



2021 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, which may be identified during the course of the 2021 calendar year.

Decommissioning and abandonment of the oil and gas facilities in the Canada-Nova Scotia offshore area was completed in 2020 and no oil and gas exploration is currently planned for 2021. Therefore, the 2021 Work Plan is reflective of the low level of offshore activity and two longstanding MOU projects, Environmental Effects Monitoring and Ocean Disposal, have been deferred for consideration in future work plans should the level of offshore activity increase.

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 2021 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)
 Lisa Fougere (ECCC)
 Rhea King (DFO Maritimes)
 Alain Hebert (DFO Gulf)

Coordination Team:

Elizabeth MacDonald (CNSOPB)
 Mike Wambolt (DFO Maritimes)
 Jaclyn Poole (ECCC)
 Jean-Francois Mallet (DFO Gulf)

Project 2 - Environmental Assessment

Project Description:

The Work Plan signatories share an interest in improving the environmental assessment (EA) process, such that impacts are understood and managed effectively and efficiently. The exchange of expertise and information is fundamental to the conduct of an EA that fulfills CNSOPB, DFO and ECCC obligations. This project will facilitate that exchange and ensure appropriate linkages are made to other relevant Work Plan items.

Strategic Environmental Assessments (SEAs) are undertaken on an as-needed basis by the CNSOPB, and help to inform the Call for Bids process. DFO and ECCC will work collaboratively with the CNSOPB during the SEA preparation process.

Deliverables:

- The CNSOPB is currently developing an SEA of the Western Scotian Shelf and Slope. In 2021, the CNSOPB will conduct another SEA. DFO and ECCC will provide advice to the CNSOPB on these SEAs.
- DFO and ECCC will provide expert advice to the CNSOPB on scoping for and review of any project-specific EAs that may be initiated in 2021.

Timing: Ongoing

Project Team Leader:

Elizabeth MacDonald (CNSOPB)

Project Team Resources:

Michael Hingston (ECCC)
 Mike Wambolt (DFO Maritimes)

Glen Herbert (DFO Maritimes)
Chris Burbidge (DFO Maritimes)

Project 3 – Regulatory Activities

Project Description:

There are several ongoing activities that require regular collaborative work by the CNSOPB, ECCC and DFO in 2021 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), Diane Amirault-Langlais (DFO Gulf), Julie McKnight (ECCC), Elizabeth MacDonald (CNSOPB).
- In order to be prepared should exploration or other activities commence, ECCC and the CNSOPB will collaborate on development of advice regarding avoidance and enhanced mitigation of impacts on migratory birds, e.g. Leach's Storm Petrel (COSEWIC assessed as Threatened in November 2020). Specifically, ECCC will provide general guidelines for systematic monitoring protocols that will need to be implemented during any offshore activities. The CNSOPB will develop protocols, in consultation with ECCC, if offshore activities are planned. Protocols will be implemented by trained and experienced observers to search for, collect and document the occurrence of stranded birds during any offshore activities.
 - Team co-leads: Sue Abbott (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), Mike Wambolt (DFO Maritimes), Elizabeth MacDonald (CNSOPB)
- Continued collaboration and input into research objectives of various funding groups, such as Environmental Studies Research Funds (ESRF) and the Program of Energy and Research Development (PERD).
 - Team co-leads: Mike Wambolt (DFO Maritimes), Dena Murphy (CNSOPB), Jean-Francois Mallet (DFO Gulf)

Timing: Ongoing.

Project 4 – Marine Planning and Conservation

Project Description:

Under the *Oceans Act*, the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans has the responsibility to lead and facilitate the development and implementation of integrated management plans for all marine waters and a national network of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs). Marine Spatial Planning is foundational to multiple applications (e.g. conservation Network planning, protected area design, implementation and management, as well as broader scale initiatives to mitigate pressures). The Minister is also responsible for leading efforts to reach Canada's marine conservation targets. 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, such as the Regional Oceans Coordination Table.
- The CNSOPB and DFO will collaborate in support of the planning, management and conservation of the Gully MPA, the St. Ann's Bank MPA, and the Fundian Channel - Browns Bank Area of Interest (AOI). ECCC will actively participate in MPA Advisory Committee meetings, specifically for Gully MPA.
- The CNSOPB and ECCC will continue to participate in the federal bioregional marine protected area network development processes, including processes for new AOIs and "Other Effective Area-Based Conservation Measures", with focus on identified areas.
- 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:

Wendy Williams (DFO Maritimes)

Richard Ruest (DFO Gulf)

Elizabeth MacDonald (CNSOPB)

Project Team Resources:

Glen Herbert (DFO Maritimes)

Carole Godin (DFO Gulf)

Karel Allard (ECCC)

Project 5 – 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:

- Develop a summary document to clarify mandates, jurisdictions and roles for ECCC, DFO and the CNSOPB regarding offshore spills and other relevant incidents. Timing Q4 2021.
- 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 to include additional comments by ECCC legal and senior management review. Timing Q2-Q3 2021.

Timing: Ongoing unless otherwise indicated.

Project Team Leaders:

Dena Murphy (CNSOPB)
Matthieu Dussault (ECCC)

Project Team Resources:

James Porter (ECCC)
Glen Herbert (DFO)
Elizabeth MacDonald (CNSOPB)

Project 6 – Framework for Oil Spill Fate and Effects MonitoringProject Description:

During a major spill incident, it is important to monitor both the fate of the oil and environmental effects. The purpose of this project is to develop a framework for the three agencies to monitor the fate and effects of the spill. The objective of the on-site operational science may be to support the mission to aid the response effort by gaining a better understanding of the fate and behavior of the spilled material, to support regulatory enforcement, and/or environmental damage assessment and restoration concerns. Although this project will focus on offshore activities, a national effort will be made, so that it applies to various sectors.

Upon completion of ECCC's study to assess the current state-of-the-art on-site and laboratory scientific analysis to support the Department mission at an oil spill, consideration will be given to expanding the spill monitoring framework to include further detailed descriptions of the roles and requirements by federal agencies to provide operational on-site scientific support, including sampling and analysis related to a spill.

Deliverables:

- Continued discussions of issues/areas requiring collaborative work and addressing identified gaps. Timing: Q4 2021.
- Finalize the framework document describing how the three organizations will work together and an outline of the types of information to be collected, and available equipment and resources. Timing: Q4 2021.

Timing: Q4 2021.

Project Team Leaders:

Stephane Leblanc (ECCC-NEEC)
Tom King (DFO-COOPER)
Elizabeth MacDonald (CNSOPB)

Project 7 - Reporting on ProgressProject 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, 2021 on the previous year's progress under the MOU.

Deliverables:

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

Timing: Mid-Year Meeting – July 15, 2021
Annual Report - December 15, 2021

Project Team Leader:

Dena Murphy (CNSOPB)

Project Team Resources:

Elizabeth MacDonald (CNSOPB)

Lisa Fougere (ECCC)

Rhea King (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

January 25, 2021

Christine Bonnell-Eisnor
Acting Chief Executive Officer

Date

for: **Environment and Climate Change Canada**



Geoffrey Mercer

Digitally signed by Geoffrey Mercer
Date: 2021.01.26 12:43:08 -04'00'

Date

Mr. I.R Geoffrey Mercer
Regional Director General
Atlantic and Quebec Regions

for: **Fisheries and Oceans Canada**

Serge Doucet

FEV 1 2021
FEB

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

Date

and

Mary Ellen Valkenier

JAN 29 2021

Ms. Mary-Ellen Valkenier
Regional Director-General (Maritimes Region)

Date

For