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## Request for Proposals

# Science and Socio-Economic Review of the Georges Bank Prohibition Area 2010-2021

RFP Release Date: May 12, 2021

Proposal Due Date: June 14, 2021 (5 pm ADT)

### Contact

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## 1. Introduction

OERA is an independent, not-for-profit research organization that funds research aimed at reducing risk and encouraging the sustainable development of Nova Scotia's energy resources. OERA supports research into renewable energy technologies, cleantech initiatives and geoscience by facilitating collaborative, made-to-order teams of experts.

OERA is requesting a study to collect and present fisheries and other scientific data in relation to the Georges Bank Prohibition Area. This work is sponsored by the Nova Scotia Department of Energy and Mines (NS DEM) and Natural Resources Canada (NRCan).

## 2. Context

### 2.1 Georges Bank

Georges Bank ([Figure 1](#)) is a large submarine platform located at the edge of the Atlantic continental shelf between Cape Cod and Nova Scotia. The Georges Bank Prohibition Area covers a significant portion of Georges Bank and is located on the Canadian side of the Canada-United States maritime boundary. The Bank is a large, relatively shallow, biologically diverse, and productive area hosting many commercially fished species.

Prior to adoption of the *Canada-Nova Scotia Offshore Petroleum Resources Accord Implementation Act* and mirror provincial legislation, the federal government issued petroleum exploration permits on the Canadian portion of Georges Bank and the interest holders conducted exploration activities. Although exploratory permits remain, no oil and gas activity has been permitted in the Georges Bank Prohibition Area since 1988.

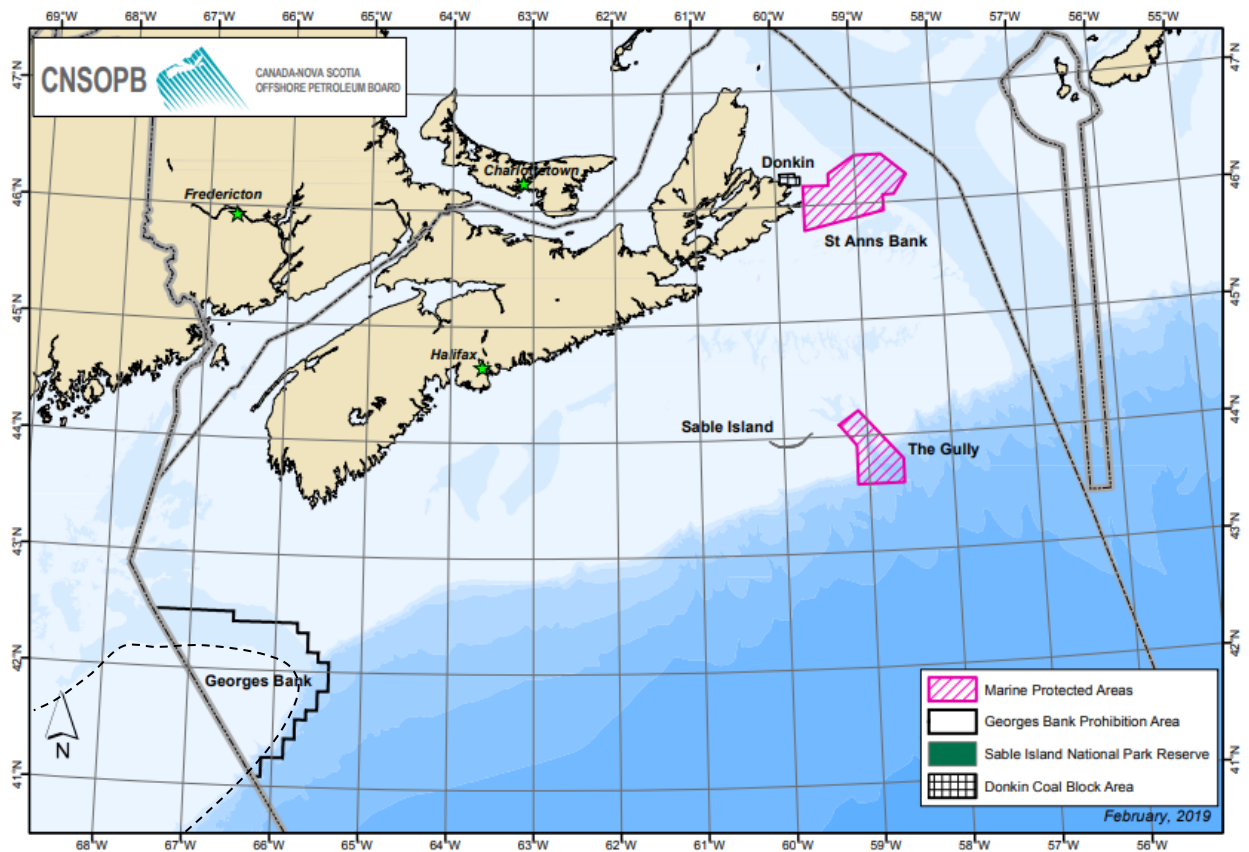


Figure 1: The Georges Bank Prohibition Area (Source: CNSOPB, dashed line not in original - for illustration only)

## 2.2 Georges Bank Prohibition Area

In 1988, the Governments of Canada and Nova Scotia placed a moratorium on all petroleum exploration and development activities on the Canadian portion of Georges Bank and certain adjacent areas. The moratorium was subsequently extended to 2012 following an independent panel review in 1999. The moratorium remained in place until 2015 when Governments passed legislation to extend the moratorium on oil and gas exploration and drilling to December 31, 2022.

The Georges Bank Prohibition Area is addressed in S. 141 of the *Canada-Nova Scotia Offshore Petroleum Resources Accord Implementation Act* and S. 134AA of the *Canada-Nova Scotia Offshore Petroleum Resources Accord Implementation (Nova Scotia) Act*.

As described in these Acts, the Federal and Provincial Ministers may jointly issue a written notice to extend the prohibition for a period of no more than 10 years after completing a “review of the environmental and socio-economic impact of exploration and drilling activities in that portion of the offshore area described in Schedule IV (i.e., Georges Bank Prohibition Area) and any other relevant factor[s]”. The science and socio-economic report commissioned by this RFP will provide the basis for that review.

### 3. Objectives

The objective of this RFP is to obtain the services of a consultant (the Respondent) to prepare a report to assist governments in their decision as to whether to extend the current moratorium on oil and gas activities in the Georges Bank Prohibition Area.

The successful proponent will undertake a jurisdictional and literature review of the scientific and socio-economic data collected in the Georges Bank Prohibition Area since the current moratorium period was enacted. Over the last ten years, environmental and energy policies have evolved at the provincial, federal, and international level. Local socio-economic conditions have also changed and warrant a re-examination by Governments prior to issuing a decision regarding the Georges Bank.

This report will update the Minister of Natural Resources Canada and the Nova Scotia Minister of Energy and Mines on the current state of knowledge of the science and issues that should be understood as they consider extending the moratorium beyond 2022.

### 4. Scope of Work

The scope of work consists of three primary tasks:

Task 1: Data Gathering and Information Review

Task 2: Assessment and Analysis

Task 3: Reporting

The final deliverable must identify and summarize basic historical and current information on the subjects listed below. There is no requirement to undertake stakeholder engagement or to collect new field data. The study should instead collect and synthesize publicly available data

with a focus on new or updated information created over the past ten years. The report must identify the key or emerging social and economic changes that would help contextualize the information presented.

### Subject Matter

1. The marine ecosystem in the Georges Bank Prohibition Area including but not limited to:
  - Benthic invertebrates;
  - Finfish;
  - Sea turtles;
  - Marine mammals;
  - Species at Risk/Species of Concern;
  - Marine birds;
  - Corals and sponges;
2. Information on any commercial fishery occurring in the Georges Bank, specifically, the economic value of commercial pelagic, groundfish, and invertebrate fisheries in this area compared to 10 years ago;
3. Scientific and socio-economic analyses describing how current-day offshore petroleum practices, if permitted, might impact commercial or traditional fisheries harvests in the Prohibition Area;
4. In broad terms, describe the economic value associated with potential petroleum exploration and resource development in the Georges Bank Prohibition Area; and
5. Potential interactions associated with offshore petroleum activities in the Georges Bank Prohibition Area, including but not limited to:
  - marine sound, including seismic acquisition;
  - drill muds and cuttings;
  - produced water;
  - atmospheric emissions;
  - accidental discharges (spills and blowouts); and
  - transportation (pipeline, floating facilities, tanker, and related traffic).

The study should focus on any new information and knowledge since the current moratorium period was enacted. This could also include any information collected and made available by Fisheries and Oceans Canada (e.g., the Fundian Channel-Browns Bank Area of Interest) or through access to academic journals or publications.

The report should consider and refer to the following reports available at [www.oera.ca](http://www.oera.ca):

Natural Resources Canada and Nova Scotia Petroleum Directorate (June 1999). *Georges Bank Review Panel Report*.

Stantec (June 2010). *A Preliminary Review of Existing Technologies and Their Mitigative Potential in Offshore Petroleum Developments*. Prepared for Offshore Energy Environmental Research Association. File No: 121510315.

Stantec (June 2010). *Preliminary Review of Environmental and Socio-Economic Issues on Georges Bank*. Prepared for Offshore Energy Environmental Research Association. File No: 121510316.

## 5. Deliverables

Upon project completion, the proponent will provide:

1. A draft report for review by OERA and Governments with NS DEM taking the lead
2. A final report incorporating comments received following review

The report structure may be created by the proponent but the report is not required to make any recommendation to Government.

## 6. Timelines

The proponent is requested to host the kickoff meeting and subsequent project status meetings via video conference. The following timeline outlines OERA's current expectations with respect to timing.

RFP release date:	May 12, 2021
Proposal due date:	June 14, 2021 (5 pm ADT)
Award:	by June 25, 2021
Draft Final Report:	September 17, 2021

## 7. Funding

Funding available for this project is capped at a maximum of CAN \$47,000 excluding taxes (\$51,000 including HST). Proposals that exceed this amount will not be considered. Note that proposals will be rated first in terms of team experience and second in terms of value (rates per hour). Please include hourly or daily rates in the proposal. Please note that OERA reserves the right not to proceed with project award.

## 8. Proposal Requirements

- The proposal should be concisely worded with clearly described objectives, methods, budget, schedule, and deliverables. Maximum 12 pages excluding appendices, title page, and cover letter. Please assemble all components into a single PDF document.
- The proposal should include a description of the Respondent's organization and its relevant experience with similar projects. The Respondent must also describe the relevant work experience of the key staff assigned to this project and their roles on the project. This material should be summarized in the body of the RFP and can be presented in more detail, if needed, in the appendix.
- Please provide a project organizational chart showing the roles and reporting hierarchy of staff and project partners, and reporting lines to the OERA review committee.
- A single electronic document is sufficient. Please ensure the proposal is signed by an officer or equivalent with authority to bind the Respondent to the statements made in the proposal.
- The electronic copy should be uploaded in PDF format to the OERA FTP site at <https://oera.sharefile.com/r-r0d86c743679c425487e41534be200a72>. The file name should include the Respondent's name.

## 9. Questions and Clarifications

OERA will accept questions from interested Respondents on an ongoing basis until 5 pm ADT, Friday June 4, 2021. Questioners will receive a direct email response from OERA and all questions and answers will be posted anonymously on the OERA website <https://oera.ca/opportunities/request-proposals/georges-bank-prohibition-area>.

Respondents are encouraged to check the website for updates to the Q&A document. The Q&A page will only be posted if content-related questions have been received.

Please submit your questions by email to Russell Dmytriw ([rdmytriw@oera.ca](mailto:rdmytriw@oera.ca)). Please do not contact the NSDEM with questions.

## 10. Evaluation

This project will be administered through OERA on behalf of NS DEM and NRCan. Proposals will be reviewed by a committee consisting of OERA and NS DEM staff. As shown below, proposals will be quantitatively evaluated against a set of criteria.

Factor	Weight
<b>Experience and Knowledge:</b> Qualifications, experience and capabilities of the company and delivery team; demonstration of local knowledge and information relevant sources. Team organisation and scale is appropriate for this project.	25%
<b>Project Plan, Approach and Methodology:</b> Proponent demonstrates an understanding of the project service requirements and has outlined a clear and effective work plan. Proposal describes the objectives, methodology, milestones and deliverables, and a sound approach in undertaking this project. Communication format and frequency between the proponent and OERA are clearly described. Proponent describes an achievable schedule with well-defined milestones and demonstrates the ability to complete the work on or before the desired completion date.	30%
<b>Proposal Presentation and Organization:</b> The proposal includes all RFP requirements, demonstrates attention to clarity, grammar, and presentation.	20%
<b>Value:</b> The project will offer good value for the proposed budget. The budget is clear, convincing, and well-described.	25%
Total:	100%