



## **2025 WORK PLAN**

### **MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING**

#### **CANADA-NOVA SCOTIA OFFSHORE PETROLEUM BOARD**

#### **FISHERIES AND OCEANS CANADA**

#### **AND**

#### **ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE CANADA**

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Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO), Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC) and the Canada-Nova Scotia Offshore Petroleum Board (CNSOPB) will collaborate on the projects outlined below, with the objective of enhancing current mechanisms and practices for delivering environmental protection and conservation measures in the Nova Scotia offshore area. The Work Plan does not preclude DFO, ECCC and the CNSOPB from working on other priority issues or projects in 2025.

There are no oil and gas facilities or active exploration licences in the Canada-Nova Scotia offshore area. The mandate of the CNSOPB is expected to officially expand in 2025 to include the regulation of offshore renewable energy, at which time the CNSOPB will become the Canada-Nova Scotia Offshore Energy Regulator (CNSOER). The provincial government has announced that the first Call for Bids for offshore wind will occur in 2025. The 2025 Work Plan is reflective of the low level of oil and gas activity and the collaborative preparations for the regulation of offshore renewable energy.

#### **Project 1 – Joint Priority Setting, Planning and Coordination**

##### **Project Description:**

The CNSOPB, DFO and ECCC all have legislative and regulatory responsibilities related to offshore energy activities in the Canada- Nova Scotia offshore area. As such, it is desirable that the agencies develop a set of focus areas for collaborative work and develop strategies to ensure resources are available to carry out this work.

To achieve this outcome, the three Parties have agreed to meet as required, and at least annually, to discuss and plan for anticipated workloads and to identify priorities. These meetings will be led by the Implementation Committee Chair.

Deliverables:

- Discussion of issues/areas requiring collaborative work, and an estimate of associated workloads.
- Development of a 2025 Annual Work Plan, coordinated by the CNSOPB with DFO and ECCC.
- Implementation Committee members will continue to identify the lead individuals from their agencies who will coordinate Work Plan projects.
- The CNSOPB will proactively collaborate with DFO and ECCC on the development of external communications materials related to process changes, projects, emergency response and other initiatives where there is potential for overlap in jurisdiction and responsibilities. The three organizations will work together to meet shared goals and ensure timely and effective communication with the general public.

Timing: OngoingProject Team Leaders:

Dena Murphy (CNSOPB)  
 Jennifer Mullane (ECCC)  
 Wendy Williams (DFO Maritimes)  
 Alain Hebert (DFO Gulf)

Coordination Team:

Elizabeth MacDonald (CNSOPB)  
 Glen Herbert (DFO Maritimes)  
 Monik Richard (DFO Gulf)  
 Patrick Sutton (ECCC)

**Project 2 – Regulatory Activities**Project Description:

There are several ongoing activities that require regular collaborative work by the CNSOPB, ECCC and DFO in 2025 and in years to follow.

Deliverables:

- The CNSOPB will continue to participate in the development of Recovery Strategies, Action Plans and Management Plans, as well as listings for Species at Risk, through participation in workshops, meetings and responses to consultation requests.
  - Team co-leads: Heidi Schaefer (DFO Maritimes), Robert Jones (DFO Gulf), Kim Mawhinney (ECCC), Elizabeth MacDonald (CNSOPB)

- DFO will collaborate with the CNSOPB regarding the ongoing review and potential update to the Statement of Canadian Practice with Respect to the Mitigation of Seismic Sound in the Marine Environment.
  - Team co-leads: Glen Herbert (DFO Maritimes), Elizabeth MacDonald (CNSOPB)

Timing: Ongoing

### **Project 3 – Marine Planning and Conservation**

#### Project Description:

Under the *Oceans Act*, the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, on behalf of the Government of Canada, has the responsibility to lead and facilitate the development and implementation of integrated management plans for all marine waters and a national system of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs). To achieve this, the Government of Canada is advancing Marine Spatial Planning and Marine Conservation Networks in priority marine bioregions, as well as commitments under Canada's Marine Conservation Targets for 25% marine protection by 2025 and 30% by 2030. The Minister may also establish marine environmental quality guidelines, objectives and criteria. Within the Maritimes and Gulf Regions of DFO, there are a number of marine planning and conservation initiatives that require CNSOPB awareness, involvement and/or collaboration.

#### Deliverables:

- The CNSOPB, DFO and ECCC will collaborate on initiatives and governance structures developed under the *Oceans Act*.
- The CNSOPB, DFO and ECCC will collaborate in support of the planning, establishment and ongoing management of protected and conserved areas in DFO Maritimes and Gulf Regions.
- The CNSOPB, DFO and ECCC will collaborate on the federal bioregional Marine Conservation Network processes.
- ECCC is committed to ongoing participation in migratory bird monitoring within MPAs and more broadly within the bioregion, by way of at-sea surveys (i.e. air and vessel-based) and telemetry data in support of evidence-based planning.

Timing: Ongoing

**Project Team Leaders:**

Luke Gaulton (DFO Maritimes)  
Richard Ruest (DFO Gulf)  
Dena Murphy (CNSOPB)  
Becky Whittam (ECCC)

**Project Team Resources:**

Glen Herbert (DFO Maritimes)  
Carole Godin (DFO Gulf)  
Karel Allard (ECCC)  
Elizabeth MacDonald (CNSOPB)

**Project 4 – Spill Preparedness and Oversight****Project Description:**

ECCC, DFO and CNSOPB have independent but related mandates regarding preparedness and oversight to environmental emergencies related to offshore activities. This project facilitates the exchange of information to ensure a coordinated approach.

**Deliverables:**

- Finalize the update to the ECCC-CNSOPB MOU Annex A: Cooperation Concerning Environmental Emergencies to account for the Spill Treating Agents Offshore Regime and other coordination activities as necessary.

**Timing:** Q1 2025

**Project Team Leaders:**

Dena Murphy (CNSOPB)  
Matthieu Dussault (ECCC)

**Project Team Resources:**

Courtney Raymond (ECCC)  
Stuart Lee (ECCC)  
Elizabeth MacDonald (CNSOPB)

**Project 5 - Offshore Renewable Energy Planning and Regulation****Project Description:**

In April 2022, the federal and provincial governments announced an intent to expand the CNSOPB's mandate to include the regulation of offshore renewable energy, and since that time, both the federal and provincial governments have passed Bills to amend the Accord Acts to establish this regulatory framework. The Bills are expected to come into force in early 2025, at

which time the CNSOPB's mandate will officially be expanded. The CNSOPB, DFO and ECCC are all preparing their respective organizations for future offshore renewable energy projects.

**Deliverables:**

- All parties will review the MOU to identify any potential changes that may be needed for offshore renewable energy.
- The CNSOPB, DFO and ECCC will provide expert advice related to their respective mandates on the implementation of the recommendations within the Regional Assessment of Offshore Wind Development in Nova Scotia.
- The CNSOPB will lead, in collaboration with DFO and ECCC, the development of Offshore Wind Site Assessment Guidelines.
- The CNSOPB is responsible for running the Call for Bids process for offshore wind and will collaborate with and seek input from DFO and ECCC.
- The CNSOPB may receive applications for offshore wind site assessment in the 2025 calendar year. If so, the CNSOPB will collaborate with DFO and ECCC in the review of any applications received with a goal of streamlining regulatory reviews.
- DFO will provide regular updates to the CNSOPB and ECCC on its marine planning, science and regulatory program activities related to offshore wind.
- All parties will work together, where appropriate, on matters related to the preparation for offshore renewable energy and keep each other informed of the activities of their respective agencies in this regard.
- The CNSOPB will participate in DFO's Canadian Science Advisory Secretariat processes related to offshore wind.

**Timing:** Ongoing

**Project Team Leaders:**

Dena Murphy (CNSOPB)  
Richard Ruest (DFO Gulf)  
Luke Gaulton (DFO Maritimes)  
Michael Hingston (ECCC)

**Project Team Resources:**

Elizabeth MacDonald (CNSOPB)  
Janice Ray (CNSOPB)

Glen Herbert (DFO Maritimes)  
Monik Richard (DFO Gulf)  
Mike Wambolt (DFO Maritimes)  
Kim Mawhinney (ECCC)

### **Project 6 - Reporting on Progress**

#### Project Description:

The Implementation Committee Members will keep the MOU Executive Committee signatories advised of the status of projects. An annual progress report will be finalized by December 15, 2025.

#### Deliverables:

- Operations staff of DFO, ECCC, and CNSOPB will discuss each deliverable and provide updates regarding progress and resourcing throughout the year.
- The 2025 Progress Report will be provided to the Executive Committee.

Timing: Annual Report - December 15, 2025

#### Project Team Leader:

Dena Murphy (CNSOPB)

#### Project Team Resources:

Elizabeth MacDonald (CNSOPB)

Jennifer Mullane (ECCC)

Wendy Williams (DFO Maritimes)

Alain Hebert (DFO Gulf)

**Approvals:**

Whereas the parties have signed this MOU on the dates indicated below.

for: **Canada-Nova Scotia Offshore Petroleum Board**

*Christine Bonnell-Eisnor*

6-Mar-25

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Christine Bonnell-Eisnor  
Chief Executive Officer

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Date

for: **Environment and Climate Change Canada**

**Cormier, Richard P**

Digitally signed by Cormier, Richard P  
Date: 2025.02.25 10:39:04 -04'00'

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Richard Cormier  
Associate Regional Director General  
East and Central Region

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Date

for: **Fisheries and Oceans Canada**

*Céline Gaudet*

**FEB 28 2025**

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Céline Gaudet  
Regional Director-General (Gulf Region)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

and

*Doug Wentzel*

**FEB 27 2025**

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Doug Wentzel  
Regional Director-General (Maritimes Region)

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Date

