

REGIONAL ASSESSMENT OF OFFSHORE OIL AND GAS EXPLORATORY DRILLING EAST OF NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR Technical Advisory Group (TAG) Sessions, September 2019: GIS Engagement Activity / Meeting Notes Finalized: October 28, 2019		
Date and Time / Duration	Wednesday, September 11, 2019 9:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. NDT	
Location	Conference Centre, Memorial University's Signal Hill Campus, St. John's, NL	
Organization(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BHP • BP • Canada – Nova Scotia Offshore Petroleum Board (C-NSOPB) • Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers (CAPP) • Department of Fisheries and Land Resources, Government of Newfoundland and Labrador (FLR) • Eastern Canada Response Corporation (ECRC-SIMEC) • Ecology Action Centre (EAC) • Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC) • Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) • Fish, Food and Allied Workers-Unifor (FFAW-Unifor) • Husky • Kwilmu'kw Maw-klusuaqn Negotiation Office (KMKNO) • Marine Institute of Memorial University (MI) • Mi'gmawe'l Tplu'taqnn Incorporated (MTI) • Mi'kmaq Conservation Group (MCG) • Nalcor - Oil and Gas • Newfoundland and Labrador Wildlife Foundation (NLWF) • Nunatisavut Government • NunatuKavut Community Council (NCC) • Ocean Choice International (OCI) • Oceans North • PGS • Resource Innovations (RI) /Newfoundland and Labrador Environmental Industry Association (NEIA) • Sierra Club of Canada Foundation • Stantec Ltd. • Wolastoqey Nation in New Brunswick (WNNB) 	
Participants (External)	<u>In-person:</u> Steve Bettles, Husky Andrew Bouzan, NLWF Paul Brett, MI Marcy Cloud, MTI Geoff Coughlan, MI Julie Diamond, DFO Kimberley Keats, DFO Robyn Lee, FFAW-Unifor Derek Peters, KMKNO Bobbi Rees, FLR	<u>Video/teleconference:</u> Susanna Fuller, Oceans North Thomas Herbreteau, WNNB Mike Kofahl, ECE Law Narmina Lovely, BHP Keith MacMaster, EAC Jennifer Matthews, CAPP Jason Norman, PGS Stanley Oliver, NCC Paul Page, BP Anthony Pouw, ECCC

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	<p>Julie Reimer, Sierra Club of Canada Kelley Santos, MI Robert Starkes, ECRC-SIMEC Heather Ward, Stantec Mike White, Nalcor - Oil and Gas</p>	<p>Janice Ray, C-NSOPB Adrian Ricketts, RI/NEIA Claude Sheppard, Nunatsiavut Government Andrew Van Wychen, MCG Sarah Wong, ECCC Bryn Wood, NCC Laura Wright, C-NSOPB Janice Ray, C-NSOPB</p>
<p>Participants (Internal)</p>	<p><u>Committee Members:</u> Gerald Anderson Garth Bangay Wes Foote Maureen Murphy Rustad Keith Storey</p>	<p><u>Regional Assessment Task Team:</u> <i>Impact Assessment Agency of Canada</i> Steve Bonnell Virginia Crawford Jeff Janes Erin Stapleton</p> <p><u>Contractor:</u> Corey Tucker, ICI Innovations</p>
<p>Record of Discussion</p>	<p>Available environmental datasets/information sources and data gaps</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Indigenous Knowledge (IK) will be included in the GIS decision support system where IK knowledge is made available, and is applicable to the Regional Assessment. 2. Local knowledge of harvesters is important to include in the system, where that knowledge is mappable. 3. Recommended potential datasets/sources note during discussion: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ World Database on Protected Areas (WDPA) – subscription ○ Environmentally and biologically significant areas (EBSAs) ○ Marine Protected Areas ○ Spawning areas / seasonal sensitivities ○ OneMap as a possible source of environmental data ○ Global Fishing Watch (live data) ○ Oceanographic and benthic data available from multiple sources ○ Subsea seeps ○ Data on marine soundscapes if available ○ There was a satellite mapping of light sources referred to that we should include here as well ○ Marine traffic ○ Wind, wave and currents (operators have wave information as a requirement of Drilling and Production Regulations) ○ GOPS—ice ocean trackers through NRCAN is very valuable for wind, currents and ice predictions ○ Data from exploration drilling (e.g., effects of drill cuttings on benthos—publicly available on the C-NLOPB website) ○ Integrated Satellite Tracking of Polluters (ISTOP) ○ IUCN Red List of Threatened Species ○ Unexploded Ordinance data from Department of National Defence 	

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- ESRF Atlantic Salmon research should be integrated when available
 - Data on historic oil spills in Newfoundland and Labrador
 - EEM data and analysis
4. There was a cautionary note to be aware of the vintage and coverage/extent of certain data sets.
 5. ECCC has been providing datasets to the Task Team for use in the Regional Assessment and ECCC participants will go back to colleagues to figure out what else may be added from ECCC perspective (e.g., marine birds—identifying hot-spots in analysis).
 6. Since the demonstration given of the GIS decision-support system was an overview, participants were not clear on all layers currently in the GIS. It was suggested that a complete list of data in the GIS be circulated to participants so that it is clear what is already in the GIS, and easier to suggest datasets that are not on the list.
 7. It was observed that there are several federal government agencies (e.g., ECCC, DFO) initiatives/databases already developed/under development and that it is important that common datasets be used. Another participant highlighted the need for “relevance of the data” and to be critical in the use of data sets just because they are available. The Committee noted that integrating all these online tools/databases is not the objective of the Regional Assessment, but there is collaboration amongst the various agencies in terms of gathering data applicable to the Regional Assessment. The Task Team re-emphasized that the GIS and Regional Assessment cannot and will not be “all things to all people” – it is not a data repository, nor a data provider.
 8. The Task Team stated that any information that is relevant to the Regional Assessment will be included, noting that the focus is at the regional scale rather than site-specific data and analysis.
 9. The Task Team referred to Nalcor’s “NESS” tool as a good source for operators to get information on offshore conditions, petroleum resources, etc. which serves a different purpose than the Regional Assessment.

Presentation/analytical capabilities of the GIS decision-support system

1. The prototype was created on the Visual Command Centre (VCC) platform, but this won’t be the platform for the final product.
2. It was recommended that a reference list be included in the GIS to accompany the biological and ecological data.
3. From operator perspective, would like to be able download data into their own GIS environment, view statistics, query shapefiles, see update status/frequency in metadata, and carry out GIS analysis to determine risk.
4. It was noted that offering data for downloading for other purposes can cause problems in terms of version control.
5. Participants inquired if oil spill modelling would be included in the GIS. The Committee is considering this but noted the challenge of doing a regional-scale model for oil spills (e.g., no model location, no specific inputs, etc.).

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6. In terms of modelling capabilities, it would be useful to see sensitive areas and what would be affected. Extensive analysis over period of time could be useful, but may be out of scope for the Regional Assessment.
7. It was confirmed that the GIS would include latitude/longitude, which is important to harvesters.
8. It was confirmed that users of the GIS platform would be able to take screenshots of whatever the user is viewing onscreen.
9. Participants inquired if documents (e.g., protection plans, permits, etc.) could be brought up by clicking on an area. The Committee replied that those documents are project-specific, and that the scope of the Regional Assessment is broader.
10. It was suggested that the Committee look at NOFO (Norwegian Clean Seas Association for Operating Companies) for the type of information included in that particular system for oil spill response.
11. It was asked how/if a user could use this tool to conduct an analysis of cumulative effects. The Committee replied that cumulative effects is a difficult topic to grapple with, and hoped to get more insight on that particular topic from the TAG session on Friday (where the topic is Cumulative Effects).
12. Within the emergency response community, it is important to make information available by end of fiscal year through webmaster.

Nature and format of the eventual product submitted to the Minister

1. There was a question on how all of the data gets used to inform decisions going forward. The Committee said the intent of the GIS platform is to be able to put at someone's fingertips, the actual information needed to assess risk when considering exploration drilling in the study area.
2. The Committee stated they want this GIS tool to improve effectiveness and efficiency of the process, and believe it will further increase environmental protection.
3. It was asked at what stage in the decision-making process will the end product come into play (e.g., in deciding if a marine refuge should be excluded from a call for bids? after that?). The Committee replied that land tenure is not within the scope of the Regional Assessment, that the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) completed a few years ago informs the land nominations. The Regional Assessment informs decision-making around where and how exploration drilling can occur.
4. It was suggested that the Committee add a disclaimer to report/tool that consultation is still important. The GIS platform should not take away from consultation. Committee confirmed that they have heard the message regarding the importance of early and continued consultation, and that the Committee is considering mechanism for this to include in their recommendations. The Committee also hopes that the GIS improves consultation by increasing the public's mutual understanding of available knowledge.
5. There was concern that the Regional Assessment and the production of a GIS decision support tool as part of the end product are both new concepts – there is apprehension that the Minister will accept this approach in the timeline given.

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Housing, maintenance and updating of the GIS platform

1. Participants asked where the platform would be housed, how it would be maintained, and how frequently it would be updated. The Committee replied that it wants to hear the opinions/suggestions from the participants on those items.
2. One suggestion was that the Impact Assessment Agency (the Agency) *not* house the system, and that it was best for an outside group to house it on a cloud-based server instead (like the NESS tool), as they Agency should focus on process.
3. The Committee was advised to consult the Federal Government’s Cloud First Policy when considering where the platform should be housed.
4. It is critical that there is dedicated staff and sufficient budget allocated to ensure the longevity and utility of the system, and ensure continued confidence in using the system.
5. It was emphasized that the staffing and financial resources required to maintain and update the system cannot be under-estimated.
6. It is important that there be transparency around how data is updated, including the frequency.
7. Also important to not only update current data (e.g., as wells are dilled, add them to the database), but to continue to search for new and relevant data.

Other topics

Regional Assessment timeline

1. There was concern regarding the timeline for completion of the Regional Assessment, especially when considering the time it takes to develop a useful GIS tool. One participant felt the timeline should stay as is and there should not be a delay due to development of the GIS platform. Other participants feel that producing a quality end product (“getting it right”) is more important. The Committee stated that doing it right was more important to them than timeline.

Duty to Consult

1. Even if the Regional Assessment ends up concluding that certain drilling projects can proceed without a project-specific environmental assessment (EA), it does not remove obligation of the duty to consult. However, if participant funding is no longer issued (as it currently is for exploratory drilling project EAs) then this will present a challenge.

**Follow-up /
Action Items**

1. Task Team to distribute to participants a list of data currently in the GIS.

Prepared By:

Erin Stapleton, Virginia Crawford