

Regional Assessment of Offshore Wind Development in Nova Scotia Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) – Edition Two

Regional Assessment Process

The purpose of this document is to provide responses to frequently asked questions (FAQs) raised during the conduct of the Regional Assessment. New FAQ editions, addressing a variety of topics, will be posted regularly to the Registry throughout the Regional Assessment process.

Q: What is a Regional Assessment?

A:

- Regional Assessments are studies in areas of existing projects or anticipated development to inform future project impact assessments.
- Regional Assessments are meant to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the impact assessment process.
- Regional Assessments allow the Impact Assessment Agency of Canada to go beyond project-specific impact assessments to understand the regional context and provide a more comprehensive analyses to support future impact assessment decisions.

Q: What is a Regional Assessment used for?

A: A regional assessment can be used to inform and identify:

- A baseline against which to assess the incremental impact of a single project
- Thresholds to support future project decisions
- Standard mitigation measures for future projects
- Potential adverse and positive effects including on the rights and interests of Indigenous peoples and/or
- Guidance for land- or marine-use planning and other initiatives for managing cumulative effects that may be undertaken by various jurisdictions.

Q: Was the Regional Assessment for Offshore Wind Development requested by a wind developer?

A: No. The decision to do this Regional Assessment was made by the Minister of Environment and Climate Change.

Q: Who is doing this Regional Assessment?

A: This Regional Assessment is being completed by an independent Committee - 5 people who were appointed by the Minister. The goals, objectives and tasks for the Committee are detailed in their [Terms of Reference](#). Read about the Committee members here: <https://www.iaac-aeic.gc.ca/050/evaluations/document/146980>.

Q: What other government departments are involved in this Regional Assessment?

A: There are 3 partnering agencies involved in the Regional Assessment: NS Department of Natural Resources and Renewables, Natural Resources Canada, and the Impact Assessment Agency. However, as part of the Regional Assessment process the Committee engages with all relevant government departments at federal, provincial and municipal levels.

Q: How is the Committee engaging with the participants during the Regional Assessment?

A: The Committee held four virtual public engagement sessions in July 2023. Following this, the 2023 fall engagement program involved 15 public open house events in NS, NB and PEI, and meetings with interested Chiefs and Councils. Additional meetings were also held with NGOs, fisheries associations, industry developers, and various other participants. Feedback and input from the fall engagement program was documented in a [What We Heard Summary](#) document and posted to the Registry.

The Committee also engages with three Advisory Groups, created to provide expertise to the Committee on various topics relevant to the Regional Assessment: Fisheries Advisory Group; Indigenous Knowledge Advisory Group; and Scientific Information and Community Knowledge Advisory Group.

The spring engagement program was initiated in April 2024 and will include public open house events and virtual sessions, as well as information sessions at Indigenous communities. Locations and times for public open houses are provided on the Registry page under [Information Sessions](#).

Q: Will the Committee produce a report?

A: The Committee completed an [Interim Report](#) on March 23, 2024. A *draft* Final Report will be posted on the Registry for a 60-day public comment period on September 23, 2024. All comments will be reviewed, and the Report will be updated as necessary. The Final Report will be delivered to Ministers on January 23, 2025. The Final Report will also be posted to the [Registry](#).

Q: Where can I learn more?

A:

- Updates, information, and documents can be found on the RA Registry page here: <https://www.iaac-aeic.gc.ca/050/evaluations/proj/83514>.
- Questions and input can be submitted directly to the Regional Assessment email: RegionalAssessmentRequest@iaac-aeic.gc.ca or through the Public Comment Tool on the Registry page: <https://www.iaac-aeic.gc.ca/050/evaluations/proj/83514>
- You can also follow us on Twitter: @IAAC_AEIC #OffshoreW