



Equinor Canada Ltd.

**Fisheries Communication Plan**  
**Feb 7, 2022**

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# 2020 Exploration Drilling Project, EL 1156

## 1 Introduction

Equinor Canada Ltd. (Equinor) will be conducting offshore exploration drilling activities on EL 1156 and has committed to developing and implementing a Fisheries Communication Plan as per commitments made in the EIS (Environmental Impact Statement) for the Flemish Pass Exploration Drilling Program, and the decision statement issued by the Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency for that project. Note that the conditions for that project apply to EL 1156.

As per condition 5.1 of the Decision Statement, Equinor is required to develop a fisheries communication protocol with commercial fisher groups prior to commencing operations. The Plan outlines communication protocols and processes leading up to and during the operational period of the exploration drilling programs; and, how communication would take place in the event of an emergency (accident, malfunction or unauthorized hydrocarbon spill). Note that this plan was written to complement the Indigenous Fisheries Communication Plan previously submitted and approved for this project.

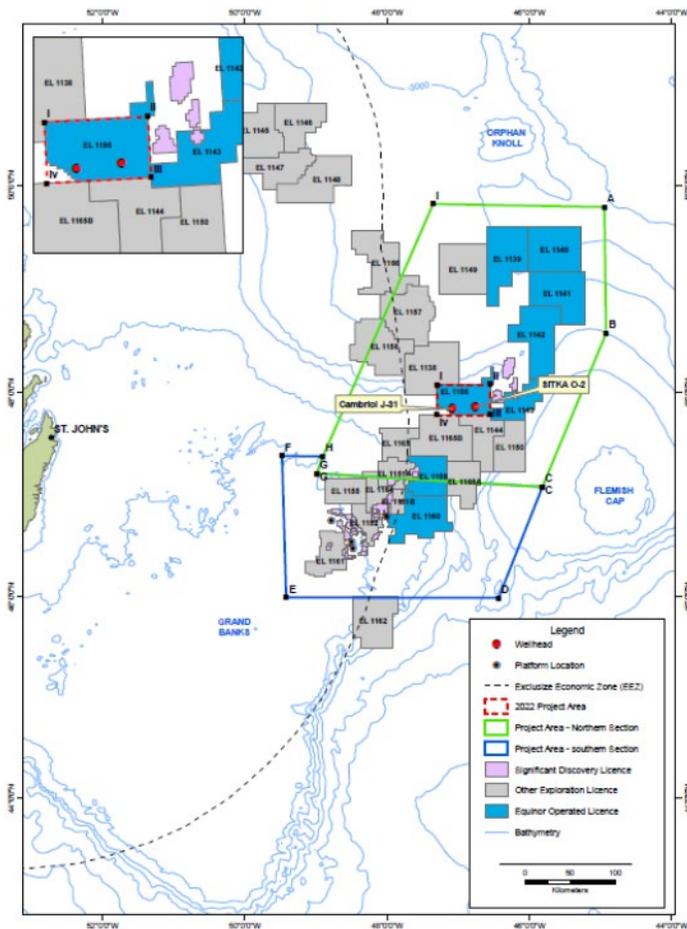
As per the decision statement, Equinor must meet the following conditions:

- Condition 5.1 - The Proponent shall develop and implement a Fisheries Communication Plan in consultation with the Board, Indigenous groups and commercial fishers. The Proponent shall develop the Fisheries Communication Plan prior to drilling and implement it for the duration of the drilling program. The Proponent shall include in the Fisheries Communications Plan:
  - Condition 5.1.1 - procedures to notify Indigenous groups and commercial fishers of planned drilling activity, a minimum of two weeks prior to the start of drilling of each well;
  - Condition 5.1.2 - procedures to determine the requirement for a Fisheries Liaison Officer and/or fisheries guide vessel during drilling installation movement and geophysical programs;
  - Condition 5.1.3 - procedures to communicate with Indigenous groups and commercial fishers, in the event of an accident or malfunction, the results of the monitoring and any associated potential health risks referred to in condition 6.9; and
  - Condition 5.1.4 - the type of information that will be communicated to Indigenous groups and commercial fishers, and the timing of distribution of this information, that will include but not be limited to:
    - 5.1.4.1 - a description of planned Designated Project activities;
    - 5.1.4.2 - location(s) of safety exclusion zones;
    - 5.1.4.3 - anticipated vessel traffic schedule;
    - 5.1.4.4 - anticipated vessel routes; and
    - 5.1.4.5 - locations of suspended or abandoned wellheads.

## 2 Project Location

The Project area for the 2022 exploration drilling program is in the Flemish Pass area, on EL 1156 (see Figure 1 – Project Locations), and includes two locations –Cambriol and Sitka.

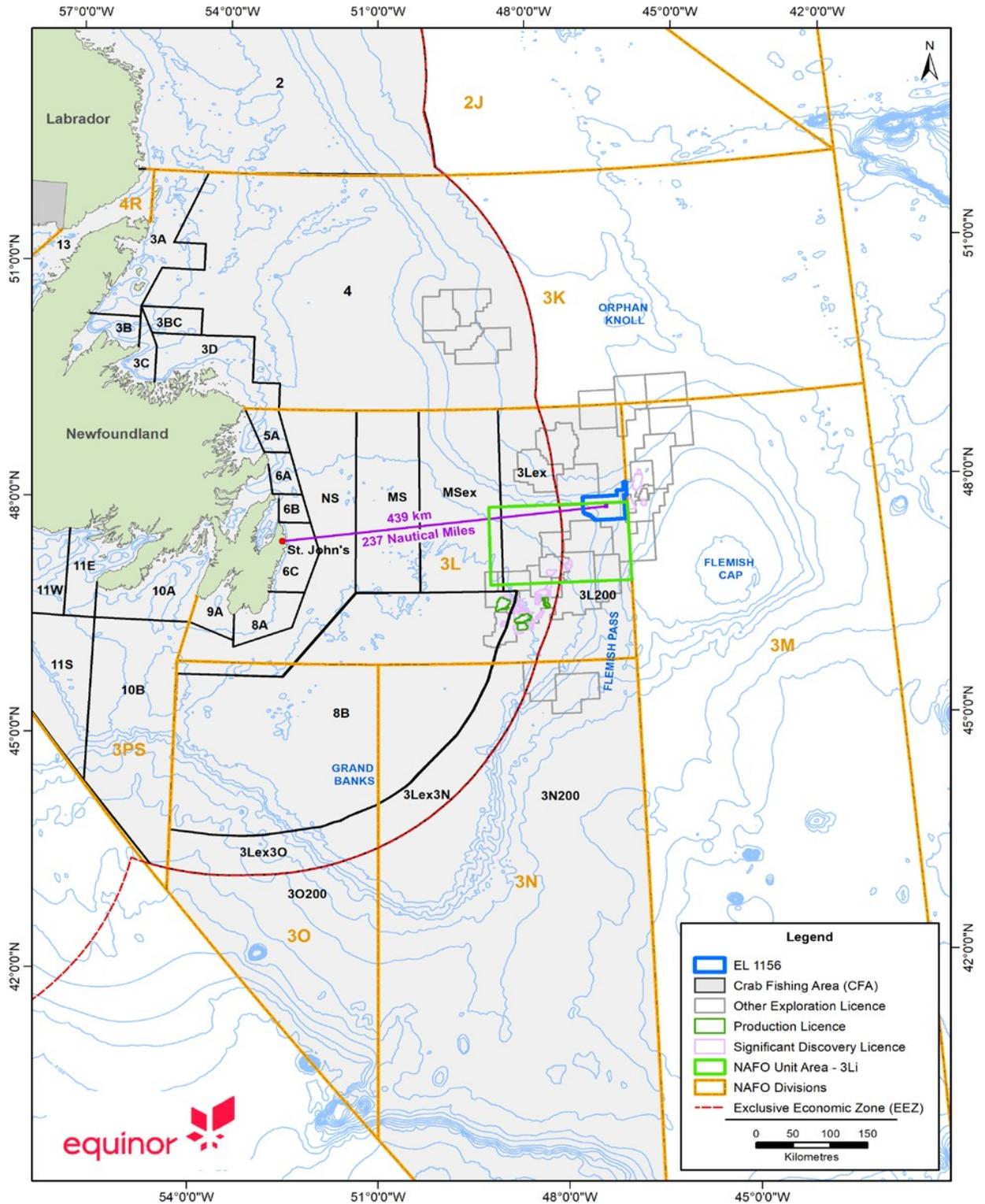
FIGURE 1 – Project Locations



### 2.1.1 Drilling and top hole locations

**Site 1** Cambriol Central J-31

**Site 2** Sitka



**FIGURE 2 – EL 1156 in Relation to NAFO Units**

### **3 Commercial Fisheries**

Equinor carries out ongoing communication and engagement with Fishing industry members to keep them apprised of offshore oil and gas activity in their fishing areas, strengthen our relationship and maintain effective information exchange. Commercial fishing entities in Newfoundland and Labrador include the Fish Food and Allied Workers-Unifor (FFAW-Unifor), Ocean Choice International (OCI), Atlantic Groundfish Council (AGC) and the Association of Seafood Producers (ASP). One Ocean is the liaison organization established by and for the fishing and petroleum industries of Newfoundland and Labrador. Its objective is to assist the fishing and petroleum industries in understanding each sector’s operational activities. Members of the One Ocean Board and working groups include representatives from these fishing entities and offshore oil and gas operators.

Fisheries are a valued component for the Project, and on-going Project planning and implementation will continue to emphasize communication with the Fisheries groups to address the potential for interactions with commercial fishing activity within and near the drilling area. For administrative purposes, the Northwest Atlantic is divided into a series of North Atlantic Fisheries Organizations (NAFO) Divisions, subdivisions and unit areas (Figure 1.0), although fish harvesting activities and fisheries management responsibilities extend across these areas and their boundaries, they are generally used to regulate and manage fishing activity. EL 1156 overlaps with a portion of NAFO Division 3L, and specifically with NAFO Unit Area 3Li (Figure 2 – EL 1156 in Relation to NAFO Units).

#### **Communication during Operations**

Beginning at a minimum of two months prior to planned exploration drilling operations, two weeks prior to the commencement of drilling, and throughout the explorationdrilling program for each approved well, Equinor will provide commercial fisheries contacts with email updates on operational activities. The operational updates will be sent to the main contact(s) of identified fishery groups and will detail specific dates and additional supporting information as described below. The identified group contact will be provided by One Ocean as per the process identified in the *2021 One Ocean Communication Protocol for Exploratory Drilling Projects in the Newfoundland and Labrador Protocol*. Equinor will identify and introduce the primary contact responsible for communications during exploration drilling activities.

Equinor will provide monthly (or sooner if the information is time sensitive) email operational updates for the following activities:

1. Mobilization of the rig; including planned traffic routes in two month notice.
2. Name and photos of the drill rig/ship
3. An assessment for the deployment of a Fisheries Liaison Officer and/or Fisheries Guide
4. Vessel for ship/rig transit route;
5. Rig location (coordinates)/map of area;
6. Safety zone – description, location and purpose;
7. Supply and safety vessels/identification/call signs/routes;
8. Anticipated vessel traffic schedule;
9. Commencement of exploration drilling (spud) two weeks in advance;
10. Schedule of activities (e.g. blowout preventer installation, well testing, etc);
11. Abandonment of well;
12. Demobilization/rig movement;
13. Two-week notice post completion of exploration drill program;
14. Notification of posting to external website the results of any monitoring or follow-up programs ( as the results of environmental monitoring programs related to birds, marine mammals, fish and fish habitat including links to documents and reports (e.g. C-NLOPB website, company websites).
15. Company contact.

Operational details will also be provided to marine communications and traffic services for broadcasting and publishing in the National Navigational Warning (NAVWARN) of the NAFO Secretariat and to the Canadian Hydrographic Services for future nautical charts and planning. The Department of Fisheries and Oceans will also be notified prior to project commencement to avoid any potential conflict with any research surveys being completed in the drilling areas.

### 3.1 Communication in the Event of an Accident or Malfunction

1. In the case of an accident or malfunction that may result in adverse environmental effects, Equinor, according to their emergency response plan, will: via email, provide an emergency information update bulletin twice weekly in the initial phases of the incident, and then as operations and other activities resume, updates will be sent as new information becomes available to representatives identified by interested fisher groups.
2. Within 48 hours of the incident or spill, notify by telephone, the representatives identified by interested Fishery groups.

The information to be included in the emergency information update bulletin (when available) will include the following:

1. Situational/event overview;
2. Map of area;
3. Location of event;
4. Timing of event;
5. Actions currently underway;
6. Any known restrictions or health, safety or environmental considerations;
7. Impacts to fisheries;
8. Results of monitoring programs;
9. Next scheduled update; and
10. Contact information for Company.

Communication protocols have also been outlined in the 2020 One Ocean Oil Spill Communication Protocol (OOOSCP). These protocols have been developed by One Ocean members to have an agreed process in place to notify the fishing industry, through One Ocean, of significant petroleum, hydrocarbon spill event directly, versus notification through the media. Direct communication will enable senior fishing industry representatives to inform their organizations that direct and ongoing communication has been made with the Operator and ensure factual information is disseminated within their organizations. This protocol will be actuated in the event of an oil spill incident that triggers the activation of Equinor's onshore emergency response centre.

Equinor will also report on an annual basis to the Canada-Newfoundland and Labrador Petroleum Board (C-NLOPB) on any known incidents of lost or damaged fishing gear attributed to the Project activities. This includes actual losses that might occur to harvesters and processors from damage to fishing gear and vessels as a result of interaction with Project vessels/debris outside the safety zone, or from oil spills originating within the Project area.

## 4 Utilization of Fisheries Liaison Officers/Fisheries guide Vessels

A Risk Management Matrix Guideline for the Utilization of Fisheries Liaison Observers (FLO) and Fisheries Guide Vessels (FGV) for the fishing and petroleum industries was developed by One Ocean (Figure 2.0). The One

Ocean Matrix includes the provision of FLOs and offers considerations for the use of FGVs. FGVs may be deployed for transit and tow operations to support the operator scout vessel in monitoring and safeguarding fishing activity and gear. In consultation with the fishing industry, Equinor will utilize the Risk Management Matrix Guidelines to assess if and/or when a FLO and/or FGV will be used during the Project work scope. Depending on the timing of any movement of the MODU there will need to be adequate time to develop contracts to support the use of FLOs and/or FGVs. The parties will keep in regular contact in advance of the prescribed two-week communication timeline to provide as much notice as possible to support logistical elements of mitigation efforts, if needed. The matrix can also be accessed through the following link <http://www.oneocean.ca/pdf/Matrix.pdf>



## Risk Management Matrix Guidelines

for the utilization of Fisheries Liaison Officers and Fisheries Guide Vessels for the Fishing and Petroleum Industries of Newfoundland and Labrador

LEVEL OF FISHING ACTIVITY	SEISMIC OPERATIONS					TRANSIT-TOW OPERATIONS			
	VSP	EMS	WSS	2D	3D	Drill Ship	Drill Rig	FPSO	GBS
Fishery Closed in Area	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green
Fishery Open- No Recent Fishing in Area	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Red
Fishery Open-Area Actively being Fished	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Red	Red	Red

	The Petroleum Industry Liaison at the Fish, Food and Allied Workers (FFAW) Union should be notified in advance of all seismic, transit and tow operations outside of the Field Safety Zone
	The use of a Fisheries Liaison Officer should be considered in consultation with the FFAW
	The use of a FLO and Fisheries Guide Vessel should be considered in consultation with the FFAW

**NOTES:**

1. The Matrix provides useful criteria and considerations for mitigative and safe practices for the fishing and petroleum industries. The Matrix is a guideline for industry consultations and does not in any way replace them.
2. The Matrix is designed for seismic, transit and tow operations located outside a field or exploration operation safety zone.
3. Fisheries Guide Vessels will be commercially registered fishing vessels and part of the FFAW's Guide Vessel Program.
4. Fishing activity referenced in the Matrix refers to fixed fishing gear/equipment only.
5. Operators accept liability for compensation of any fisheries gear damage that is directly attributable to an operation.

**Acronyms:**

- 2D Two-Dimensional Seismic
- 3D Three-Dimensional Seismic
- EMS Electromagnetic Survey
- FPSO Floating Production Storage Offloading Vessel
- GBS Gravity Base Structure
- VSP Vertical Seismic Profiling
- WSS Well Site Survey

One Ocean was established in 2002 as the inter-industry liaison organization for the fishing and petroleum industries in Newfoundland and Labrador. Its mandate is to facilitate cooperation, communication and information exchange between the two marine sectors. The Risk Management Matrix Guidelines for the Utilization of Fisheries Liaison Observers and Fisheries Guide Vessels for the Fishing and Petroleum Industries in NL, (Matrix) was developed by members of One Ocean. Its application should be developed in collaboration with industry, regulators and One Ocean. Contact One Ocean at 709 778 0511.

For more information on regulations please reference the Canada-Newfoundland and Labrador Offshore Petroleum Board (C-NLOPB) Geophysical, Geological Environmental and Geotechnical Program Guidelines 2008: <http://www.cnlopb.nl.ca/pdfs/guidelines/ggegpgg.pdf> The C-NLOPB is the authority responsible for the administration of the regulations pertaining to all exploration for, and production of, hydrocarbons in the Newfoundland and Labrador offshore area.

FIGURE 3 – One Ocean Risk Management Risk Matrix Guidelines

## 5 Engagement

Comments were received from stakeholders regarding clarification of statements or references made, including using the most recent version of documents. There were also comments regarding timelines for delivery of updates, requesting more timely updates if the information is time sensitive. Other comments were received regarding incorrect references to an EL, as well as a compliment as to the value of the map with NAFO boundaries. Another suggestion was to define some terms, for clarity.

All of the suggested changes were either incorporated, or noted for future reference where they could not be incorporated (for example suggestions for specific items to be included in updates). There were no comments or suggestions that were not incorporated in some fashion.

## 6 References

Equinor (2017) - *Equinor's (formerly known as Statoil Canada) Flemish Pass Exploration Drilling Project Environmental Impact Statement.*

*Environment and Climate Change Canada (2019) - Decision Statement Issued under Section 54 of the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act, 2012 for the Equinor Canada Flemish Pass Exploration Drilling Project.*

One Ocean (2010) - One Ocean Risk Management Matrix Guidelines. Available online at <http://www.oneocean.ca/pdf/Matrix.pdf>

One Ocean (2021) - One Ocean Communication Protocol for Exploratory Drilling Projects in the Newfoundland and Labrador Offshore [2021 OOPED June.pdf \(oneocean.ca\)](#)

## 7 APPENDIX A – FISHERIES STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT RECORD

DATE	STAKEHOLDER GROUP(S)	ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITY
Sept 27, 2021	FFAW, One Ocean, Association of Seafood Producers, Ocean Choice International, Atlantic Groundfish Council	Email of notice that Equinor intended to apply for operations authorization to support 2022 Exploration Drilling Program.
Jan 17, 2022	One Ocean	Draft FCP sent for feedback
Feb 7, 2022	One Ocean	Feedback has been incorporated for acceptance.

## GLOSSARY

**EIS - Environmental Impact Statement (for CEAA application)**

**EL - Exploration Licence – issued by the C-NLOPB for a 9 year term**

**Top Hole - the first two sections of the wellbore drilled with a large diameter pipe (conductor of 30 - 36 inches, and inside that surface casing of 20 – 22 inches), no BOP (blow out preventer) and the use of water based mud. The conductor is normally 60 -75 metres deep, while the surface casing may vary between 600 – 1100 metres below the seabed. Once this is drilled, the rig is able to return and commence drilling the main hole with a smaller bit, saving time on a multi well program.**

**MODU - mobile offshore drilling unit**