Maine Offshore Wind Research Consortium Advisory Board

Final Presentation: Socioeconomic Data Inventory Project *"Informing Responsible Offshore Wind development in the Gulf of Maine"*

Webinar Summary Monday, July 22, 2024 1:00PM – 2:30 EDT

Fully Virtual Meeting

Meeting materials are available here.

MEETING OBJECTIVES

On July 22, 2024, the Maine Offshore Wind Research Consortium (Research Consortium) Advisory Board (AB) held a virtual webinar meeting. The objectives of this webinar were to:

- Learn results of the Karp Strategies and Alison Bates's Lab (Colby College) project "Inventorying Socioeconomic Data of Maine Fishing Communities".
- Allow the AB and other attendees the opportunity to provide comments and ask questions.

WELCOME & INTRODUCTIONS

Opening remarks given by Katy Bland (Maine Sea Grant), who reviewed the meeting agenda and objectives and gave a brief overview of the meeting guidelines. Katy then handed the meeting over to Rebecca Karp (Karp Strategies).

A list of AB members participating in the meeting and meeting observers is in Appendix A.

PROJECT TEAM MEETING GOALS

- Provide a high-level overview of the project and describe the research and data collection methodology.
- Present the key findings and recommendations before the team finalizes the public facing report.
- Gather the AB's feedback on the work, including and additional consideration to incorporate either in final report of in future research efforts.

PROJECT: INVENTORYING SOCIOECONOMIC DATA OF MAINE FISHING COMMUNITIES

KARP STRATEGIES, COLBY COLLEGE

Presenters: Rebecca Karp and Annie White (Karp Strategies) and Alison Bates (Colby College) Timeline: February 2024 - August 2024

Project objectives:

- Create a comprehensive inventory of existing socioeconomic data (jobs, industry data, supply chain) around Maine fishing communities and the potential positive and negative impacts of offshore wind (OSW)
- Identify gaps in data and best practices in order to develop recommendations on where and how the state and others should prioritize future studies

The team's methodology review highlighted their desktop research, in which they analyzed over 25 reports, and their participatory data collection through 20 stakeholder interviews. These two data feeds were synthesized into a single, searchable data inventory with over 280 indicators that allowed for a data gap analysis. Through desktop research, the team reviewed leading socioeconomic analysis and OSW research to identify best practices. These efforts led to the actionable recommendations, below. Karp noted that by undergoing this effort at this stage of offshore wind development put Maine in an "enviable position", as this is typically not addressed until later in the process.

The project team produced three strong data products to support future socioeconomic impact analyses:

- A socioeconomic data inventory, to provide a single resource to facilitate the tracking and utilization of relevant data that could be used in a future socioeconomic analysis. The inventory has 11 different searchable categories along with key metadata such as publisher, date of last update, geographical scale, and collection methodology.
- 2. An analysis of existing data gaps, to highlight missing pieces and barriers to the completion of a robust socioeconomic analysis for Maine fishing communities. Limitations included, but were not limited to, demographics, geographic scales, safety, and equity.
- 3. A menu of the quantitative and qualitative methods for socioeconomic analyses, including opportunities and limitations, to distill current best practices and methodologies for achieving a comprehensive socioeconomic analysis of OSW development on fishing communities.

The study resulted in four notable takeaways:

- 1. There is a solid foundation of existing socioeconomic data metrics. However, many data points that the fishing communities and key stakeholders are interested in have not been included in previous socioeconomic studies.
- 2. There is no existing industry socioeconomic analysis framework that comprehensively addresses this specific subject. There is a lack of resources and academic research correlating OSW development and operations with socioeconomic elements.
- 3. There is a need to link offshore fishing actions with onshore impacts.
- 4. There is an existing gap in fisheries-specific supply chain information and specific business data.

Recommended next steps for Maine GEO, the Research Consortium, and other collaborators areas as follows:

Technical Research and Data Collection:

- Engage in a socioeconomic indicator prioritization exercise involving fisheries, potentially impacted communities, and industry experts to evaluate competing interests and determine the most critical data indicators for future impact analysis.
- Prioritize data collection efforts to fill existing gaps, particularly qualitative metrics, based on the prioritization exercise.
- Work with industry leaders to develop a methodology to link offshore fishing operations to corresponding onshore impacts.

Socioeconomic Impact Framework Development:

 Prioritize defining the Maine fishing industry more precisely to include fisheries-specific business and workforce information. • Fund additional research and leverage the data inventory and resources developed in this study to create a mixed-method socioeconomic impact assessment methodology tailored to Maine's fishing and offshore wind industries.

Management and Operational Recommendations (Ongoing):

- Continue inter-organization convening and coordination, building on Maine GEO and the Consortium's work to ensure effective data sharing and cross-sector collaboration and develop the mixed-method socioeconomic impact assessment framework.
- Broaden outreach and education to increase awareness among fishing and offshore wind stakeholders about this project's efforts and encourage utilization of the Data Inventory and other resources.
- Advocate for additional funding and research to fill data gaps and develop a longitudinal study of socioeconomic indicators, ensuring all the aforementioned steps are well-supported.

Discussion

- Question about if the inventory included or utilized the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) Behavioral Risk Survey System (BRSS) and if that could help address the mismatch of methods, the model, and the scale of the data, both geographical and temporal scales. Response that some CDC data was utilized, but not specifically the BRSS, and the team could look at adding that particular system. The response also clarified there is not a lack of health data, but a lack of data that is specific to the fishing industry in Maine. Data that do exist in this industry/community are of a small sample size, and the collection and timing does not align with the metrics utilized in this study. If the data that are available could be utilized, further investigation would be needed to discover if they would need to be adjusted or could be directly imported into the newly created inventory.
- Question about what kind of decisions the socioeconomic information will be most useful for, what would be utilized for the prioritization of data gaps. Response that the inventory can inform future investments and direct community resources to encourage positive outcomes while mitigating negative impacts. The recommendation to prioritize data gaps was based on stakeholder feedback and a deeper understanding of socioeconomic analyses. To best utilize the socioeconomic information, it's crucial to revisit the questions the State and AB are focused on. Refining metrics with questions like, "How is community defined?" and "How is community health measured?" will help refocus efforts. By defining neutral and important metrics, further analysis can better determine the consequences, both positive and negative. GEO added that the baseline information could also be utilized in decisions for non-OSW impact investments (i.e., climate change, regulation changes, storm events)
- Question about if the continued work for data gaps and standardizing methodologies processes could be utilized outside the Gulf of Maine. Response that there are multiple answers to this question. There are regional partnerships that exist around fisheries in the Gulf of Maine as fishing and fishing communities are not geographically confined to state borders. However, the state of Maine's fishing community will be impacted more than the other states bordering the Gulf. Also, there are more issues than just OSW that the data could be applied to moving forward, the inventory has many applications such as investments in coastal resilience and assessing storm damage.

- Question clarifying the terminology utilized in the presentation, and presumably the report, of the focus of this project being on "state of Maine" or "Gulf of Maine" fishing communities. As the OSW impacted Gulf of Maine fishing area lies in federal waters the fishing community expands beyond just Maine fishermen. Response clarified the Research Consortium is clear in their mission and scope is focused on Maine. While there are data within the inventory that link state-level information with federal permit data, there may be people in Maine that might not be included in these data. Within the report, there are metrics and indicators have Maine communities specifically linked to federal fisheries in federal waters. The team did choose to air on the side of caution and take a broader approach as geographical units are tricky with fisheries and fishing communities. Clearer lines are present in the report.
- Comment surrounding the lack of Tribal inclusion in this project. Tribal members want to see an increase in aquatic activity, such as alewives running or groundfish returning, as the Passamaquoddy are deeply linked to pollock. Tribal members have been around for over ten thousand years and there is an effort to advocate for increased access to ancestral lands. And while there are Tribal members who fish for both sustenance and commercially, overall mental and physical health are of concern, and they do not seem to be taken into consideration in this report. Sustainability is part of the original core parts of the Tribal thought process. Response agreed that the is a human factor that is difficult to measure. There was also clarification that some of the nuances of this topic are conveyed better in the report than in the presentation. While there are some indicators that touch on this subject in the newly produced inventory, this could be something to consider moving forward.
- Question about the opportunities in the future for collaboration and to help support the data gap filling process. Response that the priority is to first review the work completed and highlight missing information. After that, the team will have a better sense of indicators to be gathered and then collaborations can be looked at, who's gathering the data, where is the data coming from, and who are the partners. The inventory is intended to be a living document.

NEXT STEPS

Karp will submit their draft project report to GEO this week, and the final project materials (i.e., report, inventory) will be posted to the Research Consortium webpage in the coming months.

APPENDIX A – ATTENDANCE

Advisory Board Members

Alison Bates, Colby College, Co-Chair Damian Brady, University of Maine Dave Cowan, Diamond Offshore Wind Bob Humphrey, Sport-Ventures Laura Morse Bill Needelman, Portland Waterfront Coordinator Jocelyn Runnebaum, The Nature Conservancy Maine Daniel Salerno, Fisheries Scientist, Limington, Maine Graham Sherwood, GMRI Kanae Tokunaga, GMRI Mary Beth Tooley, O'Hara Corporation Stephanie Watson, Governor's Energy Office Ann Zoidis, Tetra Tech Gayle Zydlewski, University of Maine

Collaborators

Morgan Brunbauer, NYSERDA Todd Callaghan, MA Coastal Program Libby Jewett, NOAA NEFSC Andy Lipsky, NOAA NEFSC Cheri Patterson, New Hampshire Fish & Game Tricia Perez, ROSA

Tribal Communities

Ralph Dana, Passamaquoddy - Pleasant Point (Sipayik) Marvin Cling, Passamaquoddy – Pleasant Point (Sipayik)

Maine's Congressional Delegation or State Representatives

Zach Schmesser, Rep. Jared Golden

Presenting Project Team

Shreya Bishnoi, Karp Strategies Rebecca Karp, Karp Strategies Annie White, Karp Strategies Emma Rothwell, Colby College Sarah Doore, Colby College

Program Management, Advisors, and State Agency Staff

Laura Taylor Singer, SAMBAS Consulting LLC Meghan Suslovic, ME GEO Katy Bland, Maine Sea Grant Julia Hiltonsmith, Maine Sea Grant Jess Jansuwicz, Maine Sea Grant Casey Yanos, ME DMR Caitlin Shanahan, NERACOOS Additional observers attended in person and online.

Advisory Board Members Not Present:

Terry Alexander, F/V Jocka, Co-Chair Jack Cunningham, Maine Lobstering Union Local 207 Julian Fraize, NOWRDC Wing Goodale, Biodiversity Research Institute Sarah Haggerty, Maine Audubon Ben Martens, Maine Coast Fishermen's Association Patrice McCarron, Maine Lobstermen's Association Walt Musial, NREL John Perry, Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife Anthony Viselli, University of Maine Carl Wilson, ME DMR

APPENDIX B – ZOOM CHAT SUMMARY

- Question: Regarding the mental and physical health risk and conditions identified as knowledge gap, I wonder if you have explored CDC's BRFSS. Curious because I wonder if this knowledge gap has something to do with the lack of data collection infrastructure or the mismatch of collected data scale/level.
 - \circ $\;$ Asked and answered live.
- Question: In terms of recommended next steps, could some of the needed work in terms of data gaps or standardizing methodology be conducted or helpful outside of the Gulf of Maine? If so, which ones? Just trying to think of creating regional and east coast benefit that could also continue this work while also pulling in additional funders around this work
 - Asked and answered live.
- Question: Is there a timeline for getting their final report out to the public?
 - Asked and answered live.
- Comment: Transboundary nature of the resources and of human communities are important to understand.
- Comment: Also, language is tied to the land. Tribes need to access their ancestral lands and waters to keep the language relevant and thriving just as cultural and ancestral connections help us in seeing our connections to the environment.