



Mr. Ben Kovic
Chair
Nunavut Wildlife Management Board
Box 379
Iqaluit, NU X0A 0H0

Dear Mr. Kovic:

Thank you for your letter of 27 November 2014 and for providing an opportunity for additional input into the process by which the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board (NWMB) will make a final decision on the level of total allowable harvest (TAH) for the M'Clintock Channel polar bear subpopulation. As mentioned in my initial submission of 14 May 2014, Environment Canada welcomes the openness and thoroughness of the NWMB in making decisions, and appreciates the opportunity to provide additional input into the process.

I have reviewed the documents provided with your most recent letter. It is noteworthy that results of a new population survey, as well as an Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit study, will be available by mid-to-late 2017. As such, and as noted by Minister Mike, it would be prudent to adopt a precautionary approach and to not make significant changes to the current harvest level of three bears, in advance of receiving this new information. Furthermore, as noted in our initial submission, setting a TAH level below the maximum sustainable harvest would enable the subpopulation to continue to grow towards the target population size.

I reiterate the comments in my initial submission; Environment Canada firmly believes that setting harvest levels must continue to be based upon sound conservation principles, ensuring that the total removal is biologically sustainable. Our view is that an increase in the annual quota from three to six bears, as suggested by the Honourable Johnny Mike, would be unlikely to create a conservation concern, as long as the TAH was re-assessed once the new population estimate is available.



In summary, I would like to recognize the important role that the Wildlife Management Boards in Canada's North play in decision-making for the management of polar bear populations, and note that Environment Canada supports this process and looks forward to hearing the final outcome of this decision-making.

Sincerely,

Sue Milburn-Hopwood

JAN 19 2015

Sue Milburn-Hopwood
Director General
Canadian Wildlife Service

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Alfred Hippood.

JAN 19 2015

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