



Statement on Offshore Wind Power in Maine

Warming seas, ocean acidification, and other negative impacts of climate change are a serious threat to Maine's coast, our marine-based economy, and the livelihoods of those who work and live here. Of the many possible ways to address these complex issues, offshore wind power offers strong potential to deliver many benefits—while also raising questions and concerns.

In October 2020, the State of Maine's Offshore Wind Initiative announced it had received a \$2.16 million federal grant for the Initiative to develop a roadmap to advance offshore wind and evaluate its associated economic benefits. The State has also announced its intention to create the nation's first floating offshore wind research area, with up to 12 turbines. These recent actions, in addition to the ongoing work to develop a single-turbine project off Monhegan, have brought the issue of offshore wind back into the headlines.

For more than a decade, the Island Institute has engaged communities in discussions about the potential for offshore wind in Maine—convening local leaders, fishermen, developers, and government to invest in processes that help to amplify local voices and seek to balance competing interests. We have supported fishermen in mapping their fishing territories and participating in ocean planning processes, helped island communities as they negotiated benefits with developers, hosted listening sessions at the Maine Fishermen's Forum, networked with communities from across the U.S., Europe, and Japan, and documented and shared lessons learned through various publications and videos. We believe there is a tremendous opportunity for coastal communities to help co-create a future that addresses the drivers of climate change and builds community and economic resilience.

The Institute's primary interests in this issue area include:

- Ensuring the continued viability of island and coastal communities and strengthening the ability of these communities to navigate major environmental and economic changes
- Supporting island and coastal communities, and fishing industry leaders, in understanding and navigating significant regulatory processes
- Helping to bring the best available science, promising practices, and locally relevant data and priorities into discussions and inform participation in decision making or other stakeholder processes
- Identifying and balancing local impacts with locally defined benefits

Should these projects move forward as envisioned, Maine's fishing community will experience impacts to fishing activities. The Island Institute is committed to working with fishery and community leaders to ensure that they are informed and empowered to actively participate in managing the ocean as a public resource for the common good, and that any impacts are offset by community benefits.

The Island Institute is committed to the long-term resilience of our coastal communities and economy, and working collaboratively with fishery and community leaders to navigate complex decision-making processes at the local, state, and federal levels. As Maine's offshore wind projects move from concept to design phases, we will work to ensure the process includes community input, data gathering, and the intention to minimize negative impacts to fishermen and women. Through ongoing monitoring and sharing of accurate information, we will leverage our work with community leaders across the state to make sure their voices are heard as part of this process.

Read more [here](#) about our history of work in offshore wind and ocean planning, and how these lessons learned can guide our path forward.