

Regional Assessment of Oil and Gas Exploratory Drilling in the Canada-Nova Scotia Offshore Area
 Meeting Notes: CNSOER Fisheries Advisory Committee (FAC)
 Date: April 21, 2026

REGIONAL ASSESSMENT OF OIL AND GAS EXPLORATORY DRILLING IN THE CANADA-NOVA SCOTIA OFFSHORE AREA

MEETING NOTES - Participant Engagement Session

Date: April 21, 2026, 11:30am-12:30pm

Location: CNSOER Boardroom / Virtual

Attendees:

RA Team - C. Burgess, A. Walter, C. Coghill

Participants:

CNSOER Fisheries Advisory Committee

Agenda Item	Key Discussion Points
Presentation	RA Team presented a slide deck on the Regional Assessment of Exploratory Oil and Gas in the Offshore Area of Nova Scotia covering the following items: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - General overview of Regional Assessments - Regional Assessment of Exploratory Oil and Gas in the Offshore Area of Nova Scotia <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Pre-planning phase o Approach o Timeline o Next steps
Question and Answer Period	
Which Indigenous Groups have you engaged with?	Indigenous groups were engaged beginning in February 2026 (KMKNO, Sipekne'katik First Nation, and Millbrook First Nation). Notifications to off-reserve Indigenous groups are expected to go out today.
This RA will not be committee led? Who will lead this RA?	There is no Committee. The Minister decided that this RA will be led by the Impact Assessment Agency (IAAC) in collaboration with CNSOER, NS Department of Energy and Natural Resources Canada. The RA Team will consist of IAAC including members of the Consultation Division at IAAC
Will there be open houses for this RA like there was for the Offshore Wind RA?	No – the Offshore Wind RA required an extensive education component and the public open houses created an opportunity to do that. Exploratory drilling is not a new activity in NS and is short in duration with a smaller footprint. The RA timeline and scope of public engagement reflect that. Meetings will be held with participants and with Indigenous groups. General outreach and information sharing will be done via the RA Registry site.
General Comment: The fishing industry is busy and may not have the capacity to review the information and provide	Noted. The RA Team acknowledges that fishers are very busy and may not have the capacity to be able to fully participate. The RA Team will make themselves available to the FAC as needed. Suggested that the RA Team provide an update at the next FAC meeting in early July.

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feedback or they may be slow to provide their feedback. They don't have the resources or capacity to fully participate.	Action: CNSOER to confirm attendance at July FAC meeting
Does NS have a one-project-one review agreement in place?	NS has signed a co-operation agreement with IAAC, and this was one of the components of that agreement.
Once the RA is done, does the drilling begin?	Timelines are unknown for now. The RA may consider a potential exclusion regulation (similar to the 2020 NL RA) and the Minister will make that decision based on the information in the RA. An exclusion regulation, if made, will then require a period of consultation, and the regulation will then have to be developed. Even with an exclusion regulation, proponents must adhere to the regulatory authorization application process under the CNSOER, and the timeline associated with that process.
Will the Study Area be part of the TOR?	Yes, the proposed Study Area is in the draft Terms of Reference expected to be released later in May 2026 for public comment. The public comment period will be 20 calendar days.
We are hoping for a focused RA.	Yes, this RA will be focused and not as detailed as the offshore wind RA – the activity timeline and footprint are significantly smaller and effects and mitigation are well known. IAAC will not be asking for information from Federal Authorities, and there will be no GIS platform (the data already resides in various locations). The process and the report will focus on the NS context.