

June 17, 2024

**ELECTRONIC MAIL**

**To:** Mr. Hingston

**Subject: Request for Information - Committee for the Regional Assessment of Offshore Wind Development in Nova Scotia**

Dear Mr. Hingston

The federal Ministers of *Environment and Climate Change* and of *Energy and Natural Resources* and the provincial Minister of *Natural Resources and Renewables* established a Committee, pursuant to subsection 93(1) of the *Impact Assessment Act* (IAA), to conduct the Regional Assessment of Offshore Wind Development in Nova Scotia.

On March 23, 2023, Canada and Nova Scotia entered into an Agreement to Conduct a Regional Assessment of Offshore Wind Development in Nova Scotia (the Agreement) including an Appendix A Terms of Reference (TOR) which was posted on the Canadian Impact Assessment Registry site: [Regional Assessment of Offshore Wind Development in Nova Scotia \(iaac-aeic.gc.ca\)](https://iaac-aeic.gc.ca).

In accordance with section 5 of the Committee's Agreement, and with section 23 of the IAA, the Committee can request specialist or expert information or knowledge, from any department or agency<sup>1</sup>, which must then be made available to the Committee. This may include providing information, knowledge or advice related to any matter relevant to the Regional Assessment.

There Committee is seeking your feedback on:

- 1) Impact Producing Factors and appropriate mitigation measures;**
- 2) Potential Future Development Areas (PFDA) (as proposed in the Interim Report);**
- 3) Cumulative Effects; and**
- 4) Responses to Specific Questions**

- 1) Impact Producing Factors (IPFs)

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<sup>1</sup> All subsequent references to department mean department or agency.

For this Regional Assessment, IPFs identify those factors associated with an offshore wind (OSW) development project that may cause impacts to valued physical, biological, economic or cultural components.

The Committee is now seeking input on IPFs that may impact areas involving ECCC's area of responsibility/specialisation. In an attempt to simplify both our analysis and organize our request for information, we have considered the topic by the various stages of OSW development activity (pre-construction, construction, operations and maintenance and decommissioning). Table 1 (attached) includes a non-exhaustive list of the potential IPFs related to aerofauna and provides a summary of the Committee's understanding of the potential impact or issue, known mitigation and relevant monitoring measures with a supporting literature review. Table 2 (attached) uses the same format for IPF's unrelated to aerofauna.

We are also seeking advice on the relationship between OSW development and climate change, air quality and greenhouse gases (GHGs).

Please note that Table 1 and Table 2 are to be used as a guide to support your responses to the following questions/requests:

- a) Please expand and/or comment on the characterisation of impacts to aerofauna, air quality and GHGs, and Climate Change;
- b) Please provide additional issues not listed that you see as relevant to aerofauna, air quality and GHGs and Climate Change;
- c) Please identify known data gaps related to an issue, (i.e., what is poorly understood about the IPF and its potential interaction(s) on valued components during the OSW project phases within the Study Area), and any efforts currently underway within ECCC/CWS or otherwise to fill these data gaps;
- d) Please expand and/or comment on the identified mitigation and monitoring measures; and
- e) Please inform us of any current, planned, or recommended regulations or guidelines related to the issue.

Responses to the above questions can be provided in tabulated or written form. Should you wish to reference aspects of Table 1 in your response, please identify the relevant phase(s) of OSW development, i.e., PC = Pre-Construction, C = Construction, O = Operation and D = Decommissioning, followed by the numerical reference of the IPF.

## 2) Potential Future Development Areas (PFDA's)

Pursuant to the Agreement, the Committee submitted an Interim Report to Ministers on March 22, 2024 (<https://iaac-aeic.gc.ca/050/evaluations/document/156046?culture=en-CA>) that identified six PFDAs. The PFDAs were based on the Committee's assessment of the data reviewed and information obtained from the engagement process to that point in time, are considered preliminary and may be refined as work on the final draft report for the Regional Assessment proceeds.

While many of the IPFs and associated issues and impacts apply broadly to OSW development in general, the Committee also requests that the information provided in response to (1) above be considered with specific reference to the PFDAs.

### 3) Cumulative Effects Assessment

The TOR specifically requires the Committee to consider the potential cumulative effects of OSW development as quoted below:

- OSW development in combination with other physical activities that have been, or will be carried out;
- Providing information, knowledge and analysis related to environmental, health, social and economic conditions, and the potential effects (including cumulative effects) of offshore wind development activities in the Study Area, with consideration of Indigenous knowledge, community knowledge, and scientific information throughout; and
- Providing recommendations on potential approaches and measures to address regional scale and non-project specific (including cumulative) effects. This may include potential policy, plan, program, regulatory or other initiatives by governments or other relevant parties.

The Committee requests that ECCC's response on cumulative effects consider the TOR wording, with particular reference to the PFDAs and any work either currently underway or planned (within ECCC/CWS or otherwise) that is considered relevant to the assessment of cumulative effects.

#### Responses to Specific Questions

To the extent not already included in the above, the Committee would also appreciate responses to the following specific issues/questions:

- a) Is the Monarch Butterfly a concern in the proposed PFDAs?
- b) Are there any proposed Federally Protected and Special Areas that could impact the development of OSW in Nova Scotia?

- c) The positive or negative effects of OSW on Air Quality and Greenhouse Gases (GHGs)?
- d) The negative impacts from extreme weather events (including wind, waves and precipitation) to be reasonably anticipated over the expected 25-to-30-year life cycle of an operating wind farm.
- e) The extent to which OSW development activities in the Study Area and the potential effects would hinder or contribute to the federal governments' ability to meet their environmental obligations and commitments in respect of climate change.
- f) Details of current, anticipated or required research projects that would help address data gaps within the Study Area?

Please include in your response to any of the above matters reference to any applicable legislation, regulation or policy directive pertaining to the topic.

The Committee is working to a timeline that requires this information as soon as reasonably possible, ideally by July 31, 2024. In the interest of trying to meet this target date the Committee is available to meet with the department and to clarify, and possibly prioritize, the information requested.

As per the Committee's standard practice, the information submitted to this Request for Advice will be made public on the Canadian Impact Assessment Registry, unless otherwise requested to remain confidential. The Committee's [Confidentiality Procedure \(iaac-aeic.gc.ca\)](https://www.iaac-aeic.gc.ca/ConfidentialityProcedure) outlines the procedure in place regarding confidential information.

Thank-you for your assistance and support as we work toward the submission of our draft final report. The Committee can be reached at [OffshoreWindNS-EolienneExtracotiereNE@iaac-aeic.gc.ca](mailto:OffshoreWindNS-EolienneExtracotiereNE@iaac-aeic.gc.ca).

Sincerely,

The Committee for the Regional Assessment of Offshore Wind Development in Nova Scotia

*Attachments:*

- Advice Record
- RA ECCC Communication Table 1
- RA ECCC Communication Table 2
- RA ECCC Communication Table 3

**ATTACHMENT: DATE**

**Advice Record**

**Response due by: July 31, 2024**

Regional Assessment of Offshore Wind Development in Nova Scotia

Department/Agency	Environment and Climate Change Canada
Lead Contact	Michael Hingston
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Name of Departmental /  
Agency Responder

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Title of Responder

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Date