

**2006 Nova Scotia Energy Research and Development Forum**  
**Evaluation Survey**

**Saint Francis Xavier University**  
**Antigonish, Nova Scotia**  
**May 24 and 25, 2006**

**Prepared by: Petroleum Research Atlantic Canada**

**On Behalf of: Nova Scotia department of Energy  
and the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency**

## **2006 Nova Scotia Energy Research and Development Forum** **Evaluation Survey**

### **Introduction:**

Petroleum Research Atlantic Canada conducted a survey of those participating in the 2006 Nova Scotia Energy Research and Development (R&D) Forum to determine their views on the program, whether or not it met their expectations, the quality of the sessions and areas where improvements might be made in future events of this type.

The objective of the Forum was to create opportunities for networking, collaboration and sharing technical information covering a range of technical areas related to the further development of Nova Scotia's energy sector. In particular it provided researchers involved in energy research and development, and those who could benefit from the results of that research, with a chance to exchange ideas and consider how research and development can help address the energy challenges Nova Scotia faces as well as realize the province's energy potential.

### **Methodology:**

Almost 200 people participated in the Energy R&D Forum held in Antigonish, Nova Scotia on May 24 and 25, 2006. Individuals who attended the Forum were sent an email asking them to evaluate the Forum by directing them to the online survey accessible on the 2006 Energy R&D Forum website. The questionnaire was specifically designed to evaluate individual workshops attended by the respondent, the knowledge gained about Nova Scotia's energy research and development activities and needs, where R&D gaps exist, whether there was balanced attendance across the sessions, how well the program was designed, if the venue was adequate, how they received information pertaining to this Forum, and preferences for the location of future Forums. The questions were in the form of statements with the following selectable responses: Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree or Strongly Disagree.

The questionnaire was created using Snap Survey Software, Version Eight. There were 192 Forum participants, of which, approximately 22 per cent (42) completed the online questionnaire. The questionnaire and results can be found in Appendix One, and comments in Appendix Two. In addition to reporting the results of each question, further analysis was carried out to determine whether or not negative responses to particular questions (disagree or disagree strongly) related to specific sessions or workshops, or types of participants (e.g. researchers, students, industry personnel, government). The results from the questionnaire and comments provided by respondents were used to focus on those areas where some dissatisfaction was indicated and to identify where improvements might be made in the future. A detailed statistical analysis was not conducted; however, obvious trends and conclusions were drawn from the results and are provided.

## **Results:**

**Question 1** – Respondents did not necessarily stay in one session throughout the Forum, but in some instances moved across sessions depending on the particular workshop, and in some cases between presentations across workshops. Nonetheless it is possible to get a clear sense of the relative interest in each of the broad session themes. On average, 28 per cent of the respondents attended the Marine Environment session, 43 per cent the session on Geoscience and 33 per cent the Sustainable Energy session. Numbers varied somewhat from workshop to workshop and day to day. There was reasonably good balance between the three sessions with an exceptional drop in attendance for the Environmental Effects Monitoring (EEM) Case Studies in the Marine Environment workshop on the second day with only 17 per cent in attendance.

**Questions 2.1 to 2.5** – Overall the 42 questionnaire respondents indicated that the information presented in the workshops was interesting, useful and well presented. In general the results suggested that the speakers were considered to be very knowledgeable and their presentations were clear and concise. However, there were always a few respondents who felt differently. Approximately 7 per cent who attended the Marine Environment and Geoscience sessions disagreed with that view (refer to Appendix One). This was especially true for the first workshop on day two; 13 per cent did not find the presentations were well presented, clear and concise.

The relevance of the workshops to Nova Scotia's energy sector and developments in this industry were sometimes vague for the respondents. Approximately 10 per cent of respondents found they could not see the significance of at least some presentations to Nova Scotia's energy sector.

At the end of each workshop, time was allotted for questions to be directed to the presenters and for discussion. There were a significant number of people who felt the question period was not adequate. There were approximately 20 per cent of respondents that found the time allotted was insufficient. Comments indicated the time was too short and presentations often ran over the allotted time.

**Question 3** – The two plenary sessions held on day one also did not have enough question and discussion time reflected by the 23 per cent who disagreed and five per cent who strongly disagreed that there was an adequate amount of time. Twelve per cent disagreed that the material was well presented with appropriate visuals.

**Question 4** – Overall, just seven per cent found the Forum did not increase their knowledge of Nova Scotia's energy research and development.

**Question 5** – Nine per cent of the respondents disagreed with the statement: energy research gaps were identified at the Forum.

**Question 6** – The Forum was intended to bring a variety of people from all energy sectors together to allow for networking, collaboration and sharing of information. The people that responded to the questionnaire were made up of a fairly even mix of all sectors. However a significant disagreed that a good balance was present among academia, industry, government and other stake holders in the province’s energy future. The 14 per cent who disagreed and the comments reflected more active industry involvement (especially in exploration and production) is needed at these forums.

**Question 7** – 89 per cent thought the program was well designed.

**Question 8** – Most of the respondents thought the venue quality was satisfactory; however, 7 per cent found the accommodations to be poor and 2 per cent found the food and reception unsatisfactory. A significant number felt that the food, social events and accommodations deserved only an “ok” rating (22 per cent, 20 per cent and 32 per cent respectively).

**Question 9** – There was a 95 per cent response indicating they would be interested in attending future forums similar to this one.

**Question 10** – Forty-two percent of the respondents would prefer the next forum be held in the Halifax/Dartmouth area; 26 per cent chose Cape Breton. There was only a 16 per cent response to holding the forum in Antigonish, nine per cent in the Annapolis Valley area and seven per cent in Southwestern Nova Scotia.

**Questions 11 & 12** – Publicizing the 2006 Energy Forum was done through the Nova Scotia’s Energy Research and Development website, the Nova Scotia Department of Energy website, posters displayed at various universities, the Petroleum Research Atlantic Canada website and newsletter, oil and gas announcements, regular press releases to media outlets, postcards and email invitation. Information on the event was sent out to major member associations (Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers (CAPP), Canadian-Nova Scotia Offshore Petroleum Board (CNSOPB), Offshore Technology Association of Nova Scotia (OTANS), National Ocean Industries Association (NOIA)), focus groups, relevant federal departments, departments of relevance to NS, NB, PEI, NL and other provinces, service companies, industry contacts, educational institutes, consultants and researchers, chiefs, fishers and their associate unions, and other stake holders. Thirty-eight per cent of the respondents heard about the event by email; 62 per cent indicated that this was the preferred method. There were also a significant number of people that heard about the Forum by word-of-mouth (33 per cent) but most preferred not to hear about it that way.

**Question 13** – Results from question 13 showed most of the respondents were from industry and government. There were 31 per cent of the respondents from various sectors of industry, 37 per cent from government, 16 per cent from academia and 14 per cent were students. The results also indicate there was no representative opinion from a college, and only two per cent of the respondents represented non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

**Question 14** – 67 per cent of the respondents indicated they were actively engaged in research relevant to the energy sector.

**Question 15** – Additional comments are listed in Appendix two.

### **Discussion:**

The 2006 Energy Forum had very obvious strengths and weaknesses in its design and overall success. The Forum had an excellent array of industry experts and researchers presenting current and relevant information on new developments, findings and advancements relevant to Nova Scotia's energy sector. The workshop itinerary was very well designed and the presentations were for the most part given clearly and concisely.

There are a number of areas that need to be addressed when developing the next energy forum. The time allotted for questions and discussion was too short or non-existent in some instances. Therefore there should be an increase in the time available during each session for questions and discussion, and time allotments for presentations strictly adhered to. There should also be adequate discussion and question time allotted for the plenary sessions as well. The question and discussion periods should include a moderator and microphones placed through out the audience. One comment also suggested that small session-related discussion groups should be held at the end of each day to encourage smaller more focused group discussions. Another comment suggested the questions and discussion comments should be recorded and transcribed and made available on the website, along with notes from the workshop note-takers.

Overall the presentations were very well done as the results indicate; however, there was some concern that some of the presentations in the Geoscience and Marine Environment sessions were difficult to understand if you were not actively involved in those fields. This suggests that speaker guidelines should be developed to aid in the preparation and delivery of presentations to help ensure they are at the appropriate technical level for the expected audience with visuals that convey information clearly and simply.

A number of respondents commented on the use of the Forum website to provide copies of presentations and capture the essence of discussions during and at the end of each workshop. While most speakers provided copies of their presentations, a number did not citing the confidentiality of some of the content. Copies of presentations should be provided to the organizers at the time of the workshops, and ideally before to allow preloading and retention for the purpose of posting them on the website. If speakers are including confidential information, the guidelines should clearly indicate that copies excluding confidential information should be provided for the website.

The Saint Francis Xavier campus and the Millennium Center were excellent facilities to hold this type of event, and aided significantly in its success. However, the majority of

participants would like to see the next forum held in Halifax/Dartmouth. There are adequate accommodations and facilities available in Halifax/Dartmouth and it is a very central location for the entire province and for presenters flying in from various locations. A relevant comment suggested that industry would participate more in the forum if it were held in conjunction with or after the OTANS Canadian Offshore Resources Exhibition (CORE) Conference. The industry members would already be in one location and industry experts would most likely be present. It was also commented that for those industry people attending the forum in Antigonish, the seclusion of the town helps to keep them at the forum for a longer period of time.

### **Conclusion:**

The 2006 Energy R&D Forum was successful drawing almost 200 participants to the two-day event. There was a reasonably good mix of participants from the various stakeholder groups if the mix of respondents to the evaluation survey is indicative of the overall attendance. The three sessions - Marine Environment, Geoscience, and Sustainable Energy - had excellent presenters viewed as knowledgeable in their fields. The vast majority of respondents felt that the program was well designed, contributed to their knowledge of energy R&D in Nova Scotia and helped to identify gaps where further research activities might be directed. The vast majority (95 per cent) would attend another forum of this nature, a further indication that most considered the forum useful and well planned. Therefore the broad objectives for the Forum were accomplished.

It was clear that many felt that the next forum should include more question and discussion time following the presentations and plenary sessions with a focus on the impact to Nova Scotia. The majority also indicated that the next forum should be held in Halifax/Dartmouth because of its central location with appropriate facilities and accommodations.

## Appendix 1: 2006 Energy R&D Forum – Evaluation Survey Questions and Results

### 2006 Energy R&D Forum - Evaluation Survey

The Nova Scotia Department of Energy would like to again thank you for your participation in its Energy Research and Development Forum 2006. In order to better assess the Forum and to assist in planning future events of this nature, we would ask you to complete the following online Evaluation Survey.

The survey will only take a few minutes. Please check the appropriate box(es) for each question.

**Q1** The Forum consisted of three sessions with three workshops on Day 1 and two workshops on Day 2. Please indicate the workshops that you attended during each time slot.

	<i>Marine Environment</i>	<i>Geoscience</i>	<i>Sustainable Energy</i>
<i>Day 1 9:00 - 10:45</i> <i>Seismic</i>	32%	37%	32%
<i>11:15 - 12:30</i> <i>Baseline</i> <i>Knowledge</i>	27%	46%	27%
<i>1:45 - 3:00</i> <i>Regulatory</i> <i>Policy</i>	30%	43%	28%
<i>Day 2 9:00 - 10:45</i> <i>Waste</i>	21%	42%	37%
<i>11:15 - 12:30</i> <i>EEM Case</i> <i>Studies</i>	17%	46%	37%

**Q2.1** For each of the workshop sessions that you checked in question 1, please answer the following questions by checking the boxes that best describe your opinions of the session.

**a) Workshop 1 - Day 1 (Seismic, Shelf Systems or Clean Coal Technologies)**

	<i>Strongly Agree</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Strongly Disagree</i>
<i>i) The information presented was interesting and useful</i>	46%	54%	0%	0%
<i>ii) It helped me gain a better understanding of current research and its significance to Nova Scotia</i>	26%	67%	8%	0%
<i>iii) The workshop provided adequate opportunity for discussion</i>	15%	62%	21%	3%
<i>iv) The material was well presented, clear and concise</i>	28%	67%	5%	0%
<i>v) The speakers were knowledgeable in their subject</i>	41%	59%	0%	0%

<b>Q2.2</b>	<b>b) Workshop 2 - Day 1 (Baseline Knowledge, Resources Potential or Energy Sustainability)</b>				
		<i>Strongly Agree</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Strongly Disagree</i>
	<i>i) The information presented was interesting and useful</i>	36%	61%	3%	0%
	<i>ii) It helped me gain a better understanding of current research and its significance to Nova Scotia</i>	19%	69%	11%	0%
	<i>iii) The workshop provided adequate opportunity for discussion</i>	19%	56%	22%	3%
	<i>iv) The material was well presented, clear and concise</i>	19%	75%	6%	0%
	<i>v) The speakers were knowledgeable in their subject</i>	28%	72%	0%	0%
<b>Q2.3</b>	<b>c) Workshop 3 - Day 1 (Energy Regulatory Policy Research, Reservoir Distribution, or CO2 Storage)</b>				
		<i>Strongly Agree</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Strongly Disagree</i>
	<i>i) The information presented was interesting and useful</i>	31%	66%	0%	3%
	<i>ii) It helped me gain a better understanding of current research and its significance to Nova Scotia</i>	17%	69%	11%	3%
	<i>iii) The workshop provided adequate opportunity for discussion</i>	17%	66%	17%	0%
	<i>iv) The material was well presented, clear and concise</i>	20%	74%	3%	3%
	<i>v) The speakers were knowledgeable in their subject</i>	29%	71%	0%	0%
<b>Q2.4</b>	<b>d) Workshop 1 - Day 2 (Waste, Slope Systems, or Renewable Energy Resources)</b>				
		<i>Strongly Agree</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Strongly Disagree</i>
	<i>i) The information presented was interesting and useful</i>	42%	58%	0%	0%
	<i>ii) It helped me gain a better understanding of current research and its significance to Nova Scotia</i>	29%	65%	6%	0%
	<i>iii) The workshop provided adequate opportunity for discussion</i>	16%	68%	16%	0%
	<i>iv) The material was well presented, clear and concise</i>	35%	52%	13%	0%
	<i>v) The speakers were knowledgeable in their subject</i>	44%	56%	0%	0%
<b>Q2.5</b>	<b>e) Workshop 2 - Day 2 (EEM, Policy Research and Data, or Renewable Energy Technology)</b>				
		<i>Strongly Agree</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Strongly Disagree</i>
	<i>i) The information presented was interesting and useful</i>	39%	61%	0%	0%
	<i>ii) It helped me gain a better understanding of current research and its significance to Nova Scotia</i>	18%	70%	12%	0%
	<i>iii) The workshop provided adequate opportunity for discussion</i>	18%	67%	15%	0%
	<i>iv) The material was well presented, clear and concise</i>	36%	58%	6%	0%
	<i>v) The speakers were knowledgeable in their subject</i>	36%	64%	0%	0%



**Q3 The Energy Forum program included two plenary sessions (Michael Raymont - Canada: The Next Energy Superpower, and Sara Jane Snook - Commercializing Discoveries). Please answer the following questions that best describe your opinion of the sessions.**

	<i>Strongly Agree</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Strongly Disagree</i>
a) <i>The subject matter was relevant and useful</i>	33%	57%	7%	2%
b) <i>The material was well presented with appropriate visuals</i>	32%	56%	12%	0%
c) <i>There was adequate opportunity for questions and discussion</i>	20%	53%	23%	5%

**Q4 The Forum increased my knowledge about Nova Scotia energy research and development.**

<i>Strongly Agree</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Strongly Disagree</i>
18%	76%	7%	0%

**Q5 I believe some of the gaps in current energy research were identified.**

<i>Strongly Agree</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Strongly Disagree</i>
13%	78%	9%	0%

**Q6 Participants in this event represented a good balance from all sectors with a stake in the province's energy future.**

<i>Strongly Agree</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Strongly Disagree</i>
16%	66%	14%	5%

**Q7 The program was well-designed.**

<i>Strongly Agree</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Strongly Disagree</i>
24%	64%	11%	0%

**Q8 In terms of the venue quality, how would you rate the following?**

	<i>Very Good</i>	<i>Good</i>	<i>Ok</i>	<i>Poor</i>	<i>Very Poor</i>
<i>Sound Quality</i>	40%	51%	9%	0%	0%
<i>Food</i>	31%	44%	22%	2%	0%
<i>Social Events (ie. reception)</i>	29%	49%	20%	2%	0%
<i>Accommodations</i>	22%	39%	32%	7%	0%
<i>Meeting Facilities</i>	41%	50%	9%	0%	0%

**Q9 I am interested in attending future Forums similar to this one.**

Yes 95% No 5%

**Q10 Where do you think the next forum should be held?**

<i>Antigonish</i> .....	16%
<i>Halifax/ Dartmouth region</i> .....	42%
<i>Valley area</i> .....	9%
<i>Cape Breton Island</i> .....	26%
<i>Central Nova Scotia</i> .....	0%
<i>Southwestern Nova Scotia</i> .....	7%

**Q11 How did you hear about the Forum? Choose One.**

<i>Web site</i> .....	13%
<i>E-mail</i> .....	38%
<i>Mail</i> .....	12%
<i>Word-of-mouth</i> .....	33%
<i>Postcard</i> .....	4%
<i>Other, please specify</i>	0%

**Q12 How would you like to receive information about the Forum in the future? Choose one.**

<i>Web site</i> .....	20%
<i>E-mail</i> .....	62%
<i>Mail</i> .....	14%
<i>Word-of-mouth</i> .....	3%
<i>Postcard</i> .....	2%
<i>Other, please specify</i>	0%

**Q13 Which sector are you from?**

<i>Academic: University</i> .....	16%
<i>College</i> .....	0%
<i>Student: Graduate</i> .....	9%
<i>Undergraduate</i> .....	5%
<i>Industry: Exploration and Production</i> .....	7%
<i>Supply and Service</i> .....	5%
<i>Consulting</i> .....	7%
<i>Other</i> .....	12%
<i>Other: Government</i> .....	37%
<i>NGO</i> .....	2%
<i>Other, please specify</i>	0%

**Q14 Are you actively engaged in research relevant to the energy sector?**  
Yes 67% No 33%

**Q15 Additional comments**  
0%

**Thank you for participating in this survey.  
Your input is appreciated as it will help to improve future forums.**

## Appendix 2: 2006 Energy R&D Forum Survey Results – Comments

Impressed by the rank of some industry and government participants - who stayed for the entire event. Could this be at risk if the event is held in Halifax/Dartmouth?

THE NEXT FORUM SHOULD BE HELD IN HALIFAX IN CONJUNCTION WITH OTANS' CORE conference- Perhaps on the Monday - Tuesday preceding the CORE Conference. The date - May/June/Sept/Oct could be negotiated with OTANS.

The renewable energy talks did not provide an idea of current research areas in Nova Scotia, hence this survey will reflect this in all sections dealing with R&D.

1. More industry people to be invited 2. More time to be allowed for discussion, brainstorming sessions 3. More reps from the federal government energy, industry, and environmental sectors to be invited 4. Lunch talks should be less "official" and rather more related to the subject of the conference

I believe that there was a missed opportunity to learn more about the outcomes and insights developed from the other two concurrent sessions that I could not attend. I suggest that for future events, the delegated session chairs keep notes of the discussions and comments emanating from their sessions. At the conference conclusion, these chairs should give a 10 minute presentation reporting these insights and comments to all delegates. This would certainly enlighten fellow delegates - who could not attend the other sessions - an executive summary of the delegate interactions in the respective sessions that in turn could illuminate related issues and synergies and encourage discussions and questions at the wrap-up. I also suggest that a number of free-floating microphones be circulated amongst the delegates at the wrap-up to encourage questions and discussion. This should all be recorded, transcribed and made available on the website.

A Forum every two years is appropriate. - Great initiative on NS' part to elaborate on Energy R & D Strategy appropriate for the province.

There should be more time allotted for discussion or Q&A in each session. Some sessions I attended did not allow for appropriate time for Q&A and either had to be cut short. It was a good idea to have various people act as moderators throughout the event.

Great organization! Well done.

There is a mistake on this survey - you only list two workshops for the second day - I attended the third workshop (It was well done).

Very good effort and venue. Require more active industry (at least E&P) participants. I was embarrassed by our industry's participation as well as disappointed that the Forum was not more effectively advertised/promoted to our industry.

1. The concluding session should include synopsis of each workshop for both days 2. A CD with all abstracts should be included. 3. Selected papers should be published in a special volume of the symposium other everything is getting lost.

I could not fill out all of the questions because I truthfully don't remember very well. I think in general, there should be a few extra minutes for discussion between speakers in each workshop for discussion. There was often not enough time for discussion in these sessions. Also, I suggest having similar discussions to the open floor discussion at the end of the forum at the end of each day, and perhaps within each focus session (marine, geoscience, sustainable energy) so that more discussion is created due to a smaller group, and so that the discussion can be more specific to that certain topic without people feeling they are going to bring up to specific of a point.

Good sessions but unfortunately I could only take in a few sessions.

I think the forum was very good as I have reflected in my answers, however, having workshop facilitators who are actively engaged or passionate about the subject does not allow for a schedule to be followed properly. As well presentations should be pre-loaded and ready to go to avoid technical difficulties.