



Government
of Canada

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March 6, 2025

Barbara Pike

Canada-Nova Scotia Offshore Energy Regulator

bpik@cnsoepb.ns.ca

Dear Barbara Pike:

We are writing to provide clarity and direction to the Canada-Nova Scotia Offshore Energy Regulator (CNSOER) with respect to roles and responsibilities, and the intended steps, for administering a call for bids process for offshore renewable energy (ORE) projects under the *Canada-Nova Scotia Offshore Petroleum Resources Accord Implementation and Offshore Renewable Energy Management Act* and the *Canada-Nova Scotia Offshore Petroleum Resources Accord Implementation and Offshore Renewable Energy Management (Nova Scotia) Act* (the Acts). Enclosed to this letter is a signed joint-ministerial directive to this effect.

One of the main objectives in amending the Acts was to expand the mandate of the CNSOER to include the regulation of ORE, including offshore wind energy. The amendments set out the high-level framework for the regulation of ORE, with Part II outlining the decision-making process for the issuance of submerged land licences. When developing the legislation, governments determined that the federal and provincial ministers would have more oversight with respect to the call for bids process and be the final-decision makers on the issuance of a submerged land licence. To achieve this, the CNSOER may make a recommendation to the ministers to initiate a call for bids for ORE and to issue a submerged land licence for use of the seabed. Both ministers will need to approve the recommendation under a two-turn-key approach for that recommendation to be adopted. The authority for this decision-making is outlined in sections 38.1-38.3 and 38(A) to (C) of the respective Acts.

This is distinct from the approach taken for petroleum licences and the change was taken for two main reasons. First, unlike petroleum, ORE projects will be more closely integrated into provincial electricity markets and infrastructure, and there was a need to connect the land-tenure process with the Government of Nova Scotia's future priorities regarding the broader offshore wind industry and its electricity sector goals. Second, the geographic scope of offshore wind projects is also much larger than offshore petroleum projects and



therefore the possibility of interaction with other users of the sea is greater. Providing the ministers with a formal decision-making role ensures the pace of development matches Nova Scotia's priorities and allows for governments to undertake spatial planning work on where projects could potentially be located.

We understand that work on developing a call for bids process has been underway between officials from our departments and the CNSOER since fall 2023 and that work is progressing well. The steps, and who is responsible for each, are outlined in the enclosed land-tenure flow chart. Governments are finalizing the planning work on the identification of Wind Energy Areas, an important step that will inform Governments' objectives for the first call for bids. The next step is for Governments to issue Strategic Direction to the CNSOER, which will initiate a call for bids and clearly outline Governments' expectations for the process. As such, we wanted to provide the joint-ministerial directive enclosed, pursuant to paragraph 41(1)(a.1) of the *Canada-Nova Scotia Offshore Petroleum Resources Accord Implementation and Offshore Renewable Energy Management Act* and paragraph 41(1)(aa) the *Canada-Nova Scotia Offshore Petroleum Resources Accord Implementation and Offshore Renewable Energy Management (Nova Scotia) Act*, to affirm that ministers must issue strategic direction to the CNSOER prior to it making a recommendation to launch a call for bids under sections 93 and 96 of the respective Act. Paragraphs 41(1)(a.1) and 41(1)(aa) allow the federal minister and provincial minister to issue written joint directives to the CNSOER in relation to offshore renewable energy recommendations and we think the joint directive is useful at the current stage of ORE development to focus the work of the CNSOER in areas that both levels of government wish to prioritize.

Until Strategic Direction is issued, we expect that the CNSOER will continue to collaborate with Government on the land tenure process established in collaboration with the CNSOER. This continued collaboration is critical to a successful process, and to Nova Scotia's goals of launching Call for Bids for offshore wind projects in 2025 and licensing an equivalent of up to 5 gigawatts of seabed rights by 2030 are met. We expect Strategic Direction for the 2025 Call for Bids to be provided to the CNSOER some time in summer 2025.

We thank you for your prompt action on this matter and are keen to continue moving forward in a concerted manner.

Yours sincerely,

A blue ink signature of Jonathan Wilkinson, written in a cursive style.

The Honourable Jonathan Wilkinson, P.C., M.P.
Minister of Energy and Natural Resources
Government of Canada

A blue ink signature of Trevor Boudreau, written in a cursive style.

The Honourable Trevor Boudreau, M.L.A.
Minister of Energy
Government of Nova Scotia

Attachments: 2

c.c.: Christine Bonnell-Eisnor
Canada-Nova Scotia Offshore Energy Regulator
cbonnell@cnsoer.ca

The Federal Minister and Provincial Minister, pursuant to paragraph 41(1)(a.1) of the *Canada-Nova Scotia Offshore Petroleum Resources Accord Implementation and Offshore Renewable Energy Management Act* and paragraph 41(1)(aa) of the *Canada-Nova Scotia Offshore Petroleum Resources Accord Implementation and Offshore Renewable Energy Management (Nova Scotia) Act*, hereby make the below joint Directive to the Canada-Nova Scotia Offshore Energy Regulator (the Regulator) regarding offshore renewable energy recommendations related to Call for Bids made pursuant to section 93 of the *Canada-Nova Scotia Offshore Petroleum Resources Accord Implementation and Offshore Renewable Energy Management Act* and section 96 of the *Canada-Nova Scotia Offshore Petroleum Resources Accord Implementation and Offshore Renewable Energy Management (Nova Scotia) Act*:

Before the Regulator exercises its power to make an offshore renewable energy recommendation to the Federal and Provincial Minister with respect to a Call for Bids, the Federal Minister and Provincial Minister must provide Strategic Direction to the Regulator respecting the details of the Call for Bids for the purposes of subsection 93(3) of the *Canada-Nova Scotia Offshore Petroleum Resources Accord Implementation and Offshore Renewable Energy Management Act* subsection 96(3) of the *Canada-Nova Scotia Offshore Petroleum Resources Accord Implementation and Offshore Renewable Energy Management (Nova Scotia) Act*.

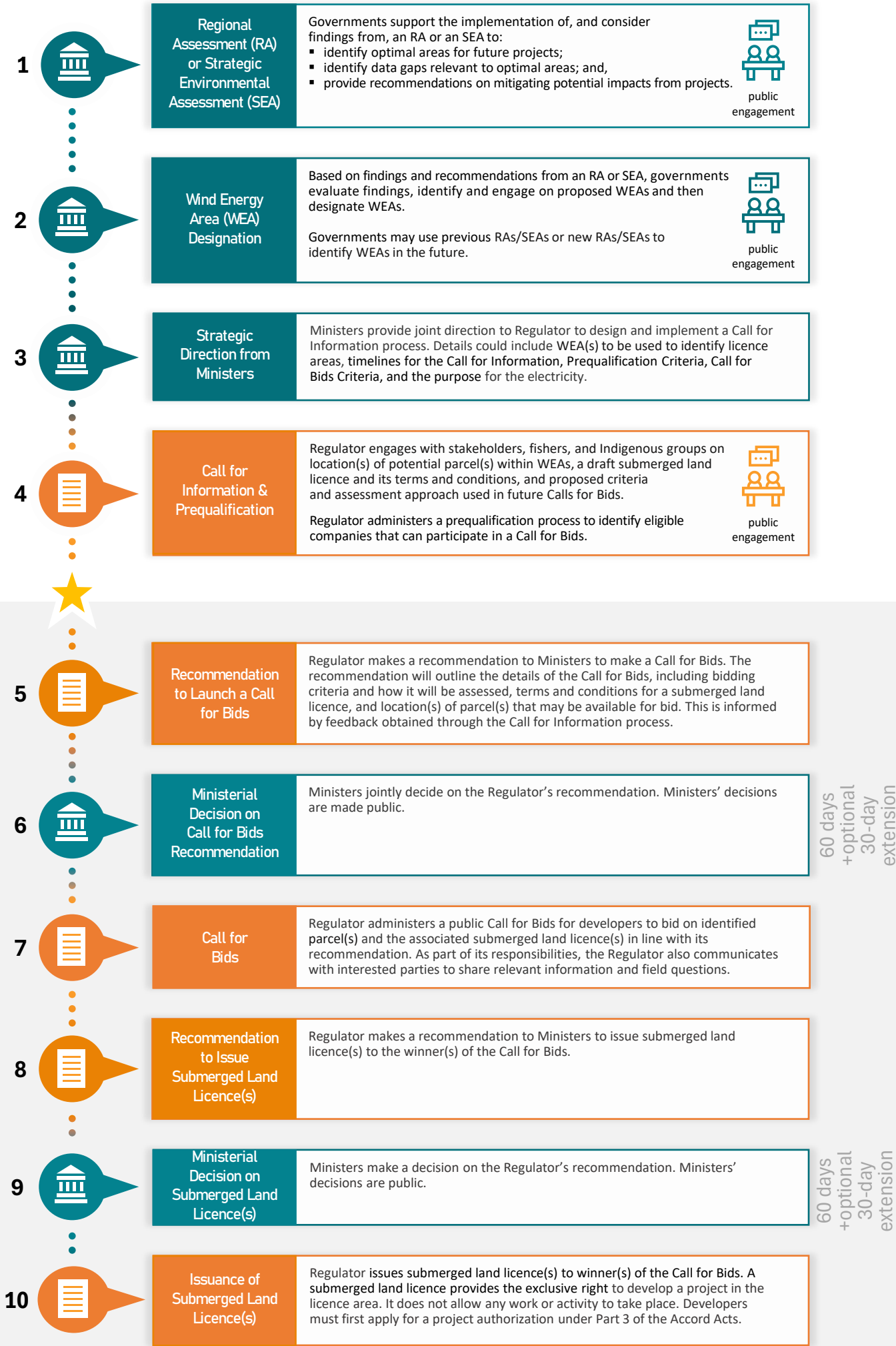


The Honourable Jonathan Wilkinson
Minister of Energy and Natural Resources
Canada



The Honourable Trevor Boudreau
Minister of Energy for Nova Scotia

Accord Acts Offshore Renewable Energy Land Tenure Process



Government-Led



Regulator-Led