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# **BOEM and BSEE Environmental Justice Strategy Dialogue March 19, 2024**

*Summary Report*

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FOR INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL USE



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## Executive Summary

The Biden-Harris administration has made addressing environmental justice a federal priority, taking a whole-of-government approach to establishing meaningful and sustained partnerships between affected communities and federal agencies. In 2023, President Biden signed [Executive Order 14096, Revitalizing Our Nation's Commitment to Environmental Justice for All](#), which directs federal agencies to develop an Environmental Justice Strategic Plan that will: “set forth the agency’s vision, goals, priority actions, and metrics to address and advance environmental justice...” The Department of the Interior has directed all bureaus to also develop Environmental Justice Strategies. To communicate early and reduce engagement fatigue, the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management and the Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement conducted a joint Environmental Justice Strategy Dialogue in March 2024. Using qualitative methods, BOEM and BSEE staff analyzed participant feedback from the meeting and identified key themes:

1. [Effective communication](#): Requires consistent two-way communication (i.e., dialogue) and continuous relationship building.
2. [Increasing capacity for engagement](#): Supporting bureaus’ staff and investing in communities and community-based organization staff is essential to developing and sustaining these long-term relationships.
3. [Overlapping jurisdictions](#): Clarifying processes with multiple agencies and jurisdictions including conducting full life cycle analysis of energy activities, recommending specific actions for bureaus to take, and sharing this information with bureau senior leadership.

BOEM and BSEE committed to sharing meeting results with participants and incorporating them into the BOEM and BSEE Environmental Justice Strategy and Action Plans.

## Introduction

On March 19, 2024, BOEM and BSEE conducted a joint Environmental Justice Strategy Dialogue meeting with participants from various environmental justice communities across US coastal areas. The meeting goals were to (1) expand the exchange of knowledge with communities, (2) bolster environmental justice within bureau planning, policies, procedures, and decision-making, and (3) jointly discuss possible near-term actions. Participant feedback would also help inform both bureaus’ Environmental Justice Strategy visions, missions, and goals. BOEM and

BSEE invited community participants via a targeted email campaign. During the online meeting, participants (Appendix A) had an opportunity to share their comments orally and with digital sticky notes.

## **Methods**

The meeting took place using Zoom video conferencing software. Zoom software generated a verbatim meeting transcript that BOEM staff reviewed against the sound recording to ensure accuracy and support rigorous analysis. During the meeting, participants added their comments to Jamboard, a digital interactive whiteboard, using anonymous virtual “sticky notes.” BOEM and BSEE staff organized the sticky notes comments based on the shared foundations for the Environmental Justice Strategy. Staff collected all Jamboard comments and assigned each unique identifiers (e.g., the first board’s first note is JB 1.1 and fourth board’s 15th note is JB 4.15). The full list of Jamboard comments is available in Appendix B.

Staff uploaded the Jamboard comments into NVivo 14, a qualitative analysis software, and analyzed for emergent themes. Participants’ quotes were added to the corresponding themes to clarify the discussion’s context and assigned unique identifiers (e.g., P1, P5) for referencing purposes and to protect confidentiality. The full list of participants’ quotes is in Appendix C. Bureaus representatives’ comments are in Appendix D.

## **Results**

Using qualitative analysis, staff identified the following themes:

1. Effective communication
2. Increasing capacity for engagement
3. Overlapping jurisdictions

Discussion and key theme takeaways are presented below.

## **Theme 1: Effective Communication**

The bureaus requested participants feedback on successful and effective communication strategies and on participants' preferred communication methods, including frequency and ways to receive information (JB 1.10, JB 3.14). Participants find **multi-media approaches** and infographics to be more effective communication media. Examples included email, blogs, social media, YouTube, X, etc.; guide, videos; email and phone (JB 1.16, JB 2.10, JB 3.16, JB 4.5). For information dissemination, participants requested project summaries for specific locations, including project status and timelines (e.g., on hold, in consultation), as well as information from multiple agencies (JB 4.6, JB 3.15, JB 3.1). A representative quote is below:

... I wanted a summary every now and then if there's a lot going on in my area ... so just an update saying, hey, this project's still on hold and here are the 4 projects that are going on with you and our agency and here's their status in your timeline because there's so many and so many different agencies. It just gets really frustrating. (P3)

The participants were vocal about the need for **continuous communication and interactions** as continuous engagement and relationship-building are more effective than one-directional outreach to meet community needs. Some of the examples attendees mentioned included: providing updates and engaging with the community throughout the entire process (e.g., even after a specific document is published or once a project is approved and in the water); sending consistent emails so that groups can participate and provide feedback on a regular basis; involving communities for collaboration and shared decision making (JB 1.15, JB 1.11, JB 3.7, JB 3.10); hiring interns from the local communities, especially within the Tribal communities; and holding required public meetings closer to water or in “anchor communities” (JB 2.16, JB 2.2, JB 2.4). An anchor community is an area that is within 15 miles of a historically Black college or university, a Tribal College or University, or a Minority-serving institution with an estimated median annual household income of not more than 250 percent of the poverty line (47 USC § 1306(a)(1)). One participant noted that providing agenda items for Tribal council meetings could encourage community involvement and inclusion (JB 1.12):

... I'd like to ...advocate for ...regular presentations at Tribal council meetings. And it relates ... to institutional capacity or organizational capacity [to] really

being open to authentically working with Tribal communities in the ways that they express interest in at these Tribal council meetings. You're doing a number of things when you present a Tribal council meeting: 1) you're taking the time to show up which has great meaning, 2) you are maintaining consistent connection by offering repeated reports in person or via Zoom to Tribal council, and 3) you are demonstrating that it is very important to really be there and to incorporate Tribal preference in decision-making. (P4)

The participants also expressed interest in continual **relationship building** and meaningful engagement as a process beyond each project or location. They advised that such interactions should be co-facilitated and co-designed with the community, focused on creating shared experiences (e.g., showing up and sharing local food), which would require time and commitment from the agencies (JB 3.6, JB 3.3, JB 3.7, JB 3.13, JB 4.7, JB 3.5, JB 3.4). One participant elaborated:

...So, I honor that you all have different roles and who you have to report into and different procedures. But for 10 years, all I've been doing is just showing up and it's only now at the 10 year point, which I know is not realistic in a lot of your roles, that the trust has been built that I've been able to go to them and say, okay, if you are coming back to the coast, what are your priorities, and now we're just working on integration or concepts of co-governance or co-management, or coastal programs. And so just waiting to share that I wonder if we can ever start talking about meaningful engagement of just going to places and being in community ... [and] how we come into these spaces. (P8)

A BOEM representative noted that uncertainties on where construction and operations activities will occur during the early stages of planning new projects can create challenges in determining when to engage in the process and with whom. One participant emphasized a need for a **paradigm shift** in how BOEM and BSEE approach effective communication and engagement:

I'm passionate about discussing meaningful engagement within the context of continual relationship building versus picking any particular ... time to start engagement ... we're just transforming how we think about that in general. (P8)

As one participant summarized, engagement work needs to be continuous to be effective:

Just as community engagement benefits from being continuous and consistent so does a commitment to partnership and equity. (JB 5.2.1)

Key takeaways from this theme:

- Each community is unique and has unique communications needs—use multi-media communication channels, continuous communication, and interactions that lead to relationship-building.
- Environmental justice work requires a paradigm shift of how bureaus think about engagement. Share the information from communities with the senior leadership and decision-makers; have continuous engagement.

## **Theme 2: Increasing Capacity for Engagement**

Capacity was a frequent topic during the meeting. Participants identified a **gap between institutional capacity and community needs** for effective engagement. Having adequate resources and capacity is a challenge for bureaus as they are repeatedly asked to do more with less. As a result, the bureaus need to take a strategic approach to identify opportunities to effectively enhance engagement (JB 1.3), including ensuring the bureaus' capacity to maintain consistent engagement with Tribal councils (JB 1.21). Staff recognized that environmental justice has not historically been the priority of the bureaus and acknowledged the need for a better understanding of environmental justice and its relation to regular staff activities (JB 2.11). Participants provided some successful examples, including hiring more staff and including fellows and interns (JB 1.18), who can provide expertise and increase institutional capacity. This will allow for more effective environmental justice processes to be created which could potentially lead to culture change. One participant describes the culture change process as continuous work:

You shift culture intentionally and consistently. Although it may be slow, you push to make progress. Let communities lead. (JB 2.13)

Participants noted that a **lack of institutional understanding of environmental justice, could be mitigated** by staff visiting impacted areas to understand firsthand how the bureaus' decisions impact people (JB 2.7). For example, bureau staff could participate in outings known as toxic tours, justice tours, or community walks to

learn how people in environmental justice communities live day-to-day. These tours can help to improve federal employees' understanding of environmental justice and its connection to the agencies' daily work (JB 2.11). A participant said:

...if people really say they don't understand environmental justice, sometimes the best way is just to show it to them. I don't know if there's money in the budget to take BOEM and BSEE employees—a lot of times people call them toxic tours—to environmental justice communities or just showing where they live in South Louisiana or on the Texas coast just for people to be able to see that. (P1)

Even though environmental justice communities share many similar characteristics, it is important to keep in mind that they are not a monolithic “BIPOC” – **each community is unique**, with its own challenges and strengths. In addition, community roles might not be institutionally defined, which can make engagement challenging (JB 2.1, JB 3.11, JB 3.12). Also, not all environmental justice communities are affected by prevalent environmental justice issues like pollution. In fact, sometimes these communities work to prevent common environmental justice issues (JB 2.14, JB 2.8, JB 2.1). One participant explained:

... I will say that all the communities we work in are not the ones that are already polluted. We work here to try to prevent that from happening. So, someone touring here will help them to understand being proactive as opposed to reactionary. And that's something that we emphasize in the tours. (P6)

Participants talked extensively about the **best ways to work with communities**, and identified important examples such as increasing capacity in communities (i.e., funding, compensation, support and investment that benefit local communities) (JB 1.6, JB 4.2, JB 4.5JB 4.16, JB 1.22, JB 2.14, JB 4.13), answering questions the community wants to know, supporting community-led efforts, and supporting community needs without crowding out existing initiatives (JB 1.22, JB 4.10, JB 4.7, JB 4.15, JB 4.19, JB 4.20, JB 5.2.2). Representative quotes are below:

.. you need to pay us. Not ask the community to volunteer while people at BOEM have salaries. So, pay, find money ... to actually participate fully with you with reading things, so that's still time, and time is people's money and



energy, all right? And we're taking from community work to do this work. So at least compensate people... (P6)

...but if you talk to the communities, they'll have questions that they want answered, that might be in line with the work you're already doing. (P3)

...the importance of staying away from crowding out already existing initiatives and resources in local communities and in local regions like the creation of new initiatives and programs with the BOEM and BSEE stamp on them, that comes in with funding that other organizations, already there that are hiring local residents, don't have. And then next funding cycle, Congress says no more of that and then [agency] leave and, [community] worse off than when you started, I think. When I think about equity and opportunity building, I think it'd be important and I'm sure you already have this on your radar, but funding pre-existing programs and initiatives and working to assist those instead of taking over those... (P7)

And even going back towards, obviously, I'm not saying anything that I'm sure people don't know or haven't said, but just uplifting that we're investing in people from these communities first and hiring people from communities and creating equitable pathways through communities in this work, and providing continual resources and access to resources. And it's a continuum versus any particular strategy. (P8)

The participants also offered examples of **ongoing engagement activities, trainings, and practices** with environmental justice communities and Tribes. The Gullah/Geechee Nation noted that it had conducted and recorded trainings for EPA at various meetings for future use for EPA and other agencies. The community also holds a Coastal Conference to dialogue with agencies and to educate them on community efforts to steward coastal environments. The Gullah/Geechee Nation has developed a model of purposeful engagement with government partners through the Gullah/Geechee Sustainability Think Tank (JB 1.2, JB 1.24, JB 2.9, JB 3.8). Community representatives encouraged both bureaus to contact the Gullah/Geechee Sea Island Coalition to work within the southeast: [GullGeeCo@aol.com](mailto:GullGeeCo@aol.com) (JB 4.4). Additional engagement examples from other participants included: consult the United Houma Nation (JB 3.17); include environmental justice representatives on regulatory boards or in a multistakeholder decision making process: meet/engage with fisheries management councils and

National Organic Standards Board (JB 1.19); and consider the European model of the public ownership of energy developments and revenues and spending the money from those ventures on community reinvestment and remediation (JB 4.11). One participant reminded the bureaus that agencies have a public trust duty to review and verify applicant claims and not to take the applicant's word on environmental justice efforts (JB 4.8).

Key takeaways from this theme:

- Participants noted a gap between institutional capacity and community needs for engagement.
- The lack of institutional understanding of environmental justice can be mitigated by “toxic” tours to learn how people live in environmental justice communities.
- Bureaus should work with communities as partners by providing compensation for participation, answering questions the community wants to know, supporting community-led efforts, and not crowding out existing initiatives.
- There is a need to leverage ongoing activities, trainings, resources, and practices within communities.

### **Theme 3: Overlapping Jurisdictions**

Multiple agencies are responsible for regulating onshore activities where impacts on environmental justice communities are most likely to occur, including BOEM and BSEE, which have specific jurisdictions and can influence certain processes. The bureaus requested ideas or best practices that would help **clarify processes with multiple jurisdictions** (JB 1.1). Participants offered specific suggestions, including removing “information or expertise silos,” encouraging employee collaboration in environmental offices (JB 2.5), and looking into “connected” actions with other agencies under NEPA (JB 1.5), even though NEPA analyses don't typically get down to a local level and include engagement (JB 2.15). One participant suggested BOEM and BSEE refer to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) environmental justice analyses for wetlands as a best practice (JB 1.14). Another inquired about any benefits BOEM and BSEE offered communities beyond regulating when someone wants to drill for oil (JB 3.18). One individual suggested integrating several permitting processes and trying to find a common language (JB 1.9). Another participant noted that an area can be under multiple regulating entities and

expressed a need to find a common language and explore connections between the work of different agencies:

...We have the Army Corps, we have the Office of Coastal Management in the state of Louisiana, which is delegated from NOAA and the CZMA. That is a permitting process that's integrated and that we're very familiar with. We also do have Coast Guard and ... PHMSA is in the sense that they are making some rulemakings on these new kinds of pipelines, like CO2 pipelines. But I would love to talk with you further about studies and other agencies because we talked to nearly everyone we can, and we try to find a common language between all the jargon. (P2)

Multiple comments mentioned the need for **full life cycle analysis** of energy activities (i.e., oil and gas) and downstream impacts that are potentially beyond bureau jurisdiction, especially impacts on Tribal and environmental justice communities (JB 1.4, JB 1.7, JB 1.17, JB 1.20, JB 3.6). Participants also mentioned the need to initiate a holistic ocean planning process that examines all ocean uses (energy, sanctuaries, fisheries, shipping, defense, etc.) and prioritizes those with the greatest benefits for environmental justice with the lowest costs (JB 1.13). Below is a participant's quote about full life cycle analysis:

But I am thinking about what things can be done to understand the impacts that the agencies are having on environmental justice, I think, would be to include full life cycle analyses of what's being extracted, right? So right now, it's sort of like: our jurisdiction ends at a shoreline or 3 miles out, which is fine. You maybe don't have a regulatory power. But I think that it is possible to say when this oil and gas comes on shore, it's refined in poor communities and in black communities, and it's releasing this amount of a certain air pollutant, and maybe you can't do that with each individual drop of oil that comes in, but there are, I assume, tools out there that look at the life cycle of oil and gas. And so, the agencies' understanding what happens to that after it's extracted. I think is critical to making decisions about whether or not to permit that extraction in first place. (P1)

A BSEE representative acknowledged that at existing levels, the bureaus lack capacity for completing this kind of work. A BOEM representative agreed that full life

cycle analysis is a challenge and noted the potential for additional research through BOEM's Environmental Studies Program (JB 3.9, JB 1.8).

Participants also recommended bureaus: **take specific actions** to clean up "Dead" and Idle Iron; assist in creating Tribal businesses to clean up waste iron and waste in communities (JB 4.9, JB 4.18); and clean up pipelines on/over fishing, sand, and wind resources (JB 4.14). Participants advocated increasing setbacks to stop overbuilding on the coastlines (JB 4.1) and asked the bureaus to require energy development companies to use organized labor (JB 4.12). One participant suggested BOEM be included on Justice40 report cards (a Council on Environmental Quality, or CEQ, accountability tool), and encouraged communities to note if the bureau has met its responsibilities and obligations (JB 1.23).

The participants' shared vision for the future includes healed and sustained communities (JB 4.3.) and waters (JB 4.17).

The concluding comments discussed the importance of **sharing the meeting information with the BOEM and BSEE senior leadership teams** (JB 5.1.1). Participants hope that the gathering will result in a working group or other type of **continuous engagement** (JB 5.1.2). Participants requested BOEM and BSEE commit to continuous engagement, consistency and transparency and share the dialogue summary reports with the participant group before distributing to the public (JB 1.26):

I think all of us, especially those folks who have been in the environmental justice game for 20 years, always see listening sessions, and even sometimes attempts at some sort of group meetings, come and go. My hope for any of these types of engagement opportunities, just like they are for the community, that they're continual and that there's a person at the helm solely responsible for this, or multiple people solely responsible for this, and that when we're doing engagement across the realm of equity, that it's just this commitment to consistency and also transparency. So, when these reports come out that the people who were engaged have the first set of eyes, maybe before it gets to the public and that there's just consistent move towards having engagement with these folks as well. (P8)

Key takeaways from this theme:

- Bureaus should clarify processes involving multiple jurisdictions.
- Bureaus should conduct full life cycle analysis of energy activities.
- Address specific actions (i.e., clean up idle iron, increase setbacks on coastlines, require companies to use organized labor, and participate in Justice40 score cards).
- Share information with bureau senior leadership and commit to continuous engagement.

## **Conclusion**

The BOEM and BSEE Environmental Justice Strategy Dialogue was the first event focused specifically on reviewing and reflecting on proposed bureau environmental justice goals. The event provided an important opportunity for mutual learning: community participants learned about BOEM and BSEE processes and bureau representatives learned about community priorities and interests. The meeting covered important themes, including effective communication, building capacity, and jurisdiction issues. The dialogue helped to identify priority actions that bureaus can implement in near-term and start engaging in long-term planning. The bureaus' next steps include:

- Evaluating the received feedback using the input diagram.
- Drafting Environmental Justice Strategy and Action Plans for each bureau.
- Providing draft strategies to participants.

## Appendix A: Participant List

Salted Roots  
Sealaska Heritage Institute  
State of Maine  
Coastal Defenders  
USGS  
NOAA  
State of New Jersey  
Deleware Sea Grant  
Sealaska Heritage Institute  
Taproot Earth  
Sealaska Heritage Institute  
State of New Jersey  
Brightline Defense  
Chieftess of the Gullah/Geechee Nation / Founder, Gullah/Geechee Sea Island  
Coalition  
Healthy Gulf  
Southeast Climate and Energy Network

## Appendix B: Jamboard of Environmental Justice Engagement Discussion

### Board 1: Identify and Address (Prevent and Mitigate) Injustices

#### Questions:

- 1.1. How can we include you so that you understand and contribute to practices that would reduce risk to your communities and environment?
- 1.2. How can we be more transparent about findings, impact determinations, protective measures? How can we show accountability?
- 1.3. How can we share information on what actions we have taken to address impacts that have occurred or are occurring?
- 1.4. How can we better integrate local knowledge? i.e., environmental reviews that identify potential impacts and propose mitigation measures; research studies?

#### Sticky notes:

- (JB 1.1) Question from BOEM: ideas or best practices that would help clarify processes with multiple jurisdictions.
- (JB 1.2) We've done trainings for the EPA at their environmental justice meetings and other national meetings. We also videotaped it for them to share within the agency.
- (JB 1.3) BSEE - echo that resources and capacity is a challenge for the bureaus (constantly asked to do more with less); need to more strategically identify where to enhance.
- (JB 1.4) Include full life cycle analysis for energy activities.
- (JB 1.5) I would say that these other federal actions are "connected" actions under NEPA, so BOEM cannot ignore them, but, that is our position.
- (JB 1.6) Need to pay community groups to participate in reviews and engagement. Need to provide compensation, not ask people to volunteer.
- (JB 1.7) Include full life cycle analyses of what's being done - acknowledge impacts beyond just the agency jurisdiction. Especially for oil and gas - identify what happens downstream.
- (JB 1.8) Observation from BOEM: looking at full life cycle is important and is a challenge. There may be potential for studies program to help fill this need.
- (JB 1.9) There are several permitting processes to potentially integrate: USACE wetlands permits in Gulf region; CZMA, state processes, others. Trying to find a common language.
- (JB 1.10) Question from BSEE on best ways to share information to make it more effective?

(JB 1.11) You can make sure to send us consistent emails so that we can participate and provide you feedback on a regular basis. You can have regional in-person meetings that we lead also.

(JB 1.12) Provide agenda items for Tribal council meetings (AK) to keep community involved and included.

(JB 1.13) Initiate whole ocean planning process that looks at all ocean uses (energy, sanctuaries, fisheries, shipping, defense, etc.) and prioritize those with biggest benefits for environmental justice with lowest costs.

(JB 1.14) Look at pipelines - wetland footprint of the pipelines and identify environmental justice communities along those pipelines. Healthy Gulf would share USACE environmental justice analyses for wetlands.

(JB 1.15) Providing updates throughout the entire process. Please engage with the community even after a specific document is published.

(JB 1.16) Share information on multiple platforms and via various media: email, blogs, social media, YouTube, X, etc.

(JB 1.17) Examine the full lifecycle of Offshore E&P waste, and where it impacts Tribal communities and communities of color.

(JB 1.18) USGS Knauss Fellow for Tribal engagement. Working at DOI level to support Tribal liaisons. Available to bureaus to possibly be of assistance.

(JB 1.19) Include environmental justice reps on regulatory boards or in a multistakeholder decision making process. Existing examples: fisheries management councils, National Organic Standards Bd.

(JB 1.20) Including system-level analysis including traditional subsistence and cultural events.

(JB 1.21) Question about capacity building, including bureau capacity to maintain consistent engagement with Tribal councils.

(JB 1.22) Local knowledge has to be brought in by those that are indigenous to the areas. Therefore, we have to be paid to be on boards or teams for engagement.

(JB 1.23) BOEM needs to be part of Justice40 report cards that the CEQ has mentioned as a tool of accountability. The community should state if we feel you've done what you should.

(JB 1.24) Gullah Geechee holds a Coastal conference to dialogue with agencies- bureaus can see what the community is doing to steward coastal environments.

(JB 1.25) A couple ways to think about capacity: number of people in the bureau (need budget for that), increase capacity within existing staff - it is responsibility of every staff member.



(JB 1.26) You can be more transparent by sending out findings to us to vet. Include BIPOC people on the committees as data is gathered and reports are written.

## **Board 2: Institutionalizing Environmental Justice**

### Questions:

- 2.1. What trainings would benefit BOEM and BSEE employees to meaningfully engage with your community?
- 2.2. Is there a role for communities in our agencies' internal training development? Are there resources you are willing to share?
- 2.3. How do we effectively shift culture? Where have you had successes in shifting priorities in your communities?

### Sticky notes:

(JB 2.1) Important to note that not all "environmental justice communities" are already polluted. Also important to recognize work to be proactive. Vital that agency people are on the ground to see.

(JB 2.2) But shouldn't NEPA include notification of environmental justice communities in those communities? BOEM holds hearings at the New Orleans Airport, shouldn't the hearings be closer to the water?

(JB 2.3) Ocean Justice Advocacy Group (OJAG) is a resource group that can provide trainings for you also.

(JB 2.4) Hold hearings in appropriate places. Go to where people are closer to the water, to an anchor community. That money is already being spent, so use it better.

(JB 2.5) Un-silo "environmental offices"—all bureau offices should inherently be environmental, \*especially\* at orgs like BOEM & BSEE due to their subject matter.

(JB 2.6) We have published "WEBE Gullah/Geechee" which is available at [www.GullahGeechee.biz](http://www.GullahGeechee.biz) that will help with community engagement in many BIPOC communities.

(JB 2.7) Question on whether virtual options would be an option? (there are meaningful documentaries, etc.) Getting people to understand human impacts of decisions.

(JB 2.8) Toxic tour for employees to see environmental justice communities along the Gulf Coast.

(JB 2.9) We've offered trainings for EPA at their regional and national meetings. We recorded them so that the videos could be used within the agency also.

(JB 2.10) Suggestion to provide information in multiple avenues - guide, videos.

(JB 2.11) BSEE: workforce comments that environmental justice has not historically been a priority in the bureau. Need to improve understanding of environmental justice and connection to the work being done day2day.

(JB 2.12) Question for bureaus: curious about what the cultural obstacles are at the bureaus?

(JB 2.13) You shift culture intentionally and consistently. Although it may be slow, you push to make progress. Let communities lead.

(JB 2.14) If people don't understand environmental justice, one of the best ways is for folks to visit impacted areas. Have people show their own places (and compensate).

(JB 2.15) Example from BOEM: NEPA analyses don't typically get down to a local level and include engagement.

(JB 2.16) Use opportunity to have required public scoping meetings in or as close to coastal communities as possible; already spending money for the meetings.

### **Board 3: Purposeful and Collaborative Engagement**

#### Questions:

3.1. What is meaningful engagement? What does that look like in practice? What are examples of where that has been done well?

3.2. What factors limit your capacity to engage with us on federal actions? (e.g., permitting, leasing, studies...) What about for the communities you work with or represent?

3.3. We are providing a high-level intro of who we are and what we do. What would communities want to learn from us? And what are the methods that would be helpful?

#### Sticky notes:

(JB 3.1) Notices need to include project timelines & what stage the project is currently at. The compliance/consultation letters are confusing & repetitive.

(JB 3.2) Comment from BOEM about challenges to find the right time to engage in planning processes - given uncertainties in early stages. Can be a difficult balance.

(JB 3.3) Meaningful engagement within context of continual relationship building. Invest in people from communities first. It is a continuum. Should not be tied to a specific process.

(JB 3.4) Important to just show up and build trust before asking for engagement. Go to places and be in community just for that has value for trust and relationship.

(JB 3.5) Meaningful engagement usually includes sharing food from the area, and from the ocean. Don't plan a meeting without food.

(JB 3.6) Commit to continued interaction, talk about full life cycle performance.

(JB 3.7) Continued interaction once a project is approved and in the water.

(JB 3.8) Purposeful engagement has taken place with the Gullah/Geechee Sustainability Think Tank in the southeast with govt partners.

(JB 3.9) BSEE - appreciate the emphasis on continuity. Agencies don't always talk about continued interaction and engagement over the full life cycle.

(JB 3.10) Involve communities when there's collaboration and shared decision making. One-direction information meetings are less useful.

(JB 3.11) What limits our participation with government agencies is them reducing us to being monolithic as "BIPOC."

(JB 3.12) Government folks wanted to work with "government sanctioned" folks and organizations and not grassroots and legitimately native folks is problematic for engagement.

(JB 3.13) Meaningful engagement is that which is important to all that are in the conversation not just those working for the government. Let communities lead.

(JB 3.14) Examples of information-sharing that folks consider successful. What works best to receive information, what frequency.

(JB 3.15) A summary of everything going on in a given area would be helpful - quick summary of projects and their status (e.g., on hold, in consultation).

(JB 3.16) Probably all of the above approach is best. Email and phone.

(JB 3.17) Ask the United Houma Nation, as they have 10,000 members.

(JB 3.18) We'd love to know what you do other than come in to regulate things such as when someone wants to drill for oil. What do you offer to communities?

#### **Board 4: Equity and Opportunity Building**

##### Questions:

- 4.1. What would benefits look like that positively impact communities in those areas?
- 4.2. We have learned that community driven processes work. How do we connect with those efforts? What does support look like?
- 4.3. What are some resources and opportunities that have been impactful? And what did that look like?

Sticky notes:

- (JB 4.1) Increase setbacks to stop overbuilding on the coastlines would be a major benefit.
- (JB 4.2) Support of community efforts involves funding and not just technical assistance.
- (JB 4.3) Communities would be healed and sustained.
- (JB 4.4) Please reach out to the Gullah/Geechee Sea Island Coalition to work with you in the southeast: GullGeeCo@aol.com.
- (JB 4.5) Financial resources and handouts for the community have all been beneficial and impactful. Infographics to share online are always helpful too.
- (JB 4.6) Location specific summaries from multiple agencies/projects.
- (JB 4.7) Support projects that are community designed and led instead of coming in with new projects.
- (JB 4.8) Do not take Applicant's word on what Env Justice is. You have a public trust duty to check up on what they claim.
- (JB 4.9) Clean up of "Dead Iron" and Idle Iron.
- (JB 4.10) Answer questions communities want to know.
- (JB 4.11) European model: Public ownership of energy developments and revenues. The money from those ventures spent on community reinvestment and remediation.
- (JB 4.12) Require companies developing energy to use organized labor.
- (JB 4.13) Investments that benefit local communities such as propping up Tribal-led educational STEM opportunities for youth, local workforce development, local energy distribution.
- (JB 4.14) Clean up pipelines on top of fishing resources, sand resources and wind resources.
- (JB 4.15) Funding pre-existing programs and initiatives; assist community-led efforts.
- (JB 4.16) Consider nexus and need of support (e.g. if agency is travelling to a certain place, can they provide travel support for CBO, too).
- (JB 4.17) Healed waters would be a benefit.
- (JB 4.18) Assist in the creation of Tribal businesses to clean up waste iron and waste in communities.
- (JB 4.19) Be aware of not crowding out other initiatives, especially local or other efforts that might have more stable funding. Assist rather than take over existing work.

(JB 4.20) Answer questions that communities want to know. Incorporate research into supporting community needs (e.g. cultural sites research).

## **Board 5: Closing - Purposeful and Collaborative Engagement**

### Questions:

5.1. Closing questions: Anything new learned? What was not addressed?

5.2. One sentence of what a positive vision for the future might look like.

### Sticky notes:

(JB 5.1.1) Hope that the information is shared with "higher ups"; there's a sense that we're speaking to the choir with the agency folks on the call.

(JB 5.1.2) Hoping that the gathering would result in a working group or some sort of continued opportunity to engage.

(JB 5.2.1) Just as community engagement benefits from being continuous and consistent so does a commitment to partnership and equity.

(JB 5.2.2) Research funding to answer community questions - where communities get to submit questions and they are used for the RFP.

## Appendix C: Community Participants' Comments

### Participant 1.1.

Sorry, I was just kind of making sure that I was sort of like reading the question correctly about you know, who's reducing the risk here, I guess.

Is it, are we talking about BOEM and BSEE sort of reducing the risk? But I am thinking about what things can be done to understand the impacts that the agencies are having on environmental justice I think would be to **include full life cycle analyses of what's being extracted**, right? So right now it's sort of like: our jurisdiction ends at a shoreline or 3 miles out, you know, which is fine. You maybe don't have a regulatory power. But I think that it is possible to say when this oil and gas comes on shore, it's refined in poor communities and in black communities, and it's releasing this amount of a certain air pollutant, and maybe you can't do that with each individual drop of oil that comes in, but there are, I assume, tools out there that look at the life cycle of oil and gas.

And so the agencies' understanding what happens to that after it's extracted I think is critical to making decisions about whether or not to permit that extraction in first place.

### Participant 1.2.

Yeah, one thing I was thinking, I heard [xx] talking is that **if people really say they don't understand environmental justice, sometimes the best way is just to show it to them**. I don't know if there's money in the budget to take BOEM and BSEE employees—a lot of times people call them toxic tours, and environmental justice communities or just showing where they live in South Louisiana or on the Texas coast just for people to be able to see that. A lot of times when people do that, they are being honorary to the community members and really try to be respectful and to have people show their own places.

But I think that kind of the flip side again, the life cycle analysis on a paper, another way for employees to sort of have that be a part of their culture is to go experience it for themselves.

### Participant 1.3.

Q: Would a virtual option be successful?

A: Hey, it's probably better, better than nothing, but there's probably some meaningful documentaries and stuff like that have been put out there by community, community members that you could look at. So yeah, I think just **getting people to understand the human impacts of their decisions in any way that you can**, and I think it would be great to bring senior people with decision making authority, I'm certainly a man of the people and I think you should try to bring rank and file if you can, but I think, it is pretty critical for the people who have the decision-making authority so to see this.

#### **Participant 1.4.**

Yeah, so this is [xx]. One of the things I think this is a good meeting, but y'all are kind of what I consider the good people in BOEM and BSEE, my sense is that y'all are kind of fighting uphill battles at your own agency as well.

So, **I hope that this information is shared with some of your higher ups** and things like that because we always find a sympathetic ear with y'all and we know that change is slow but anyway.

#### **Participant 2.1.**

Just to deepen what [xx] said, look at pipelines. We have pipelines whether for oil, gas or carbon even. Look at the communities. Look at the wetland footprint of those pipelines to see and identify environmental justice communities along the pipelines. That could be challenging.

We would share the Army Corps environmental justice method with y'all. Since we're at Healthy Golf often in conversation with them on the wetlands permit.

But we do think that **these pipelines would not be happening without the actions of BOEM and BSEE.**

So we do think that y'all should look at the communities impacted by these pipelines and the other facilities.

#### **Participant 2.2.**

Hello, this is [xx]. So Army Corps has a wetland permit down on the Gulf Coast. We have hundreds of miles of wetlands between onshore and the ocean. The resources that along are like migrating birds are in that interstitial space where we live and we eat and we fish and you know. We have the Army Corps, we have the Office of

Coastal Management in the state of Louisiana, which is delegated from NOAA and the CZMA. That is a permitting process that's integrated and that we're very familiar with. We also do have Coast Guard and in some respects and I would say, PHMSA is in the in the sense that they are making some rulemakings on these new kinds of pipelines like CO2 pipelines.

But, **I would love to talk with you further about studies and other agencies** because we talked to nearly everyone we can and **we try to find a common language between all the jargon**. So I'd love to talk further.

### **Participant 2.3.**

This is [xx] in New Orleans. I would say you should look at say the hearings that are required. If you're holding a hearing at the New Orleans airport, you're spending money, that is a missed opportunity. The people at the airport are not thinking about the ocean. There're almost any other location you would pick up, people who live here, who are oriented toward the ocean and the ocean uses. So I do think that NEPA and the executive orders might behoove you to **take those hearing opportunities closer to the water into an anchor community**, a community that's working in the Gulf affected by BOEM activities in the Gulf. Take those opportunities and make the most of them.

### **Participant 3.1.**

[xx] I'm in Alaska. We just had a meeting with our traditional counselor of scholars and one of their biggest requests is that we incorporate a **hiring interns from the local communities**, so especially with the Tribal communities, if you can even hire interns to do minor tasks. But it gets them involved and they can report back to the community more about what's going on.

### **Participant 3.2.**

Hi, we talked earlier about **collaborating with communities before you get projects up and going**, I'm blanking on the term that was used earlier, but, those kind of things actually doing that very early and determining what kind of engagement they want. So [xx] was just talking about helping support their projects, **it's about answering the questions that they want to know**.

So if you want to do some environmental development, maybe the community, especially in Southeast Alaska, were really interested in our heritage or the



indigenous heritage here. I'm not indigenous. But as an underwater archaeologist, I worry as development does occur offshore as we have a major sea level change in this region since populations are expected to have been here. And so **partnering in those kind of ways and incorporating research**, like you do in some other areas around the coastal US, researching the submerged culture that's out there not just shipwrecks but so much cultural sites.

And that's just one region and one idea, but if you talk to the communities, they'll have questions that they want answered that might be in line with the work you're already doing.

### **Participant 3.3.**

I deal with a lot of the section 106 requests from other agencies, and I have to say what I wanted a summary every now and then if there's a lot going on in my area. I just kind of **want to know where different things are at** because some of these projects sometimes take a long time, especially from the start of consultation through to when things happen.

And so just **an update** saying, hey, this project's still on hold and here are the 4 projects that are going on with you and our agency and here's their status in your timeline because there's so many and so many different agencies. It just gets really frustrating. Thanks.

### **Participant 4.1.**

I just want to address one of the sticky notes that was put up, **provide agenda items for Tribal council meetings as a way to keep community involved and included**. I absolutely agree with that and I'd like to take that a step further. In fact, to advocate for presentations, not only presentations at Tribal council meetings, but also **regular presentations at Tribal council meetings**. And it relates to participation from Alaska Native and Native American groups. And this is a question more as it relates to **institutional capacity or organizational capacity is really being open to authentically working with Tribal communities in the ways that they express interest in at these Tribal council meetings**. You're doing a number of things when you present a Tribal council meeting: 1) you're taking the time to show up which has great meaning, 2) you are maintaining consistent connection by offering repeated reports in person or via Zoom to Tribal council and 3) you are demonstrating that it is very important to really be there and to incorporate Tribal

preference in decision-making. This might include any number of things and it's going to vary across Tribal communities. It's also a lot of work, and so I suppose a question that I have for members of BOEM and BSEE I recognized that there's a requirement for Tribal consultation this has to do with NEPA as well as other agency involvement?

But how far are you actually; is there capacity at present to involve authentically, preferences and involvement of Tribal communities? So that's sort of a question that I'd like to ask some of the folks on this call here. Thank you.

### **Participant 5.1.**

I just wanted to share a little bit that I am involved as [xx] and I'm working in a new position created this year by BOEM and the US Geological Survey as a Tribal engagement fellow. And first of all, I just want to reiterate and echo everything that I heard already. You're hitting all the key points. So just know that that's being confirmed in all my experiences working with Tribes themselves. They also are saying the same things much of the same.

You know just to reiterate what [xx] was saying that **ongoing relationship building and communication** is really important as she pointed out. I think my role that I'm seeking to develop and synthesize everything you've said for BOEM and USGS, so really working at the DOI level to support the Tribal liaison, support all of you in your different roles. And that's wide open and it's brand new. So I'd also say if I can be of assistance to anyone or you have ideas to help formulate with this new position, I would welcome it as well as this may be one signal of how BOEM and the USGS and DOI are trying to develop more capacity to address some of these issues and emphasize it.

### **Participant 6.1.**

Peace and blessings, all so glad you for deal with all a [-unclear-] from the [xx].

One of the things that we do here in the [xx] is **we already have our own event**, which is coming up in the beginning of April, which is our [xx] conference where we bring together federal partners along with our indigenous community leaders to dialogue about things we are already working on so that you're not trying to reinvent the wheel in our community and also so that we can provide the kind of feedback you're asking us for today.

And it is in person on the ground so they get activities that they can see what we're doing to sustain our own coastal environment. So you might want to partner with organizations and communities because we have our own—someone already has a posted up there about—our cultural events so you need to **meet the people where we are** by coming to our events, our conferences, our meetings, and that way it's not something new that we have to create, it would just be a matter of someone of your team engaging with us and then also in terms of finding people to read documents, to participate in data collection and so forth.

One of the posts that I put up was **you need to pay us**. Not ask the community to volunteer while people at BOEM have salaries. So pay, find money, have it as a line item in the BOEM budget so you can do community engagement, which allows for stipends **for community leaders to be able to have the time and the capacity**, as we like to say these days, to actually participate fully with you with reading things, so that's still time and time is people's money and energy, all right?

And we're taking from community work to this work. So **at least compensate people**, give them some sort of enumeration and say, well, if we're going to come down and have this meeting with you, we can provide you this much as well and we can provide community members who might come to a focus group this much each to be there.

So those are things that have to be considered, and I think you would get a lot more support for yourselves so that so much weight's not on your shoulders, right?

And we all good stay around in the boat together nice and smoothly on healthy waters.

### **Participant 6.2.**

Hi, I can't go back and claim the sticky, but I'll tell you that's the [xx]. We have trained EPA and other groups as well. [xx]. That's essentially what we've been doing there. And so while I do have the mic again, I will say that **all the communities we work in are not the ones that are already polluted. We work here to try to prevent that from happening**. So someone touring here helps them to understand being proactive as opposed to reactionary. And that's something that we emphasize in the tours. They classify us as environmental justice just because we are

indigenous and we are also black. And we're on rural sea islands and low income that, yeah, yeah, yeah, all under under underwords that they like to use.

But it's not because we're polluted because we've been proactive in protecting our environment by using our cultural traditions.

So that's some of the things that we help to expose and teach and someone whenever we're in these agency meetings and have the opportunity to be the trainers instead of agencies thinking that they could come in and train us when we're the ones that live here all the time and been here for hundreds of years. So I think that that's critical as well. So when we talk about the tours, **it is vital that these agency people are on the ground and literally see what the community's capacity is to protect their own community** because the video will never do it.

And I'm a computer scientist, so don't think I'm anti-technology, but I'm telling you that's not the way to really engage these people and get their heart and make them change their policies and their behavior.

### **Participant 6.3.**

Yes, I was hoping that this gathering was gonna result in maybe some type of **new committee or working group** or something that you were going to pull together some of us to continue to be able to engage directly with you and have a shared circle of knowledge.

#### **Other Participant:**

Same.

### **Participant 7.1.**

A quick question I had was, and this for the BOEM and BSEE folks. And thank you so much for having us.

A question I had is on sort of the third part of this slide on culture shifting. I'm curious about, we talk about culture shifting a lot, and there are so many facets to that and so much what we mean about that a lot that's important there. I'm curious about further folks at BOEM and BSEE, **what the cultural obstacles you think there are at your bureaus to institutionalizing environmental justice?** As communicating to outsiders to the bureaus, I think it's also, it's easy to generalize culture. I'd love to get some specifics on what you think are the issues there.

**Participant 7.2.**

That is really helpful. I think it's good to get a sense of where BSEE and BOEM are coming from, I think that's a good part of the sort of transparency communication that we're speaking out on the past slide is just getting a sense of.

In addition to what BOEM and BSEE can provide, what the limitations are on capacity, limitations are structurally, I think that's helpful in terms of helping our organizations operate and communicate with you as well. So thank you.

**Participant 7.3.**

One thing I'll bring up, [xx], if not to really answer your question, but that this got me thinking about was just the **importance of staying away from crowding out already existing initiatives and resources in local communities and in local regions** like the creation of new initiatives and programs with the BOEM and BSEE stamp on them, that comes in with funding that other organizations, already there that are hiring local residents, don't have. And then next funding cycle, Congress says no more of that and then [agency] leave and, [community] worse off than when you started, I think.

When I think about equity and opportunity building, I think it'd be important and I'm sure you already have this on your radar, but funding pre-existing programs and initiatives and working to assist those instead of take over those [-unclear-].

**Participant 7.4.**

Yeah, I mean, I'm sure that varies a lot across all of our organizations and all of our communities. Probably what I think of a lot is I'm similar to how earlier we mentioned that it's tough for BOEM and BSEE to support full-time engagement coordinators in certain communities and regions, there are a lot of organizations, for example, Southeast Alaska, that have trouble supporting enough stuff. Right? So what is enough funding? Like providing funding for enough staff helping. Provide that support or even talking about, oh, you know that BSEE and BOEM are going to be traveling somewhere in this region and would be able to support additional travel for partner organization staff, I think looking at those nexuses of needs and support. And I know that kind of ties back to how do you even find out about what works but that's what comes to mind for me, [xx].

**Participant 8.1.**

Hi everyone, good morning. I apologize. I'm a one person show for my nonprofits. I'm going back and forth between a couple of meetings, but it's wonderful to at least briefly be in community with you all and thank you for this opportunity.

I apologize if anyone might have already said this **and I'm passionate about discussing meaningful engagement within the context of continual relationship building so versus peaking any particular**, I don't know if this resonates with anyone, **picking any particular time to start engagement that we're just transforming how we think about that in general.**

**Participant 8.1.**

And even going back towards obviously I'm not saying anything that I'm sure people don't know or haven't said, but just uplifting that we're **investing in people from these communities first and hiring people from communities and creating equitable pathways through communities in this work and providing continual resources and access to resources. And it's a continuum versus any particular strategy.**

I am not indigenous, from the East Coast and I occupy [xx] land and have been—and hi [xx], you're wonderful beautiful human that I had the opportunity to be in community with in some other space sometime. I hope to see you again—I occupy [xx] Island for 10 years and I utilize my privileges from the way that I look to all these other different things, really only to serve and uplift them first.

So I understand that that's a privilege because I'm not tied to it now that I'm out of my own. I'm not tied to any specific institution, right? So then that gives me so much more freedom and flexibility.

So I honor that you all have different roles and who you have to report into and different procedures. But for 10 years, all I've been doing is just showing up and it's only now at the 10 year point, which I know is not realistic in a lot of your roles, that the trust has been built that I've been able to go to them and say, okay, if you are coming back to the coast, what are your priorities, and now we're just working on integration or concepts of co-governance or co-management, or coastal programs, you know. And so just waiting to share that I wonder if we can ever start talking with meaningful engagement of just **going to places and being in community**, just for

that, not even for the ask, [-unclear-] for breaking bread. And the last thing I went to say I think it was on a previous slide but like how we come into these spaces.

I'm very tall, over 6 feet tall and 200 pounds. I can have a very dominating presence and I'm always working on my active listening but with indigenous folks out here, when I was introduced, being in the dominant culture and introduce like your name or this is your title, your role or your background. What I was asked, you know, with some indigenous folks in the Central Coast and that I had been up there and worked with their son for years, he asked me who are your people? What's your relationship to the water? And I was introduced as how many times I had been to their land before. So I think obviously then that other component of the cultural differences into how you even come into those spaces and when you do.

### **Participant 8.2.**

I wrote in the comments, but I just wanted to say, similar to [xx] comments. I think all of us, especially those folks who have been environmental justice game for 20 years, always see listening sessions and even sometimes, attempts at some sort of group meetings come and go. My hope for any of these types of engagement opportunities just like they are for the community that they're **continual and that there's a person at the helm solely responsible for this or multiple people solely responsible for this**. And that when we're doing engagement across the realm of equity, that it's just this **commitment to consistency and also transparency**. **So when these reports come out that the people who were engaged have the first set of eyes, maybe before it gets to the public and that there's just consistent move towards having engagement with these folks as well.**

## Appendix D: Bureau Participants' Comments

### **Bureau participant 1.1.**

Okay, so when I look at this shared foundation between BOEM and BSEE there are a few critical areas where we touch on this. There is our environmental studies work. There is work that's done under environmental assessments. And then there's work that we do to ensure compliance and we do enforce that.

And so, when we think about these particular touch points, I'm interested in understanding how we may better include communities in that. So I'm hearing, looking at the full life cycle. I do think that is important. And are there other ways in which to include communities or community-based organizations in some of those critical activities?

### **Bureau participant 1.2.**

I think, the mechanism by which we share this information is one that's of interest to us. You know, what are the ways that we can share this information to communities that would be beneficial? Are there organizations that we could partner with who work in that space to make that more efficient and effective?

### **Bureau participant 1.3.**

Yeah, I just wanted to echo what was said and the reality is that resources and capacity is a challenge for our agencies. We recognize that, and so we are looking at creative ways to address the kind of engagement that needs to occur, understanding that we are constantly being asked to do more with less.

And I will say that's the beauty of this work that we're talking to you all about today, it's because we are hoping to develop a path towards identifying where we need to build that capacity, where we need those resources, so that we can more strategically build them in, and the process that we have undertaken to develop these environmental justice strategies is one, that's very much so uprooted in stewardship. And so instead of relying on dedicated environmental justice coordinators, which we never have enough of, we are looking at our programs in our workforce to say: How should you be thinking about environmental justice in your day-to-day work and what is your responsibility?

And with that, hopefully, that helps us to enhance our current capacity.



**Bureau participant 1.4.**

I'm happy to share some perspectives on that from the BSEE side. So we've talked with our workforce, and what we hear emerging is that environmental justice has not necessarily been a priority in our action. We have a core mission to ensure safety, to protect the environment. But we never really looked at it through the lens of communities, especially those communities that have been historically marginalized or left outside of the process, right? And we also have heard that people don't really know what we mean when we say environmental justice. And so there's a desire to really understand that better in order to strengthen the connection between environmental justice and the work that they're doing on the day to day basis.

It's the, well, why is that specific focus important, right? And so it does take a little bit of shifting in the way that we think about our mission.

And getting people to not just think about safety and environmental protection. But then how do we go further? So that we understand the impacts that we're making to communities on the ground. So that's a perspective on the culture shift that we're facing with BSEE.

**Bureau participant 1.5.**

Yeah, I appreciate emphasis on the continuity. I think that's why this particular meeting is so important, with BOEM and BSEE is a lot of times there's an emphasis on engagement early in the project in the assessment. But then we don't really talk about continued interaction once the project's approved and in the water, right? And I think that's certainly where BSEE can certainly step up I think we have to be committed to continued interaction and engagement on what's happening with these projects.

So in addition to analyzing full lifecycle, also talking about performance, full life cycle as well. So I really do appreciate that.

**Bureau participant 1.6.**

I have a follow up question to that. So what would that look like for our agencies to support those already existing initiatives, how could we core into those efforts, what would be helpful? Maybe what are those efforts lacking that we might be able to help support?

**Bureau participant 2.1.**

I think [xx] comment was the biggest point of struggle I have as a social scientist working on the NEPA documents is trying to think through the full life cycle when often our NEPA documents are project by project or have limited scope or jurisdiction. I just wanted to echo [xx], I think that that is a really important place to do some more work and the studies program might be the best place to do it.

I think maybe this group could talk through, because I've been trying to work in this space a bit and it gets really complicated when you're looking at different levels of government or different jurisdictional authorities.

Because we're trying to do this in the New York New Jersey place in a more programmatic view of the offshore wind impacts, but there's all these kinds of questions of what the state's requiring versus what BOEM should be requiring to mitigate impacts and a lot of discussion around the impact particularly on environmental justice communities aren't coming from offshore lease area but all of the associated infrastructure onshore. So, I guess more conversation could be useful around how do we [do it]. I think the only way we can really address this is through the studies program and how would it be advisable that we work with communities directly into developing a study on lifecycle analysis impacts on environmental justice communities.

And particularly I'm interested in if it has limited liability to inform BOEM NEPA documents,

as they are, what kind of other state and local NEPA processes associated, [xx] you mentioned, Coast Guard and pipelines with wetlands, what other state and local associated NEPA processes we need to create linkages with? If anybody has thoughts on those?

**Bureau participant 2.2.**

Okay, sure. I think it's mixed. I think, the capacity is not there yet. There's a desire within our bureaus to build it. So it is very difficult to get full time employee positions that would be needed to really carry out that different way of working that the government's not used to. It takes—you know, you're well aware of what it takes, right—it takes a lot of work. It takes so much time. And I only know that from doing engagement with environmental justice communities for just a few years and I was shocked when I started doing it a few years ago, how much time it actually

took. And so I am hesitant as we try and expand out environmental justice engagement to not commit ourselves to too much that we can't successfully maintain and continue building trust, right? Cause we try and shoot for the moon and we don't meet expectations. That's probably worse than trying to go about it in a slower approach. That said, I've heard rumblings of a desire to set up a more centralized way to engage with Tribes and indigenous populations. We have Tribal liaisons in every office, and I know there's always requests going in for more attention towards funding those positions and expanding that. So I think I've seen capacity grow a lot, I also think there's a lot of attention being put on how do we integrate that type of work into existing processes without having whole others separate staff member where it's that just only their job to trying to integrate it into the day to day work more but that it's really a culture shift at and that takes time. I think I think the nuggets are there and we just have to keep building them. Exactly what you said is the direction we should be going, just gonna take government quite a while to get there but I've been trying to promote a co-designed engagement model and so that's getting traction.

### **Bureau participant 2.3.**

And I might just give you an example from some environmental assessment, NEPA document work I was doing, I reviewed one of the environmental justice sections and I asked the authors that were preparing it. It just seems like super high level and not realistic and there was nothing really concrete I could put my finger on of like this is how a community would be impacted, and I asked them if they had engaged with any communities in that area. And they said, oh, we couldn't find any environmental justice communities. There aren't any there. This is a very rich coastal area with a bunch of people with their summer homes out in this area. And there's been several times where I've just heard comments like that or not like that, but I'm just like shocked of like, okay, we gotta start from the base level here, we have to explain, you know, but I'm going home thinking, of course there's low income in minority folks there too, you know.

So I think that's just what we're facing is that there's a lot of unknown biases that people are carrying around into this work and into the way our agencies do environmental reviews or studies or procure contracts or this and they're just not seeing or realizing the barriers that people keep maintaining and it's very hard when you have business models or process, standard operating procedures, or the way

things have always been done to kind of change that when people have a closed mindsets. So that's what I see in day-to-day actions.

**Bureau participant 2.4.**

And [xx], I wanted to follow up, we have thought about, especially getting the senior leaders to tour places, but I don't think it's in the budget to have like a lot of employees go. So, I'm wondering your thoughts on or would a virtual option be successful, do you think, or would that just really not hit the mark?

**Bureau participant 2.5.**

I might chime in a bit here. Yeah, cause I often hear from community-based organizations or state and local government folks that we want to be really mindful to not contribute to community fatigue. And I know compensation and capacity building is the key there, but I also wanted setting that aside as something we're gonna work towards, what is the right time to engage is always a huge question. And because then in a lot of our processes, we don't know exactly where the infrastructure is gonna be. Like when we're talking about wind farms, we don't know which port the offshore wind developers are gonna use, or we don't know where the cable is going to go through yet. And then we don't know whether it's appropriate to ask community members to engage with us if there're so many uncertainties.

But then if we engage too late, people are like, well, you already made all the decisions, and there's only such limited scope that we can influence now, we wanna be engaged earlier. And so for me, it's been a really hard balance of trying to find that right timing to engage. So I'm curious if folks have thoughts on that.

**Bureau participant 3.1.**

Yeah, thank you, [xx]. And I think to build off of [xx] question in terms of building out an action plan for these environmental justice strategies, I think you brought up a really good point about how there are a lot of different overlapping authorities and jurisdictions at the local, state, and federal level, a lot of different agencies involved in managing different resources, infrastructure, things like that at different phases and sometimes that can be confusing and not as transparent as it can be. And so I think if there are any ideas or best practices that you all have experienced in working at either the local, state, or federal level to help make sure that there is coordination among agencies, when we're sharing information and making sure that those

different authorization processes are really clear? I think advice and or feedback on best practices would be really helpful as we develop these strategies.

**Bureau participant 3.2.**

Thanks, [xx], while I got my thoughts together and agree with everything you said.

And I think there are a couple of different ways to think about the capacity issue, right? One is this the actual like number of people fully dedicated to that type of work and that of course we're always going to need more people to do that. And even if the Bureau prioritizes that, for example, putting line items in our budget to hire more full time people focused on this, it's also that's subject to whether or not Congress agrees that we need that or not.

So then the question is what do we do with our you know existing workforce and for a lot of amazing people like the folks here, [xx] and [xx], this is a big part of their job but it's not the only part of their job, and I think there's a way to increase capacity.

**With having more staff recognize how much engagement is the responsibility, and promoting environmental justice, Tribal engagement consultation, our trust and treaty responsibilities, is the responsibility of every single staff member.** And so, in order to help increase that capacity, that's a big reason why we are really trying to incorporate, and we hear this from staff as well, training and education opportunities as a part of this strategy, because a lot of folks feel like they don't have the adequate training to do engagement in a meaningful way.

And so that, I mean, could be another great discussion point for today as well. As is there a way for us to partner with the communities and the Tribes and Alaska Native communities, Native Hawaiian communities, indigenous communities that we're working with to **maybe even co-develop some of those education and training opportunities to make sure that our staff are as helpful and they can be and is helpful for your communities.**

**Bureau participant 3.3.**

Well, thanks everyone. I think, I'm comfortable speaking on behalf of the group and saying that we are all so incredibly grateful for your volunteered time and input and energy that you gave us all today. I love the phrase being in community with all of us

even though it's virtual, and I'm sure we would all love to be in your communities physically at some point in the future.

And I think that's why we are so excited about this process. I think to address some of the feedback I heard and just this past session, our next steps are to take the feedback and input that we heard today and incorporate that into the development of our environmental justice strategies for each bureau and their action plans to implement those strategies. And there will be then future opportunities to provide feedback on the draft versions of that. So this is just the first step and we look forward then to future engagements with you. So we can continue to meet good people because there are a lot of good people at our bureaus. And hopefully these strategies will help implement that. So I would just say yes thank you all for your guidance, and we look forward to continuing this partnership moving forward.

And I welcome anyone else to provide closing thoughts.

**Bureau participant 3.4.**

Thank you. I really appreciate that and it reminded me of something I meant to mention is that we have tried this in another instance and in terms of promoting accountability that continuity that you mentioned the input graphic that we showed earlier to show how your input is going to be considered, it's a relatively new practice that we hope to institutionalize more to promote that kind of consistency, transparency, and accountability for how your input was addressed and how it was incorporated into our decision making and it also then promotes that continual feedback and communication loop.

So you will be hearing from us in terms of notes that we took today and then how those notes were then incorporated into the draft strategies that will come later so thank you for the reminder.

**Bureau participant 4.1.**

I can build on that a little, and just add on from kind of the BOEM perspective to, I think.

You know, one of the challenges is any office workforce, folks trying to get some stuff done, staying within lanes and environmental justice is kind of within the realm of environmental work, and we have an office of environmental programs and so,

folks within the environmental office maybe have more familiarity. But that office doesn't actually come into play necessarily until a certain point in planning and decision-making processes and so getting through past that lane within the bureau and trying to bring folks in from other offices whose responsibilities might be planning for leases and marine spatial planning overall. So, that's, we're working on it, I think, but it's I think gonna be a constant challenge.

**Bureau participant 5.1.**

Thank you, [xx]. I really appreciate that comment and it actually has me thinking, going back to the trainings question, folks learn in a variety of ways. Some folks are great visual learners and I think a tour would really kind of help grasp that. But I'm wanting to see what other kind of avenues or different types of trainings could we offer.

And you know, [xx], your point about folks may have a closed lens they may not necessarily know about stuff, so. I've heard folks say: "I don't understand terminology." That's all related, and **I'm wondering if we need to do like a general guide, maybe something on paper on terminology and maybe trainings that are video or in person and then tours with our staff and our senior leadership team to expose them and show them what environmental justice communities look like.** So, I don't know if folks have other thoughts, but I know this is a really important point for us as we kind of move forward is how we build our staff, how we give them the knowledge and education they need so that they can meaningfully engage with folks and also be good stewards in this space.

So, if anyone has any other thoughts, will definitely take that the tours and field trips and when we do training, maybe even trainings in certain areas. So, thank you.

**Bureau participant 5.2.**

Actually, had a question here that I wanted to follow up on. I know I saw post sticky where someone said to reach out via email. And I know [xx] kind of touched a little bit on this about how we can best share information with you all while being mindful that it's not too overwhelming or frequency and whatnot. So I did wanna ask like what ways do you all receive information that like you think is great? Are there any examples that you can share with us? We've brainstormed, you know, do we do a monthly newsletter? Do we do a quarterly newsletter? You know, do we send email updates? Are folks going to our website and our web pages? Are they taking a look at

the updates we post there? I'm curious, did you all register through your, the link that you got in your email or did you find it on our web page?

So these are really thoughtful questions where we want to make sure that we can get you the information that is needed but in the best medium, like what's the right medium, and I know there's so much out there. But I did want to I am just curious to know how you all best receive information and in what particular format, even frequency if, if you all have that, that would be like great to share as well.