

Advisory Council Meeting

September 24, 2021 | Meeting Summary

Developed by the Consensus Building Institute

Meeting-In-Brief

On September 24, 2021, the Responsible Offshore Science Alliance (ROSA) Advisory Council held its fifth meeting, convening 23 members and 14 alternates (a list of Council attendees can be found in Appendix A). Thirty-four (34) interested others attended the event. At this meeting, ROSA:

- Received brief regional science updates from Regional Wildlife Science Entity (RWSE), Responsible Offshore Development Alliance (RODA), and the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP)
- Reviewed ROSA progress updates
- Conducted two panel discussions on (1) intent and purpose of data collection on fisheries and (2) considerations for achieving regional data sharing
- Discussed ROSA's role in data standardization, storage, and accessibility

Meeting materials, including the agenda and presentations can be found on ROSA's website: <https://www.rosascience.org/advisory-council>

Welcome

ROSA Executive Director Lyndie Hice-Dunton welcomed participants and, with Facilitator Patrick Field, oriented participants to meeting topics, agenda, and conversation guidelines. Mr. Field reminded attendees that the conversation is intended primarily for Advisory Council (AC) Members.

Regional Science Updates

Emily Shumchenia, RWSE, Fiona Hogan, RODA, and Joe Cimino, NJDEP provided regional science updates for attendees.

- Emily Shumchenia, Director of Regional Wildlife Science Entity (RWSE), reviewed the purpose and mission of RWSE, highlighted the commonalities between RWSE and ROSA, and shared several areas of potential collaboration with ROSA, including study design, data collection, and data management. Dr. Shumchenia also shared recent and upcoming RWSE activities. She noted that the operation of RWSE is funded by contributions from members of the four sectors (federal agencies, states, environmental

NGOs, and offshore wind industry members). RWSE has not established sources and mechanisms for research yet.

- Fiona Hogan, RODA Research Director, provided updates on RODA's ongoing research-related efforts, including a NYSERDA-funded project on collaborative development strategies to address commercial fishing access in U.S. Offshore Wind Farms. Other RODA efforts included literature reviews, science symposiums, completing the Synthesis of the Science in collaboration with many others, and developing research priorities based on input from fishing industry stakeholders.
- Joe Cimino, NJDEP, shared that the NJ Offshore Wind Research & Monitoring Initiative (RMI) is making \$10,000 per MW from NJ's 2,658 MW capacity available for grants to further advance the science of offshore wind. Mr. Cimino noted that NJDEP is collaborating with a number of federal agencies and science groups, including NYSERDA, ROSA, BOEM, NOAA, RWSE, NWFS, and others to guide their work to identify and prioritize research needs. NJDEP is in the early stages of the Research and Monitoring Initiative project and would like to advance the process soon.

ROSA Progress Updates

ROSA Executive Director Lyndie Hice-Dunton reviewed ROSA progress updates, including findings from its recent communications survey, the Advisory Council's process to date, and a number of ROSA's research and data initiatives. She highlighted that the majority of respondents to the communications survey indicated they would like to continue quarterly AC meetings, and several indicated an interest in open conference calls and sector-specific calls. Respondents made a number of recommendations, including improving written communication, the recognition and distinction of ROSA within the offshore wind and fishing community in the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic, and clarifying the role of the AC and how it is engaged in decision making. She also reviewed the progress of the AC to date, highlighting the outcomes of its five meetings since September 2020.

Mike Pol, ROSA Science Director and Lyndie Hice-Dunton shared updates and progress to-date about several ROSA initiatives and sub-committees that were identified as priorities at previous ROSA AC meetings:

- Fishing Gear Standardization
- Fishermen's Ecological Knowledge
- Regional Research Framework
- Data Sharing

Alicia Morandi, RPS ecologist and project manager, presented an overview of ROSA's Fisheries Resource Data Project which is being conducted for ROSA by the contractor RPS. Morandi shared information about the project's main tasks and deliverables which includes:

- Reviewing the types of fisheries resources data available
- Summarizing the metadata collected for existing fisheries surveys and identifying variables

- Developing a database of reviewed fisheries surveys, portals, and clearinghouses that catalog the data that are typically collected for a variety of existing survey efforts
- Drafting a report that describes existing data sources and standards and examines storage, standardization, and accessibility of fisheries data, and assesses metadata needs for dataset interoperability

Dr. Hice-Dunton shared that ROSA has been working on a Southern New England wind energy areas pilot data sharing project focused on regional data management, storage, and access identified as a priority focus area by the ROSA Advisory Council in at the Nov. 2020 Advisory Council meeting and in the March 2021 survey. The update is:

- July 2021- ROSA proposed a data sharing pilot project to investigate the potential for standardization and cross-comparability across offshore wind projects, collaborating with current offshore wind developers that are ROSA board members with active projects in southern New England;
- August 2021- Draft rationale and scoping document was provided to the developers for review; and,
- September 2021- ROSA requested follow up meeting to discuss scoping document.

Meeting slides are available to view on the Advisory Council page on ROSA's website:

<https://www.rosascience.org/advisory-council>

Below are attendee questions and comments that followed the presentations. Attendee questions and comments are in regular type and responses are *italicized*.

- Volunteers to support ongoing ROSA efforts:
 - Kirk Larson volunteered to participate in Fishermen's Ecological Knowledge efforts.
 - Dave Secor volunteered to join the Regional Research Framework committee.
 - Douglas Christel volunteered to help the Fisheries Resource Data Project, suggesting that Ms. Morandi reach out to him and the Greater Atlantic Fisheries Office because they may be able to share useful fisheries-dependent data.
 - Bonnie Brady suggested that AC members should offer input into ROSA's data management to ensure data consistency.
- Regarding the Regional Research Framework, it seems to me that we need to know (1) who or what entities need research (i.e., who are the users); (2) for what, how do they use it; (3) what are the priority questions that need to be addressed, and when is the info needed; (4) what processes should be in place to help direct resources to the priority scientific questions; (5) how should products be quality assured, shared and communicated; and (6) how will the performance of the plan be monitored and updated? So far, I do not think such a framework is widely understood if it even exists.
- Would it be possible to share some background and explanation of the purpose of a Regional Research Framework?

- *ROSA: ROSA is still clarifying the end product, but the goal is to develop a framework of regional research needs that could be used by any stakeholder in the region. A subgroup has been working to refine a RFP seeking to clarify the task and goals.*
- Is any fishery-dependent data being collected?
 - *RPS: The project is looking at both fishery-dependent and fishery-independent data.*
- Could RPS collect and note the weather conditions when the data was collected?
 - *ROSA: AC members are encouraged to note similar gaps in the data sets.*
- Several AC members asked for clarification about the purpose of the RPS work and how it is different from other ROSA data initiatives like for Southern New England.
 - *ROSA: RPS is looking at currently available survey types and data sets. That data varies in level of detail and amount of data. This is one attempt to see how difficult it would be to gather all of the data to look at it at a broader scale. While RPS is summarizing existing data and data management structures, we are exploring our capacity to actually do some data sharing at the same time. The data pilot, in contrast, is looking at the comparability of the various data types from actual data sets held by developers.*
- What is the availability of proprietary data that is collected but not publicly available?
 - *ROSA: There are various challenges with data sharing; this project is trying to understand where the challenges are and if there are ways to generate best practices on data sharing and accessibility. This is a key issue for the RPS study to highlight for launching further needed work.*
- Will the RPS effort just be looking at current existing surveys or historic fisheries surveys/data collections that may also be useful?
 - *RPS: RPS is taking that into account historic as well as more recent data sets, noting that they are incorporating existing surveys and asked for AC members to share any specific surveys that AC members would like included.*

Panel #1: Why are we collecting data on fisheries relevant to OSW?

ROSA Executive Director Lyndie Hice-Dunton moderated a panel on the questions:

- What is the original intent and purpose of your data collection (scientific, OSW regulatory, fisheries management, etc.)?
- For what and how will it or is it being used presently?
- What are the disconnects between original intent and current purposes?

Panelists included Ruth Perry, Shell; Doug Christel, GARFO/NMFS; Dave Secor, University of Maryland; Brian Hooker, BOEM; Anna Mercer, NEFSC/NMFS; Carl Wilson, Maine Department of Marine Resources.

- *Ruth Perry, Shell*, highlighted that the purpose and intent of developers' data collection is regulatory in nature to meet requirements from impact and needs assessments, and data collection is often species- and site-specific. She shared that there could be

regional value, especially with migratory fish species data, but local projects that are regulatory and time-bound presents a challenge to designing a regional approach.

- *Doug Christel, GARFO/NMFS*, spoke to the different scope and challenges associated with collecting fisheries-dependent and fisheries-independent data, noting that dependent data is unable to be shared due to regulations and protecting individual fishermen's data while independent data is broad-based and publicly available.
- *Dave Secor, University of Maryland*, shared learnings from designing the impact study for US Wind, highlighting that the principles in the ROSA Offshore Wind Project Framework and Guidelines document are feasible and led to the exploration of scaled impacts and power analysis.
- *Brian Hooker, BOEM*, spoke to the bureau's environmental studies program and regulatory requirements, sharing that BOEM is evaluating single projects from a permitting point of view; the surveys that developers do are for specific projects in specific areas. He noted that there's an expectation that these surveys are filling a regional need of seeing the bigger picture. BOEM is interested in this conversation and the idea of data from individual projects being useful at a regional perspective.
- *Anna Mercer, NEFSC/NMFS*, reviewed ongoing data collection activities and NOAA's collaborations with the fishing industry to leverage their expertise. She noted many challenges, including that data is often not at the scale needed, that NOAA has some data programs that are attempting to fill in the gaps, but no programs have full participation of the industry. It is difficult to know how representative the data is of the whole industry. She commented that NOAA is working towards a solution to bring together different fishery-dependent data sets to show how areas are being used by different fisheries to understand impacts.
- *Carl Wilson, Maine Department of Marine Resources (DMR)*, shared the data gaps that DMR has come up against while working towards a preferred siting area for an OSW leasing area for a research array, specifically noting challenges in engaging fishermen in a charged environment and understanding how to address the connectivity of proposed sites with adjoining areas.

A key challenge identified by several panelists is that data is collected for specific projects at a local level and focused on before and after changes. As a result, middle-scale data (between project specific and broad-based regional surveys) is challenging to gather to see the cumulative impacts across projects; then there are questions about who collects it and how it is collected.

Below are questions and comments that followed initial panel remarks. Questions are in regular type and responses from panelists are *italicized*.

- Developers look at data locally. To what extent do developers coordinate efforts and share data with other developers?
 - *Ruth Perry: Developers work together through several working groups and look to ROSA to help with some of that data sharing. In Mass/RI, the Mass Fisheries Working Group got together to plan organically. There are a few developers that*

are doing surveys in the same areas, and we are trying to use best practices. Developers are also coordinating with federal and state agencies. We hope to continually evolve to put all the local puzzle pieces together. We want the localized data to have scientific use to BOEM, academics, and everything in between. Challenges to coordination include timing as different lease holders are in different stages. It is hard to give raw data. Any hypothesis-driven design requires a lot of QA and QC before it is ready to be published. Species detection data can be shared more easily because it is already QA and QC'd. The analysis takes much longer, requires several reviews with regulators, and when it is made available varies.

- Local observations are important in decision-making. I think our challenge is to think about what is needed to translate local data to identify broader impacts. If we all had a common understanding about how to produce local data that is useful at a regional scale, that would be helpful in designing project-specific efforts.
- The value of a fishery goes far beyond vessel price. What is the plan for quantifying the shore-side components of fisheries? For every dollar of black sea bass, the multiplier is 6 once it is brought on land.
 - o *Anne Mercer: For the project I discussed, we are looking at operational impact, not economic impact. Other groups are looking at economic impacts and often look only at vessel price. Our socio-economic team is looking at the impacts up and down the value chain.*
 - o *Doug Christel: We have the INPLAN model that explores these secondary and tertiary economic effects, and SeaGrant is investigating a model to analyze this in a more systematic way.*

Panel #2: How do we achieve regional data sharing?

ROSA Research Director Mike Pol moderated a panel on the questions:

- How comparable, accessible, and shareable are data?
- What is our vision or aspiration for regional data sharing?

Panelists included Drew Carey, Inspire Environmental, Inc.; Kathryn Ford, NEFSC/NMFS; Peter Hughes, Atlantic Capes Fisheries Inc; Willy Goldsmith, American Saltwater Guides Assoc.; Greg DeCelles, Ørsted; and Jim Gartland, Virginia Institute of Marine Sciences.

- *Drew Carey, Inspire Environmental, Inc.,* shared his perspective on data sharing, noting that an important step in data sharing is consistent quality control. He emphasized that the synthesis and interpretation of that data is going to be a key challenge to sharing data. He mentioned the need to create useful data sets from existing projects and is working to integrate high resolution data with habitat data to provide regional level habitat data to government agencies.
- *Kathryn Ford, NEFSC/NMFS,* shared about what NEFSC is doing related to data sharing with an emphasis with fishery-independent data collections, noting that it can take several months of quality control, requires individuals to submit data requests for most

of the data, and is shared in aggregate. NEFSC is currently working to integrate different data sets to improve standardization and access.

- *Peter Hughes, Atlantic Capes Fisheries Inc.*, shared that proprietary data is essentially worthless to fishermen until it is publicly accessible; universities that collect data often require subscriptions to access that data which makes it inaccessible to fishermen. He also highlighted the importance of standardized formats in order to gather meaningful information. There is an opportunity to collect more data by partnering with the operators of tens of thousands of vessels on the water daily.
- *Willy Goldsmith, American Saltwater Guides Association*, discussed his thoughts on data sharing from recreational fishing data perspective, highlighting the importance of knowing what data collection and studies are scheduled and taking place in the future, in addition to that being conducted currently. He suggested that data accessibility and standardization should be prioritized, as well as outreach and communications. He asked attendees to consider how the industry could gather and share socio-economic data.
- *Greg DeCelles, Ørsted*, discussed how the ROSA guidelines have been helpful and discussed Ørsted's efforts to standardize data through consistent data collection efforts. He also discussed examples of data collection efforts by developers at lease sites and coordination with state and federal agencies. He explained that there are some existing data sharing frameworks and networks for some data types. He suggested that developers would be more willing to share data if they received guidance on a standard format and framework, noting that Ørsted makes much of its data available upon request and is advancing an MOU with NOAA on data sharing.
- *Jim Gartland, Virginia Institute of Marine Sciences*, noted that these conversations have been ongoing for decades and that survey data are being shared relatively widely. He raised concerns about large data sharing portals because of how easy it is to misunderstand and misconstrue data collected by others, suggesting a more focused portal that shows who to go to for certain data types so that data can be collected from the source which would limit misinterpretation of data. He also emphasized the importance of connecting new studies with previous studies.

An overarching theme shared by panelists was that it's not the lack of data; rather it's coordination and sharing.

- We need to keep the long view and future value of data in mind as we collect data today.
- We need to build from what we have to the extent we can.
- We need guidance around data storage and formats.
- Access and accessibility have many challenges, including sources, destination, and the danger is misinterpretation.
- And finally, part of this will take people talking to people more.

When asked to share one thing that the industry could do to advance this in a meaningful way, panelists raised the following key themes:

- Better communication to avoid blind spots and share best practices.
- Creation of a central data sharing group for OSW
- Employing consistent measurement methods to ensure data sets can be combined and compared. In the case of comparing data sets from vessels, this could require specific, standard design calibrations on the vessel, net, and species.
- Designing process and protections for data sharing of raw data versus synthesized data and data products.

No questions and comments followed initial panel remarks.

ROSA's Role in Data Standardization, Storage, and Accessibility

Following panel discussions, facilitator Patrick Field moderated an open discussion on the question: How and what can ROSA specifically do to improve data coordination and standardization in the region? Key discussion threads, including those shared in the meeting chat due to time constraints, follow below:

- ROSA can work to determine consistent data formats and processes.
- It would be helpful to narrow ROSA's focus and go piece by piece rather than tackling the entire data sharing ecosystem. There are well defined data collection methods and standards for trawl, and those could be used as a starting point to apply to other species and contexts.
- From a habitat project reviewer, it would be helpful to see what other project reviewers have found (e.g., what are the takeaways and best management practices from these various surveys, how could construction be accessed, etc.).
- ROSA could host a meeting where all the different fisheries monitoring plans are brought together.
- ROSA could provide information about types of standardized gear that has been used in other projects to have an idea of what data could be compared or not.
- ROSA and the RWSE could work together to convene regular meetings of all researchers funded to collect data in the WEAs. This could lead to better cooperation and synergy between projects.
- ROSA could host another meeting with more discussion of a framework for a central data platform for offshore wind and fisheries and what it would look like.
- If there is not yet a repository for MSA essential fish habitat designations; ROSA could engage with NMFS/BOEM to help develop such a resource.

Next Steps & Adjourn

ROSA Executive Director Lyndie Hice-Dunton closed the meeting with an overview of next steps:

- Post-meeting follow-up with attendees

- ROSA staff will continue to address priority topics, including drafting work plans for subcommittees and discussing strategies
- ROSA will continue to develop approaches to address feedback from communications survey
- Please reach out to us with topics of interest for meetings or sector-specific calls (lyndie@rosascience.org or mike@rosascience.org)
- Next quarterly meeting will be November or December 2021

Dr. Hice-Dunton shared that she and ROSA Research Director Mike Pol will develop a timeline to advance the efforts discussed in this meeting.

Dr. Hice-Dunton and Dr. Pol thanked attendees for their time, participant, and engagement.

Appendix A | ROSA Council Member and Alternates Attendance

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| Peter Aarrestad | Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection |
| Katie Almeida | The Town Dock |
| Crista Bank | Vineyard Wind |
| Chris Batsavage | North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality |
| Robert Beal | Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission |
| Samuel Beirne | Maryland Energy Administration |
| Bonnie Brady | Long Island Commercial Fishing Association |
| Colleen Brust | New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection |
| Patrick Campfield | Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission |
| Joe Cimino | New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection |
| Jennifer Daniels | Atlantic Shores Offshore Wind |
| Greg DeCelles | Orsted |
| Kathryn Ford | Massachusetts Department of Marine Fisheries |
| Willy Goldsmith | American Saltwater Guides Association |
| Erin Healy | Mayflower Wind Energy |
| Brian Hooker | Bureau of Ocean Energy Management |
| Peter Hughes | Atlantic Capes Fisheries, Inc. |
| Greg Lampman | New York State Energy Research and Development Authority |
| Kirk Larson Jr. | Lindsay L Inc. |
| Andy Lipsky | Northeast Fisheries Science Center |
| Julia Livermore | Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management |
| Frederick Mattera | Commercial Fisheries Center of Rhode Island |
| Catherine McCall | Maryland Department of Natural Resources |
| Rachel Peabody | Virginia Marine Resources Commission |
| Ruth Perry | Mayflower Wind Energy |
| Eric Reid | Commercial fishing consultant |
| Robert Ruhle | F/V Darana R |
| Sarah Schumann | Commercial fishing deckhand & Shining Sea Fisheries Consulting |
| Mike Sissenwine | New England Fishery Management Council |
| David Stormer | Delaware Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control |
| David Tobey | Virginia Saltwater Sportfishing Association |
| John Toth | Jersey Coast Anglers Association & Saltwater Anglers of Bergen County |
| Alison Verkade | Greater Atlantic Regional Fisheries Office |
| Mike Waine | American Sportfishing Association |
| Kevin Wark | Endeavor Fisheries |
| Kate Wilke | Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council |
| Carl Wilson | Maine Department of Marine Resources |
| Renee Zobel | New Hampshire Fish and Game Department |