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Tammaqtainahuarniriit anngutighat atuqhugit Inuit qaujimajatuqangillu ilihimanillu ilitquhiannin  
Conserving wildlife through the application of Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit and scientific knowledge

December 10<sup>th</sup>, 2014

Honourable Johnny Mike  
Minister of Environment  
Government of Nunavut

Dear Minister Mike:

**Re: Government of Nunavut – Department of Environment *Proposal for Decision*  
regarding Baffin Island Caribou Harvest Management**

**Government of Nunavut *Proposal for NWMB Decision***

During the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board's (NWMB or Board) Regular meeting on December 3<sup>rd</sup> 2014 (RM 004-2014), the Government of Nunavut – Department of Environment (DOE) presented to the Board a *Proposal for Decision* (Proposal) regarding Baffin Island caribou harvest management. The Proposal included general options to reduce harvests to sustainable levels, as well as three examples of specific management actions for consideration. These options and examples were based upon:

- ❖ the extremely low numbers of caribou observed during the aerial survey conducted in the spring of 2014;
- ❖ community consultations conducted in December 2013 and January 2014, which supported the findings of the aerial survey; and
- ❖ the results of the Baffin Island caribou workshop held in November 2014, where participants agreed that management action is urgently needed.

During its presentation, DOE emphasized, and the NWMB agrees, that appropriate management actions need to be enacted as soon as possible in order to reduce the risk of extirpation of caribou from some - potentially even all - parts of Baffin Island.

## NWMB Resolutions

After considering the issue during its In-Camera decision meeting (IC 011-2014) on December 4<sup>th</sup>, the NWMB passed the following two resolutions:

*RESOLVED that the NWMB hold an in-person public hearing, as per Section 5.2.26 of the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement, concerning the Government of Nunavut – Department of Environment’s Proposal for Decision regarding Baffin Island caribou harvest management.*

*FURTHER RESOLVED that - considering the urgent and unusual circumstances, as well as the necessary time required to conduct an NWMB in-person public hearing - the NWMB invite the Government of Nunavut Minister of Environment to consider making and implementing a reasonable interim decision regarding Baffin Island caribou harvest management, as authorized by Section 5.3.24 of the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement.*

The NWMB has already taken initial steps to commence its public hearing process. However, in order to ensure that the hearing proceeds in a fair manner, the Board must provide those who will be affected by the NWMB's eventual decision(s) with reasonable notice, disclosure and opportunity to respond. All of those steps will necessarily take time to carry out. Accordingly, the Board passed the second resolution set out above, to help ensure appropriate protection of Baffin Island caribou throughout the period preceding co-jurisdictional decision-making by the NWMB and the Minister pursuant to Article 5 of the *Nunavut Land Claims Agreement* (NLCA).

<b>NWMB support for a reasonable interim decision by the Minister</b>
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Under NLCA Section 5.3.24, the Minister is authorized to make and implement any reasonable interim decision when urgent and unusual circumstances require an immediate modification in harvesting activities. Given the already extremely low numbers of caribou on Baffin Island, and the fact that the approaching winter harvest season will put added pressure on the herds, the Board is of the view that the conditions required to trigger ministerial action pursuant to NLCA Section 5.3.24 are firmly in place. Accordingly, the NWMB is in support of the timely exercise by you of your NLCA Section 5.3.24 authority.

That NLCA section also requires a full NWMB review as soon as practicable thereafter. Please be assured that the Board will include its review within the upcoming NWMB in-person public hearing and subsequent NLCA Article 5 decision-making process.

The NWMB looks forward to promptly receiving your reply to this correspondence. If, in the meantime, you or your officials require further information or clarification, please do not hesitate to contact the NWMB at your convenience.

Yours sincerely,



Ben Kovic  
Chairperson of the  
Nunavut Wildlife Management Board

c.c. Cathy Towtongie, President, Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated  
Paul Irrngaut, Director of Wildlife and Environment, Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated  
Drikus Gissing, Director of Wildlife Management, Government of Nunavut – Department of Environment