

Lessons Learned from Developing California Offshore Wind Environmental Monitoring Framework

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With offshore wind leases now secured, California is leveraging current and future monitoring programs to evaluate the potential environmental effects of floating turbines and inform data-driven adaptive management. To this end, the California Marine Sanctuary Foundation, funded by the Ocean Protection Council and with input from a multidisciplinary team of over 200 experts, developed the Environmental Monitoring Framework. The Framework presents a series of actionable monitoring recommendations to assess the potential impacts of offshore wind development. To develop these recommendations, six working groups were created, five of which were taxa and habitat focused, and one of which was an overarching working group for technology and data. In July 2025, the team provided an interim memo of short-term opportunities for the State that identified three core areas for monitoring preparedness: 1) multi-scale (regional-transitional-local) monitoring integration, 2) prioritized desktop studies and data syntheses, and 3) targeted baseline data collection. At the time of this abstract submission, the full monitoring framework is under final review by the State of California. The Framework identifies priority questions that will steer monitoring efforts; describes key methods and data collectors; and considers spatiotemporal scales; and provides recommendations for data consistency, comparability, and robustness for monitoring efforts. This presentation outlines the key insights gained from the Framework's development and provides monitoring recommendations, specifically evaluating their applicability to offshore wind projects in Nova Scotia.