

Minister of
Fisheries and Oceans



Ministre des
Pêches et des Océans

AUG 18 2014

Ottawa, Canada K1A 0E6

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Mr. Ben Kovic
Chairperson
Nunavut Wildlife Management Board
P.O. Box 1379
Iqaluit, NU
X0A 0H0

Dear Mr. Kovic,

Thank you for your letter dated July 10, 2014 conveying the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board's decision to increase the Total Allowable Harvest to 4 bowhead whales per year from the Eastern Canada – West Greenland (EC-WG) bowhead whale population within the Nunavut Settlement Area.

Pursuant to the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement, I accept the decision of the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board to establish a Total Allowable Harvest of four bowhead whales per year within the Nunavut Settlement Area.

As you point out, bowhead whales are harvested by Inuit in Nunavut, Nunavik and West Greenland. I commend the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board for seeking input to inform its decision, from the co-management partners and stakeholders in both Nunavut and Nunavik.

With regard to the issue of wastage, which is a collective concern, DFO officials will engage with co-management partners, Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated and Makivik Corporation, to identify appropriate measures to reduce wastage in the Integrated Fisheries Management Plan that is currently being drafted for bowhead whales.

In 2013, DFO conducted aerial photographic surveys of arctic cetaceans. A revised abundance estimate for EC-WG bowhead whales is anticipated in 2015, after scientific peer review and approval. At that time, DFO will reassess the scientific advice regarding the Total Allowable Harvest recommended for EC-WG bowhead whales.

Thank you for writing, and I look forward to our continued collaboration in this important matter and please extend my best wishes for safe and successful bowhead hunts in 2014 to all the communities hosting a hunt.

Yours sincerely,

Gail Shea, P.C., M.P.

Canada

