

Encourage sustainable approaches to offshore energy development

America's oceans, coasts, and Great Lakes, with their vast reserves of oil and gas, opportunities for offshore wind generation, and prospects for other more nascent forms of renewable energy production, are a significant current and potential source of domestic energy. Offshore oil and gas production has continued to grow, furnishing a vital source of domestic energy. Meanwhile, the first offshore wind turbines in the United States are now generating power off the coast of Rhode Island, providing proof of concept for the dawn of a new industry. Several areas along the East Coast have been leased for offshore wind development, and additional planning efforts are underway in state and federal waters. Decision makers should capitalize on these opportunities to maintain and expand appropriate options for offshore energy production. In the long term, the United States needs a comprehensive national energy policy that includes a road map for how ocean-based energy resources can be developed in a safe, environmentally responsible, and economically beneficial manner.

Stimulate the production of offshore renewable energy through technology development, deployment, and regulatory consistency

Almost 80 percent of electricity demand in the United States is located in coastal states. Offshore energy sources, particularly wind power, have the potential to meet that demand. Offshore renewable energy development can provide opportunities to create innovative partnerships, streamline the regulatory process, and use integrated ecosystem management tools to effectively, safely, and efficiently advance offshore energy technologies.

In 2016, the Department of the Interior and the Department of Energy released a joint report laying out a [national strategy](#) for developing offshore wind energy. The report contains more than 30 actions that can be taken by the federal government to encourage the private sector to develop offshore wind energy, ranging from supporting the infrastructure that is needed to effectively transport, store, and use energy (e.g., power cables, grid networks, and transmission stations) to providing financial support and more efficient regulatory processes. **The Trump Administration and Congress should continue to provide strong support for developing and deploying offshore wind energy.** The United States can benefit from adding this renewable energy source to the mix and lead in an emerging global industry.

In addition to action on the federal level, many states are leading the way with innovative policy approaches to promote offshore renewable energy development. States are [incentivizing](#) the development of renewable energy in several ways, including the use of renewable portfolio standards. To inform these policy efforts, states like Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and Oregon are engaging a broad set of stakeholders in statewide planning to maximize ocean uses and avoid potential conflicts. Proactive planning and policies can assist developers and the public by providing transparency and efficiency. Federal officials have an important role to play by sharing information across jurisdictions and ensuring continuity between efforts in state and federal waters.

Implement the recommendations of the National Commission on the BP Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill and Offshore Drilling

In the aftermath of the 2010 BP Deepwater Horizon oil spill, the largest oil spill in U.S. history, President Obama ordered the creation of the [National Commission on the BP Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill and Offshore Drilling](#) to independently, thoroughly, and impartially analyze the disaster and develop recommendations to make offshore energy production safer. Yet, most of the Commission's recommendations have not been implemented. The Deepwater Horizon oil spill had devastating effects on the region's economy and the health of its ecosystems. **The Trump Administration and Congress should implement the National Commission's recommendations to ensure that future oil and gas development is conducted safely.**

Encourage responsible collaboration between federal regulators and the oil and gas industry, specifically around information and data sharing

The oil and gas industry employs thousands of people around the Gulf and supports a wide range of economic activities. In addition, it has economic impacts along a diverse supply chain, including geophysical and geotechnical surveys, a vibrant marine construction industry, and engineering firms developing cutting edge drilling technologies. Given rapid technological advancements and changing conditions, collaboration can promote effective regulations that encourage technological innovation and make production safer. **The Trump Administration and Congress should require that oil and gas companies gather and share environmental baseline data they collect as part of the exploratory process with scientists and regulators.**