



International Offshore Petroleum
Environmental Regulators

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Annual General Meeting

6– 7 October 2025 | St Johns Newfoundland and Labrador Canada

Communique`

The International Offshore Petroleum Environmental Regulators (IOPER) began its Annual General Meeting (AGM) on 6 October 2025, hosted by the Canada-Newfoundland and Labrador Offshore Energy Regulator, Canada-Nova Scotia Offshore Energy Regulator and Canada Energy Regulator. The AGM was attended in person or virtually by offshore energy regulators from nearly all member countries, which include Australia (Chair), Canada, Ireland, Israel, The Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Mexico and the United Kingdom.

The IOPER AGM reaffirmed the importance of maintaining robust oil spill preparedness, particularly given the extended period since the last major spill event. Participants acknowledged the risk of complacency and emphasized the need for continued vigilance and collaboration across jurisdictions.

Work Groups - IOPER members considered updates from various Working Groups (WGs), with consensus that these forums have been valuable for sharing lessons learned and addressing common challenges. Notably:

- **Oil Spill Preparedness:** The Oil Spill Working Group (OSWG) transitioning to a network model, with NOPSEMA leading efforts to reinvigorate engagement and scope future focus areas. This reflects members observations that while prevention efforts have ensured no large-scale oil spill events have occurred in member jurisdictions, the potential for significant impacts remains and highlight the need for to remain vigilant and ensure appropriate levels of emergency preparedness for response operations are maintained to emergency response.
- **Decommissioning and Environmental Risk:** Members noted the complex challenge of developing universal standards to guide decommissioning outcomes, with decisions often made on a case-by-case basis. Common challenges in many jurisdictions highlighted the need to continue to share and promote good practices including understanding long-term effects of decommissioned wells and infrastructure, and the potential benefits of emerging technologies and more efficient decommissioning and removal of offshore infrastructure.
- **Consultation with Indigenous Peoples:** The WG continues to share insights across jurisdictions and members reflecting on the differing legislative frameworks. Broader community engagement may be considered in future scope of the WG given recent increase in public interest in some jurisdictions adding to already high level in others.



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- **Environmental Management of Carbon Capture and Storage (EMOCCS) Working Group**

The WG reported to make steady progress, hosting knowledge-sharing sessions on multiple topics. Members reaffirmed the value of the WG as a forum for sharing lessons learned, particularly benefiting from insights shared by jurisdictions with instances of operational CCS projects.

- **Ocean Noise Management:** In addition to the above WG's, members recognised the role and value of the Multi-National Ocean Noise Management by Environment Regulators (MONMER) which will continue as the primary forum by which members would engage. Upcoming presentations will focus on seismic impacts and marine science research

Stakeholder Perspective

Members invited an external guest to share their perspectives on offshore petroleum environmental management. Dr. Corey Morris, Research Scientist with Fisheries and Oceans Canada provided an overview on his research projects on “Seismic Effects on Snow Crab and Groundfish” and “Abandoned Wells” and shared his perspectives on the benefits of deep engagement and participation by stakeholder in environmental resource programs. Dr Morris summarized the results of the studies and, in particular, how cooperation with the petroleum industry, fisheries and academia contributed to a successful research program. He noted that early and ongoing deep engagement and involvement with the fishing industry informed the study design and was key in terms of stakeholder acceptance of study results. Members observed the benefits this approach could be taken to other research topics to build confidence and respect in the outcomes.

Offshore Renewables Roundtable

Participants discussed the environmental effects of wind projects, including discussion of mitigation for potential impacts on seabirds, perspectives of other stakeholders regarding offshore wind, e.g. fisheries organizations, Indigenous groups, ENGOs, etc. IOPER members recognised the role of the Global Offshore Wind Regulators Forum (GOWRF) and that some members represent regulators for petroleum and renewable energy, while in other countries there are separate regulators for these industries, or no current renewable energy sector.

Industry Engagement

Members were briefed on updates on several Joint Industry Programmes, including environmental genomics, marine life acoustics, and methane detection technologies. The session fostered valuable dialogue between regulators and industry on decommissioning challenges.



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Digital Systems and Transformation

Members shared experiences with digital upgrades and the integration of AI in regulatory processes. NOPSEMA provided an update on its digital platform enhancements. While jurisdictions are at different stages of digital transformation, there was consensus on the importance of innovation and efficiency through technology.

Future activities

A virtual mid-year meeting will be held on the 1 April 2026, and the Annual General meeting will be held in Aberdeen on the 14 – 16th September, to co-locate with IUF.