



2023 WORK PLAN

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

CANADA-NOVA SCOTIA OFFSHORE PETROLEUM BOARD

FISHERIES AND OCEANS CANADA

AND

ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE CANADA

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 identified in 2023.

All of the oil and gas facilities in the Canada-Nova Scotia offshore area have been decommissioned and abandoned since 2020. There are no active exploration licences and no oil and gas exploration planned for 2023. Therefore, the 2023 Work Plan is reflective of the low level of offshore oil and gas activity.

In April 2022, the provincial and federal governments announced the intention to start work to expand the CNSOPB's mandate to include the regulation of offshore renewable energy. Mandate expansion is not anticipated until sometime in 2024 with a potential first Call for Bids for offshore wind in the Canada-Nova Scotia offshore area in 2025. The CNSOPB has added a project to this Work Plan to collaborate with DFO and ECCC on offshore renewable energy transition planning.

Project 1 – Joint Priority Setting, Planning and Coordination

Project Description:

The CNSOPB, DFO and ECCC all have legislative and regulatory responsibilities related to petroleum activities offshore Nova Scotia. 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 joint 2023 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: Ongoing

Project Team Leaders:

Dena Murphy (CNSOPB)

Lyndsay Vidito (ECCC)

Wendy Williams (DFO Maritimes)

Alain Hebert (DFO Gulf)

Coordination Team:

Elizabeth MacDonald (CNSOPB)

Glen Herbert (DFO Maritimes)

Monik Richard (DFO Gulf)

Project 2 – Regulatory Activities

Project Description:

There are several ongoing activities that require regular collaborative work by the CNSOPB, ECCC and DFO in 2023 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), Joselyn Maclellan (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)
- The CNSOPB will collaborate with ECCC and DFO on post abandonment monitoring as needed.
 - Team co-leads: Elizabeth MacDonald (CNSOPB), Rita Mroz (ECCC) and Mike Wambolt (DFO Maritimes)

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 and DFO will collaborate on initiatives and governance structures developed under the *Oceans Act*.
- The CNSOPB and DFO will collaborate in support of the planning, management and conservation of the Gully MPA and the St Ann's Bank MPA, the Fundian Channel - Browns Bank Area of Interest (AOI), and existing *Fisheries Act* Marine Refuges, as appropriate. ECCC will actively participate in MPA and AOI Advisory Committee meetings.
- The CNSOPB, DFO and ECCC will continue to participate in the federal bioregional Marine Conservation Network development processes and processes for new AOIs and "Other Effective Area-Based Conservation Measures," including *Fisheries Act* Marine Refuges.
- 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:

Donald Humphrey (DFO Maritimes)
 Richard Ruest (DFO Gulf)
 Dena Murphy (CNSOPB)
 Jennyfer Tolley (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: Q2-Q3, 2023

Project Team Leaders:

Dena Murphy (CNSOPB)
Matthieu Dussault (ECCC)

Project Team Resources:

James Porter (ECCC)
Rob Ronconi (ECCC-CWS)
Elizabeth MacDonald (CNSOPB)

Project 5 – Offshore Renewable Energy Transition PlanningProject 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, governments have been moving forward with amendments to the legislation to establish the regulatory framework. Although the CNSOPB does not anticipate its mandate expansion until sometime in 2024, it is engaging in internal planning work to transition the organization to deliver on its new mandate. The CNSOPB envisions some early work that can be done in 2023 in collaboration with DFO and ECCC.

Deliverables:

- All parties will review the MOU to identify any potential changes that may be needed for 2024 when the CNSOPB's mandate is officially expanded.
- The CNSOPB, DFO and ECCC will provide expert advice related to their respective mandates on the work associated with 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.
- DFO will provide regulator updates to the CNSOPB and ECCC on its Marine Spatial Planning work that relates 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.

Timing: Ongoing

Project Team Leaders:

Dena Murphy (CNSOPB)
Donald Humphrey (DFO Maritimes)

Michael Hingston (ECCC)

Project Team Resources:

Elizabeth MacDonald (CNSOPB)

Glen Herbert (DFO Maritimes)

Monik Richard (DFO Gulf)

TBD (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 report will be finalized by December 15, 2023 on the previous year's progress under the MOU.

Deliverables:

- Mid-year status update for operations staff of DFO, ECCC, and CNSOPB will be conducted to discuss each deliverable and provide updates regarding progress and resourcing.
- Annual report to the Executive Committee.

Timing: Mid-Year Status Update - July 15, 2023

Annual Report - December 15, 2023

Project Team Leader:

Dena Murphy (CNSOPB)

Project Team Resources:

Elizabeth MacDonald (CNSOPB)

Marc-Antoine Giroux

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**

original signed

Ms. Christine Bonnell-Eisnor
Chief Executive Officer

3-Apr-23

Date

for: **Environment and Climate Change Canada**

original signed

Ms. Cherie Young
A/Associate Regional Director General
Atlantic and Quebec Regions

April 3, 2023

Date

for: **Fisheries and Oceans Canada**

original signed

Mr. Serge Doucet
Regional Director-General (Gulf Region)

April 3, 2023

Date

and

original signed

Mr. Doug Wentzell
Regional Director-General (Maritimes Region)

April 3, 2023

Date