

NUNAVUT WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT BOARD

HIGHLIGHTS OF MEETING #24

23 - 25 NOVEMBER 1999

SANIKILUAQ, NU

1. This was the twenty-fourth regular meeting of the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board, and the first meeting of the Board conducted in the community of Sanikiluaq.



2. The Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) advised the Board that support is being provided to coastal communities to pursue coastal planning, with the ultimate goal of developing coastal management plans. Currently, work is being conducted in Hudson Bay off the Manitoba Coast, and near Clyde River off the coast of Baffin Island. In Hudson Bay, students are compiling information on human uses of the area; another study is to look at who is responsible for dealing with such things as oil spills in the area. In Clyde River work is being conducted in conjunction with the unique bowhead whale habitat at Isabella Bay. The focus of this latter project is to help develop economic possibilities (tourism) based on this coastal resource.

3. DFO officials advised that they are awaiting the final tabulations on the past summer's hunt of beluga whales in the southeast Baffin region. Quotas were removed in 1999 for the communities of Iqaluit and Kimmirut, and a report will be prepared for the Southeast Baffin Beluga Management Committee. The Committee will meet in February 2000, and will need to consider whether to alter the rules for beluga hunting in this region.



4. DFO provided an update on the narwhal non-quota management system. Revised harvest information was provided to the Board, this information along with a summary of the past summer's hunts in the communities of Repulse Bay, Pond Inlet, Arctic Bay and Broughton Island will be provided to the Narwhal Working Group meeting in Iqaluit in December. The communities of Hall Beach, Igloodlik, Pelly Bay and Pangnirtung have also expressed an interest to the NWMB in implementing the new management system. While the NWMB approved Pelly Bay for future participation at its last meeting in August, the other communities are still in the process of developing the necessary narwhal hunting rules.

5. The Board was advised by DFO that a discussion paper on Nunavut Fisheries Regulations is expected in early 2000. Marine Mammal Regulations are being worked on at a national and regional level and a draft of those regulations is also expected sometime early in the new year, with appropriate northern consultation to follow.



6. The Board heard a report on the Walrus Working Group meeting conducted in Iqaluit on September 21-23. Representatives from various communities, DFO and NWMB worked hard to develop a "Task List" to assist in the eventual development of a Walrus

Management Plan. The next meeting of the group is scheduled for April 2000.

7. The Board approved a request from four shrimp-fishing companies to fish in the waters of the Nunavut Settlement Area (NSA) (that is, within 12 miles of shore) in respect to the exploratory shrimp fishing allocations granted to them earlier this year by the NWMB for Shrimp Fishing Area 2 north of 63°N. This particular approval to access the NSA excludes the waters of Cumberland Sound.
8. The Board heard a report from the Department of Sustainable Development (DSD) on development of a draft discussion paper on "Compensation for Research-Related Polar Bear Kills." Canadian Wildlife Service (CWS) has called for broadening the policy to include all defence kills. DSD noted that they are interested in establishing an inter-agency polar bear fund to compensate for defence kills. At the same time a policy has to be developed to cover how much compensation will be paid in each circumstance and linking the policy to the current MOUs.
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9. DSD provided an update on their plans to develop a new "Nunavut" Bear Safety Program. Although there was a system in place with the old GNWT now Nunavut is developing its own program. The Department recently tested electric fences, which have worked well with grizzly bears. If they prove to also work on polar bears they may be adopted for use in Nunavut.
10. The Board learned that there is funding available through the Canadian Adaptation and Rural Development Program for development of inter-settlement trade in Nunavut. DSD advised there needs to be an organization or committee to deal with this program. The Board agreed to support establishment of a committee as a basis for accessing this funding source, in order to help develop inter-settlement trade in Nunavut.
11. The Board heard an update from DSD on development of a new Nunavut Wildlife Act. A legislative proposal was recently submitted to Cabinet and the Department is waiting for the response. Work has also begun on a consultation plan. The Department promised to do a press release when Cabinet approval is received, providing an update to the public on progress to-date.
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12. The Board received the draft Bluenose Caribou Management Plan for review. New survey information suggests that the herd may be made up of three smaller herds, rather than one herd as originally estimated. This would change the consultation process in developing management plans.
13. The Board received updates from DSD on several other projects:
 - Polar Bear Handling Effects Study - formal comments were submitted to the consultant. DSD will provide the NWMB with a summary of the consultant's report.
 - Thelon Management Plan is still on hold as the department has had difficulty getting the parties together to finalize the plan.
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14. The Board heard an update on the NWMB Harvest Study. Members were advised that Jordan DeGroot was hired to replace Johnny McPherson who moved to Nova Scotia. The study is progressing well and staff will soon be planning for the eventual development of a final report.
15. The Board learned that reviews were received on the Inuit Bowhead Knowledge Study (IBKS) and the Coordinator is currently incorporating these recommendations and completing the Conclusion for the study. Translations are to follow, and the IBKS Committee members will review the completed translations. A request for proposals to publish the reports will be advertised shortly.

16. The Board was advised that the Regional Wildlife Organizations (RWOs) and Government had named their appointees to the Hunting Guides Working Group. A conference call is planned for early December to discuss the terms of reference and workplan. The purpose of the Working Group will be to provide the NWMB with recommendations on, among other matters, the establishment of qualifications for big-game hunting guides.



17. The Board was advised that at the annual DIAND Contaminants Results Reporting Workshop held in White Rock, B.C., Nunavut delegates discussed the establishment of a Nunavut Environmental Contaminants Committee (NECC). Most parties (ITC, NTI, Regional Inuit Organizations and Government) showed some interest in participating in such a committee. The NWMB decided to endorse the current initiative to establish an NECC but to participate as an observer only at this time.
18. The Board adopted the wildlife research priorities established by the Wildlife Research Priorities Workshop held in Iqaluit on October 19-21. This priority list will be used in allocating Nunavut Wildlife Research Trust funding for the next two years.
19. The Board heard an update on the World Wildlife Fund's (WWF's) Bowhead Conservation Plan. The NWMB is assisting WWF by translating a document to be the basis of a workshop to be conducted in Iqaluit December 16-17th.



20. The Board received a request from the WWF for funding assistance to cover extra costs for the workshop to review the Bowhead Conservation Plan to be conducted in Iqaluit on December 16-17. The Board approved in principle to contribute up to \$4,500 to the workshop to cover RWO representation.
21. The Board learned that the Minister of Sustainable Development had disallowed the NWMB decision to allow an Inuk hunter to harvest a polar bear by traditional methods. The Board decided that a formal process of meeting with the Ministers prior to finally deciding these types of issues must be established for the future.
22. Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated (NTI) advised that there are management concerns with the harp seal population. Hunters have reported changes in the harp seal population in many locations. Based on these observations, there is concern over what effects the harp seals may have on marine mammals and fish stocks. NTI called on the Board to investigate this concern with the communities and DFO.



23. NTI advised that communities require resources to be full partners in the process of revisiting the polar bear MOUs. It was recommended that the parties get together to work out a process, as some discussion has to be held with regards to roles, funding, issues, and schedules.
24. Funding for RWOs and HTOs was discussed with NTI. NTI called on the NWMB to draft financial guidelines for these organizations to assist in establishing accountability. Currently procedures are not standardized between the regions and NTI feels this causes difficulties in budgeting funds.
25. The Board was advised of a request from both the Hamlet of Coral Harbour and the Aiviit HTA in Coral Harbour requesting support for development of a laboratory facility to test for trichinella in walrus meat. The Board noted that this is fundamentally a public health issue, but agreed to support the initiative in principle.



26. The Board heard a request from the Pelly Bay HTA regarding provision to hunt a bowhead whale. The Board decided to deny this request for a hunt due to the need to determine, among other things, the stock to which whales at Pelly Bay belong. The Board called on DFO to conduct the necessary research to answer these questions on stock identity.
27. The Board decided to advise the RWOs that the NWMB is considering establishing a total allowable harvest of one bowhead whale from the Hudson Bay/Foxe Basin stock, and inviting the RWOs to submit proposals for the conduct of a bowhead hunt based on this stock.
28. The Board scheduled its next (25th) regular meeting for the week of March 13th in Iqaluit.

For further information please contact:

Ben Kovic, Chairperson

Nunavut Wildlife Management Board

(867) 979-6962

