

**REGIONAL ASSESSMENT OF OFFSHORE OIL AND GAS EXPLORATORY DRILLING
EAST OF NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR**

Technical Advisory Group (TAG) Session on *Commercial Fisheries*

September 9, 2019

**QUESTIONS AND ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION
PARTICIPANT INPUT FORM**

Name and Affiliation : Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers (CAPP)

1) Key fishing activities and areas

a) *Are there any key fishing activities, locations and times that you would like to identify, including any particularly important and sensitive areas within the Study Area (current and potential future fisheries)?*

- For identification of key fishing, other ocean uses and sensitive environmental areas for consideration in project EAs, the offshore petroleum industry (and their environmental consultants) rely on the most up-to-date (2015 or in some cases more recent) electronic DFO Oceans/Fisheries Atlas databases for graphic (i.e., GIS) displays re: Fisheries: fishing areas by species, gear type, fisheries closure areas, emerging fisheries; Offshore oil and gas activities: production licenses/discoveries, development wells, significant discoveries & exploration licenses, historic drilling activity, Other ocean activities: multi-species/oceanographic research, oceanographic/weather buoys, submarine cables, ocean disposal, etc; Sensitive environmental areas: vulnerable marine ecosystems (e.g., coral/sponge concentrations); critical habitat for marine at-risk species; Ecologically or Biologically Significant Areas (EBSAs)

2) Fisheries information and datasets

a) *Do you have any suggestions for fisheries related datasets and information sources that should be considered in the Regional Assessment (current and future fisheries)?*

b) *Do you have any suggestions for the analysis, use and presentation of fisheries data in the Regional Assessment?*

- As for other types of Environmental Assessments (EAs) (i.e., strategic, project EAs), the Regional Assessment (RA) should rely on the DFO Oceans/Fisheries Atlas database and other electronic databases maintained by DFO as the primary source of information on fisheries and ocean uses and environmentally sensitive areas. There is no need to re-invent the existing GIS Oceans/Fisheries databases, which DFO updates on an on-going basis. Standard graphical outputs are very user-friendly and readily allow for the overlay of petroleum-related facilities/activities. With the exception of the introduction of fisheries closures/exclusion areas/moratoria, fishing patterns for most species generally do not vary greatly from year to year.

3) Potential interactions between offshore exploratory drilling and fisheries

a) *In addition to the issues and interactions listed in the backgrounder for this session, are there any others that should be considered in the Regional Assessment?*

- The depiction of offshore petroleum activities (including drilling) on some maps (e.g., license maps) can be misleading. The exclusion zones around anchored (<2km) and dynamically-positioned (500m) drill rigs encompass relatively small ocean spaces over short time intervals (60-120 days) in offshore areas east of NL.
- Fisheries and other ocean interests can find offshore petroleum environmental effects monitoring information on the C-NLOPB website at <https://www.cnlopb.ca/environment/projects/>. Results of laboratory and field

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studies to date of drill waste suggest a minor potential for taint, toxicity or health effects; Environmental effects of 'other' drilling-related discharges and emissions were considered minor because: released volumes were low (bilge, grey water, treated sewage, etc.), infrequent or of short duration (flaring), similar to other vessels (lighting), relatively small on a regional or global scale (air) or within the range of other sources in the marine environment (underwater noise).

4) Existing and potential mitigation and follow-up requirements

- a) *In addition to the standard measures listed in the backgrounder for this session, do you have any suggestions for any required new or different ones?*
 - b) *Do you have any suggestions for issue- or situation-specific (certain activities, areas, times) measures that should be considered?*
- The RA team should clarify the distinction between the terms consultation (i.e., engagement) and communication (i.e., passing of information). Ideally, both should be two-way and on-going exchanges of information prior to, during, and following specific activities

5) Do you have any other input or recommendations that you would like to provide to the Committee on this topic?

- CAPP recommends that the RA include consideration of pre-moratorium (July 1992) fisheries catch data.
- In addition to catch data provided by DFO for the RA, CAPP recommends that the RA team approach fisheries interests to capture any traditional knowledge they may have on locations of at-risk fish species, spawning areas, female snow crab concentrations etc. based on their own experience or to avail of any proprietary geo-referenced catch data.
- CAPP supports and has supported an independent dispute resolution mechanism for compensation claims from fisheries interests for attributable or non-attributable damages.
- While potential effects of oil spills were discussed, it should be noted that currents are such that an oil plume as a result of a large spill or blowout is predicted to most likely travel eastward (i.e., off eastern NL banks/basins towards the mid-Atlantic) based on strategic and project EA model simulations.
- For transparency and validity, the RA team should invite CAPP, commercial and indigenous fisheries interests (and other relevant stakeholders and relevant subject matter experts) to participate on the assessment risk-ranking team.

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