

Moss, Melissa

From: Pulchan, Jerry (ECCC) <Jerry.Pulchan@ec.gc.ca>
Sent: Thursday, May 30, 2024 11:41 AM
To: Moss, Melissa
Cc: Roberts, Sydney (elle | she, her) (ECCC)
Subject: FW: ExxonMobil Hebron Project 2024 EA Update
Attachments: ExxonMobil and Hibernia Management Development Company Environmental Ass... (6.96 MB); ECCC-CWS_Guidance_StrandedBirdSurveyProtocol_Mar2021.pdf; ECCC-CWS_StrandedBirdDatashet_fillableJun22.pdf

From: Pulchan, Jerry (ECCC)
Sent: Wednesday, May 29, 2024 3:45 PM
To: Moss, Melissa <MMoss@cnlopb.ca>
Cc: Roberts, Sydney (elle | she, her) (ECCC) <sydney.roberts@ec.gc.ca>
Subject: FW: ExxonMobil Hebron Project 2024 EA Update

Melissa,

Please see below recommendations from the CWS. Because of Message size limits, I will be sending a second e-mail with the rest of the attachments. Let me know if you have any questions.

Jerry Pulchan

Your original request for information is [attached](#) (Note that the original request also included a separate review request for Hibernia as well that we will be providing shortly).

Environment and Climate Change Canada's Canadian Wildlife Service (ECCC-CWS) has reviewed the *ExxonMobil Hebron Development Project 2024 Environmental Assessment Update* and offers the following recommendations.

1. Quote (page 16) "*Current mitigations specific to stranded birds in offshore Newfoundland apply to Leach's storm-petrel, and so potential environmental effects from the project on this species are anticipated to be within EA predictions.*"

ECCC-CWS notes that the project is located relative to known foraging habitats of Leach's Storm-petrel (COSEWIC-assessed as "Threatened" in November 2020), particularly from important breeding colonies at Gull Island and Baccalieu Island. As a result, the project has the potential for increased interactions with Leach's Storm-petrel and other migratory birds, particularly with respect to attraction to artificial lighting and potential strandings on vessels and project infrastructure (per Gjerdrum et al., 2021), storm-petrels are the most commonly stranded species in NL (93%) based on reports from 1998-2018). The location and proposed timing of activities overlap with peak storm-petrel stranding period (mid-September to mid-November) when young Leach's Storm-petrel fledged and make their first flight offshore.

The prompt location of stranded birds through daily, systematic searches of vessel(s) increases the potential of reducing harm and/or mortality of stranded birds Gjerdrum et al., 2018 states per reports that 98% of storm-petrels found alive were successfully released back to the ocean.

ECCC-CWS recommends that the proponent should develop and implement vessel-specific systematic search protocols for stranded birds that will be undertaken by trained, experienced observers. ECCC-CWS provides the following guidance (attached) regarding the development and implementation of systematic stranded bird

protocols, for the proponent's consideration, and is available to review draft protocols prior to their implementation (please contact scf-atlmarin-cws-atlmarine@ec.gc.ca).

- ECCC-CWS Guidance for Developing Systematic Stranded Bird Survey Protocols for Vessels and Platforms.
- Appendix 1 – Stranded Bird Encounter Datasheet
- Appendix 2 – Infographic and Reference Card – *What to do when you find a stranded bird?*
- Appendix 3 – Seabird Identification Photo Card
- *Procedures for handling and documenting stranded birds encountered on infrastructure offshore Atlantic Canada*
- MS Excel Stranded seabird datasheet

Additionally, given the high potential for migratory bird strandings, particularly Leach's Storm-petrel in mid-September to mid-November, ECCC-CWS recommends that the proponent consider including stranded seabird awareness training for all members on the vessel, to ensure that individuals are adequately informed of potential impacts to migratory birds. ECCC-CWS is able to provide awareness materials for the proponent's consideration, if desired.

P.S. Please note that we have recently updated our email addresses:

CWS Offshore Oil and Gas-related inquiries: scf-atlmarin-cws-atlmarine@ec.gc.ca

CWS Permits Email: SCF-ATLPermis-CWS-ATLPermits@ec.gc.ca