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Canada-Nova Scotia Offshore Energy Regulator
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In response to CNSOER's request for suggestions and feedback on considerations for community benefits programs related to offshore wind development, NSFM offers the following comments.

- NSFM supports engagement with and consideration of Community Benefit Agreements (CBAs) for the Mi'kmaq of Nova Scotia, African Nova Scotian and African Descent communities, and other underrepresented and underserved groups as part of Offshore Wind (OSW) development.
- The Regional Assessment of OSW development in Nova Scotia (January 2025) acknowledges that OSW development will place pressure on municipal infrastructure and services.
 - Municipal costs associated with supporting these projects may exceed revenues generated through property tax assessments.
 - These costs may include investments in roads to support port and supply chain activities, as well as expanded water, wastewater, and emergency services required to accommodate workforce growth and increased service demand.
- NSFM encourages the Province to consider CBAs between OSW developers and affected municipalities as part of the Call for Bids criteria. CBAs are well-established in OSW developments in jurisdictions such as the United States and the United Kingdom, including Scotland.
 - The City of Salem, a municipality in Massachusetts, will receive long-term funding for police and fire services, workforce development, community events, and climate initiatives through a CBA.
 - Community councils in Aberdeenshire, Scotland, receive annual per-MW payments and contributions to community climate funds.
 - Similar models have been used in Nova Scotia's onshore wind developments through community benefit funds overseen by local committees with municipal representation.

- Examples of these agreements are publicly available through resources such as the Sabin Center for Climate Change Law's Community Benefits Agreement Database (Columbia Law School), as well as through organizations such as Local Energy Scotland.
- There is no standardized content for CBAs, as they are intended to be tailored to the local context, addressing both community and municipal needs. CBAs may include but are not limited to:
 - Upfront and annual payments over the life of a project;
 - payments tied to megawatts produced;
 - reimbursements of costs incurred by municipalities, including legal and consulting expenses;
 - contributions to community benefit funds; and,
 - non-monetary commitments (i.e. local hiring).
- NSFM recommends that the call for bids consider the proponents' willingness and financial capacity to enter into CBAs with affected municipalities to support municipal capacity, community acceptance, and the long-term viability of OSW development.
- NSFM recognizes that the commercial fishing and seafood sectors are critical to the economic, social, and cultural fabric of many municipalities in Nova Scotia.

In response to CNSOER's request for feedback on coexistence and fisheries' compensation, NSFM offers the following comments.

- Municipalities have expressed concern about how OSW development and fishing activities will co-exist, as fisheries are a primary livelihood for many residents.
- NSFM supports efforts to ensure that OSW development is planned and implemented in a way that minimizes disruption to existing ocean users, while providing clear, fair, and transparent mechanisms to address potential impacts.
- Municipalities encourage governments to continue engaging with affected fishing communities to identify potential conflicts, mitigation measures, and appropriate approaches to compensating fisheries.

Kind Regards,



Juanita Spencer,
CEO, Nova Scotia Federation of Municipalities