



ᓄᓇᓖᑦᑦ ᓂᐱᓯᑦᑦᑦᑦᑦᑦ ᑲᑎᐱᑦᑦᑦ
Nunavunmi Anngutighatigut Aulapkaijtitkut Katimajiat
Nunavut Wildlife Management Board

ᐱᓯᑦᑦᑦᑦᑦᑦᑦ ᓄᓯᐱᓯᑦᑦᑦ ᑦᑦᑦᑦᑦᑦᑦᑦ ᑦᑦᑦᑦᑦᑦᑦᑦᑦ ᑦᑦᑦᑦᑦᑦᑦᑦᑦ ᑦᑦᑦᑦᑦᑦᑦᑦᑦ ᑦᑦᑦᑦᑦᑦᑦᑦᑦ
Tammaqtailinahuarniriit anngutighat atuqhugit Inuit qaujimajutuqangillu ilihimaniillu ilitquhiannin
Conserving wildlife through the application of Inuit Qaujimajutuqangit and scientific knowledge

May 24th, 2011

Gabriel Nirlungayuk
Director of Wildlife
Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated
P.O. Box 280
Rankin Inlet
X0C 0G0

Richard Connelly
Executive Director
Nunavut Inuit Wildlife Secretariat
P.O. Box 219
Rankin Inlet
X0C 0G0

Re: Summary of Fisheries and Oceans Canada consultations on the potential listing of Atlantic cod (Arctic lakes population) as a species of *Special Concern* under the *Species at Risk Act*

Dear Gabriel and Richard,

The purpose of this letter and information package is to provide your organization with relevant information as per Section 3.8 of the SARA/NLCA MOU for the proposed *Species at Risk Act* (SARA) listing of Atlantic cod (Arctic lakes population) as a species of *Special Concern*. For clarification, Section 3.8 of the SARA/NLCA MOU involves providing your organization with consultation report(s) for Nunavut species, including any Departmental response(s), as well as available summaries of consultations in other jurisdictions, that the NWMB receives, all in English and Inuktitut.

On September 14th, 2010 Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) informed the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board (NWMB or Board) of the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada's (COSEWIC) 2010 assessment proposing to list the Arctic lakes populations of Atlantic cod as a species of *Special Concern* under the *Species at Risk Act* (SARA). On December 3rd, 2010 the NWMB received a letter from DFO outlining their process regarding the proposed listing, including their plans for consultations. In December 2010, DFO distributed consultation workbooks to Inuit and other Aboriginal organizations that could be used to review and provide feedback to the Government of Canada on the proposed listing.

On April 6th, 2011 DFO provided the NWMB with a summary of the results of their consultations on this potential listing under the SARA. Results of these consultations will inform DFO's advice to the Minister of the Environment as to whether or not the Arctic lakes populations should be listed under the SARA as *Special Concern*. According to section 3.8 of the SARA/NLCA, the NWMB is now providing your organization with the attached consultation summary.

Additional Background Information

In May 2003, COSEWIC evaluated the Arctic Lakes population and the Arctic Marine populations of Atlantic cod as a single unit, and assessed it to be *Special Concern*. Consultations were held in Iqaluit, Pangnirtung and Qikiqtarjuaq in November 2004. The Hunters and Trappers Organizations (HTOs) and their communities did not support the listing under the SARA at that time; the NWMB also opposed a SARA listing. Partially as a result of concerns raised during the consultations, the Federal Government returned the COSEWIC assessment back to COSEWIC for its re-assessment for the following reasons:

- The COSEWIC assessment did not include adequate Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge;
- It was not clear why COSEWIC combined the marine and lake populations into a single assessment; and
- There was no evidence presented by COSEWIC to support a decline in the population in either the marine or the landlocked environments.

In April 2010, COSEWIC separated the Atlantic cod's Arctic populations into two units: Arctic lakes populations and Arctic marine populations. The Arctic lakes populations unit was assessed by COSEWIC as a species of *Special Concern* due to its limited distribution in only three isolated lakes on Baffin Island. The total combined area of habitat is less than 20 km². One of the lakes, Ogac Lake, is accessible for fishing and large numbers of Atlantic cod may be removed from the lake if fishing increases. Rescue from other populations is not thought to be possible, should any of these three lake populations be lost due to human activity.

If further information becomes available it will be forwarded to you promptly. If you have any questions or concerns please feel free to contact myself or my staff.

Sincerely,



Adam Schneidmiller
Director of Wildlife Management
Nunavut Wildlife Management Board

Attachments (1)

Summary of consultations on the potential listing of Atlantic Cod (Arctic lakes population) under the *Species at Risk Act (SARA)*
March 2011

NUNAVUT

Amaruq Hunters and Trappers

The Iqaluit (Amaruq) HTA indicated they neither support nor do not support listing of Atlantic Cod (Arctic Lakes population) primarily because they stated Inuit rarely fish these lakes and therefore the populations are seen as having little direct importance to them. However, they would not like to see the lake populations of Atlantic Cod disappear.

Pangnirtung Hunters and Trappers

During an HTA Board meeting held in Pangnirtung on January 26, 2011, participants indicated they did not support adding the Atlantic Cod (Arctic Lakes population) to the *Species at Risk Act* list as a species of Special Concern. Reasons given included Inuit only very rarely harvest these fish, they do not see any evidence of declines in the populations they know of and they believe there are many more lakes with these types of fish in them. They also did not feel it necessary to protect Atlantic Cod (Arctic Lakes population) in these three lakes which are rarely fished while other similar lakes containing cod would still be open to fishing. While the members of the HTA did not want the populations to disappear, they felt there was no reason to protect these three populations, at this time.

Government of Nunavut, Department of Environment

Following a meeting with staff at the Department of Environment (DoE) in Iqaluit on January 28, 2011, the DoE submitted comments on behalf of the Government of Nunavut and was not supportive of listing. They stated that the re-assessment by COSEWIC did not include adequate Aboriginal traditional knowledge, there was little new scientific information, the only change being the separation of lake and marine populations in different designated units and that the social and economic impacts of any harvest restrictions were unknown. They, however, supported the development of a management plan and research on the distribution of Atlantic Cod in other similar lakes on Baffin Island. They also inquired why Atlantic Cod in these particular lakes are considered for listing but not other similar lakes that they believe contain Atlantic Cod.

NATIONAL NON-GOVERNMENT ORGANIZATION

The World Wildlife Fund-Canada indicated they supported listing of Atlantic Cod (Arctic Lakes population) under *SARA* as a species of Special Concern because a management plan would help to ensure that the current population is managed sustainably and a relatively unexploited Arctic Lakes population (*i.e.*, compared to marine Atlantic cod populations) could provide an opportunity to study natural processes. The geographic isolation of the Arctic Lakes population has led to a distinct genetic structure which may be important to species and system adaptation prospects.

Prepared by: Sam Stephenson, Species at Risk group, DFO, Winnipeg