

# Designated Offshore Wind Energy Areas



## Introduction

Nova Scotia is well-positioned to enter the \$1-trillion global offshore wind market. The province has world class offshore wind speeds, a stable regulatory environment, and decades of experience in offshore energy development.

Safely developing offshore wind energy in the Canada-Nova Scotia offshore area can grow the economy, create sustainable jobs, attract investment, provide long-term energy security, and help reduce carbon emissions.

An important step toward developing this resource is the designation of offshore wind energy areas. Four of these areas were designated on July 29, 2025:

- Middle Bank
- Sable Island Bank
- Sydney Bight
- French Bank

## Offshore wind energy areas

Offshore wind energy areas are large sections of ocean identified as being suitable for potential offshore wind energy development. They are areas where future offshore wind projects could be built. Identifying them is an important step towards Nova Scotia's target of issuing licences for up to 5 gigawatts of offshore wind energy by 2030.

## How offshore wind energy areas were identified

To support the development of this emerging industry, the Government of Canada and the Province of Nova Scotia conducted a regional assessment. It identified eight potential areas for offshore wind development.

After further review, the governments shortlisted five proposed wind energy areas to advance for public consultation. On March 14, 2025, the governments released a discussion paper, and the consultation was open for 30 days, until April 14, 2025.

## What we heard

About 150 individual submissions were received from a broad range of interested parties. They included commercial fishers and organizations, Indigenous groups, prospective offshore wind developers, environmental organisations, federal government departments, local businesses, and members of the public.

Feedback was generally supportive of offshore wind development and its capacity to generate clean energy and electricity. Some participants noted that the proposed wind energy areas have world-class potential for offshore wind development due to their wind speeds, water depths, and geology.

At the same time, there was recognition of the potential need to further address some concerns at later stages in the land tenure process for offshore wind. Some participants expressed concern about the potential overlap between proposed wind energy areas and existing and proposed conservation areas, and the potential for offshore wind to impact aquatic species, including marine mammals and birds. Others raised the potential for impacts to commercial fishing activities in and around the proposed wind energy areas. Some noted overlap with existing ocean uses, such as the Department of National Defence which does training and exercise areas in the Western/Emerald Bank area. Some also expressed concern about the proximity to shore of some of the proposed wind energy areas, particularly near Sydney Bight.

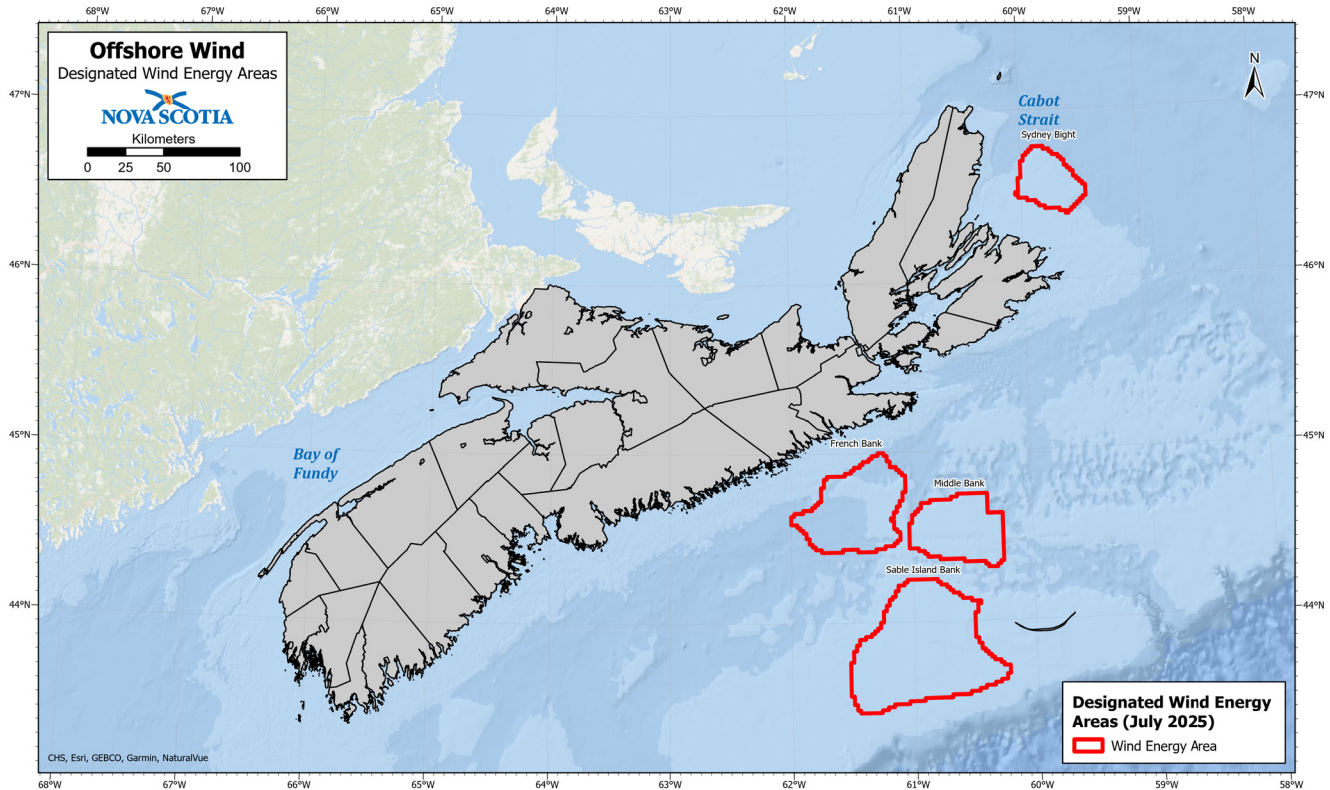
## Designated offshore wind energy areas

After considering feedback, the governments adjusted their plans for Tier 1 offshore wind energy areas. They have designated four areas – two of which have been reduced in size:

Tier 1 offshore wind energy areas	Size	Change from original proposal
French Bank	3125 km <sup>2</sup>	Reduced by about 296 km <sup>2</sup>
Middle Bank	2289 km <sup>2</sup>	No change
Sable Island Bank	5850 km <sup>2</sup>	No change
Sydney Bight	1285 km <sup>2</sup>	Reduced by about 406 km <sup>2</sup>

The Middle Bank and Sable Island Bank wind energy areas are remaining the same size as originally proposed. The boundary of Sydney Bight was changed so that its closest point to shore is about 25 kilometres. The boundary of French Bank was reduced slightly and its closest point to shore is about 20 kilometres.

Western/Emerald Bank will not be included in Tier 1. It will be considered post-2030 after the first round of licences is awarded, along with the three Tier 2 areas identified in the regional assessment.



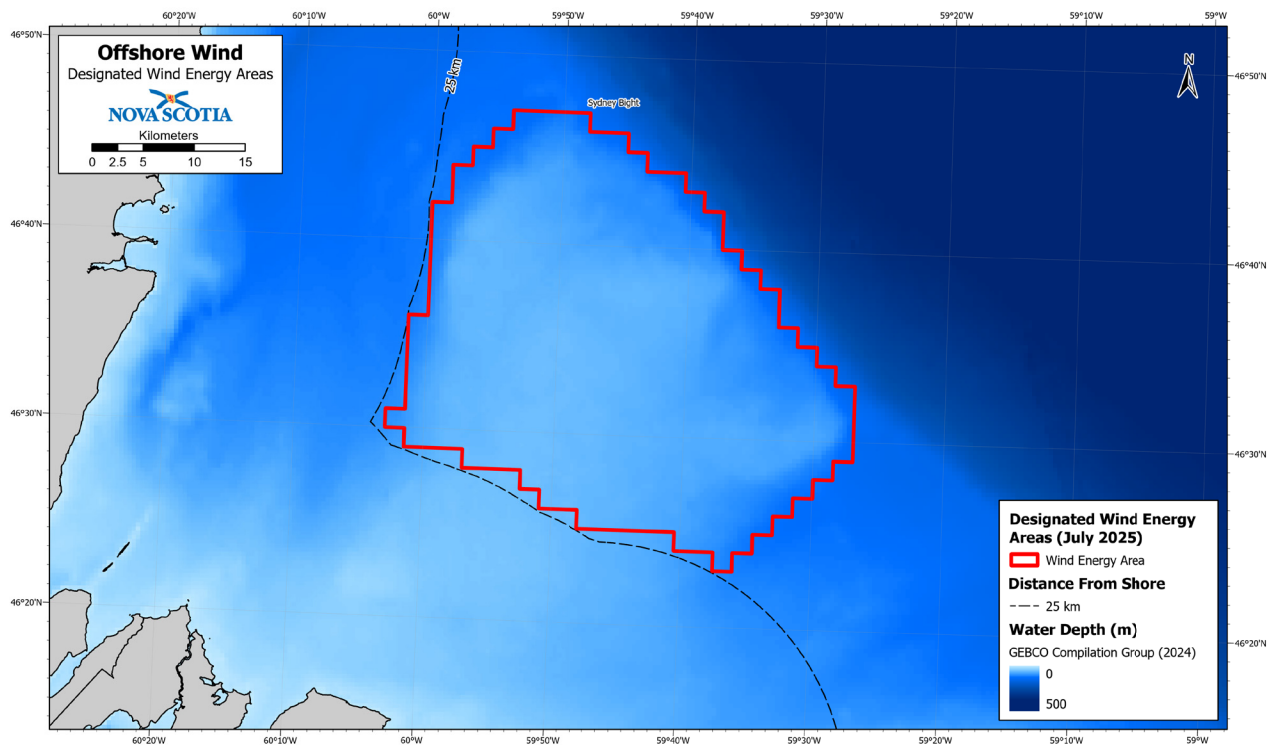
## Next steps

This summer, the Government of Canada and the Province of Nova Scotia will provide strategic direction to the Canada-Nova Scotia Offshore Energy Regulator to begin the process for a licensing round to commence for offshore wind energy.

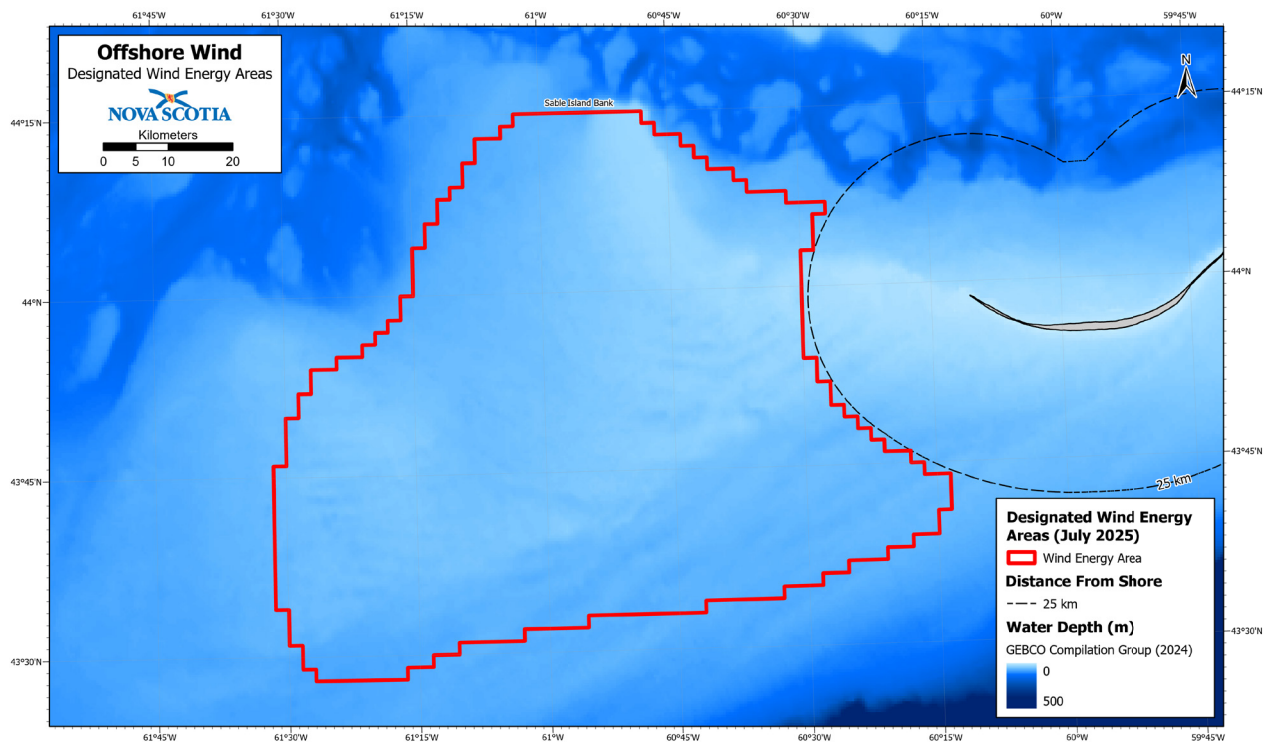
That process starts with a call for information and pre-qualification step. It will be another opportunity for all interested parties to provide feedback on potential parcels within the wind energy areas that may be included in the call for bids later in the year.

# Appendix A – Designated offshore wind energy areas

## Sydney Bight

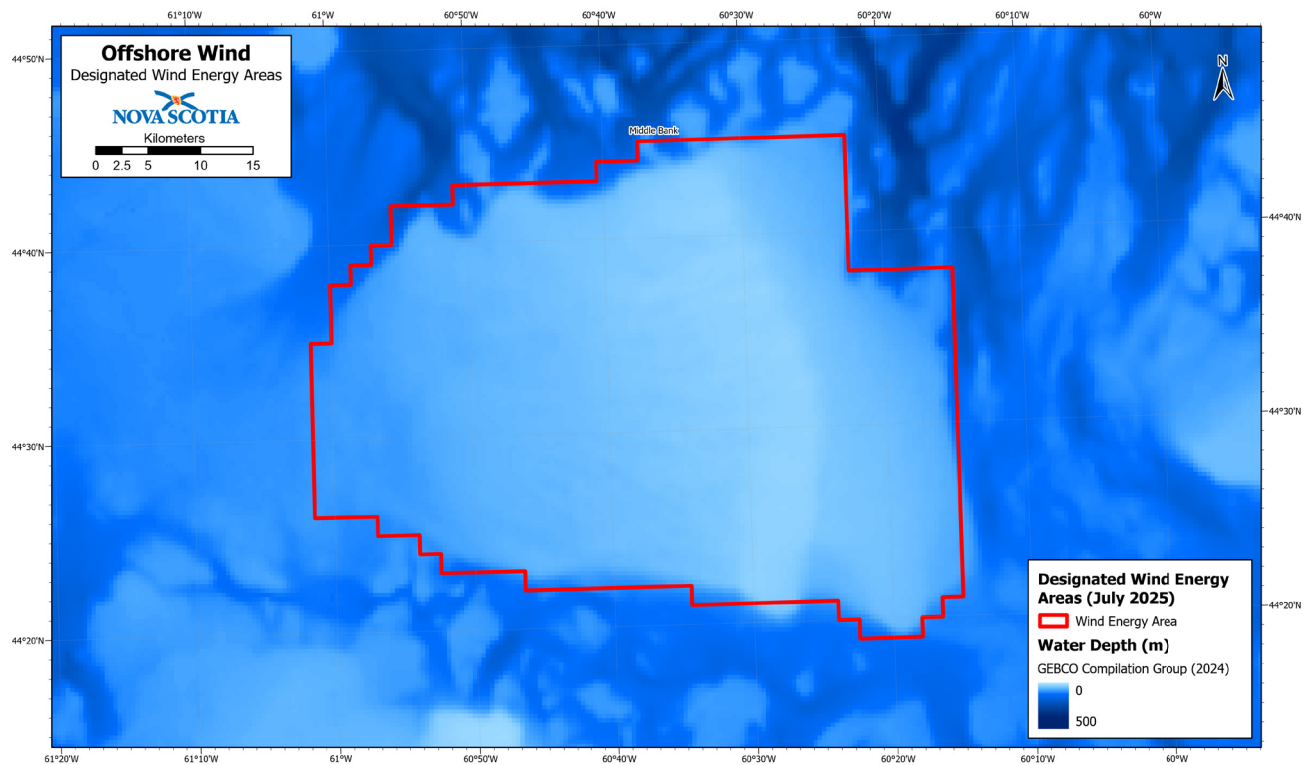


## Sable Island Bank





## Middle Bank



## French Bank

