



SUBMISSION TO THE
NUNAVUT WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT BOARD

FOR

Information: X

Decision:

Issue: Efforts to include Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit in wildlife research and management

Background:

The Department of Environment (DOE) uses both Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit (IQ) and science in management and research of wildlife.

The definition of IQ includes

1. Inuit Traditional Ecological Knowledge;
2. Inuit Ecological Knowledge;
3. Inuit public opinion; and
4. Inuit values.

The use of IQ is mandated:

1. through Tamapta which requires that the government adheres to Inuit Societal Values; and
2. the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement (NLCA), which creates a wildlife management system that invites public participation and promotes public confidence, particularly amongst Inuit, and serves and promotes the long-term economic, social and cultural interests of Inuit harvesters.

Current Status:

Funding has been provided in support of IQ research on polar bears in Baffin Bay in 2005-2006; in Foxe Basin in 2007-2009; and in Davis Strait in 2006-2008. The Minister of Environment also made a commitment to work with NTI, NWMB and affected communities to develop a new traditional knowledge/IQ study, ideally starting in 2011/12.

DOE continues to use IQ in research. For example, Inuit knowledge regarding denning and habitat use is collected for use in land-use assessments by DOE personnel. Inuit knowledge regarding distribution of polar bears is used in the design of polar bear surveys. Through communication among research and operations personnel and hunters, Inuit knowledge is used in the interpretation of biological data.

Finally, IQ is used in decision-making on polar bear management. Some examples include:

1. In its decision not to reduce the TAH in Baffin Bay in 2008, the NWMB used Inuit knowledge of increased number of bears, despite contradictory scientific results.
2. In 2007, a survey extension project was conducted in Western Hudson Bay based on Inuit Knowledge of change in distribution of polar bears.
3. In 2005, Inuit knowledge of increasing bear numbers contributed to the decision to increase the TAH in Baffin Bay, Davis Strait, Western Hudson Bay, Foxe Basin, Gulf of Boothia, and Lancaster Sound.
4. In 2002, Inuit knowledge and science indicated a declining in the M'Clintock Channel population, and the decision was made to implement a temporary hunting moratorium for this population.

DOE however recognizes that we need to find ways of bringing Traditional Knowledge and science closer together in the decision making process. We continue to work with co-management partners to try and close this gap and to find ways to better include IQ in wildlife management decisions.