



## CENTRAL ATLANTIC 2 VIRTUAL PUBLIC MEETING OCTOBER 2<sup>ND</sup>, 2024 MEETING SUMMARY

*DISCLAIMER: This meeting summary was prepared by the Consensus Building Institute (CBI), a non-profit entity contracted by Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) to facilitate discussions. This summary is not intended to be a meeting transcript. Rather, it focuses on the main points covered during the meetings.*

### Meeting in Brief

BOEM convened a Virtual Public Meeting on October 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2024 from 6:00 to 9:00 PM ET to provide information and receive input on the Central Atlantic 2 Call for Information and Nominations (hereafter Call). BOEM provided a brief overview presentation of the Central Atlantic 2 Call but allocated most of the meeting time to public input. Feedback provided during the meeting will help inform BOEM's next steps in the Central Atlantic 2 offshore wind lease planning process ahead of a possible future second offshore wind lease sale in the Central Atlantic region (hereafter Central Atlantic 2).

### Attendance

472 registered for the virtual meeting, approximately 194 people attended, and 38 offered statements during the meeting.

### Summary of Presentations

David Diamond, Deputy Chief for Atlantic Operations within BOEM's Office of Renewable Energy Programs (OREP), provided introductory remarks, thanking those who attended the Central Atlantic Intergovernmental Renewable Energy Task Force meeting held virtually on September 10th and 11th, and those who participated in the in-person Open House meetings in Morehead City, NC, Virginia Beach, VA, Ocean City, MD, Rehoboth Beach, DE, and Atlantic City, NJ between September 17<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup>.

Diamond emphasized the focus of the meeting: the Central Atlantic 2 Call, which is the first step of a multi-year planning process for designating potential offshore wind energy areas in the Central Atlantic region. This Call is intended to help BOEM gain information to further narrow the region and deconflict future potential lease areas, in consultation with federal agencies, Tribes, state and local governments and other key stakeholders.

Seth Theuerkauf, Project Coordinator within BOEM OREP and lead for Central Atlantic 2, presented on: 1) the state offshore wind goals that are driving this second round of Central Atlantic planning, 2) information within the Call that summarizes key issues from the first planning process and forms the initial foundation of information for Central Atlantic 2, and 3) BOEM's offshore wind lease planning process generally and the expected timeline for Central Atlantic 2. He also reviewed next steps and how interested parties can provide input to inform Central Atlantic 2.



## Discussion

Each commenter was offered three minutes to provide input or ask questions. At regular intervals (approximately every 30-45 minutes), BOEM paused to answer questions it was able to respond to in the moment, as well as to offer clarifications where appropriate. This summary focuses on the commenters. BOEM responses can be heard in the meeting recording.

BOEM and the meeting facilitator clarified at the beginning of the meeting that each statement provided by participants during the Virtual Public Meeting would be considered within the meeting summary (i.e., this document), but that each statement would not be transcribed with attribution as an individual comment into the Central Atlantic 2 Call docket. At the meeting, participants were encouraged to consider submission of individual written comments directly at [www.regulations.gov](http://www.regulations.gov) via the docket associated with the Central Atlantic 2 Call: BOEM-2024-0040. While this meeting summary is not intended to be a verbatim record or transcript of each comment, this summary describes the common themes, issues, and concerns raised by commenters. Below is a summary of key themes and topics discussed.

### Visual and Auditory Impacts:

- Many commenters expressed strong concern on behalf of residents and tourists about the negative visual impacts of having turbines visible from the coastline. The visual impact would include general visual impairment and dissatisfaction, reduced aesthetic, personal, and economic value of the viewshed, and potential adverse economic harm to tourism, a major economic driver along this coast. BOEM was urged to develop lease areas as far away from the coast as possible out of visible range. Some commenters provided specific suggestions, such as siting turbines far enough away from shore so that the turbine's nacelle is below the horizon.
- Commenters also raised concerns about nighttime visual impacts due to aviation lights on the turbines and adverse impacts on the night sky. They asked about the lumen requirements for the aviation lights on turbines.
- Commenters raised concern about noise impacts of both construction and operation and asked for greater clarity on sound impacts of both at and near shore.
- One commenter urged BOEM to not put too much emphasis on viewshed concerns, so that projects could be closer to shore and have lower costs for ratepayers.

### Economic Impacts:

- Several commenters shared concerns that the visibility of the turbines will decrease property values and negatively impact tourism.

- Commenters also raised the potential negative economic impacts in terms of tourism, real estate, and commercial fishing if turbines malfunction and result in ocean debris.
- Commenters expressed concern that business, property owners, and taxpayers in general will be financially burdened, and expressed interest in seeing a cost-benefit analysis or expected return on investment.

### **Engineering and Technical Concerns:**

- Commenters asked about the size, lifespan, and density of turbines per unit area, as well as what is involved in routine maintenance.
- Commenters shared concerns about the potential of turbines malfunctioning and whether the turbines could withstand hurricanes or other climate events.
- Some raised the concern that the wind turbines could disrupt radars used by vessels in and near the arrays.
- A commenter asked that BOEM consider different foundation types offered by developers during the review of any future Construction and Operations Plan (COP).
- A few commenters urged BOEM to look into the possibility of floating offshore wind turbines for Central Atlantic 2.

### **Wildlife, Habitat and Environmental Impacts:**

- Commenters expressed concern that migratory birds, whales, horseshoe crabs, loggerhead turtles, deep sea corals, water quality, and air quality would be negatively affected.
- A commenter suggested BOEM include more wildlife behavior studies examining how sensitive various species are to change.
- A commenter asked about who ensures adherence to acoustic monitoring requirements.

### **Evaluation of Potential Developers:**

- Commenters shared concerns about offshore wind developers backing out of projects, and interest in knowing more about the qualification process and financial assurance requirements.

### **Emergency Response:**

- Commenters were curious about whether a disaster recovery or emergency response plan was being developed, and whether developers could be held accountable for any emergency that occurs and who would hold them accountable.



### **Climate Change:**

- Various commenters expressed fears about the impacts of climate change, and the urgent need to transition to clean energy, including offshore wind.
- One commenter expressed doubt that offshore wind will reduce global emissions causing climate change.

### **Commercial and Recreational Fisheries:**

- Several commenters shared concerns regarding how turbines might affect pelagic & highly migratory species' migration, as well as the effects on commercial and recreational fisher's livelihoods, and wanted to ensure that they are part of the process moving forward.
- A commenter suggested that BOEM consider for-hire fishing fleet interests in the planning process.
- A commenter requested BOEM stop looking at fisheries on a Fisheries Management Plan basis. For instance, the Squid/Mackerel/Butterfish plan has multiple species of each within it, and wondered why these have not been examined separately given how offshore wind might affect them differently.

### **Drivers of Central Atlantic 2 and State Renewable Energy Goals:**

- A commenter asked about how BOEM will measure whether they are helping the states meet their renewable energy goals.
- A commenter shared concerns that Delaware will not benefit in the same way Maryland and North Carolina will from this lease planning effort.

### **Planning Process:**

- Commenters urged BOEM to engage in close federal interagency coordination and deconfliction, particularly with the Department of Defense and the U.S. Coast Guard to ensure lease areas are carefully selected.
- Several commenters expressed support for running a pilot project before larger-scale commercial development occurs.

### **Navigation and Vessel Traffic:**

- A commenter recommended developing appropriate traffic separation schemes and fairways in potential wind energy areas that prioritize navigation and vessel traffic and allow for safe maneuvering in emergency scenarios.
- A commenter asked about restrictions on commercial traffic (i.e. cruise ships or commercial fishing ships) near wind farms.



### **Stakeholder Engagement:**

- Some commenters expressed feeling that their voices were being ignored, and were also concerned why areas taken off the table in Central Atlantic 1 are being considered again in this Call.
- One commenter said that they appreciated the format of the Virtual Public Meeting, in particular, the ability to see the attendee list.
- Another commenter asked that BOEM engage meaningfully with communities and consider ways to offer local benefits during future project development.
- A commenter asked whether BOEM is legally obligated to address public comments during mitigation.

### **Total Size of Build Out and Cumulative Impacts:**

- Commenters asked about the total size of the build out (in terms of acreage and the number of turbines) across the region.
- A commenter recommended that BOEM discuss the cumulative impacts of wind farms.

### **Transmission:**

- A commenter suggested that BOEM coordinate transmission to have fewer landing sites and a transmission line connecting wind farms along the Atlantic coast.

### **National Security:**

- A commenter urged greater attention on national security issues and asked whether protections are being considered to reduce U.S. vulnerabilities to terrorism at these proposed facilities.