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ፈተናዎች ለግር ልሳኔ ፍጠራ,

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July 4<sup>th</sup> 2014

The Honourable Gail Shea  
 Minister of Fisheries and Oceans  
 15<sup>th</sup> Floor, Centennial Towers  
 200 Kent Street  
 Ottawa, Ontario  
 K1A 0E6

Dear Minister Shea:

**Re: Nunavut Wildlife Management Board decision to increase the total allowable harvest of bowhead whales for the Qikiqtaaluk Region**

On February 5<sup>th</sup> 2014, the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board (NWMB or Board) received a request from the Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board to increase the total allowable harvest of bowhead whales for the Qikiqtaaluk Region to two (2) whales. This request for decision was considered by the NWMB at its Internal In-Camera Meeting (INT003-2014) on February 24<sup>th</sup> 2014 in Iqaluit, where the Board made the following decision:

*RESOLVED that the Board will hold a written hearing regarding the request from Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board to increase the total allowable harvest of bowhead whale.*

The Board felt that, since Inuit in Nunavut and Nunavik harvest bowhead whales from the same population and requests to change the harvest levels had been made in both regions, a written hearing would allow co-management partners and stakeholders from both Nunavut and Nunavik to provide input. The Board also felt that this would facilitate the NWMB's consideration of the overall harvest from the population. The NWMB received two submissions, from the Mayukalik (Kimmirut) Hunters and Trappers Association and the Ikajutit (Arctic Bay) Hunters and Trappers Association, by the April 23<sup>rd</sup> 2014 deadline. Both submissions expressed support for the proposed increase to the total allowable harvest. The full submissions and written hearing background documents are available on the NWMB's website ([www.nwmb.com](http://www.nwmb.com)).

The Board again considered the Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board's request at its In-Camera Meeting (IC008-2014) on June 15<sup>th</sup> 2014 in Cambridge Bay, and made the following decision:

*RESOLVED that, pursuant to Section 5.6.16 of the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement, the NWMB modify the regional level of total allowable harvest of bowhead whales in the Qikiqtaaluk Region from 1 whale to 2 whales.*

As the most recent scientific information from Fisheries and Oceans Canada suggests a sustainable removal of 18 whales, and given that the total annual harvest from the population in recent years did not exceed 6 whales, the NWMB is confident that the addition of one whale to Nunavut's total allowable harvest does not raise a conservation concern. An additional whale for the Qikiqtaaluk Region will also help the Hunters and Trappers Organizations in this region to develop and diversify their experience and organizational capacity with respect to bowhead harvesting.

In coming to this decision, the Board also identified the importance of ensuring a safe and efficient hunt. Although these issues do not fall solely under the jurisdiction of NWMB, the Board recommends that issues such as hunt safety, cost management, and efficient butchering methods to reduce wastage, be incorporated into the forthcoming Integrated Fishery Management Plan for the Eastern Canada-West Greenland Population of Bowhead Whales.

Should you have any questions or concerns regarding the Board's decision, please do not hesitate to contact the NWMB.

Yours Sincerely,



Ben Kovic  
Chairperson of the  
Nunavut Wildlife Management Board

Minister of  
Fisheries and Oceans



Ministre des  
Pêches et des Océans

AUG 18 2014

Ottawa, Canada K1A 0E6

*fed Aug 29/14 TS*

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