

Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) New York & New Jersey Offshore Wind Development Environmental Justice Forum (EJF)

Wednesday 24 July 2024, 10:30 am – 12:30 pm ET

Meeting Summary

Purpose and Intent of Meeting

This document summarizes the presentation, discussion, and key themes heard at the 24 July 2024 Environmental Justice Forum (EJF) virtual meeting, hosted by the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM). This is the final EJF meeting of the series. The goals of the EJF are to:

- Identify priorities, needs, and issues to address through BOEM’s draft New York Bight PEIS specific to environmental justice and underserved communities.
- Improve information-sharing and coordination across agencies, governments, lessees, community-based organizations, and Indigenous Peoples.
- Create greater accountability by providing transparency to communities on whether and how their input has affected the decision-making process.
- Grow long-term relationships with communities that are founded on mutual respect, understanding, and collaboration.
- Reduce barriers to participation, increase access to environmental reviews, and create better-informed decisions.

Contents

- I. Meeting Summary
 - a. Welcome and agenda overview
 - b. Leadership remarks
 - c. Participant announcements
 - d. Where we’ve been
 - i. Retrospective review of the EJF
 - ii. Review the status of EJF participant input
 - iii. Clarifying questions and reflections
 - e. Where we’re going
 - i. Upcoming processes
 1. Update on Final PEIS
 2. Timeline of upcoming activities
 3. Next stages of NEPA and engagement
 - ii. Clarifying questions and reflections
 - f. Shaping future engagement
 - i. Group activity
 - ii. EJF lessons learned assessment
 - g. Closing remarks and adjourn

2. Meeting Participants

Meeting Summary

Welcome and Agenda Overview

Miquela Craytor, the facilitator, welcomed participants to the meeting and began with a moment of silence for participants to center themselves for the discussion. She shared that this is the eighth and final EJP, given that this engagement is tied to the New York Bight Offshore Wind Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (PEIS), which is ending with the publication of the Final PEIS this Fall 2024.

The facilitator provided an overview of the key objectives for the EJP including:

- Build capacity of participants to comment on BOEM's Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (PEIS) on Expected Wind Energy Development in the New York Bight (offshore NY and NJ).
- Provide updates on how previous input is being utilized by BOEM or others.
- Grow relationships and improve coordination.

The facilitator reviewed the meeting principles which can be found within the [Participant Guidelines](#).

Leadership Remarks

Marissa Knodel (Senior Advisor, BOEM) and **Karen Baker (Chief of Office of Renewable Energy Programs, BOEM)** welcomed participants to the EJP and provided opening remarks.

Marissa Knodel (BOEM) began by explaining how the EJP came about with BOEM recognizing the need to do better engagement with environmental justice (EJ) communities. She shared that the EJP has been a pilot effort to bring together community-based organizations and state and federal agencies to discuss EJ issues related to offshore wind in New York and New Jersey.

Karen Baker (BOEM) reflected on the past EJPs and how she felt they have been a great opportunity for BOEM to grow relationships with impacted communities in the New York Bight region. She noted that, while the next phase of engagement will look different, BOEM's goals for engagement remain the same. BOEM will continue to strive to reduce barriers to local EJ, Tribal and community participation, increase access, and create better-informed decisions.

Participant Announcements

Participants were invited to share any relevant announcements with the broader group.

Participants shared the following announcements:

- **Laura Mansfield (BOEM)** shared that on 24 July, the Biden-Harris Administration will host the first-ever *White House Summit on Environmental Justice in Action*.
- **State Participant** shared information on NYSERDA's upcoming open houses.
 - 31 July: NYSERDA Open House on Long Island. More information can be found [here](#).

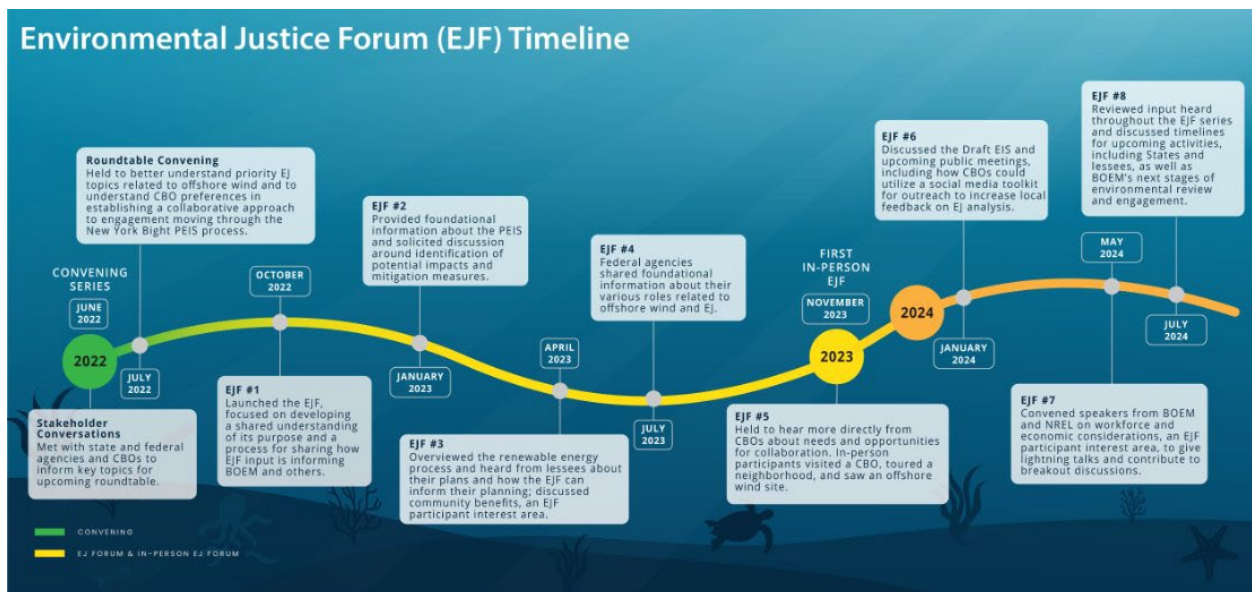
- Offshore Wind Open House and Union Apprenticeship Awareness Day on 1 August 2024 at 11:00 AM - 2:00 PM ET at the Stony Brook University Research and Development Park (1500 Stony Brook Road, Stony Brook, New York, 11794, USA)
- **State Participant** shared information on an upcoming New Jersey Economic Development Authority grant for green workforce training. More information can be found [here](#).
- **Meghan Cornelison (BOEM)** shared information on a resource document BOEM is compiling for EJF participants. This document provides all EJF participants with a compilation of offshore wind and environmental justice resources shared over the EJF, along with any additional resources participants may wish to add.
- **Community Participant** shared that the EPA Thriving Communities Technical Assistance Center for NY/NJ region has an upcoming training series on "How to Meaningfully Engage and Influence Government Decision making on Environmental Justice" starting August 22. More information can be found [on the center's website](#).

Where We've Been

The facilitator introduced the next agenda item. They noted that this is the final EJF, and that BOEM will now provide an overview of what has been accomplished, and what has been discussed throughout the process.

Retrospective Review of the EJF

Laura Mansfield (BOEM) provided an overview of what has been covered in the EJFs using the following timeline.



She then reflected on the EJF deliverables that were developed in response to EJF participants' needs and requests. These include the following:

- EJF webpage with resources linked
- Participant Guidelines

- Input Status Reports
- Meeting summaries
- Summary of the Draft PEIS EJ section
- Spanish translated documents (EJ summary, EJV factsheet, social media toolkit)
- Federal and state agency roles table (and points of contact)
- Collection of relevant and previously shared resources
- Social media toolkit for public meetings

Laura Mansfield (BOEM) asked participants if they found any of the above deliverables especially helpful.

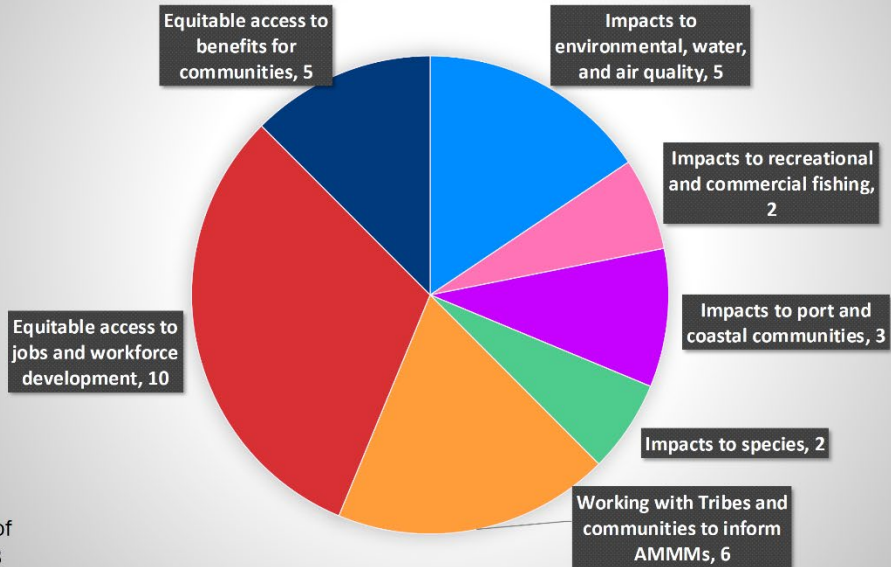
- **State Participant:** The PEIS EJ briefing documents BOEM created were helpful in sharing information on the Draft PEIS and having informal discussions during the public comment period.
- **Community Participant:** The EJV itself has been useful as well as the associated resources and deliverables.

Review the Status of EJV Participant Input

Next BOEM shared the purpose of the Input Status Report. Throughout the EJV, BOEM has developed and updated the report, which captures all participant input that has been shared during the EJV along with who is responsible for addressing that input, and where the status of that input currently stands. This document is intended for use by BOEM and all EJV participants (particularly other agencies and lessees) to ensure they respond to EJ community concerns.

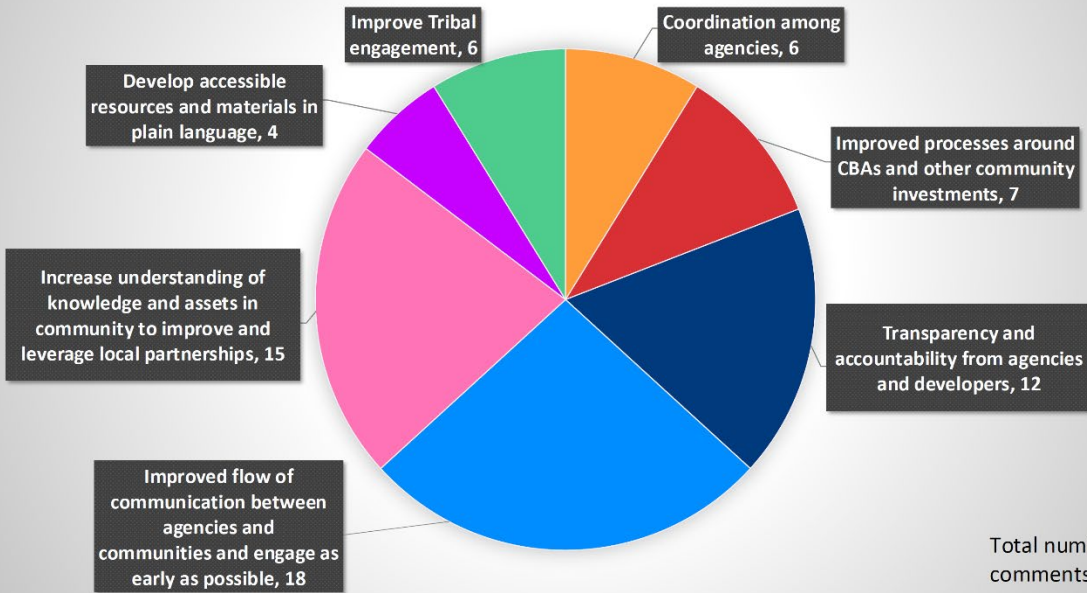
Laura Mansfield (BOEM) shared an overview of participant input received throughout the EJV using the following graphs.

EJF Input Status Report: Top Themes Relevant for Programmatic Impact Statement – Impacts, Benefits, and AMMM measures



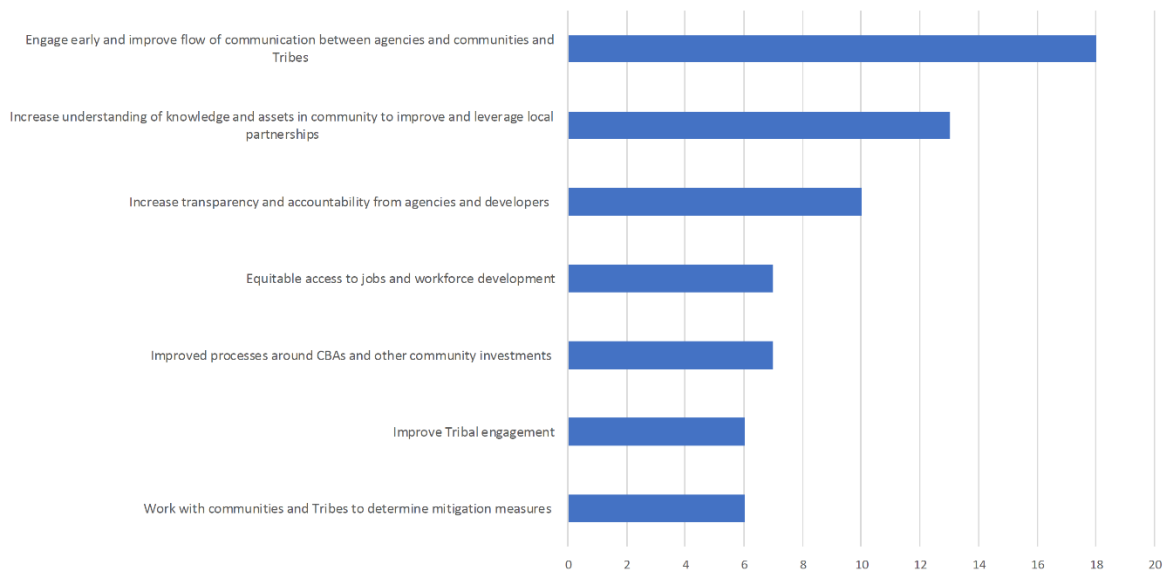
Total number of comments: 33

EJF Input Status Report: Top Themes Relevant to Offshore Wind Beyond PEIS or EJ & Engagement Process Related Issues



Total number of comments: 68

EJF Input Status Report: Top Themes Raised During Environmental Justice Forums



Laura Mansfield (BOEM) highlighted what activities fall within BOEMs jurisdictional authority to help participants understand what input received throughout the EJF BOEM can directly address. The activities that fall within BOEM’s jurisdiction include:

- **Environmental Assessment:** NEPA documents, including an EJ section which identifies potentially impacted communities, characterizes area, assesses potential impacts, and proposes measures to reduce impacts.
- **Environmental Studies:** Provides information to improve the NEPA analysis.
- **Leasing:** Authorized by Energy Policy Act of 2005, BOEM grants the right to use a lease area to develop plans.
- **Permitting:** BOEM decides whether to approve, approve with modification, or disapprove a Construction and Operations Plan (COP).

Clarifying Questions and Reflections

The facilitator opened the floor for questions and/or reflections from participants.

- **Community Participant:** Now that the EJF is ending, what comes next?
 - **Laura Mansfield (BOEM)** responded that this will be covered in the next segment of the agenda.

Where We’re Going

The facilitator introduced the next agenda item where BOEM shared what was coming next in terms of the PEIS, upcoming processes, and future community engagement during the Construction and Operations stage. They noted that while the EJF was ending, BOEM will continue with different forms of engagement within the region.

Update on the Final PEIS

Meghan Cornelison (BOEM) provided an update on the status of the Final PEIS.

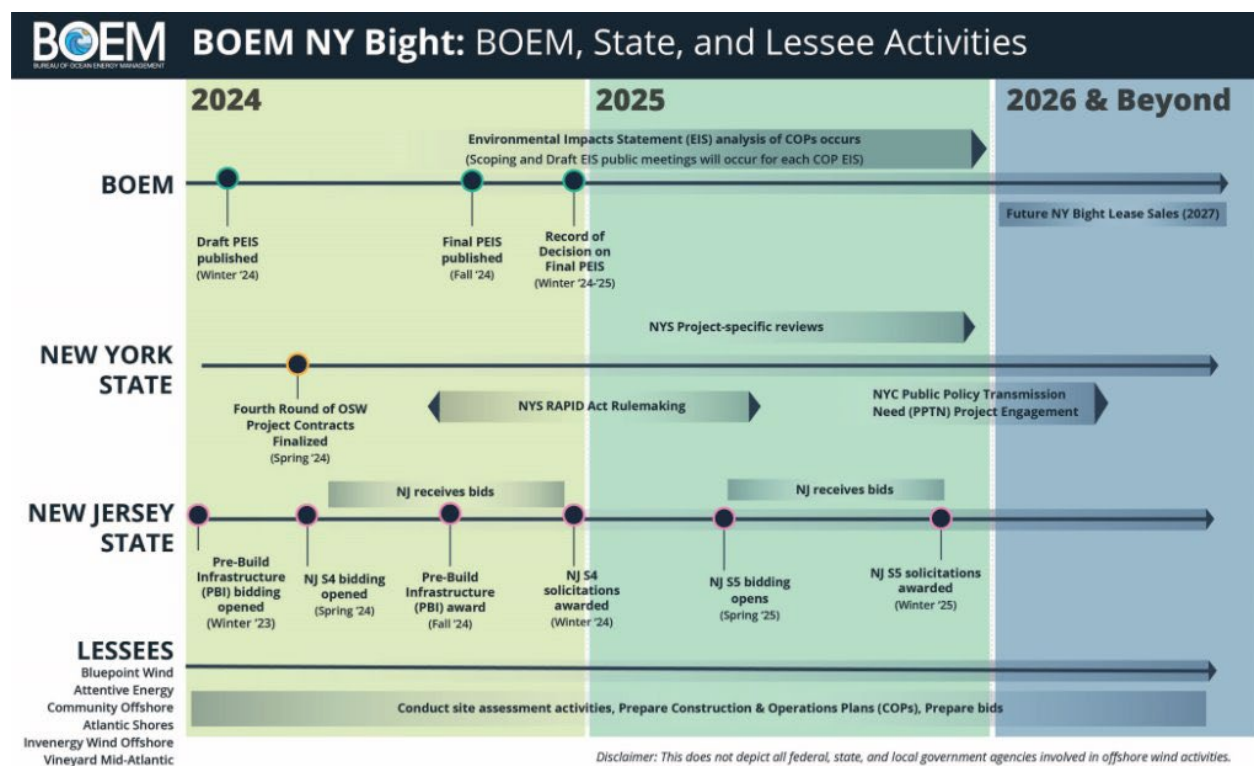
On January 12, 2024, BOEM published a notice of availability of the Draft PEIS, opening a 45-day public comment period. BOEM then extended the comment period by an additional 14 days in response to requests for additional review time. BOEM received 1,355 unique comments from 530 comment submissions.

The Final PEIS is expected to be published in Fall 2024. Edits are currently being made to address comments received, including updates to the EJ section and to the proposed Avoidance, Minimization, Mitigation, and Monitoring (AMMMs) measures. A comment response summary will be included as an appendix.

The Record of Decision is expected to be in Winter 2024/2025.

Timeline of Upcoming Activities

Meghan Cornelison (BOEM) shared an overview of near-term upcoming activities for BOEM, New York State, New Jersey, and lessees referring to a timeline graphic (included below).



Next Stages of NEPA and Engagement

BOEM shared what to expect in terms of the Construction and Operations Plan (COP) Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) process.

Lindy Nelson (BOEM) shared an overview of the COP EIS process to provide participants with a better understanding of what comes next and what engagement will look like during this next phase.

- **Meghan Cornelison (BOEM)** shared information and a link to the Notice of Intent (NOI) Checklist:
 - BOEM Publishes [Final Guidance for Submission of Offshore Wind Project Plans to Improve Permitting Efficiency](#) | Bureau of Ocean Energy Management

Holly Fowler (BOEM) then provided an overview of what BOEM engagement will look like moving forward into this next stage. The EIJ was tied to the PEIS process, therefore the COP phase will be different. The BOEM Office of Renewable Energy Programs (OREP) will continue engagement and is planning to host 2-3 virtual engagement meetings in early 2025.

OREP is interested in continuing meaningful engagement to ensure underserved communities, especially those with environmental justice concerns:

- Are aware of and understand proposed projects,
- Can actively participate in the identification of impacts and ways to mitigate them,
- Have an opportunity to voice concerns,
- Understand how their input is used or affects a decision.

Clarifying Questions and Reflections

The following comments were shared to provide additional context from the state perspective in response to the upcoming activities' timeline.

- **State Participant (New York)** shared that the RAPID Act (NY) passed in April 2024 and called for New York State to improve and streamline its transmission siting process. There are new uniform standards and conditions which will cover all new transmission projects in the state. A public comment process is anticipated for Quarter 2 of 2025.
 - To receive alerts on the RAPID Act rulemaking for New York State's transmission siting process, you can subscribe on the top right of the [New York Department of Public Service website](#).
- **State Participant (New York)** provided additional context on the New York City Public Policy Transmission Need (PPTN). This is a New York City coordinated transmission project. More information can be found on the [project website](#).
- **State Participant (New York)** provided [a New York offshore wind resource](#) with more information on New York's upcoming processes for offshore wind development.

Participants then asked the following clarifying questions:

- **Tribal Participant:** Does BOEM have a draft monitoring agreement of the projects for Tribal Nations to use?

- **Meghan Cornelison (BOEM)** responded: Not yet, because the decision is still being made, however, integrating with onshore is a great question. This is not happening that she is aware of.
- **Laura Mansfield (BOEM)** added: Monitoring is based on resources (i.e. endangered species).
- **BOEM** noted that they will share additional resources with this participant.

Shaping Future Engagement

The facilitator introduced the next portion of the agenda where participants were asked to reflect on their experience with the EJF and about what they want to see in engagement processes going forward. The following questions were asked and word clouds were created with participants' responses.

1. Can you share one word to describe your experience with the BOEM EJF?

 Mentimeter

One word to describe your experience with the BOEM EJF

24 responses



2. Can you share one word to describe the future of engagement for offshore wind?

One word to describe the future of engagement for offshore wind

26 responses



The facilitator then transitioned the group to breakout discussions on what information needs to be carried forward in the next stages of engagement through a *Memo to Self on the Future of Offshore Wind Community Engagement*. The intent here was to capture the types of engagement that should be replicated or continued. The participants then split into three breakout groups, and discussed the following questions:

1. What are the most important things you want to remind yourself and others of for future engagement processes?
2. What is your top priority related to environmental impacts that should be addressed before an offshore wind project starts construction?

Breakout Group 1

Group Discussion Overview: Future Engagement Processes

The group responded to the following question: What are the most important things you want to remind yourself and others of for future engagement processes?

What are the most important things you want to remind yourself and others of for future engagement processes?



The following comments were shared by participants as they related to the future engagement processes.

- Participants emphasized that process design should encourage robust, inclusive dialogue and diverse participation options for folks coming from varying levels of expertise and comfort with sharing.
 - There should be more room for conversation about various topics so people can share their relevant experiences.
 - It is important to give grace to fellow participants.
- To reduce fatigue and boost trust among participants and organizations, participants advised designing engagement processes to avoid extractive activities.
- Agencies should provide updates on various engagement processes as they unfold.
- Agencies should avoid burdening community groups by ensuring they do not need to repeat their messages to new staff.
 - Job turnover disrupts relationships between organizations within engagement processes, therefore agencies should use a relationship tracker to promote continuity in relationships between organizations.
- Attendees noted it is important to build the capacity of participants to understand and relate to renewables by tracking the evolving status of offshore wind in the American market, offering education on the new technology and its benefits to stakeholders, and exploring and expressing the relevance of offshore wind to the granular needs and interests of local communities and households.
- Developers and agencies need to meet people where they are.

- Participants underscored the need to prioritize accessibility in meeting design, format, and outreach. For example:
 - Community and stakeholder engagement should be conducted early and often.
 - Printed materials need to be accessible to communities on the ground by using plain language.
 - Participant noted that both Spanish and Portuguese translation is lacking.

Group Discussion Overview: Top Priorities Related to Environmental Impacts

The breakout group did not address this question.

Breakout Group 2

Group Discussion Overview: Future Engagement Processes

The group responded to the following question: What are the most important things you want to remind yourself and others of for future engagement processes?

What are the most important things you want to remind yourself and others of for future engagement processes?



The following comments were shared by participants as they related to the future engagement processes.

- Ensure that stakeholders are heard by providing opportunities for entities to engage with climate and/or social justice advocates.
 - BOEM plays an "oversized" role, as smaller organizations don't possess the same time and/or resources.

- Government agencies need to become more involved and connected with the communities they serve. They need on-the-ground, firsthand knowledge of the realities that marginalized communities experience on a regular basis.
- Remind ourselves to be open minded and respectful, regardless of our affiliations and disagreements with other community members. We are all trying our best to adapt to the rapidly changing physical and sociopolitical climate.
 - Listening to others through a critical lens is how we produce more effective and engaging discussions.
- Too often, we try to create a clean future without considering the full costs. We can't have both – fighting climate change but not investing adequate resources into the effort.
 - We can create a narrative that educates people of all ages on the need for investments. That way, support for such investments could potentially increase.
- We don't have enough conversations about the reality of the financial costs of offshore wind, etc. People need to be aware – transparency is key.
- These processes are about human connections.
- We rely on our community-based organizations (CBOs) for our messaging and to combat that of opposition to offshore wind development.
 - This can prove to be challenging as opponents of offshore wind may often have the power to control the narrative and sway policymakers.
 - We need to do a better job at preparing communities for policy processes, building connections, and sharing information.
 - Understand and leverage the power of community.
- Transparency is key; stakeholder engagement is paramount to the success and continued support of present and future projects.
 - Since OSW is connected to and impacts so many different departments/entities, how do we end the silos preventing the flow of information, etc.?
- Agencies and policymakers should consider that regular convenings with stakeholders can be counterproductive; people may begin to lose interest and disengage after a certain period of time.

Group Discussion Overview: Top Priorities Related to Environmental Impacts

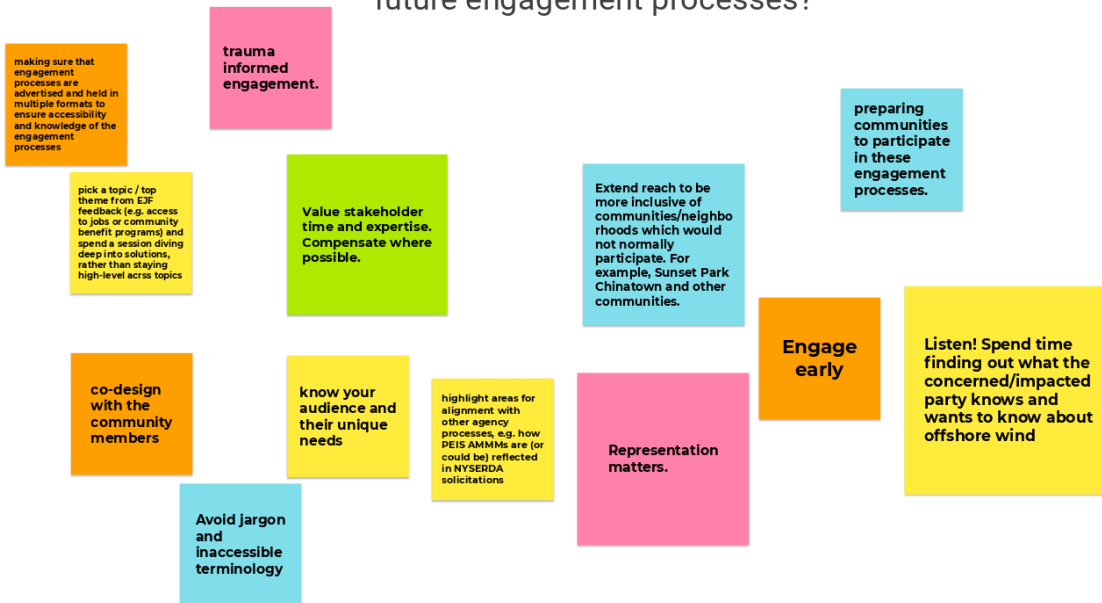
The breakout group did not address this question.

Breakout Group 3

Group Discussion Overview: Future Engagement Processes

The group responded to the following question: What are the most important things you want to remind yourself and others of for future engagement processes?

What are the most important things you want to remind yourself and others of for future engagement processes?



The following comments were shared by participants as they related to the future engagement processes.

- A participant asked what engagement processes the question is focused on.
 - **Laura Mansfield (BOEM):** There may be a pause in engagement, so this is a reminder for what should be focused on next time.
- Co-design engagement processes with the community members.
- Ensure that engagement processes are advertised and held in multiple formats to ensure accessibility and knowledge of the engagement processes.
- Value stakeholder time and expertise and compensate where possible. People often share a lot about stakeholder fatigue. Time is valuable so people should be compensated to adequately value their time.
- Trauma informed engagement.
- Listen and spend time finding out what the concerned or impacted party knows and wants to know about offshore wind.
 - It's important to note the expertise of community members and find out what they know.
 - Understand how impacted communities see issues and what information is important and valuable to them.
- Engage early and as often as the community or stakeholders want. This is important because this sets the tone and shows that feedback can be incorporated. Feedback received from late-stage engagement is less likely to be incorporated.
- Representation matters.
- Prepare communities to participate in these engagement processes.

- Extend reach to be more inclusive of communities or neighborhoods which would normally not participate. For example, Sunset Park Chinatown and other sections.
- Pick a topic or a top theme (e.g., access to jobs or community benefits programs) and spend a session diving deep into solutions, rather than staying at a high level across topics.
- Avoid jargon and inaccessible terminology.
- Know your audience and their unique needs.
- Highlight areas for alignment with other agency processes, e.g., how PEIS AMMMS are (or could be) reflected in NYSERDA solicitations.

Group Discussion Overview: Top Priorities Related to Environmental Impacts

The group was also asked to identify their top priority related to environmental impacts that should be addressed before an offshore wind project starts construction.

What is your top priority related to environmental impacts that should be addressed before an offshore wind project starts construction?



The following questions and comments were shared by participants as they related to environmental impacts.

- Traffic, noise, pollution, and quality of life to neighborhoods.
- Awareness of environmental impacts and the need for environmental justice.
- Benthic habitat disruption resulting from cable burial.
- Underwater noise during construction.
- Responding to public health concerns related to onshore transmission or cabling.
- Resiliency of in-water infrastructure during storms.
- Avoid important fishing grounds to reduce the impact on the fishing industry.
- Minimizing disturbance along cable routes.

EJF Lessons Learned Assessment

Laura Mansfield (BOEM) shared that Kearns & West will be developing a lessons learned assessment to capture the key takeaways from the EJF. BOEM plans to continue hosting EJ engagement activities that build off this pilot approach, with an EJF series planned for California. The assessment will help BOEM to better understand the most important outcomes of the EJF that future activities should focus on. BOEM will share the final lessons learned assessment with all EJF participants via email and post it on the webpage.

Closing Remarks and Adjourn

BOEM expressed their appreciation for everyone's time and participation during the EJF.

The meeting concluded at 12:30 pm ET.

Meeting Participants

Community Based Organizations & Non-Profits

Annel Cabrera-Marus	Green City Force
Charles Callaway	WE ACT
Oriana Holmes-Price	New Jersey Environmental Justice Alliance
Sebastian Baez	UPROSE
Vanessa Thomas	Ironbound Community Corporation

Other Organizations

Jennifer Gorini	Rise Light & Power
Julia Weil	Avanti Corporation
Marcus Sibley	National Wildlife Federation (NWF)
Mel Moyce	Lawrence Berkeley National Lab

Tribes

Harry Wallace	Unkechaug
Jason Hansana-Cofield	Shinnecock Nation
Jeff Bendremer	Stockbridge-Munsee Community
Peter Silva	Shinnecock Nation

State and Local Agencies

Isabella Betancourt	New York State Department of State (NYS DOS)
Jessica Dealy	New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA)
Laura McLean	New York State Department of State (NYS DOS)
Myla Ramirez	New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP)
Nicole Jean Christian	New York State Department of State (NYS DOS)
Taylor Groskorth-Flynn	New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP)
Tyler Hepner	New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYS DEC)

Federal Agencies

Anne Schaffer	US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
Hameed Ajibade	National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Sea Grant Office
Hannah Weaver	Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement (BSEE)
Jordan Creed	Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement (BSEE)
Jared Pritts	US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)
Samantha Nyer	US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)

Lessees

Carmen Bennett	Invenergy
Eleanor Evans	Environmental Design & Research DPC
Favio German	Attentive Energy
Katherine Mears	Bluepoint Wind
Lisa Wood	Bluepoint Wind
Marlena Fitzpatrick	Vineyard Offshore
Michael Porto	Invenergy
Retha Fernandez	Community Offshore Wind
Sarah Dougherty	Invenergy / Leading Light Wind

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