newfoundland and Labrador)



## 1.1 Committee’s Mandate and Commitments

The Committee will conduct the RA in accordance with the *Impact Assessment Act* (IAA) and the Agreement. The roles and responsibilities of the Committee are detailed in the Agreement.

<sup>1</sup> The term “Ministers” means, collectively, the federal Ministers of Environment and Natural Resources and the provincial Ministers of Industry, Energy and Technology, Environment and Climate Change and for Intergovernmental Affairs.

During the conduct of the RA, the Committee will conduct engagement activities with participants<sup>2</sup> to:

- a. Seek scientific information and advice relevant to the conduct of the RA from individuals (Indigenous and non-Indigenous)
- b. Seek information from fishing organizations, industry reps, and fishers on:
  - o Potential interactions between fishing activities and offshore wind (OSW) development activities
- c. Ensure Indigenous peoples and the public are provided with opportunities to participate meaningfully in the RA.
- d. Engage with Indigenous peoples, governmental and non-governmental organizations and individuals that have information, knowledge or interests relevant to the RA.
- e. Collaborate in a way that respects Indigenous rights, culture, and traditional knowledge.

## **1.2 Engagement Objectives**

The Committee has tried to structure the engagement process in a way that achieves the following:

- a. Establishes an open and constructive dialogue with public stakeholder groups interested in participating in the RA,
- b. Encourages stakeholders to actively participate in the RA, and
- c. Works with stakeholders to determine opportunities for participation in the RA.

## **2 Approaches to Engagement**

### **2.1 Activities**

This section outlines the proposed approaches for participation identified to date.

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<sup>2</sup> Throughout the plan, the term “participants” refers broadly to public, fisheries and stakeholder groups, Indigenous peoples and organizations, federal and provincial authorities participating in the RA process.

Table 1 outlines proposed initial activities for participation in the RA process. The Committee identified these activities by considering comments and views gathered by the Agency from participants during the planning phase of the RA, along with additional comments or feedback that were subsequently submitted and available on the Registry. This list of activities is preliminary; additional engagement sessions and methods may be created as the RA progresses and the Committee responds to participant feedback. Engagement activities include, but are not limited to:

- a. Planned general engagement sessions, either in-person or virtual
- b. Focused Advisory Group engagement sessions on a particular topic of interest

Engagement can be broad or more focused, depending on the questions and needs of the Committee. General engagement sessions will include a larger public invitation for participation through methods such as a general email to stakeholders, or a notice on the RA registry page. Anyone can participate.



**Table 1**

Proposed activities for Participants during the Conduct of the Regional Assessment of Offshore Wind Development in Newfoundland and Labrador

Step	Activities	Considerations
Public, Fisheries and Stakeholder Participation Plan	Committee shares draft Plan for review and input.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Committee will develop and share the first version of the plan.</li> <li>• The plan will be posted to the Registry and updated regularly by the Committee to provide an ongoing record of engagement activities.</li> </ul>
Initial engagement and information sessions	Initial engagement sessions will be planned for the Committee to meet with stakeholders and receive general feedback on the RA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Offer public stakeholders the opportunity to meet in person (or virtually) with Committee.</li> <li>• Offer information sessions with the Committee and participants.</li> <li>• Engagement sessions can continue throughout the processes, as deemed appropriate / needed by the Committee.</li> </ul>
Establishment and use of Advisory Groups	Advisory Groups for Indigenous Knowledge, Scientific Information and Community Knowledge, and Fisheries and Other Ocean Users	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establishment of these advisory groups is described in the TOR.</li> <li>• The Committee will work with the advisory groups to determine the details on how, when and on what to engage.</li> <li>• Timing and frequency of sessions with Advisory Groups will be determined by the Committee on an as-needed basis.</li> <li>• Notices will be sent out in advance of sessions to provide enough notice for Advisory Group members to plan and coordinate.</li> </ul>
<p>Note: This table is not meant to be inclusive of all potential engagement activities that can be undertaken during the conduct of the RA. The Committee understands that as the RA evolves and the Committee learns new information related to Offshore Wind, additional engagement sessions may be required. The Committee will work with participants and stakeholders to determine additional engagement opportunities as needed, if the Committee feels it is necessary.</p>		

## 2.2 Identifying Stakeholders

During the planning phase of the RA<sup>3</sup>, the Impact Assessment Agency (“the Agency”) undertook a widespread exercise to develop a comprehensive stakeholder list. This included reaching out to other federal and provincial government departments, and other organizations to begin developing an initial distribution list. Through outreach emails and engagement sessions completed prior to the appointment of the Committee, stakeholders 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 this process. The stakeholder list has grown from these efforts, and the Committee, and their secretariat, have been promoting participation through emails and communications to further identify and include those stakeholders who want to participate in the process.

## 2.3 Advisory Groups

The Agency also initiated an additional process to identify organizations or individuals with expertise in one or more fields to become members of one or more Advisory Groups. These include the following:

- a. Indigenous Knowledge Advisory Group
- b. Scientific Information and Community Knowledge Advisory Group
- c. Fisheries and Other Ocean Uses Advisory Group

The Agency posted a notice in February 2023 for an initial [expression of interest](#) to stakeholders, inviting them to apply to be involved in one or more of these groups. In addition to the three Advisory Groups listed, the Committee may choose to establish additional Advisory Groups as it deems necessary, and to combine or integrate the activities of two or more Advisory Groups, as applicable. Individuals or organizations may participate in more than one Advisory Group. The Committee has also made a public call for interest through emails and during its introductory sessions with Indigenous groups and Indigenous organizations as well as public and other stakeholders.

Members of an Advisory Group will function as a voluntary roster of experts from which the Committee can select when they want information or advice on a specific topic. There are no pre-determined hours or defined activities for Advisory Groups, and activities may include, but are not limited to, participating in meetings, providing feedback on literature relevant to the RA, or reviewing a document. Planned engagement activities will be listed and updated in [Appendix](#)

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<sup>3</sup> The planning phase is the period between April 5, 2022, when the Minister announced the conduct of the RA and March 23, 2023, when the Committee was appointed.

A. All public and stakeholder engagement activities, including Advisory Group meetings, will be logged, and included in [Appendix B](#) of this plan, as part of the public record of engagement. Each of the Advisory Groups will provide information and advice to the Committee on the topics outlined below, as required, and requested:

- a. Environmental, health, social and economic conditions.
- b. Information and knowledge gaps, and potential opportunities to address these during or following the completion of the RA.
- c. Future offshore wind development activities in the Study Area, including their:
  - i. Need and purpose.
  - ii. Physical activities associated with their construction, including expansion, operation, decommissioning and abandonment.
  - iii. Key locations of interest for future offshore wind development activities in the Study Area (to help focus the Committee’s work on areas which are most likely to see future development interest, based on technical and economic factors).
  - iv. Regulatory requirements.
  - v. Potential positive and adverse effects, including cumulative effects and associated sustainability considerations.
  - vi. Mitigation, and other approaches for avoiding or reducing potential adverse effects and creating and maximizing potential positive effects; and
  - vii. Follow-up requirements.
- d. Other topics relevant to the RA, as requested by the Committee.

### **2.3.1 Indigenous Knowledge Advisory Group**

The Committee will establish the Indigenous Knowledge Advisory Group, the details of which, will be shared in the IPP.

### **2.3.2 Scientific Information and Community Knowledge Advisory Group**

The committee will seek Scientific information, including technical information and advice, and Community knowledge from representative of federal and provincial government department and agencies and non-governmental organizations and individuals (both Indigenous and non-Indigenous) on matters relevant to the conduct of the RA. This will include information and advice related to environmental, health, social and economic components.

This advisory group will assist the Committee in gathering and analyzing relevant data and information and in conducting analyses, and will provide expertise in relation to the RA. This will include sharing information and expertise on some or all of the topics listed in [Section 2.3](#) Advisory Groups above, as requested by the Committee during the conduct of the RA.

### **2.3.3 Fisheries and Other Ocean Uses Advisory Group**

The Committee will seek knowledge, information and advice from fishing organizations, fishing industry representatives and fishers (both Indigenous and non-Indigenous) regarding current and potential fishing activity (commercial, traditional, recreational – including inshore, midshore, and offshore fisheries), as well as potential interactions between fishing activity and offshore wind development activities in the Study Area.

This Advisory Group will include organizations and individuals that are involved in and/or otherwise have expertise regarding other ocean uses including, but not limited to, tourism, marine shipping, offshore energy, research, aquaculture, infrastructure, and other components and activities.

The Advisory Group will also provide advice to the Committee on approaches for avoiding or minimizing adverse effects and creating or maximizing opportunities for positive effects on fisheries and other ocean uses.

## **2.4 Participant Funding**

In July 2022, the Agency provided participant funding to interested public and Indigenous groups to support their participation in the early planning phase of the RA. The Agency posted a second contribution funding offer in December 2022 to support continued participation in the conduct of the RA. This will include participation in meetings and in Advisory Groups, review of materials and comment on the draft Committee’s draft Report.

## **2.5 Engagement with Federal and Provincial Authorities**

In the conduct of the RA, the Committee will consider the advice of many federal and provincial departments, who have an obligation to provide the Committee with relevant information and expertise under the provisions of the IAA and the Agreement. The Committee will engage with federal and provincial government departments and agencies in the manner that it believes to be transparent and most efficient to conduct its work. The Committee may solicit information or advice via written correspondence with the expectation that the authority will reply in writing with the requested information or advice. The Committee may also request to meet with authority to receive the requested information or advice. In either case, the Committee will ensure the applicable documentation is made publicly available<sup>4</sup> (subject to confidentiality considerations).

Government departments could also attend larger open engagement sessions and can participate in one or more Advisory Groups if they have demonstrated pertinent expertise. The Committee may hold individual meetings with government agencies on specific topics or

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<sup>4</sup> “Publicly available” means posted on the Registry or readily available to a participant upon request.

initiatives, if it feels that this method would be most effective to receive input on a specific topic or subject. These meetings will be logged, so that there is a public record of the meeting and the general discussion.

### **3 Confidentiality and Operational Procedures**

Comments and other documents received by the Committee throughout the RA process will be posted on the Registry, except for the ones deemed to be confidential or subject to non-disclosure. The Committee has developed its own [confidentiality procedures](#) and how it will conduct itself regarding confidentiality and sensitive information which can be found on the Registry. The Committee has also developed its [operational procedures](#), which tends to elaborate upon the general principles and processes described in the agreement and inform participants on how the committee intends to function throughout the conduct of the RA on the issues of bias and conflict of interest, accessibility to information, and other confidential information handling.

## 4 Schedule

The Committee will complete its work in a phased manner and will, following the public review of drafts as referenced in Section A1.6 of the Agreement, submit the various components of its Report to the Ministers as follows:

Report Component	Overview	Relevant Components (From Sections A2.3 and A2.4 from the <a href="#">Agreement</a> )	Submission to Ministers
1	Information and analysis to inform future planning and licencing for offshore wind in the Study Area	Section A 2.3 Objective A, items a) to d) Objective B, item a) Objective D, item a) Section A 2.4 Items a) to e)	12 months from Committee appointment *
2	Identification of, and recommendations on, mitigation, and other approaches to address potential effects, and monitoring and follow-up requirements, to inform future impact assessments for offshore wind in the Study Area	Section A 2.3 Objective C, items a) to b) Objective D, items a) to b) Section A 2.4 Items d) to e)	18 months from Committee appointment *
<p>* As noted above, the Committee may choose to present information in an electronic format, such as through a GIS. While this information is part of Component 1 (and any such GIS is therefore to be submitted with 12 months), it is recognized that the system may continue to be refined during the remainder of the Regional Assessment process, and that an updated version may be included in the Committee’s final deliverable (at 18 months). The Committee was appointed on March 23, 2023.</p>			

## Appendix A

### Planned Engagement Activities

The Committee intend to use this table to provide advanced notice on upcoming engagement activities with the Public, Fisheries, and other stakeholders, including Advisory Groups, and will be updated as soon as plans are further refined.

Regional Assessment of Offshore Wind Development in Newfoundland and Labrador		
Last updated:		
Activity	Date	Note

## Appendix B

Engagement Activities completed to date.

Regional Assessment of Offshore Wind Development in Newfoundland and Labrador Last updated: July 24, 2023				
Date	Location	Organization(s)	No. of Participants*	Topics Discussed
May 10, 2023	Virtual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO)</li> </ul>	13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Introductory meeting to learn of available DFO expertise</li> </ul>
May 24, 2023	Virtual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>DFO: Marine planning and conservation</li> </ul>	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Demo of the Canada Marine Planning Atlas to the Committee</li> </ul>
May 31, 2023	Virtual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Agency</li> </ul>	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gender based analysis plus (GBA+) presentation to the Committee</li> </ul>
May 31, 2023	Virtual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Agency</li> </ul>	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>RA scoping presentation to the Committee</li> </ul>
June 7, 2023	Virtual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Natural Resources Canada (NRCan)</li> </ul>	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Accord act amendments presentation to the Committee</li> </ul>
June 13, 2023	Virtual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Newfoundland and Labrador Wildlife Federation</li> <li>Econext</li> <li>Dominion Diving</li> <li>DFO</li> <li>Energy NL</li> <li>AECO</li> <li>Canada Energy Regulator (CER)</li> <li>Memorial University of Newfoundland and Labrador (MUN)</li> <li>East Coast Environmental Law</li> </ul>	14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Public and stakeholder introductory session of the Committee</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Baird</li> <li>• Starboard Wind</li> <li>• Salmonid Council of NL</li> </ul>		
June 14, 2023	Virtual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society Newfoundland and Labrador Chapter (CPAWS NL)</li> <li>• Keepers of the Circle</li> <li>• The Agency</li> <li>• DFO</li> <li>• Port of Corner Brook</li> <li>• RelyOn Nutec Canada</li> <li>• BP</li> <li>• Energy NL</li> <li>• Sabik Offshore GmbH</li> <li>• LSPU (I.L.A.) Local 1953</li> <li>• EDF Renewables</li> <li>• Baird</li> <li>• Black Bawks Data Science Ltd/World Seabird Union</li> <li>• Ausenco</li> <li>• ABO Wind</li> <li>• Crown Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada (CIRNAC)</li> <li>• Wood</li> <li>• Edgewise Environmental</li> <li>• Marine Renewables Canada</li> <li>• MUN Grenfell Campus</li> <li>• Dovre Group</li> </ul>	45	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public and stakeholder introductory session of the Committee</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fish, Food and Allied Workers (FFAW-Unifor)</li> <li>• Embassy of Belgium in Canada</li> <li>• Canada Newfoundland Offshore Oil and Petroleum Board (C-NLOPB)</li> <li>• ICI Innovations</li> <li>• Nunatukavut Community Council (NCC)</li> <li>• Government of Newfoundland and Labrador</li> <li>• Qualipu</li> <li>• Innergex</li> </ul>		
June 15, 2023	Virtual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• North American Worley Advisian</li> <li>• NCC</li> <li>• Generation Electricity Canada</li> <li>• Wolastoqey Nation (WNNB)</li> <li>• MUN</li> <li>• Stantec</li> <li>• Canadian Coast Guard (CCG)</li> <li>• Camerado Energy Consulting</li> <li>• SubC Imaging</li> <li>• West Coast Environmental Law</li> <li>• NCC</li> <li>• East Coast Environmental Law</li> <li>• Marine Institute (MI)</li> <li>• Fagiloi</li> <li>• NRCan</li> <li>• Oceans North</li> <li>• DFO</li> </ul>	35	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public and stakeholder introductory session of the Committee</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Government of Newfoundland and Labrador</li> <li>• Keepers of the Circle</li> </ul>		
June 22, 2023	Virtual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Environment and Climate Change Canada</li> </ul>	8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introductory session, and to provide overview to the Committee</li> </ul>
June 28, 2023	Virtual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Net Zero Atlantic</li> <li>• ASL Environmental Services</li> <li>• Government of Newfoundland and Labrador</li> <li>• The Agency</li> <li>• PESCA Environmental</li> <li>• C-NLOPB</li> <li>• Council of Canadians</li> <li>• Transport Canada (TC)</li> <li>• Member of the Public</li> <li>• ABL Group</li> <li>• University of Waterloo</li> <li>• DOF Subsea</li> <li>• Coldwater Lobster Association</li> <li>• Edgewise Environmental</li> <li>• Seafood Producers Association of Nova Scotia</li> <li>• Rob Strong Consulting</li> <li>• DFO</li> <li>• Natural Research Council Canada (NRC)</li> </ul>	27	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public and stakeholder introductory session of the Committee</li> </ul>
	Virtual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PhD Student in Law at Dalhousie University</li> <li>• Bear Head Energy</li> </ul>	10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public and stakeholder introductory session of the Committee</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Canadian Renewable Energy Association</li> <li>• DFO</li> <li>• Natural Forces</li> <li>• eDNAtec</li> <li>• Parks Canada</li> <li>• STRUM</li> <li>• One Ocean</li> <li>• A Recent Graduate and Member of NGOs</li> </ul>		
July 7, 2023	In person	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• C-NLOPB</li> </ul>	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Update on C-NLOPB's mandate</li> <li>• Trip to Germany: lessons learned by C-NLOPB on offshore wind energy.</li> <li>• Experience implementing the offshore drilling RA, including GIS product</li> </ul>
July 18, 2023	Virtual & In person	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DFO: Marine planning and conservation</li> </ul>	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In-depth Session on the Canada Marine Planning Atlas to the Committee</li> </ul>

\*External participants only (i.e., does not include Committee and Secretariat members). Engagement activities with Indigenous peoples will be capture within the IPP.