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 Nunavunmi Anngutighatigut Aulapkaijitkut Katimajiat
 Nunavut Wildlife Management Board

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 Tammaqtailinahuarniriit anngutighat atuqhugit Inuit qaujimajatuqangillu ilihimaniillu ilitquhiannin
 Conserving wildlife through the application of Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit and scientific knowledge

July 14th 2014

Honourable Johnny Mike Minister of Environment Government of Nunavut	Honourable Leona Aglukkaq Minister of Environment Government of Canada	Cathy Towntongie President of Nunavut Tungavik Incorporated
David Heurtel Minister of Sustainable Development, Environment Wildlife and Parks Government of Quebec	Ross Tatty Chairperson of the Kivalliq Wildlife Board	James Qillaq Chairperson of the Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board
Jobie Tukkiapik President of Makivik Corporation	Josepi Padlayat Chairperson of the Nunavik Marine Region Wildlife Board	Mikidjuk Kolola Chairperson of the Mayukalik Hunters and Trappers Organization
Qabaroak Qatsiya Chairperson of the Aiviq Hunters and Trappers Organization	Manasie Naullaq Chairperson of the Hall Beach Hunters and Trappers Organization	David Ingaut Chairperson of the Igloodik Hunters and Trappers Organization
Noah Kadlak Chairperson of the Coral Harbour Hunters and Trappers Organization	Michel Akkuardjuk Chairperson of the Arviq Hunters and Trappers Organization	Barney Aggark Chairperson of the Aqigiq Hunters and Trappers Organization
Drikus Gissing Chairperson of the Polar Bear Administrative Committee	David Miller President and CEO World Wildlife Fund Canada	Jimmy Johannes Executive Secretary Nunavik Hunting, Fishing and Trapping Association

Dear Colleagues:

Re: Nunavut Wildlife Management Board reconsideration and final decision concerning the level of regional total allowable harvest for the Foxe Basin polar bear subpopulation

The Nunavut Wildlife Management Board (NWMB or Board) is contacting you to obtain your input – if you wish to provide it – into the NWMB’s reconsideration and final decision concerning the level of regional total allowable harvest for the Foxe Basin polar bear subpopulation. You, or the organization that you represent, attended the NWMB public hearing, held in Iqaluit on September 10th and 11th 2013.

On December 12th 2013, the NWMB reviewed the written and oral arguments and evidence presented at the hearing and approved the following two resolutions and three recommendations:

RESOLVED that the NWMB approve, pursuant to Sections 5.6.16, 5.6.17(b), 5.3.3(a), and 5.3.3(c) of the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement, an increase of 27 bears to the annual regional total allowable harvest in the Nunavut Settlement Area for the Foxe Basin polar bear sub-population - resulting in an overall regional total allowable harvest of 133 Foxe Basin polar bears.

FURTHER RESOLVED that the NWMB approve, pursuant to Sections 5.6.48 and 5.3.3(c) of the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement, a non-quota limitation that 20 of the 27 bears be harvested only for defense purposes (that is, in emergency circumstances, as described in Section 5.6.52 of the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement), and as allocated by the Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board or the Kivalliq Wildlife Board.

THE NWMB RECOMMENDS that the successful World Wildlife Fund - Canada/Government of Nunavut - Department of Environment polar bear deterrence program in Arviat be expanded to those Foxe Basin communities experiencing the highest number of polar bear defense kills.

THE NWMB RECOMMENDS a mandatory review of the level of total allowable harvest for the Foxe Basin polar bear sub-population, following completion of the next aerial survey of the sub-population.

THE NWMB RECOMMENDS that the Government of Nunavut - Department of Environment and the NWMB collaborate on the development of a policy designating certain defense-killed polar bears as humane harvests (e.g. problem bears that are starving and do not have a reasonable prospect of survival).

On March 4th 2014, the NWMB forwarded its decision to the Minister of Environment, pursuant to Section.5.3.8 of the *Nunavut Land Claims Agreement*. On May 29th 2014, pursuant to Section.5.3.9 of the *Nunavut Land Claims Agreement*, the Minister delivered reply correspondence to the NWMB disallowing both initial decisions of the Board. With respect to the Board's total allowable harvest decision, the Minister did not agree that an increase in the total allowable harvest from 106 to 133 bears is sustainable. The Minister expressed concerns with comparing population estimates derived using different methodologies as evidence of population growth and relying on results of population models that were based on information from a population not adjacent to Foxe Basin (Baffin Bay). As well, the Minister was concerned that a second aerial survey conducted by no later than 2016/2017 would fail to detect significant changes in the population and could therefore result in prolonged, unsustainable harvesting. Finally, the Minister was concerned about the uncertainty associated with the annual harvest from Nunavik and the potential for a combined Nunavut and Nunavik harvest to be unsustainable. With respect to the Board's non-quota limitation decision, the Minister felt that a two-tag system would complicate the administration of polar bear tags and possibly add the misperception of a quota or limitation on the number of defence of life and property kills.

The Board must reconsider its decisions in light of the Minister's written reasons for rejection and make a final decision, which the Board shall forward to the Minister (*Nunavut Land Claims Agreement* Section.5.3.12). It is anticipated that the NWMB will make a final decision at its September 2014 quarterly Board meeting, in Iqaluit. Because you, or the organization you represent, attended the NWMB's September 2013 public hearing concerning the regional total allowable harvest for Foxe Basin polar bear, the NWMB is inviting you to provide additional written responses with respect to the Board's reconsideration and final decision. To that end, the NWMB is providing you with the following three documents, which are included as Appendices to this letter:

1. Appendix 1: Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board's May 3rd 2013 submission to the NWMB requesting an increase in the regional total allowable harvest for the Foxe Basin polar bear subpopulation;
2. Appendix 2: The NWMB's March 4th 2014 confidential decision letter to the Minister, which includes the Board's initial decisions and recommendations with accompanying reasons (letter attachments included); and
3. Appendix 3: The Minister's May 29th 2014 response letter, which includes the Minister's reasons for disallowance of the NWMB's initial decisions.

Until such time as the NWMB releases its final decision, please treat both of the attached letters (Appendices 2 and 3) as confidential documents (see *Nunavut Land Claims Agreement* S.5.3.17).

All responses must be submitted, in both English and Inuktitut, to the NWMB by no later than **5:00pm (Iqaluit time) on Friday, August 8th, 2014**. Written responses should be clearly marked as pertaining to the "*NWMB Reconsideration and Final Decision Concerning the Level of Regional Total Allowable Harvest for the Foxe Basin Polar Bear Subpopulation*". Responses may be filed with the Board in person, by mail or by courier, or submitted electronically by fax or email at the following coordinates:

NUNAVUT WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT BOARD
3rd Floor, 1106 Ikaluktuutiak Road
P.O. Box 1379, Iqaluit, NU X0A 0H0
Phone: (867) 975-7300
Fax: (888) 421-9832
E-Mail: receptionist@nwmb.com

If you submit your response by fax, you must confirm by phone with the NWMB – prior to the filing deadline – that a complete and legible copy of the transmission have been received by the Board. Materials are deemed to have been filed on the actual date of receipt by the NWMB.

Please note that responses that contain the most thorough and persuasive justifications based on the best available western scientific, Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit and/or community information,

as well as supporting evidence related to the Proposal, will be given more weight by the NWMB in the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement decision-making process.

If you require further information, please do not hesitate to contact the NWMB.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ben Kovic", written over a horizontal line.

for Ben Kovic
Chairperson of the
Nunavut Wildlife Management Board

Enclosures (3)

c.c.

The Honourable Johnny Mike, Minister of Environment, Government of Nunavut;
Bert Dean, A/Director of Wildlife, Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated;
Drikus Gissing, Director of Wildlife, Nunavut Department of Environment;
Lisa Pirie, A/Head of Eastern Arctic, Environment Canada, Canadian Wildlife Service;
Stas Olpinski, Science and Policy Advisor, Makivik Corporation;
Mark O'Connor, Director of Wildlife Management, Nunavik Marine Region Wildlife Board;
Jackie Price, South Baffin Regional Liaison, Nunavut Inuit Wildlife Secretariat; and
Leah Muckpah, Kivalliq Regional Liaison, Nunavut Inuit Wildlife Secretariat

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Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board

May 3, 2013

Manasie Audlakiak
Acting Chairperson
Nunavut Wildlife Management Board
Box 1379
Iqaluit, Nunavut
X0A 0H0
Fax: (867) 975-7320

Dear Mr. Audlakiak,

Re: Request for Increase in Polar Bear Total Allowable Harvest (TAH) for the Foxe Basin (FB) Population

The Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board (QWB) has recently received letters and requests from the communities of Hall Beach and Igloolik. These communities are requesting an increase in the TAH for Foxe Basin polar bears. These requests are informed by consultations carried out by the Government of Nunavut (GN) in June & July 2012, and reflect the communities' growing concerns over next year's TAH recommendations, particularly in light of the communities' defense kills.

As you are aware, last winter Hall Beach and Igloolik had 29 defense kills combined. The high number of defense kills prompted the GN's Department of Environment's Minister, James Arreak and his Deputy Minister, QWB and NTI to consult with the two communities, February 4 - 6, 2013. During these consultations, the communities were informed there would be no polar bear quota for the next two years.

While this is the case, in 2010, the GN completed an aerial survey of the Foxe Basin polar bear population. As already mentioned, the GN informed communities of the new population estimate, approximately 2,500 polar bears. The previous government estimate, from 1996, was 2,200 polar bears. In light of this information, which suggests higher polar bear numbers, and in considering how much of the communities' quota has been used as defense kills, we feel this request for an increase in TAH respects the terms of the current Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). The MOU states that the TAH and credits are to be reviewed when new polar bear population estimates have been produced.


QWB does not believe there is a conservation concern with this population, therefore, increasing the TAH will not harm the population. In fact, the MOU states that the target number for this subpopulation is 2,300, an estimate we know has been exceeded. Attached, you will find a

figure which shows the recommended TAH from 2000-2012. As the chart shows, the polar bear population has stabilized since the MOU was put into effect.

The QWB Executive supports Hall Beach & Igloodik's request, and requests that the TAH for the Foxe Basin population be increased.

Thank you for your time in reviewing our request. As some communities are currently facing harvesting restrictions, the QWB feels this matter must be dealt with urgently. We eagerly await your response.

Sincerely,


Joshua Kango

Vice-Chairman
Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board

