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**Kitikmeot** ックヘットレー Kitikmeot

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> Gjoa Haven Dsbysb Uqhuqtuuq

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Taloyoak C\_5くくち Taloyoak October 29, 2015

Mr. Ben Kovic, Chairperson of the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board

## Re: Kitikmeot Regional Wildlife Board's Response on the Nunavut Polar Bear Co-Management Plan

Thank you for allowing us the time to provide a written submission on the Government of Nunavut's Polar Bear Management Plan. Since the June 2015 request for input from the HTO's and RWOs in the Kitikmeot, there has not been a lot of concerns risen. This however does not reflect the KRWB's views on the new (draft) management system.

To-date, we still point out a number of concerns that is written below. We'd like to acknowledge our appreciation in that the Government of Nunavut has included us RWO's in the development of this new management plan.

A tour was conducted in late 2013 and early 2014 with the communities in Kitikmeot. At these community tours, hunters often showed their frustrations with having to adhere to the management system that does not reflect the values of hunting polar bears (traditionally). It has been brought to attention numerous times that polar bear population has increased dramatically over decades. It has also been brought to attention that sex-selective harvesting is cumbersome to amend.

Here is a brief outline of the Spence Bay Hunters & Trappers Associations Submission (5 point)

- 1) Amalgamate the subpopulations Gulf of Boothia and M'Clintock Channel quota tags as the bears migrate from one side to the other;
- 2) Polar Bears killed in defense situations or nuisance, should be handled by Wildlife Officers entirely from giving away meat to cleaning and drying of the hides. This should not be taken off the community quota as hunters were not originally out on the sea ice looking for them.
- 3) Sex-selective harvesting be removed. If too many males are taken from the population, reproduction may take longer; example, if there are 25 tags, 13 of them should be assigned to males and 12 for females,
- 4) The Government of Nunavut should honour the co-management of polar bears in the Territory as Inuit have for decades.

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Taloyoak CJSZOS Taloyoak 5) Public hearing and/or Regional workshop on the Nunavut Polar Bear Comanagement Plan prior to finalizing of the draft plan.

GN has identified in their last tour that the Gulf of Boothia is in a very healthy state, this proves we have managed well as Inuit. Department of Environment has also asked whether we want to keep it at a sustainable rate. We would like to keep it in a population number that will keep it away from SARA listing with the Federal Government in both sub-population and population as a whole.

As far as IQ goes, we'd like to incorporate it in research with biologists as Inuit are well known experts with polar bear habitat and population abundance. Inuit have been requesting this since wildlife management came in to force. Framework has to be done to develop co-management and should come from Inuit beforehand.

HTO membership has also been raising concerns over the increase in population of polar bears all across Nunavut; it is understandable that the world is watching and scrutinizing GN's annual harvest allocations but it is difficult to be heard as Inuit when we say there are too many bears. Inuit need to be heard in these regards as they live in the North and see what is out there.

KRWB supports GN in the development of a new management plan for polar bears. In this regard, the intention of Inuit is only to continue managing of polar bears in the Territory so our children and grandchildren will continue to hunt them; it is one of Inuit's source of diet.

As in any management plan, especially for the polar bears, it is expected that difficulties will be encountered for both the hunters and developers. We urge that the new current draft plan be flexible to HTO's and RWO's for discussions (living-breathing document). It is within interest of the KRWB that this management plan reflects true values of Inuit hunters and that it has significant cultural values and importance.

We would like to stress that GN should use both IQ and science when surveys are being done. KRWB feels if IQ and science works together, it will create a positive change in the way research is conducted; this would enable Western Science to look at populations and sub-populations globally rather than in separated boxes.

And in conclusion, we would like to take this opportunity to thank the Government of Nunavut for allowing us again to input our concerns as an RWO's. We continue to expect GN to work with HTO's and RWO's for generations to come.



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Taloyoak C\_540% Taloyoak We anticipate further working together to build a strong and viable management plan. This will be the main structure both economically and culturally for Inuit for future generations. This plan should also represent the cultural and traditional values of Inuit when it comes to polar bear management in the Territory.

Yours truly,

Simon Qingnaqtuq Chairperson