



Oceans of Information  
**One Ocean**

by Maureen Murphy Rustad

*In the province of Newfoundland and Labrador, a unique model has been developed to promote effective communication among the fishing and offshore petroleum industries. One Ocean was launched in 2002 with a mandate to serve as the medium for information exchange regarding industry operational activities between the fishing and petroleum industries. As an informed entity, One Ocean initiates research and industry specific activities to meet industry challenges and promotes cooperation, transparency and information dissemination between the two industry sectors. One Ocean's Director Maureen Murphy Rustad outlines the beginnings of the organization and explains how it works – and how it can work in other jurisdictions around the globe.*

In the fall of 2001, the Canada-Newfoundland and Labrador Offshore Petroleum Board (C-NLOPB) sponsored a series of meetings between fishing and petroleum industry representatives to discuss the idea of establishing a liaison organization. The meetings were held at the Fisheries and Marine Institute of Memorial University of Newfoundland (Marine Institute) and facilitated by campus officials. At the conclusion of the meetings, industry representatives identified the importance of establishing a neutral liaison model and agreed that the organization would be housed at the Marine Institute.

### **The One Ocean Model**

One Ocean was launched in May 2002 as the inter-industry liaison organization for the fishing and petroleum industries in Newfoundland and Labrador. The organization consists of a secretariat, industry board and chair. The One Ocean Industry Board is a core component of the organization and is comprised of equal, senior-level representation from the two industry sectors. Fishing industry members are represented by the Fish, Food and Allied Workers (FFAW) union and the

Association of Seafood Producers (ASP). Petroleum industry members include Chevron Canada Resources, ExxonMobil Canada, Husky Energy, Statoil Canada, Suncor Energy as well as the Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers (CAPP). Representatives from both industries serve as voluntary directors of the Board.

One Ocean is an industry driven organization and not mandated by government; however, Board members identified the value of having industry regulators represented on the Board. Representatives from the C-NLOPB, regulator for the offshore petroleum industry in Newfoundland and Labrador, and the Canadian Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO), regulator for the fishing industry, sit on the Board in the capacity of official observers. Other official observers include the Marine Institute and the Canadian Coast Guard (CCG).

In 2006, One Ocean was incorporated under the province of Newfoundland and Labrador as One Ocean Corporation with corporate by-laws observed by the Secretariat, Board and Chair.

### **Function and Purpose**

This year, 2011, marks One Ocean's ninth year. The predominant question asked of the organization is '*why and how does it work.*' The One Ocean concept is relatively straightforward: provide a neutral, practical forum that facilitates mutual understanding and effective communication between the fishing and petroleum sectors. Not a complex model but it has never been duplicated – One Ocean remains unique in the world and the reason it continues to evolve has everything to do with its members.

Before One Ocean had a name, it had context and merit. The fishing and petroleum industries created the fundamental basis of the organization by demonstrating a willingness to develop a cooperative working relationship



A fishing boat off Bear Cove Point, NL.



Terra Nova FPSO (floating production storage and offloading) platform.

and a mechanism to guide it. This incentive is the reason One Ocean continues to exist. From its inception in 2002, the collaborative efforts of One Ocean members have facilitated the ability to identify, discuss and address mutual concerns before they become problematic. This proactive approach is based on years of transparent information exchange and a commitment to sustainable and safe practices in the marine environment.

Successful coexistence between the offshore fishing and petroleum industries in Newfoundland and Labrador is not taken for granted. It is a continuous goal maintained by the members of One Ocean. The ‘why and how’ factors are best explained by the shared opportunities, experiences and lessons learned in the last nine years.

### **Developing a Work Plan**

As One Ocean began to develop a work plan, its first initiative was to learn from other regions with similar marine industry interaction. In 2002, members of One Ocean participated in a study tour of Norway and Scotland to gain perspective on interaction between sectors in other jurisdictions, identify lessons learned and implement findings that would advance and benefit One Ocean. The petroleum industry in the North Sea had been producing for 35 years and had over 400 offshore installations compared to the province’s relatively young production operations beginning in 1997 and two producing offshore fields (2002). Although there were differences in the structure of the fishing industries, like Newfoundland and Labrador, the fishery in the North Sea had been



established for hundreds of years. Experiences between the fishing and petroleum sectors in the North Sea highlighted the importance of striking a balance between economic, social and traditional values while continuing to share marine resources.

One Ocean's second initiative was to consult a broad spectrum of fishing and petroleum industry representatives to assist in defining its work plan. In 2003, the organization hosted a workshop convening 85 participants from government, academia, One Ocean member entities and presenters from Norway and Scotland. The purpose of the workshop was to share knowledge and expertise on use and management of marine resources, relationship-building and existing inter-industry models.

Feedback from the workshop identified a common goal for the provincial fishing and petroleum industries: facilitate better understanding of each sector's operational activities. To begin the process of mutual understanding of operational activities, One Ocean needed to determine priorities. During the workshop, the petroleum industry stated it wanted to know the concerns of the fishing industry regarding oil and gas development; the fishing industry identified seismic survey and oil spill response. One Ocean had a work plan.

### **Seismic Survey**

Since 2003, seismic survey has been an active file for One Ocean. In 2004, One Ocean hosted an information session on seismic survey for fish harvesters. It was coined "Seismic 101" and covered scientific research and

technical overviews. The year 2005 was a record year for offshore seismic surveys and fish harvesters expressed concern about the potential effects on their industry. In 2006, One Ocean collaborated with DFO to host a seismic workshop with presentations on the regulatory authorization process for seismic survey, scientific research initiatives and findings, mitigative practices, the role of Fisheries Liaison Officers and perspectives on seismic survey from the fishing and petroleum industries. The workshop confirmed that a better understanding of seismic survey had been attained and also confirmed there was more to learn.

### **Consultations**

In the interim of information sessions and workshops, the fishing and petroleum industries had taken part in consultations for every proposed seismic survey program. One Ocean, the liaison for industry consultations, actively participated in the consultations and regards them as the major source of information exchange on operational activities for both sectors. It became apparent during the early years of consultations that the two industries spoke a different language. Oil and gas representatives referred to proposed offshore seismic locations as “within the Laurentian, Jeanne d’Arc or Orphan basins.” Fish harvesters did not know ‘basins’ but once the location was put into ‘fishery’ language using Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization (NAFO) divisions, the location of the proposed seismic survey was immediately understood. The miscommunication provided One Ocean with an important lesson learned and since then NAFO divisions have been clearly defined on maps illustrating the location of all proposed petroleum operational activities.

Identifying timing and location of operational activities became an important component of consultations as offshore fishing and petroleum

activities may overlap. During consultations, fish harvesters have the opportunity to share information about approximate harvesting locations, number of vessels, species fished, gear used, duration of harvest; they often identify relevant spawning and migration areas. Operators provide project descriptions on the type of program, 2D or 3D, streamer array details, water depths and expected duration of the operation. Information exchange has assisted the two industries in determining best operational time frames and mitigative measures.

Concerns about the potential impact of seismic survey on fish were also discussed during consultations. Fish harvesters requested that seismic research be conducted ‘in their waters, on their species.’ In 2006, the FFAW and One Ocean submitted a proposal to the Environmental Studies Research Fund (ESRF) to conduct research on the potential impacts of seismic on Monkfish eggs. Funding was approved and marked the first project led by the FFAW with ESRF. Involvement of Monkfish harvesters was a vital part of the project. Harvesters were trained at DFO to collect and examine eggs (veils) at sea and preserve them until they were transported to the DFO laboratory. Efforts in 2007 were unsuccessful but in 2008, samples were collected and successfully transported to DFO. The research results are published as ESRF Report No. 170, *Potential Effects of Seismic Airgun Discharges on Monkfish Eggs (Lophius americanus) and Larvae*.

In 2009, One Ocean hosted its third workshop and seismic survey was a key focus and remains a priority area for One Ocean.

### **Oil Spill Response**

Oil spill response was identified as an area of concern by the fishing industry in 2003. Members of the FFAW expressed concern regarding potential spills in the offshore jurisdiction; however, Placentia Bay was the



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Fishing boat buoys.

region of major concern. Tanker traffic in Placentia Bay is generated by an oil refinery and transshipment terminal and is one of the largest oil handling facilities in Canada. The bay is also a busy fishing area where prime Crab catches are harvested directly in and around the traffic lanes used by tankers. In 1990, Placentia Bay was identified as an area with the highest potential for an oil-related environmental accident in Canada (*Brander-Smith Public Review Panel on Tanker Safety and Marine Spills Responses Capability*).

As part of its Oil Spill Response Initiative, One Ocean hosted an information session on vetting practices for tankers using the transshipment facility in Placentia Bay and held various public meetings in the region with presentations from government departments with a role in oil spill response.

In 2004, One Ocean partnered with Environment Canada, DFO, CCG and Transport Canada to produce the *Marine Environmental Emergency Oil Spill Information Card* that was distributed to over 5,000 commercial and recreational

marine users in Newfoundland and Labrador. In 2005, One Ocean collaborated with the same government departments as well as the Marine Institute and Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency (ACOA) to provide a five-day, in-situ course, *Training of Fisheries Workers in Oil Spill Counter-Measures*. The training program is currently offered by the Marine Institute.

Six months after the tragic oil spill incident involving the *Deepwater Horizon* in the Gulf of Mexico, a One Ocean joint industry delegation travelled to the region to meet with representatives from the fishing and petroleum industries involved in the response effort. One Ocean is currently developing a report on its trip to the Gulf of Mexico and both industries continue to work together to address mutual concerns on oil spill prevention and response in Newfoundland and Labrador.

### **The Working Group**

To enhance the functioning of the One Ocean organization, a working group was formed in 2009. Members are representatives of the fishing and petroleum entities on the One

Ocean Board and appointed by its directors. At the direction of the Board, the working group reviews joint industry initiatives providing insight and perspective at the working level and brings its considerations and recommendations to the Board. This process optimizes the Board's ability to make informed decisions in a timely and comprehensive manner when it convenes four times a year. To-date, the working group has developed "Protocols for Communication between Fish Harvesters and Oil Installations on the Grand Banks" (Protocol) and "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" (Matrix).

The Protocol is a two-sided, laminated sheet illustrating offshore installation safety and exclusion zones and provides radio call-in information. The Protocol promotes the use of radio communication between offshore fishing enterprises, petroleum installations, supply ships and related vessels during offshore operational activities and has been distributed to relevant fishing fleets and petroleum operators.

The Matrix provides criteria reflecting current mitigative and safe practices for the fishing and petroleum industries on seismic, transit and tow operations outside a field or exploration operation safety zone. The Matrix outlines considerations to advance industry consultations but does not in any way replace them. The Protocol and Matrix are a result of joint planning and information exchange to ensure awareness and understanding of operational activities and enable safe practices for fishing and petroleum personnel and the marine environment.

### **2011 and Beyond**

There are currently three production fields offshore Newfoundland and Labrador: Hibernia, operated by Hibernia Management

and Development Company (HMDC); Terra Nova, operated by Suncor Energy; and White Rose, operated by Husky Energy. Husky Energy is also producing from its satellite field, North Amethyst. HMDC is planning the development of Hibernia Southern Extension, and the Hebron project is expected to produce its first oil in 2017. In 2010, there were 37 active exploration licences, 49 Significant Discoveries and eight production licences. The fishing industry continues to overcome the many challenges it has faced in recent years. Shellfish (crab and shrimp) represents close to 80% of the landed value of the province's seafood industry and is harvested in proximity to existing petroleum installations and areas of exploration.

The fishing industry has never been 'against' the oil and gas industry; it wanted to know more about the industry with which it was sharing its traditional 'stomping grounds.' The One Ocean model provides the forum for effective communication but it is the members of One Ocean that will ensure its future by their commitment to resolve industry challenges based on consensus and maintain successful coexistence for two industries operating in one ocean. ~



Maureen Murphy Rustad was born and raised in St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador, Canada. After graduating from the Toronto School of Business she worked in London, England, for several years then moved to France to continue her studies at the Université de Pau. Ms. Murphy

Rustad lived in France for five years and became active in marine affairs. She returned to Canada and completed a Bachelor of Arts in Community Studies and a Master's degree in Marine Management at Dalhousie University. Ms. Murphy Rustad worked in the industry sectors before joining One Ocean in 2003 as a Research Analyst. As Director of One Ocean, her focus is to facilitate and promote communication and information exchange between the fishing and petroleum industries. One Ocean is housed at the Fisheries and Marine Institute of Memorial University of Newfoundland in St. John's, NL, Canada. [www.oneocean.ca](http://www.oneocean.ca)