

Green Energy Engagement Program

*Description of the Cape Breton Partnership's
Green Energy Engagement Program*

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Supported by:



Background - Green Energy Engagement Program

As Unama'ki – Cape Breton's private sector-led economic development organization, the Cape Breton Partnership wants the economic, cultural, social, and environmental values of Unama'ki - Cape Breton to be reflected in any future proposed green energy development. We are an independent, non-partisan organization that works collaboratively to promote Unama'ki – Cape Breton as a great place to live, work, and invest. The potential for offshore wind and green fuels production presents a generational economic development opportunity for Unama'ki - Cape Breton; however, this can only be realized if these new industries can co-exist with our current industries and be supported by Indigenous Communities, ocean users, and our local communities.

The Paris Agreement provided a legally binding commitment to ensure that global temperatures do not rise to more than two degrees above the pre-industrial level. This has created an urgency to decarbonize, electrify, and target net-zero emissions globally. Canada's 2030 Emissions Reduction Plan provides a roadmap to attain emissions reductions 40% below 2005 levels and to be net zero by 2050. The plan outlines sector by sector how Canada will reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, while strengthening the economy with sustainable jobs and clean industrial growth.

As part of this plan, the Government of Canada has accelerated the phase-out of coal and put a price on carbon pollution. There is funding through programs to meet the rising demand for clean electricity, including \$2 billion in the Low Carbon Economy Fund, \$964 million for the Smart Renewable Electrification Pathways Program, and \$99 million for the Smart Grids program. Moving beyond 2023, the Government of Canada has committed \$250 million to support predevelopment work for large, clean energy projects through the Electricity Predevelopment Program. The intent has also been signaled to invest \$25 million in Regional Strategic Initiatives to work with provinces to accelerate regional growth opportunities and facilitate energy systems transformation, driving economic prosperity and creating sustainable jobs.

Hydrogen production is one path in our goal to achieve net-zero emissions by 2050. The Hydrogen Strategy for Canada was released in 2020 which positions Canada as a global industrial leader in clean renewable fuels production. In embracing zero-emissions fuel sources, like hydrogen, Canada would have new markets for conventional energy resources and could decarbonize resource extraction, freight, transportation, power generation, and manufacturing. Canada has already demonstrated its intent to export secure, clean energy with the signing of the Canada-Germany Hydrogen Alliance, which will enable investment in hydrogen projects, support secure supply chains, establish a transatlantic supply corridor, and export clean Canadian hydrogen by 2025. This commitment on its own will require extensive renewable energy sources to produce hydrogen at a scale large enough to meet export demand.

Offshore and onshore wind energy are proven renewable energy technologies that create efficient, cost-effective energy in other jurisdictions. Onshore wind has been prominent in Nova Scotia since the early 2000s; however, offshore wind has not been developed in Canada to date. In 2022, the Government of Nova Scotia set a target to lease 5 GW of offshore wind energy by 2030 to support the emerging hydrogen energy market. Leases for offshore wind development will be granted through a competitive bid process that is jointly managed by provincial and federal governments in the offshore area –

nearshore wind development in provincial waters is being considered and would be under provincial jurisdiction under the *Marine Renewable Energy Act*. The Government of Nova Scotia has released their Offshore Wind Roadmap and is developing a Green Hydrogen Action Plan to be released in 2023 that will outline the role green hydrogen and offshore wind can play in the transition to clean energy.

Running parallel to this process is the Regional Assessment of Offshore Wind Development in Nova Scotia through the Impact Assessment Agency of Canada. The Regional Assessment will help inform future project-specific federal impact assessments, contributing to their efficiency and effectiveness. In this case, the Regional Assessment will provide an early analysis of future offshore wind development in Nova Scotia, as well as its potential environmental, health, social, and economic effects and benefits. This will help inform planning and decision-making for future wind projects in the study area. In March 2023, the final Terms of Reference were released publicly, and the Regional Assessment Committee was named. The Committee will engage with Indigenous Peoples, fishers, other organizations, and the public, to gather and analyze information as well as seek advice from advisory groups. By September 2024, the Committee will develop a final report to submit to federal and provincial Ministers. As provincial and federal governments are leading regulatory framework development for future offshore wind and green fuels projects, organizations like the Cape Breton Partnership, Net-Zero Atlantic, and the Strait of Canso Offshore Wind Task Force have been conducting community engagement and outreach to ensure that communities are informed and have the capacity to make decisions connected to green energy project development.

There has been an unprecedented interest in Unama’ki – Cape Breton for the development of commercial offshore wind and green fuels production. The development of these forms of energy could contribute towards Nova Scotia’s goal of achieving 80% renewable electricity generation by 2030, including the phase-out of coal, and net-zero emissions by 2050. It is anticipated that the creation of this new green energy sector could also provide meaningful employment, improve energy security and reliability, and bolster economic development in Unama’ki - Cape Breton and more widely across Nova Scotia and Atlantic Canada.

With our unique natural resources and human capital, Unama’ki – Cape Breton is positioned to lead development of this emerging green energy industry. We have world-class offshore wind speeds, two ports including the deep-water and ice-free Strait of Canso and the Port of Sydney dredged to 16.5m with year-round operational capacity, proximity to international markets; multi-modal transportation infrastructure and a demonstrated commitment to policy development. In addition, we have a skilled workforce with academic institutions capable of supporting ongoing training.

Our region is at the forefront of developing a green energy sector; however, this cannot be done without the support of our Indigenous Communities, ocean users, industries, businesses, and the public. The Green Energy Engagement Program is being developed to begin meaningful community engagement, to create dialogue and equitable knowledge exchange as we endeavour to create a more sustainable future.

Program Description - Green Energy Engagement Program

The Cape Breton Partnership is establishing the Green Energy Engagement Program (the Program) to focus on meaningful community engagement, creating ongoing dialogue and equitable knowledge exchange that helps communities build capacity and make informed decisions about future green energy projects, including wind energy and green fuels. Netukulimk is a Mi'kmaq concept defining the relationships between the aspects of humanness, interconnectedness, and principles of responsibility, respect, and reciprocity. Resource management that aligns with Netukulimk honours the integrity, diversity, and productivity of our environment for present and future generations – a goal that is central to the objectives of the Program.

We cannot begin a conversation about a sustainable future without first acknowledging that the Calls for Action as part of the Truth and Reconciliation Report must be central to our actions. There are specific calls to action for the business community, including a call on the corporate sector to adopt the United Nations Declaration of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) as a reconciliation framework and to apply its principles, norms, and standards to corporate policy and core operational activities involving Indigenous Peoples and their lands and resources. This includes meaningful engagement and building respectful relationships with Indigenous Communities; obtaining free, prior, and informed consent before proceeding with economic development projects; ensuring that Indigenous Peoples have equitable access to jobs, training and education opportunities; along with long-term sustainable benefits from economic development projects. The Cape Breton Partnership has longstanding partnerships with Mi'kmaq communities across Unama'ki - Cape Breton for economic development support. We will continue to incorporate these Calls to Action in our own work and will encourage those involved in green energy projects to strive to incorporate these Actions into their own project planning and operations. Unama'ki – Cape Breton has a diverse economy that has a significant reliance on ocean use and resources. Compared to the Canadian average, there are 13 times more people employed in the fishing industry in Unama'ki – Cape Breton. In addition to their significant contribution to our local economy, fishers are part of intergenerational communities with shared experiences and traditions that are inextricably linked with the ocean. Fishing cannot simply be identified as a form of employment in Unama'ki – Cape Breton – it is connected to each fisher's identity. Understanding fishers' perspectives, concerns, and learning from their lived experiences on, and off, the ocean will be critical to any future offshore energy development co-existing with fisheries. Our ocean resources are not only used by commercial fisheries and harvesters, there are ceremonial and moderate livelihood fisheries for Mi'kmaq communities; ocean-based tourism and recreation; as well as maritime transportation and shipping. Ocean users are a critical stakeholder group in any discussions pertaining to offshore energy development.

The Regional Assessment has established a fisheries advisory committee to help gather information to inform future impact assessments. The Canada Nova Scotia Offshore Petroleum Board (soon to become the Canada Nova Scotia Offshore Energy Regulator) also has a fisheries advisory group where knowledge is shared between fisheries and the offshore energy sector. With both bodies having a province-wide mandate, it is crucial that the Program ensure that the voices of our local fishers and ocean users are incorporated in any future decision-making connected to offshore development. The Program Coordinator will build relationships and develop ongoing dialogue with leaders in each of the industries

connected to ocean use in Unama'ki – Cape Breton, in support of and collaboration with existing committees.

The Program Coordinator will participate in and support formal government processes like the Regional Assessment, as well as local initiatives like the Strait of Canso Offshore Wind Task Force (the Task Force). The Task Force is composed of a diverse group of stakeholders who have been working to create a broader understanding and awareness of the offshore wind and green fuels industries within local communities surrounding the Strait of Canso region. The Program is not a means of advocating on behalf of any one industry. The purpose of the Program is to work along entities like the Task Force, Net Zero Atlantic, and Clean Foundation to leverage existing relationships and ensure that all stakeholders and rightsholders are meaningfully engaged in ongoing dialogue and equitable knowledge exchange, which will help them build capacity to make informed decisions about future green energy projects.

The Program will be deployed across Unama'ki – Cape Breton. The Program Coordinator will create opportunities for engagement through relationship development, increasing representation of stakeholders and rightsholders groups across Unama'ki - Cape Breton. The Program will collect and analyze data to help inform engagement strategies that provide a voice to all communities across our Island, including First Nations' Communities, fishing communities, rural and urban communities, business and industry communities, the tourism communities, the academic community, and all other communities identified now and as they arise. The Cape Breton Partnership will encourage sustainable and equitable development, that allows all communities and ocean users to work together towards a common understanding and sharing of resources.

The Program will be administered by the Green Energy Engagement Coordinator who will work alongside partners to deliver initiatives on behalf of the Cape Breton Partnership. There will be capacity limits with respect to participation in all green energy initiatives and projects across Uanama'ki - Cape Breton; therefore, the Program will focus on those that contribute to the Cape Breton Partnerships' strategic priorities and organizational goals.

Key Objectives

The key objectives of the Green Energy Engagement Program are centered around ongoing dialogue with communities across Unama'ki – Cape Breton and building organizational capacity within the Partnership. The key objectives are as follows:

1. Provide the people of Unama'ki – Cape Breton with information related to green energy through different forms of media, to keep communities informed and involved in any future development tied to green energy, namely onshore wind, offshore wind, and green fuels production.
2. Build capacity within the Cape Breton Partnership to undertake larger-scale engagement efforts to work toward social acceptance and support for future development.
3. Establish a community of practice with organizations conducting education and engagement throughout Unama'ki – Cape Breton and develop strategic and coordinated engagement strategies that reach all communities across the Island.
4. Focus on relationship development with First Nations' Communities, fishers and ocean users, local businesses, academic leaders, environmental groups, non-profits, tourism operators, and individual community members to account for all voices in Unama'ki – Cape Breton when considering the potential benefits and impacts of future offshore wind and green fuels production.
5. Participate in the ongoing Regional Assessment for Offshore Wind Development in Nova Scotia (RA) to provide the Unama'ki – Cape Breton perspective that will help inform the regulatory requirements for future offshore wind development.

Program Activities

To achieve the key objectives of the Program, a wide range of activities will be undertaken that focus on building relationships within and between stakeholder groups to develop communities of practice, conducting ongoing research, exploring opportunities to build capacity, and facilitating dialogue between key stakeholders. The Program will include, but will not be limited to, the following activities:

- Development and analysis of engagement surveys
- Stakeholder mapping
- Coordinate with community of practice members to plan strategies to avoid participant fatigue and accidental misinformation.
- Initiate one-on-one meetings with key stakeholders to build relationships, create open channels of communication and ongoing dialogue.
- Identify liaisons within each stakeholder group who are strong leaders and able to share information to and from their peers. Development of steering groups containing these leaders to facilitate ongoing engagement.
- Research engagement strategies in jurisdictions in emerging markets to identify communication barriers and identify ways to mitigate these barriers locally.
- Develop materials and content that can be used for community engagement locally and virtually to improve accessibility and extend our reach throughout Unama'ki – Cape Breton (focus on the interconnection between forms of energy as well). For example, this could include brainstorming ideas for short informational videos, creating printed materials to handout, creating webinars, and other forms of information dissemination.
- Hosting in-person and virtual sessions to have meaningful dialogue and knowledge exchange between the Partnership, our partners, and local communities.
- Compiling data from sessions and writing reports that help inform future strategies that can be shared across the region and, more broadly across Canada.
- Planning and facilitating workshops that bring together industry members from the wind and green fuels sectors and local businesses to create synergistic relationships between existing and future industries.
- Participating on behalf of the Partnership in the Regional Assessment for Offshore Wind Development in Nova Scotia and drafting feedback on the development of the regulatory frameworks connected to offshore wind.
- Ongoing dialogue with industry to exchange knowledge so that future development is informed and connected to the needs of each community.
- Contribute to and participate in local committees and other initiatives related to green energy.
- Identify and write proposals/applications for funding opportunities related to decarbonization, net-zero emissions, and sustainability initiatives to build capacity within the Cape Breton Partnership and within communities.

Program Outcomes:

- Development of a community of practice with key partners who have a mandate to conduct engagement in Unama'ki - Cape Breton, including Net Zero Atlantic, Clean Foundation, the Strait of Canso Offshore Wind Task Force, and any other organizations with whom the Partnership develops future relationships.
- Development of a comprehensive report on the methods of engagement used in different jurisdictions, with analysis and identification of their efficacy and applicability to Unama'ki – Cape Breton. This report will be used to inform future engagement strategies and can be shared with the broader community, including government agencies and potential investors.
- Co-delivery of community-tailored engagement initiatives to encourage two-way knowledge sharing and understand community expectations and perceptions related to green energy development within communities across Unama'ki - Cape Breton. This includes, but is not limited to, First Nations, fishers and ocean users, industry and business operators, tourism and recreation operators, rural and urban populations, academic institutions and research organizations, and other organizations or groups that arise in the course of this work.
- Creation of stakeholder steering groups composed of community leaders who can share community knowledge and experience with the communities of practice and act as a trusted source to relay information to their respective communities.
- Built capacity within the Cape Breton Partnership to continue to participate in green energy engagement projects and initiatives through the development of knowledge, skills, technical expertise, and funding.
- Representation for the impacts and benefits to Unama'ki - Cape Breton in the outcome of the Regional Assessment for Offshore Wind Development in Nova Scotia and input provided to Regional Assessment Committee to help inform regulatory requirements for future Impact Assessments.

Timeline:

The Green Energy Engagement Program is planned to run from June 2023 to March 31, 2025, to be extended should the need for the extension be demonstrated and future funding secured.

It is expected that there will be an ongoing need for the Program moving forward, as the Governments of Canada and Nova Scotia continue to develop legislation and regulations pertaining to the development of green energy projects.

Funding Partners:

The Green Energy Engagement Program has funding partners from different organizations in the public sector, including Net-Zero Atlantic; the private-sector investors of the Cape Breton Partnership, the Cape Breton Regional Enterprise Network (CB REN), the Cape Breton Regional Municipality Regional Enterprise Network (CBRM REN), and other partners as they are developed.

Program Description Approved by:



Tyler Mattheis
President and CEO
Cape Breton Partnership