

KIVALLIQ WILDLIFE BOARD

WRITTEN SUBMISSION

NUNAVUT WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT BOARD  
PUBLIC HEARING TO CONSIDER THE GOVERNMENT OF NUNAVUT PROPOSAL ON  
THE REVISED POLAR BEAR CO-MANAGEMENT PLAN

Kivalliq Wildlife Board  
Stanley Adjuk, Chairperson

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'S. Adjuk', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

October 12 2018



# Kivalliq Wildlife Board

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## Table of Contents

1. .... Introduction, Background, and Objectives ..... 3

2. .... Comments and Recommendations ..... 4

    2.1 ..... Maintaining Inuit Ways and Knowledge of Hunting Polar Bears ..... 4

    2.2 ..... Public Safety is a Top Priority ..... 5

        2.2.1 ..... Increase Bear Deterrence Programs ..... 6

        2.2.2 Increase Funding and Access for Wildlife Damage Prevention and Compensation Programs ..... 7

    2.3 ..... Moratorium on Flexible Quota System Penalizations for Overharvesting Females ..... 7

3. .... Further Comments ..... 8

    3.1 ..... Disagreement with Sub-Population Understanding of Polar Bears ..... 8

    3.2 ..... Concern with Manitoba Polar Bear Tourism ..... 9

    3.3 ..... Concern with Invasive Wildlife Research ..... 9

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KWB wants polar bear and human encounters to be reduced for the safety of both humans and bears. As expressed in the teachings of Elders who grew up and lived on the land and ice, one way to do this is to actively hunt polar bears.

**Recommendation:** Ensuring public safety and the protection of people and property should be included in the overall goal of the polar bear management plan.

### 2.2.1 Increase Bear Deterrence Programs

The community of Arviat, the GN, and the World Wildlife Fund have worked towards creating a strong bear deterrence program which involves a GN Conservation Officer and two to four bear guards using live trapping, bear bangers, rubber bullets, and ATVs to deter bears from entering town.<sup>13</sup> Luring sites and scent trails have also been created in the past, using seal and beluga meat, to successfully lure polar bears away from Arviat.<sup>14</sup>

KWB would like to see this type of program setup in other communities in Nunavut to help deter bears from entering the communities and causing public safety concerns. This would include the training of bear deterrers, the provision of equipment and the funding to keep this program running and working. The people who do this type of work need to be compensated fairly and provided with the best possible equipment and procedures to keep them safe. In particular, in Whale Cove and any other communities in similar situations, it is very important that a permanent Conservation Officer is hired and trained to coordinates these types of duties in the town.

**Recommendation:** The polar bear management plan should have a plan in place with specific details and a timeline to provide funding, training and the long-term sustainability for bear deterrence programs in communities that experience frequent encounters with polar bears.

**Recommendation:** All communities in Nunavut should have a permanent and full-time Conservation Officer.

<sup>13</sup> Rob Harmer, Kivalliq Regional Manager, GN DoE presentation at KWB AGM, October 18, 2017

<sup>14</sup> Government of Nunavut, Department of Environment. (2014). Operation Arviat Polar Bear Summary Report. Report prepared by Conservation Officer Joe Savikataaq Jr. This report notes that in 2014, 249 polar bears were deterred away from Arviat, 14 bears were live captured and transported away from the community and successfully released, and bear guards drove 8,000 kilometres during patrols.





Kivalliq Wildlife Board

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into the future.<sup>18, 19</sup> Furthermore, when defence kills are necessary, there is not an opportunity to selectively choose the sex of the bear.

KWB would like to see a five-year moratorium on severe penalizations resulting from overharvesting females in the flexible quota system. Instead, hunters should be encouraged by RWOs, HTOs, and other co-management partners to hunt bears at a 2M:1F ratio, but there should not be punishment if this ratio is not maintained perfectly. If overharvesting occurs beyond the TAH, a one to one reduction should occur in the next year’s TAH.

After five years, a harvesting analysis and population survey can be done to determine what ratio of males and females were actually caught during the time period and evaluate the impact on the overall WH PB population to determine whether severe penalizations for overharvesting females need to be reinstated.

**Recommendation:** Initiate a five-year moratorium on sex-selective harvesting in the flexible quota system. Conduct a harvesting analysis and population survey after the moratorium and reassess whether a sex-selective ratio is necessary in polar bear management.

#### 2.4 Further Comments

#### 2.5 Disagreement with Sub-Population Understanding of Polar Bears

As the 2016 Draft NU PBMP notes, the knowledge of Elders and hunters as expressed through Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit tells us that polar bears do not know the boundaries created by human wildlife managers. Polar bears move up and down the coast and travel on ice pans across the Hudson Bay. The same bears can be WH, FB or Southern Hudson Bay (SH) polar bears during their lifetimes.

Sometimes the borders cause issues for humans in the Kivalliq as well. The WH sub-population and FB sub-population boundary is south of Chesterfield Inlet, which can cause disagreements within the Kivalliq about who should get tags from the TAH. Issues are noted with the sub-population boundaries. However, there are also concerns about too many levels of government and bureaucracy existing in polar bear co-management, and if any sub-population boundaries are reconsidered, KWB would not want to open up management of polar bears in the Kivalliq to even more jurisdictions, which could create even more political-legal complications.

<sup>18</sup> Wenzel, G. (2008). Inuit TEK and the sport-hunt. In G. Wenzel, *sometimes hunting can seem like business: Polar bear sport hunting in Nunavut* (pp. 21-31). Edmonton, AB: CCI Press.

<sup>19</sup> Tyrrell, M. (2009). Guiding, opportunity, identity: The multiple roles of the Arviat polar bear conservation hunt. In M.M.R. Freeman and L. Foote (Eds.), *Inuit, polar bears, and sustainable use: Local, national, and international perspectives* (pp. 25-38). Edmonton, AB: CCI Press.



