

AGENDA FOR THE NUNAVUT WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT BOARD PUBLIC HEARING TO CONSIDER THE GOVERNMENT OF NUNAVUT'S POLAR BEAR CO-MANAGEMENT PLAN

Day 1: November 13th, 2018

TIME OF DAY	PROPOSED TIMING FOR SUBMISSIONS, QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS	MAXIMUM PROPOSED TIME
8:30 – 8:50 AM	Introductions, Chairperson opening remarks & opening prayer, NWMB review and approval of the Day 1 Agenda	20 minutes
8:50 – 10:00 AM	Government of Nunavut-Department of Environment <i>Proposal for Decision</i>	1 hour and 10 minutes
10:00 – 10:15 AM	Mid-morning Break	15 minutes
10:15 – 12:00 PM	Questions and comments to Government of Nunavut <i>Proposal for Decision</i>	1 hour and 45 minutes
12:00 – 1:30 PM	Lunch Break	1 hour and 30 minutes
1:30 – 3:00 PM	Questions and comments to Government of Nunavut <i>Proposal for Decision</i>	1 hour and 30 minutes
3:00 – 3:15 PM	Mid-afternoon Break	15 minutes
3:15 – 3:35 PM	Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated submission	20 minutes
3:35 – 5:15 PM	Questions and comments to Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated submission	1 hour and 40 minutes
5:15 – 7:00 PM	Dinner Break	1 hour and 45 minutes
7:00 – 8:30 PM	Questions and comments to Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated submission	1 hour and 30 minutes

*November 13th - 16th 2018
Cadet Hall, Iqaluit, Nunavut*

AGENDA FOR THE NUNAVUT WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT BOARD PUBLIC HEARING TO CONSIDER THE GOVERNMENT OF NUNAVUT'S POLAR BEAR CO-MANAGEMENT PLAN

Day 2: November 14th, 2018

TIME OF DAY	PROPOSED TIMING FOR SUBMISSIONS, QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS	MAXIMUM PROPOSED TIME
8:30 – 8:45 AM	Chairperson opening remarks & opening prayer	15 minutes
8:45 – 10:00 AM	Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife & Qikiqtaaluk Hunters and Trappers Organizations AND Qikiqtani Inuit Association submission	1 hour and 15 minutes
10:00 – 10:15 AM	Mid-morning Break	15 minutes
10:15 – 11:45 AM	Questions and comments to Qikiqtaaluk regional submissions	1 hour and 30 minutes
11:45 – 1:15 PM	Lunch Break	1 hour and 30 minutes
1:15 – 3:00 PM	Questions and comments to Qikiqtaaluk regional submissions	1 hour and 45 minutes
3:00 – 3:15 PM	Mid-Afternoon Break	15 minutes
3:15 – 5:15 PM	Questions and comments to Qikiqtaaluk regional submissions	2 hours
5:15 – 7:00	Dinner Break	1 hour and 45 minutes
7:00 – 8:30 PM	Kivalliq Wildlife & Kivalliq Hunters and Trappers Organizations AND Kivalliq Inuit Association submission	1 hour and 30 minutes

*November 13th - 16th 2018
Cadet Hall, Iqaluit, Nunavut*

AGENDA FOR THE NUNAVUT WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT BOARD PUBLIC HEARING TO CONSIDER THE GOVERNMENT OF NUNAVUT'S POLAR BEAR CO-MANAGEMENT PLAN

Day 3: November 15th, 2018

TIME OF DAY	PROPOSED TIMING FOR SUBMISSIONS, QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS	MAXIMUM PROPOSED TIME
8:30 – 8:45 AM	Chairperson opening remarks & opening prayer	15 minutes
8:45 – 10:00 AM	Questions and comments to Kivalliq regional submissions	1 hour and 15 minutes
9:45 – 10:00 AM	Mid-morning Break	15 minutes
10:00 – 12:00 AM	Questions and comments to Kivalliq regional submissions	2 hours
12:00 – 1:30 PM	Lunch Break	1 hour and 30 minutes
1:30 – 3:00 PM	Kitikmeot Regional Wildlife & Kitikmeot Hunters and Trappers Organizations AND Kitikmeot Inuit Association submission	1 hour and 30 minutes
3:00 – 3:15 PM	Mid-afternoon Break	15 minutes
3:15 to 5:15 PM	Questions and comments to Kitikmeot regional submissions	2 hours
5:15 – 7:00	Dinner Break	1 hour and 45 minutes
7:00 – 8:15 PM	Questions and comments to Kitikmeot regional submissions	1 hour and 15 minutes

*November 13th - 16th 2018
Cadet Hall, Iqaluit, Nunavut*

AGENDA FOR THE NUNAVUT WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT BOARD PUBLIC HEARING TO CONSIDER THE GOVERNMENT OF NUNAVUT'S POLAR BEAR CO-MANAGEMENT PLAN

Day 4: November 16th, 2018

TIME OF DAY	PROPOSED TIMING FOR SUBMISSIONS, QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS	MAXIMUM PROPOSED TIME
8:30 – 8:45 AM	Chairperson opening remarks & opening prayer	15 minutes
8:45 – 9:30 AM	Environment and Climate Change Submission	45 minutes
9:30 – 10:00 AM	Questions and comments on Environment and Climate Change submission	30 minutes
10:00 – 10:15 AM	Mid-morning Break	15 minutes
10:15 – 11:45 AM	Questions and comments on Environment and Climate Change submission	1 hour and 30 minutes
11:45 – 1:15 PM	Lunch Break	1 hour and 30 minutes
1:15 – 2:00 PM	Parks Canada Agency submission	45 minutes
2:00 – 3:00 PM	Questions and comments on Parks Canada Agency submission	1 hour
3:00 – 3:15 PM	Mid-Afternoon Break	15 minutes
3:15 – 3:35 PM	World Wildlife Fund submission	20 minutes
3:35 – 4:05 PM	Questions and comments on World Wildlife Fund submission	30 minutes
4:05 – 5:00 PM	Public statements/questions and responses	55 minutes
5:00 – 6:00 PM	Final comments from hearing parties and NWMB	1 hour

*November 13th - 16th 2018
Cadet Hall, Iqaluit, Nunavut*

July 20th, 2018

THE PURPOSE of this Nunavut Wildlife Management Board (NWMB) in-person public hearing is to consider the Government of Nunavut- Department of Environment's Proposal *for Decision* to the Board (Proposal) seeking approval of the Nunavut Polar Bear Co-Management Plan. The Proposal, along with other documents comprising the best available information to date, is available for review or download from the NWMB's website (www.nwmb.com).

Hearing Rules:

1. The NWMB (the Board) shall provide notice to the public at least thirty (30) days prior to the deadline for filing hearing submissions.
2. Any interested person or body may file with the Board a written submission and supporting documentation^[1] in response to the Proposal for approval of the Nunavut Polar Bear Co-Management Plan— duly translated into Inuktitut or English as the case may be—by no later than 5:00 p.m. (Iqaluit time) on October 12th, 2018.
3. Unless persuasive written and translated reasons are provided to the Board for late filing, the Board will not consider materials for this hearing that are not filed on time.
4. The requirements for translation of submissions and supporting documentation filed with the Board does not apply to individual members of the public.
5. For all others who file supporting documentation with the Board, the requirement for translation does not apply to such documents over ten (10) pages in length, as long as each supporting document that is not translated is accompanied by a concise, translated summary (English and Inuktitut) at least two (2) pages in length.
6. The Board shall ensure that all materials filed with it or produced by it are made publicly available, subject to relevant confidentiality or privacy concerns.
7. The NWMB shall provide simultaneous English and Inuktitut translation at the hearing, to the extent reasonably possible.
8. A quorum of NWMB members shall be present at the hearing.
9. Any representative or agent of the Government of Canada or Government of Nunavut, any Hunters and Trappers Organization or Regional Wildlife Organization, and any Inuk shall be accorded the status of party for the hearing.

10. Unless invited by the Board to be a party, any other person or body wishing to be named as a party by the Board shall make an appropriate request in writing to the Board.
11. All parties and other participants at the hearing are required to treat one another and the NWMB with respect.
12. The NWMB shall provide a reasonable opportunity for oral presentations from each of the parties at the hearing by their choice of official, expert or counsel.
13. Any member of the NWMB, the NWMB's Director of Wildlife or the NWMB's Legal Counsel may ask relevant questions of any other party at the hearing.
14. Any party may ask relevant questions of any other party at the hearing.
15. The NWMB shall provide members of the public in attendance at the hearing a reasonable opportunity to make statements and to ask questions of the parties and the NWMB.
16. Every person at the hearing wishing to speak or ask a question shall raise his or her hand, and shall only speak once the NWMB Chairperson has recognized him or her.
17. The NWMB Chairperson reserves the right to place reasonable time limits on presentations, statements and questions.
18. The NWMB shall make an audio recording of the hearing available upon request.

[1] "*Supporting documentation*" refers to one or more studies, articles, opinions or other documents separate from a person's or organization's written submission, filed as additional evidence and/or arguments in support of that person's or organization's submission.



SUBMISSION TO THE
NUNAVUT WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT BOARD

FOR Information:

Decision: X

Issue: Resubmission of the draft Nunavut Polar Bear Co-Management Plan

Background

During the development of the draft Polar Bear Co-Management Plan (the plan, Attachment 1) a working group was tasked with developing a replacement to the existing Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). The working group focused on addressing concerns with the existing MOU and with ensuring that the plan reflects the jurisdictional perspective on polar bears. Overall, polar bears are doing well and have increased from the low population numbers of the 1960's and 70's. Public safety has become a serious concern as a result of the increase in population and /or changes in bear distribution and concentration.

A successful polar bear management plan needs to reflect Inuit societal values and concerns. It must support and ensure continued Inuit involvement in polar bear co-management and conservation.

The new draft plan better reflects Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit and is more accessible to Nunavummiut.

Current Status

The Department of Environment (DOE) has incorporated many of the comments received during the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board (NWMB) Written Public Hearing (September – October 2015) into the draft plan, which has improved the document. When reviewing comments received, DOE considered what was heard from and said to communities and Hunters and Trappers Organizations (HTO's) during consultations. Where possible, efforts were made to modify language or to better represent the position that was being proposed.

Consultations

The initial consultations and summary were provided with the original DOE submission. Additional consultations were undertaken after revisions were made to the draft to address comments received during the NWMB Written Public Hearing. These consultations were undertaken during October and November of 2016. DOE presented the revised draft plan to the Regional Wildlife Organizations (RWO's) at their Annual General Meetings, as well to the Nunavut Inuit Wildlife and Environment Advisory Committee (NIWEAC) during its fall meeting. The NIWEAC was instrumental in developing the initial draft in 2014. The Consultation Summary for those meetings is included as Attachment 2 of this document. The current draft Nunavut Polar Bear Co-Management Plan reflects input received from those meetings.

DOE also sought a second review of the draft plan from Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC) and their feedback was incorporated, as ECCC was the most critical commenter during the NWMB Written Public Hearing. ECCC's comments were also reflected in other reviews, notably by Parks Canada and World Wildlife Fund. This second ECCC review resulted in additional edits to better clarify language in the draft plan.

Recommendation

DOE requests that the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board approve the revised Nunavut Polar Bear Co-Management Plan.

Attachments

- 1) Draft Polar Bear Co-Management Plan
- 2) Consultation Summary

NUNAVUT POLAR BEAR CO-MANAGEMENT PLAN **(to replace existing Memoranda of Understanding)**

PREFACE

Management of polar bears in Canada is conducted at the territorial and provincial level. Federal lands, such as Migratory Bird Sanctuaries, National Wildlife Areas and National Parks, are managed for conservation purposes and may include management for polar bears. In addition, there is recognition that management requires coordination of national efforts. In Nunavut, management of wildlife is governed by the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement (NLCA). The NLCA requires that Inuit play an effective role in all aspects of wildlife management. The management of polar bears shall acknowledge the best available scientific knowledge and *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit* (IQ). The process for decision-making is clearly defined under the NLCA.

The Nunavut Minister of the Environment and the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board (NWMB) hold the ultimate responsibility and primary responsibility for wildlife management, respectively, under the NLCA. The NWMB has the responsibility of approving management plans (Article 5 section 5.2.34 d(i)). This plan has been prepared in cooperation with Nunavut Tunngavik Inc., the Department of Environment, Regional Wildlife Organizations, Hunters and Trappers Organizations, and Inuit community members from throughout Nunavut.

Successful management of polar bears depends on the commitment and cooperation of all co-management partners involved in implementing the directions set out in this plan.

Implementation of this management plan is subject to appropriations, priorities, and budgetary constraints of the participating jurisdictions and organizations.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This management plan has been developed cooperatively by co-management partners to improve the existing polar bear management regime in Nunavut. It replaces the Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) that have directed management efforts to date. These efforts have been instrumental in facilitating the recovery of polar bear populations from the lows of the 1950s, while maintaining harvest opportunities for Inuit.

This intent of this plan is: 1) to provide guidance and direction to co-management partners for decision-making; and 2) identify goals and objectives for polar bear management. Improved communications, co-management partner participation, and cooperation will be fundamental to the plan's success.

Previous management relied heavily on scientific monitoring and modeling to determine sustainable harvest rates. This scientific approach has been effective and will continue, but now allows for full participation of Inuit. Improved collection and use of *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit* (IQ) and increased Inuit participation in all aspects of management are central to the goals of this plan.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This management plan was developed by a co-management working group consisting of Gabriel Nirlungayuk and Paul Irngaut (NTI), Markus Dyck and Paul Frame (DOE), James Qillaq (QWB), Attima Hadlari (KRWB), Ross Tatty (KWB), and Chris Hotson (Okalik Consulting). Additional review and drafting of text was provided by Lynda Orman (DOE), Andrew Maher (PC), Peter Hale (ECCC), and David Lee (NTI). Significant assistance during consultations was provided by Leetia Janes, Lazarus Arreak, Gailene Pigalak, Jackie Price, Ema Qaggutaq, Leah M. Muckpah, and Jason Mikki.

1. INTRODUCTION

Management of polar bears in Nunavut predates the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement (NLCA) by several decades. In the 1960s and 70s, harvest restrictions were placed on Inuit with little or no consultation. Restrictions (e.g., limiting the number of polar bears harvested per year per subpopulation) were the primary means of population recovery in regions where abundance was reduced as the result of unsustainable harvest. Since then, implementation of the NLCA, and improved research and understanding of polar bear biology has strengthened management and increased Inuit involvement. Over the last 50 years polar bear management has focused on recovery of polar bear numbers, which has largely been achieved. The focus of polar bear management now shifts to maintaining, or reducing numbers in areas where public safety is a concern and/or where there are detrimental effects on the ecosystem due to increased numbers of polar bears. This plan has been developed to guide polar bear management in Nunavut through 2026, and explicitly recognizes the requirement to engage Inuit in polar bear management.

Inuit hunter observations indicate that polar bear numbers have increased from the population lows of the 1950s and 60s. This is confirmed by scientific studies on Most Nunavut subpopulations. During this time period, polar bears did not pose a serious threat to human safety; Inuit did not worry about going camping in those days and life generally existed in seasonal camps where families were safe. Today, however, safety concerns, in part, result from increased polar bear numbers in some Nunavut subpopulations. Increased interactions may also be due to changes in the distribution of bears from being on sea-ice to being on land for longer periods, and change in Inuit settlement away from a dispersed lifestyle to one with established communities.

Despite scientific and traditional knowledge/IQ indicating that polar bear numbers have increased since the 1950s, conflict exists between Inuit observations and public perspective on the status of the species. Pressure to conserve and protect polar bears from national and international environmental and non-governmental organizations, climate change advocates, and the general public at large has created contention about the status of polar bear populations. Inuit believe there are now so many bears that public safety has become a major concern. Public safety concerns, combined with the effects of polar bears on other species that Inuit and scientists are observing (e.g., ringed seal and water fowl populations) suggest that in many Nunavut communities, the polar bear may have exceeded the co-existence threshold of Nunavummiut.

*“...in my lifetime we have seen opposite ends of the spectrum where
when I was a child we saw no bears and now we can see*

40 bears a year near town” Sandy Akavak, Elder, Kimmirut

In Canada, polar bears have been managed to increase populations since the 1970s, largely through sustainable hunting practices. Prior to the fur trade and whaling, polar bears were predominantly harvested by indigenous peoples. The increase in whaling sealing, fur trade and Arctic explorations during the late 1800s and early 1900s resulted in Arctic-wide increases in polar bear hunting by non-indigenous people. The five polar bear range states, Russia, Canada, the United States, Norway and Greenland, agreed that the polar bear needed protection to prevent a further decline, and the Agreement on the Conservation of Polar Bears was signed in 1973. Management of polar bears has since evolved to include setting sustainable harvest levels, maximizing harvest through sex-selective harvesting, reporting and submitting harvest data and samples, as well as non-quota limitations (NQLs) that include protection of family groups. Although seen by some Inuit as restrictive, these NQLs are supported by the Nunavut Hunters and Trappers Organizations (HTOs).

Although Inuit support Nunavut's polar bear management efforts, they are directly affected by increased polar bear abundance from the standpoint of personal safety and property damage (e.g., cabins and food caches). Restrictions such as these, as well as public safety and property damage concerns potentially undermine Inuit support when population numbers are perceived to be high.

2. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The following principles will guide conservation and management decisions within the framework of the NLCA:

- To integrate Inuit societal values and Inuit traditional knowledge, collectively called Inuit *Qaujimajatuqangit* (IQ), in polar bear management;
- *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit* and scientific knowledge will be considered in decision-making. Both perspectives, always taken/considered together, will continue to inform decision-making;
- To consider public safety in management actions;
- To consider the ongoing social, cultural, and economic value of the polar bear in decision-making;
- To consider other aspects of the ecosystem when we consider polar bears;
- Polar bears will be managed at the subpopulation level, and their status will be assessed regularly to ensure that information is available for timely conservation, and long-term sustainability;

- Where there are threats of serious or irreparable damage to polar bear populations or habitat, lack of certainty will not be a reason for postponing reasonable or precautionary conservation measures.

3. GOAL OF THE POLAR BEAR MANAGEMENT PLAN

To maintain viable and healthy polar bear subpopulations for current and future generations, and to ensure that polar bears remain an integrated and functioning part of the ecosystem while monitored and appropriate harvests are allowed.

4. SPECIES DESCRIPTION

Inuktitut name – Nanuq, Nanuk

English name – polar bear

French name – Ours blanc

Scientific name – *Ursus maritimus* (Phipps 1774)

4.1 Status:

Canada: Special Concern (*Species at Risk Act*) 2011

IUCN: Vulnerable (2015)

Nunavut Wildlife Act: Not assessed

4.2 General description

The polar bear is a member of the order *Carnivora* and the family *Ursidae*. It is the top terrestrial predator in the arctic marine environment. Polar bear breeding biology is characterized by low reproductive rates, a long life span, and late sexual maturity.

Webbed and enlarged front paws make the polar bear a strong swimmer and its curved claws are well-suited for “hooking” seals, their primary food source. Other adaptations to the Arctic environment include furred pads (improved insulation and traction) on the paws, and black skin (absorb solar energy). Polar bear fur usually appears to be white, but it may also be yellowish or off-white, depending on the time of year and sex. Polar bears exhibit extraordinary strength when crushing through sea ice, digging into birth and haul-out lairs of seals, and moving large boulders to access meat caches. Adult males are larger (up to 300 cm long) and heavier (800-1000 kg) than adult females, which do not usually exceed 400 kg in weight and 250 cm in length.

4.3 Distribution

4.3.1 Global range

Polar bears occur as a circumpolar species in the sub-arctic and arctic regions of the northern hemisphere. It was initially believed that they represented a single population that ranged throughout the Arctic, with animals being carried passively on the sea ice by currents. However, satellite telemetry studies and mark-recapture data have shown that they do not wander throughout the Arctic, but rather show seasonal fidelity to local areas. Movements and distributions are mainly determined by sea ice which is used as a platform for feeding, mating, and denning. Globally, all polar bears are divided into 19 “subpopulations”, 13 (excluding bears of the Arctic Basin) of which are in Canada (Figure 1). There is an estimated world population of about 26,000 (95% Confidence Interval 22,000 – 31,000) polar bears. Approximately 14,000 to 16,000 polar bears are found in Canada (See Appendix A for current status). The majority of Canada’s polar bear subpopulations are found in Nunavut.

4.3.2 Nunavut range

As of 2016, there are 12 recognized subpopulations of polar bear within Nunavut (Baffin Bay, Davis Strait, Southern Hudson Bay, Western Hudson Bay, Foxe Basin, Kane Basin, Lancaster Sound, Norwegian Bay, Gulf of Boothia, M'Clintock Channel, Viscount Melville Sound, and Northern Beaufort Sea). Eight of these subpopulations are shared with other jurisdictions and user-groups and four are entirely within Nunavut (Figure 1). A more detailed background and description of Nunavut’s polar bear subpopulations is provided in Appendix B.

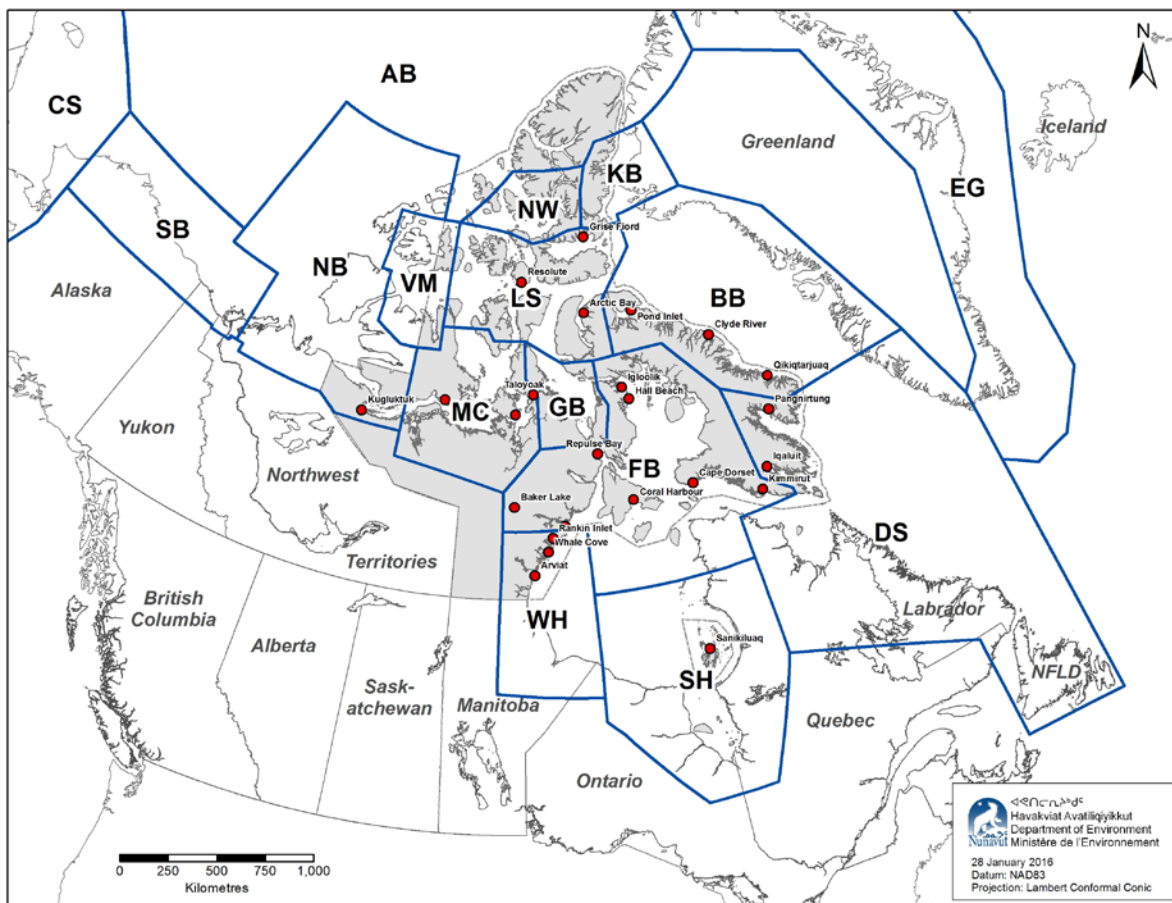


Figure 1. Canadian and Nunavut (dark grey) polar bear subpopulations [BB = Baffin Bay; DS = Davis Strait; SH = Southern Hudson Bay; WH = Western Hudson Bay; FB = Foxe Basin; GB = Gulf of Boothia; MC = M'Clintock Channel; LS = Lancaster Sound; KB = Kane Basin; NW = Norwegian Bay; VM = Viscount Melville Sound; NB = Northern Beaufort Sea; SB = Southern Beaufort Sea.

4.4 Biology

4.4.1 Life cycle and reproduction

Breeding occurs between March and June. When a male mates with a female, ovulation is induced, although implantation of the fertilized egg is delayed until October. Female age at first reproduction ranges between four and seven years of age, with most subpopulations having females producing litters by age six. By age six, male polar bears are normally reproductively mature, however younger males often do not reproduce due to competition from older and bigger males. It appears that most males are entering the reproductive segment of the population between eight and ten years old.

Pregnant females prepare and enter maternity dens in late fall and the cubs, normally one or two, are born between November and early January. IQ suggests that the

timing of birth is later in higher latitudes. In northern subpopulations dens are generally excavated in snow, and are then covered and closed by snowdrifts. They are frequently located on islands or land that is near the coast and adjacent to areas with high seal densities in spring. An anomaly to this pattern of behaviour is the maternity dens for the Western Hudson Bay and Southern Hudson Bay polar bears: their dens are up to 120 km inland at traditional denning areas, and initially dug in soil.

At birth, cubs weigh approximately 0.6 kg. They are nursed inside the den until sometime between the end of February and the middle of April. By this time, cubs weigh 10-12 kg. A new litter is produced after three years of raising cubs, making the average inter-litter interval approximately 3.6 years.

4.4.2 Natural mortality and survival

Aside from humans, polar bears have been observed and documented as posing a threat to other polar bears. Inuit and scientists have observed predation by wolves on polar bear cubs-of-the-year. Walruses have also been reported to kill polar bears in self-defence, but this is infrequent. Every main life history stage of a polar bear has different challenges, such as hunting success and experience, and hierarchical rank; therefore the survival rates vary accordingly. Moreover, the survival rates for these life stages also vary slightly among subpopulations because of the differences in ecosystem productivity and seasonal ice duration.

Biologists recognize four important age categories: 1) cubs-of-the-year; 2) yearlings and sub-adults, 3) prime-age adults, and 4) senescent adults. These categories are also divided by sex because males generally have lower survival rates than females. In the wild, the maximum age is estimated to be 30 years.

Inuit recognize 11 different age categories/class of polar bears. They are 1) *Atiqtaqtaq* – a newborn cub, 2) *Atciqtaq* – a cub, 3) *Piaraq* – a cub that is with its mother, 4) *Advarautaq* – a cub that is about one year old, 5) *Nalitqaihiniaq* – when a cub is a little bigger than an *advarautaq* (a bit bigger than a sled dog, about the height of the mother's belly), 6) *Namiaq* – offspring that is the same size as its mother, 7) *Nukaugaq* – a young male, 8) *Tadzraq* – an adult female, 9) *Anguruaq* – a full grown male, 10) *Arnaluit* – a pregnant female, 11) *Piaralik* – a female with cubs. Although some of these age categories are general and specific for the same age, they represent the diverse understanding Inuit have of polar bears.

4.4.3 Diet

Polar bears are carnivorous. Throughout their Nunavut range, ringed, bearded and harp seals make up most of the polar bear's diet. Other species like walrus, beluga whale, narwhal, bowhead whale, birds, and harbour seal are also preyed upon

opportunistically. Polar bear also eat eggs, berries, and seaweed.

Polar bear diet varies throughout the year, and across its range. Primary feeding tends to be in spring when seal pups are abundant; however, polar bears will hunt and scavenge throughout the year, feeding opportunistically on vegetation, berries, eggs, and birds. Fish and ringed seals are also successfully preyed upon when there is little or no sea ice in summer.

Polar bears are well-adapted to times of food abundance and shortages. When food is in high abundance, polar bears can increase their body mass significantly. When food becomes scarce or unavailable, polar bears can live off their stored fat reserves.

4.4.4 Habitat

Polar bears can be found in all coastal and offshore areas of the Canadian subarctic and arctic. Access to land is essential during the ice-free periods, but also for mid-winter denning. They also use the marine environment for hunting marine animals. Polar bears have adapted to all types of sea ice, and are strong swimmers capable of traveling long distances in open water. Inuit have observed that bears can exist in open water and on sea ice for the majority of their lives (the Inuktitut term for this is *tulayuituq*).

In Nunavut, polar bears den mostly on land. Denning sites are locations that have sufficient snow cover in early winter for the construction of the dens. Dens can also be found on moving multi-year ice and areas of annual rough ice. All maternity denning sites are important areas because they provide shelter for the mother and offspring. All maternity denning sites are protected under the Nunavut *Wildlife Act*.

5. BACKGROUND

5.1 Historical perspective

The polar bear management system in Nunavut dates back to the Northwest Territories, prior to the creation of Nunavut. This system includes setting of harvest quotas (now called Total Allowable Harvest or TAH), instituting harvest seasons, and harvest reporting and sample submission. After the creation of Nunavut, memoranda of understanding for each subpopulation were implemented between the DOE and each RWO and HTO to guide harvest and management.

5.2 The Nunavut perspective

Management in Nunavut has focused on sustainable harvest using population estimates derived from scientific studies. Although abundance in most subpopulations was low prior to the 1970s (the reason for the Agreement on the Conservation of Polar Bears), many have recovered or increased since that time. As

of 2016, the statuses of the 12 subpopulations in Nunavut are determined to be: 3 uncertain, 1 likely decline, 4 likely stable, 2 stable, and 2 likely increase (see Appendix A). Nunavummiut believe that polar bears have become less afraid of humans and more likely to damage property, as the result of an apparent increase in polar bears in some areas. In Nunavut, human safety and the right of Inuit to harvest are high priorities. Increased interactions between humans and bears, and a right to protect human safety and property have led to an increase in defence kills. Considering all removals come off the TAH this can lead to a reduction in the community harvest, resulting in a loss of opportunity for traditional harvesting activities.

5.3 Legislative frameworks and agreements

In Nunavut, wildlife is managed according to Article 5 of the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement. Article 5 sets out the creation of the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board (NWMB), which is the primary instrument of wildlife management in Nunavut. It defines the roles of the NWMB, government, Hunters and Trappers Organizations (HTOs), and Regional Wildlife Organizations (RWOs).

The Nunavut *Wildlife Act* sets out harvest management, licensing, reporting and sample submission. Further details on management, including research, harvest, and TAH determinations have been detailed in previous Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) developed for all subpopulations (12) jointly with RWOs, Hunters and Trappers Organizations HTOs and the Department of Environment (DOE). These MOUs shall be replaced with this management plan. Enforcement provisions are in place in regulations under the *Wildlife Act*.

In Nunavut, each of the co-management partners fulfills its respective role as defined in the NLCA (see Figure 2). This plan applies to the Nunavut Settlement Area as defined in Section 3.1.1 of the NLCA.

In 2011 the polar bear was listed under the federal *Species at Risk Act (SARA)* as a species of special concern. While there are no associated effects on Inuit harvest or management actions, a national management plan must be developed according to SARA legislation in order to prevent a species from becoming threatened or endangered. This Nunavut-based management plan may be adopted, in whole or part, as part of the national plan.

In 1973, Canada was a signatory to the International Agreement on the Conservation of Polar Bears. The Agreement holds member states accountable for taking action to protect the ecosystems in which polar bears live, paying special attention to places where polar bears den, feed, and migrate. Range states also must manage polar bear populations in accordance with proper conservation practices, based on best available scientific data. Recently, range states have agreed to include Inuit

traditional knowledge as part of the body of knowledge to be considered for polar bear conservation and management. There also exist inter-jurisdictional agreements between Canada and Greenland in Davis Straits, Baffin Bay and Kane Basin subpopulations, and Canada and the United States on polar bears in general.

6. POLAR BEAR CO-MANAGEMENT IN NUNAVUT

The following co-management partners participate in polar bear management, their roles are defined in full detail in Section 5 of the NLCA. A brief summary is provided below, however the NLCA is the guiding document. Figure 2 illustrates not only the partners but decision-making process.

6.1 Nunavut Tunngavik Inc.

Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated represents all Inuit beneficiaries in the Nunavut Settlement Area, in line with the NLCA that was signed in 1993 by the Inuit of Nunavut and the Government of Canada. The NLCA is constitutionally protected under Canada's *Constitution Act*, 1982.

6.2 NWMB

The NWMB's role is defined in the NLCA, sections 5.2.33 and 5.2.34. Its role consists of, but is not limited to, setting Total Allowable Harvest rates (TAH) and Non Quota Limitations (NQLs). In addition, it approves management plans and the designation of rare species.

6.3 RWOs

The role of RWOs is defined in section 5.7.6 of the NLCA. The role of the RWOs includes, but is not limited to, regulating the activities of HTOs in their regions, including allocating TAH among communities, and distributing any accumulated harvest credits (1 un-harvested bear equals 1 credit, see Appendix C) as required to cover accidental, defence, or illegal kills. The RWOs may also return credits annually to augment a community's harvest. Credits may not be transferred between communities that share a population without the written consent of the community that accumulated the credit.

6.4 HTOs

The role of HTOs is defined in sections 5.7.2 and 5.7.3 of the NLCA. These roles include, but are not limited to, regulating the harvesting activities of their members, including all beneficiaries within the community. They allocate tags for species with TAH, and set harvest seasons. As per the NLCA, the HTOs may develop rules for non-quota limitations. They open and close their polar bear hunting seasons to

optimize polar bear hunting for their communities and determine if sport hunts will be allowed in the community.

6.5 Government of Nunavut

The Nunavut Minister of Environment retains the ultimate authority over polar bear management in Nunavut as per the NLCA. DOE staff conduct research, work to collect IQ, and make management recommendations to the NWMB for decision. Conservation Officers enforce the Nunavut *Wildlife Act* and its regulations. DOE implemented new programs starting in 2013 to reduce human-bear conflicts, and to reduce and compensate for damage to property as a result of bears.

6.6 Government of Canada

Under the federal *Species at Risk Act* (SARA), Environment and Climate Change Canada is responsible for completing a national management plan for polar bears, and has responsibilities for the management of listed species where they occur on federal land. The Government of Canada is responsible for managing polar bears and their habitat on federal lands under the jurisdiction of the federal Minister of Environment (National Wildlife Areas and Migratory Bird Sanctuaries, National Parks, National Park Reserves and National Historic Sites). The Government of Canada contributes to scientific knowledge of polar bears through research and helps to coordinate polar bear management across the country. Canada signs international agreements on behalf of all jurisdictions and has responsibilities to coordinate international management actions for polar bears, with the advice of the co-management boards and jurisdictions. It is involved in international polar bear management including the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) and the 1973 *Agreement on the Conservation of Polar Bears*.

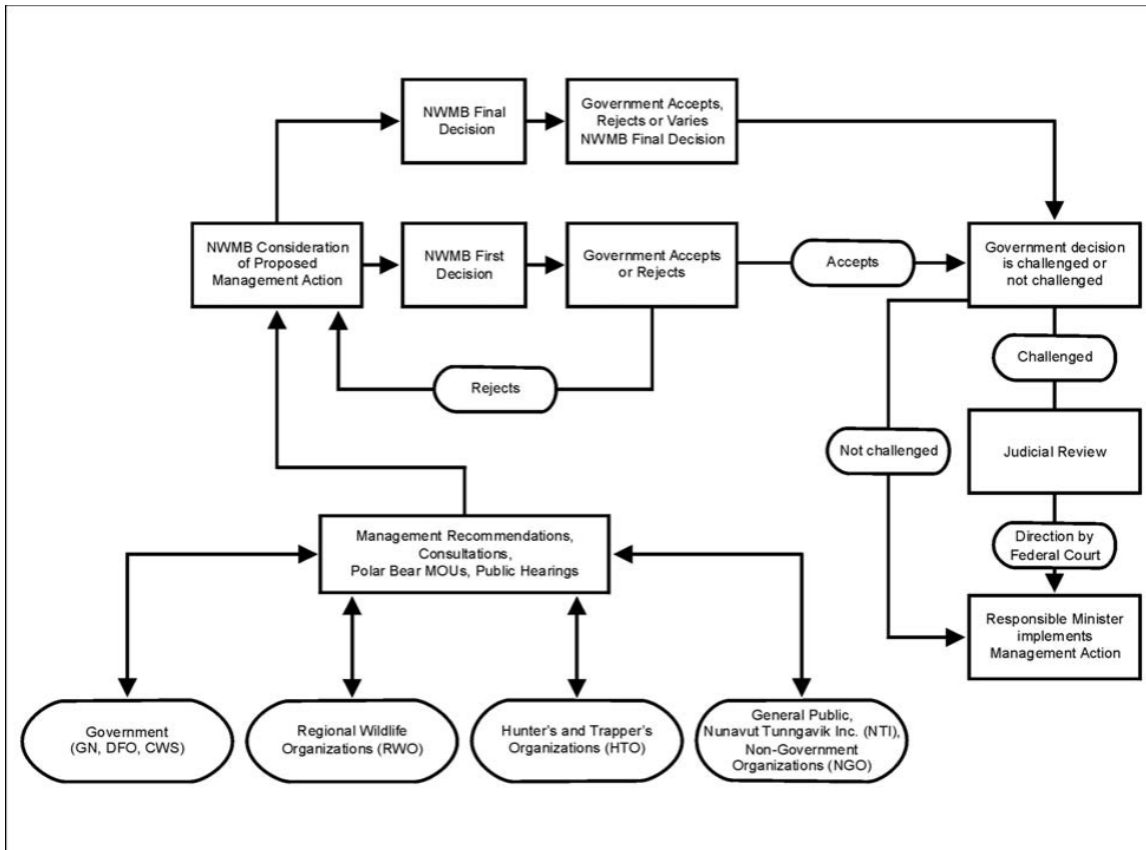


Figure 2. The Co-Management Framework in Nunavut (after Obbard et al. 2010).

7. CONSERVATION THREATS AND CHALLENGES

Nunavut has a management system whereby threats of any kind, including those posed by industrial activity or climate change, can be identified and responded to relatively quickly. For example, if a significant reduction in the body condition, recruitment, or overall abundance of a subpopulation is detected and attributed to a threat, the appropriate action can be taken to implement conservation measures to stop or mitigate these changes. The following are current threats, or threats expected to occur within the 10 year life of this plan.

7.1 Industrial activity

There is considerable potential in Nunavut for industrial activities to be harmful to polar bears and their habitat. There are several active and proposed mines, and other industrial pursuits, that could affect bears directly, or through increased shipping traffic and pollution. Noise and disturbance from humans or exploration activity in any form near dens could cause disturbance, the abandonment of offspring, or the displacement of denning bears if it is not carefully planned and controlled. Any shipping activities through primary feeding areas may lead to

disturbance and reduce the hunting success of polar bears. These activities could also increase the abandonment of seal dens. If industrial activities (e.g., oil or gas exploration and development, shipping, mining exploration and operations) lead to an oil spill in sea ice habitat, polar bears and seals will be directly exposed to oil, with effects ranging from ingestion of oil, hair loss, kidney failure, and ultimately death. Increasing industrial activities may cause an increase in the local human population (both the indigenous population and non-indigenous people), the amount of refuse, and other wildlife attractants. As a consequence, bear-human encounters are also likely to increase, leading to a potential increase of injury and/or mortality.

7.2 Tourism

There always has been a great interest in the Arctic and its resources and wildlife. This interest has recently grown as the result of easier access to remote destinations across the Arctic. Any increase in human activity (e.g. by boat, ATV and snowmobile traffic) increases the amount of disturbance to polar bears. Currently, Nunavut does not have a polar bear viewing tourism industry as sophisticated as Manitoba, but various locations in Nunavut offer similar opportunities that could become focal points for intense polar bear viewing. Although some side effects of tourism can be controlled by proper policies and management, the cumulative impacts of several negative stressors (e.g. disturbance, environmental changes, and contaminants) is not clear and therefore warrant heightened awareness.

7.3 Pollution/contaminants

Polar bears are at the top of the Arctic food chain, and as such accumulate high levels of various environmental pollutants through the food they ingest. A majority of these polluting compounds, mostly organochlorines, reach the Arctic via wind and ocean currents from industrialized areas. These compounds are usually fat soluble and remain in fat tissue, with concentrations accumulating progressively at higher levels throughout the food chain. It has been demonstrated that various organochlorines are passed from mothers to cubs through their milk.

How these pollutants and chemical compounds affect polar bear populations and their health and fitness over the long-term is not well known. However, it is very likely that their survival and their immune and reproductive systems are negatively affected. With new pollutants and uncertain long-term impacts for polar bears, a combined and reinforced response to these stressors is anticipated.

7.4 Habitat alteration

7.4.1 Climate change

Climate change is affecting terrestrial and marine environments in Nunavut. Although there is growing scientific evidence linking the impacts of climate change to reduced

body condition of bears and projections of population declines, no declines have currently been attributed to climate change. IQ acknowledges that polar bears are exposed to the effects of climate change, but suggests that they are adaptable. It is challenging to predict and mitigate the effects of climate change on the polar bears' sea ice habitat. Active management and increasing the frequency of subpopulation assessments will allow for more responsive decision-making in response to climate change. The loss of annual sea ice in southern subpopulations may be offset by improvements to heavy multi-year ice in other portions of the range. Subpopulation boundaries may shift as bears adapt to fluctuations in their environment.

*“..people (in the south) think climate change will hurt polar bears
but the bears will adapt, and there will always be an arctic and ice”*
Leopa Akpalialuk, Pangnirtung HTO board member

7.4.2 Denning

Other important habitat includes denning and coastal areas used as summer retreat areas during ice free periods. In Nunavut, most polar bears den on land, either along the slopes of fiords, or on peninsulas or islands. All maternity denning sites are important areas because they provide shelter for the mother and offspring, and contribute to the growth of the population.

A significant amount of polar bear habitat, including known denning areas, are currently within the boundaries of national parks, territorial parks, or other protected areas, such as Migratory Bird Sanctuaries and National Wildlife Areas. Existing protected areas will play an increasingly important role in the face of growing development in the Arctic.

7.5 Population boundaries

The division of polar bears into subpopulations is based on movement patterns estimated from satellite telemetry data, as well as tag returns of harvested bears. Although boundaries are accepted for management purposes, it is understood that bears occasionally move across these artificial boundaries at times, moving and responding to their environment. It is important to recognize that these boundaries have formed the basis for management actions for over four decades, and have been beneficial to managers for setting harvest levels and for researchers focusing their population assessment studies.

Contrary to the scientific view of subpopulations above, Inuit believe that polar bears travel regularly among different geographic areas of Nunavut and that there may be fewer than 13 subpopulations in Canada. As the understanding of the structure of polar bear populations improves, there will be an ongoing need to review current subpopulation delineation. Ongoing studies using satellite telemetry collars may

provide information that could result in boundary changes. It will remain a challenge to balance Inuit perspective on population structure with current subpopulation designations. Maintaining Inuit support for subpopulation boundaries is fundamental to the success of polar bear management in Nunavut. Reconciling IQ with scientific knowledge as it evolves will be a necessary but considerable challenge.

7.5 Polar Bears and People

Inuit and their ancestors have been living in close proximity to polar bears for thousands of years. The human population in Nunavut is currently higher than it has ever been and continues to grow, with most of the population concentrated in 25 communities. At the same time, it is recognized that, in many areas across Nunavut, there are more bears now than 40 or 50 years ago. Human-bear interactions have increased and led to an increase in defence of life and property kills (DLPK) of polar bears.

These DLPKs are included in the TAH and reduce Inuit hunting opportunities. Defence kills occur in communities and on the land in hunting and fishing camps. Inuit have stored meat for centuries in traditional meat caches, both within small traditional camps on the land, and within communities. The loss of nutritious food due to polar bear depredation is a significant cost to Inuit.

Reduced hunting opportunities and associated loss of meat and hide are only part of the impact Inuit feel from harvest restrictions. There is also an impact on the transfer of Inuit knowledge and culture over time when restrictions are put in place.

“...it is like ripples in a pond, we lose the hide and the meat and the hunt, but there is also loss of culture and knowledge. We no longer travel to the areas we used to hunt polar bears, so a generation has no knowledge of the land and traditional camping areas, we no longer have sport hunters so we no longer keep dog teams and we cannot pass on that knowledge, we no longer have skins to handle and women cannot pass on the skills to prepare and sew.”

David Irqut, HTO Director and Elder, Taloyoak

7.7 Inter-jurisdictional considerations

In Nunavut, eight of 12 polar bear subpopulations are shared with other jurisdictions. The shared populations are Northern Beaufort Sea and Viscount Melville Sound (shared with NWT*), Foxe Basin (shared with Quebec*), Southern Hudson Bay (shared with Ontario* and Quebec*), Western Hudson Bay (shared with Manitoba*), Davis Strait (shared with Labrador*, Quebec* and Greenland*), and Baffin Bay and Kane Basin (shared with Greenland). Cooperative efforts on research and consultation between jurisdictions should be encouraged as part of these efforts. Current jurisdictional efforts to consider combined total allowable removal levels

between jurisdictions are a positive step for cooperative management however this remains a significant challenge due to the complexities of multiple jurisdictions and land claims.

(*This denotes a simplified relationship between jurisdictions and does not reflect the respective sub-jurisdictional entities and their stakeholders and boards).

7.8 Trade

The 1973 Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) has been in effect in Canada since July 1975. Polar bears are included in *Appendix II* to the Convention which means that trade is allowed under strict conditions including that it must be non-detrimental to the species and CITES permits are required.

As the responsible authority for the implementation of CITES, Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC) must determine if the export or import of a species would be detrimental to the survival of that species. Such “non-detrimental findings” (NDFs) are a requirement of the Convention. The international export of polar bears from Canada is considered non-detrimental (with the exception of export of bears harvested from the Baffin Bay subpopulation).

Given the shared jurisdiction for wildlife in Canada, coordination among provincial and territorial jurisdictions is required to ensure that total removals among jurisdictions within shared subpopulations is sustainable and defensible at the national and international level.

Ongoing domestic and international export of polar bear parts, such as hides, depends on sound harvest reporting and sustainable harvest levels. Communities have unanimously supported efforts to maintain international trade options for polar bears as an important component of community economic development. The listing of polar bears on CITES *Appendix I* would have a negative impact on conservation efforts as the economic benefit to communities will be reduced and the incentive to manage for abundant populations will be lost. In September 2015 the Animal Committee of CITES determined that the current trade in polar bear hides and parts is not detrimental to the survival of the species in the wild.

8. MANAGEMENT PLAN OBJECTIVES

The following five main components are considered important for co-management partners to achieve the goal of the management plan:

- Harvest management (*Angujaujunnaqtunik Aulattiniq*)
- Information and knowledge gathering (*Qanuqtuurniq*)
- Habitat management and environmental stewardship (*Avatitinnik Kamatsiarniq*)

- People and bears (*Inuillu Nanuillu*)
- Working together (*Piliriqatiginniiq*)

8.1 Harvest management and objectives (Angujaujunnaqtunik Aulattiniq)

8.1.1 Harvest Management

Legislated harvest restrictions have been the primary management tool used to facilitate the recovery of polar bear populations throughout Nunavut. As new information becomes available, co-management partners work together to establish a Total Allowable Harvest (TAH) for each polar bear population. The TAH represents the total number of polar bears that can be harvested according to the management objective of the subpopulation. These numbers are based on detailed scientific data, population trends, IQ, and past harvest information.

Once the TAH is established, local communities are given the choice whether they wish to harvest the set number of bears for their own needs or to allocate a portion of the total for sport hunts. All bears harvested, whether for subsistence purposes, sport hunts, or in defence of life/property, are accounted for and subtracted from the annual TAH of the nearest community. In the event that human-caused mortality exceeds the annual TAH of a particular community, additional tags will be issued and will be counted as part of the following year's TAH. Any portion of the TAH that goes unused will be counted as credits, which can then be used in subsequent years. This accounting regime is known as the Flexible Quota System – refer to Appendix C for a detailed discussion.

While the TAH for each polar bear population is subject to change, the following harvest restrictions are legislated in the Nunavut *Wildlife Act* and do not vary according population dynamics or annual removals:

1. No person shall harvest a polar bear that is under three years of age unless
 - a. It appears to be abandoned by its mother; or
 - b. Its mother was killed or harvested as an emergency kill in accordance with section 97 of the Act and there is little likelihood of it surviving.
2. No person shall harvest a female polar bear that is accompanied by a bear that is or appears to be under three years of age (A polar bear is deemed to be three years old on the first day of the January that follows the third summer after its birth).
3. No person shall harvest a female polar that is in a den or that is constructing a den.

The use of Non Quota Limitations, including seasonal harvest restrictions, sex selective harvesting (the harvest of two males for every one female), and the protection of family groups are also important components of Nunavut's polar bear

harvest management regime.

8.1.2 Selective Harvesting

Selective harvesting of wildlife populations is a common management practice whereby individuals of a certain age, sex or body size are selectively harvested in order to achieve a specific management goal. In Nunavut, the use of age and sex selective harvesting has been used to recover polar bear populations, while maximizing harvest opportunities for Inuit.

Sex-Selective Harvesting

Polar bears are a polygynous species, which means that one male often mates with multiple females during a single breeding season. Accordingly, a few male bears are capable of siring many offspring. Females on the other hand generally only mate once every 2-4 years because they must give birth and raise their young alone. Therefore, the number of females in a given population is the most important factor affecting future abundance and population growth.

Scientific modeling has shown that harvesting 2 males for every 1 female is the best way to increase/maintain polar bear populations, while simultaneously maximizing the harvest for Inuit. Harvesting at a ratio of 1 male for every 1 female is possible but would likely require the adoption of lower, more conservative harvest rates for most populations.

Age-Selective Harvesting

As noted above, only those bears that are three years of age and older are allowed to be harvested. This is meant to ensure polar bear populations remain stable via the recruitment of new cubs.

8.1.3 Harvest Reporting and Monitoring

Timely harvest reporting and sample collection are essential components of any wildlife management system. They provide invaluable information about population health, and are required to maintain international trade in polar bear parts. The following body parts shall be collected from each polar bear that is harvested in Nunavut:

- (a) lower jaw
- (b) baculum (penis bone), as proof of sex in the case of males
- (c) ear tags, if present
- (d) straight line body length and chest girth
- (e) other samples or measurements, as required.
- (f) additional samples and measurements (e.g., body condition, body size, etc.)

It is recognized that consultation and training may be required before additional information can be collected. Hunters will be paid for samples at a rate determined by the Department of Environment. In the event of a defence of life or property kill (DLPK) the Superintendent of Wildlife (GN) may authorize payment for samples collected by HTOs or individuals on behalf of the Department in the absence of a Conservation Officer in the community.

The parts that show the age, sex and species of a polar bear are: teeth for the age, the jaw or skull for the species, the baculum for the gender, and a meat sample for genetic identification of the sex if no baculum was provided. DNA determination will constitute evidence of the sex. If the reported sex is different from the genetic result, the genetic result is considered the final sex determination for TAH purposes.

Potential future harvest management actions may include:

- 1) *If a decline in a population is noted by science/IQ and the objective is to increase or maintain the population, actions may include:*
 - Reduce the TAH, or institute a moratorium until the desired target number is reached;
- 2) *If an increase in a population is noted by science/TK and the objective is to decrease or maintain the population, actions may include:*
 - Increase or maintain the TAH; however, If the TAH is increased, appropriate monitoring must be conducted as a follow-up to measure the success of the management action;
- 3) *If a population is determined to be stable by science/TK and the objective is to maintain the population at the current level actions may include:*
 - Maintain the current harvest conditions unless there is evidence of declining body condition, recruitment, etc.

As a future option to address the concerns of public safety and potential new subpopulation management objectives, the following objectives will be considered as new information (subpopulation inventories) becomes available:

- 1) *When the status, trend, and management objective of a particular population can support it:*
 - Eliminate the sex-selective harvest (i.e. harvest 1:1 male to female). As discussed above, harvesting polar bears at a 2 male:1 female ratio maximizes the number of bears that Inuit can harvest; accordingly, switching to a 1:1 harvest will likely result in a reduced TAH. DOE will consider these requests on a case-by-case basis, and only as new information becomes available;

8.2 Information and knowledge gathering (*Qanuqtuurniq*) and objectives

8.2.1 Gaining knowledge

To date, most polar bear research has focused on the estimation of population abundance and trends, and the delineation of population boundaries using physical mark-recapture and telemetry collars. However, Inuit resistance to these research methods has resulted in a shift to less invasive methods, including genetic mark-recapture studies and aerial surveys. These methods do not require the handling of bears, but they must be done more frequently because they do not provide the same degree of detailed information about the individual polar bears or the populations in general.

DOE has implemented various new research methods to monitor Nunavut's polar bear populations that require less or no handling, addressing hunters concerns. That means that a variety of information that biologists previously obtained through research activities is no longer available. Information obtained through prior research on growth, development, and variation of bears across Nunavut can now be collected through hunters. Communities and hunters can provide this information voluntarily to accommodate this loss of data by collecting additional information to supplement population data information. This will aid in understanding polar bear biology and ecology in a broader context.

In addition to ongoing scientific research and monitoring, improvements are being made in the collection of IQ for use in decision-making. Inuit observe bears year round and provide current and historical knowledge that help in decision-making. Harvester observations of body condition can be used to help infer health, as can observations of reproductive success, such as bears with single cubs, twins and triplets. On its own, this information may not be enough for decision-makers, but when used mutually with other sources of knowledge, the decision making process is strengthened.

The following objectives are aimed at providing information that will help in making decisions:

- Increase the frequency of population surveys and monitoring;
- Continue to improve Inuit involvement and participation in research;
- Improve and continue gathering and archiving IQ in relation to polar bears and their habitat;
- Improve and continue to gather supplementary information of harvested bears by hunters;
- Continue to develop and evaluate new and less invasive methods of research;

- Consider not only the effects of ecosystem changes on polar bears, but also how polar bears affect other species, specifically ringed seals and eider ducks;
- Continue genetic research and collaring to clarify potential boundary changes where needed and supported by communities;
- Continue to review developing knowledge when considering boundary changes to reflect Inuit knowledge;
- Improve information reporting related to polar bears and bear-human interactions;
- Improve the analysis of bear-human interactions to determine causes and potential mitigation measures;
- Continue traditional mark-recapture and delineation studies using collars where needed and supported by communities, or when alternative studies do not provide sufficient data for management decisions.

8.2.2 Research

The Department of Environment intends to conduct population inventories of each subpopulation on average every 10 years (depending on the monitoring techniques applied). Harvest statistics and sample collection will be ongoing in order to further aid management decisions. When possible, a concurrent IQ study will be conducted to complement the population inventory. A schedule of subpopulation inventories and IQ studies is found in Appendix D.

Community residents (with priority to HTO members) shall have the opportunity to participate in polar bear research projects. HTOs will have input into the proposed studies and IQ will be used to guide research efforts.

In addition to the ongoing population monitoring conducted by DOE, other partner organizations and individuals conduct research on polar bears throughout Nunavut. Some of these initiatives include research examining the impacts of contaminants and climate change on polar bear populations, ecological studies, feeding studies and many others. The information gathered through these projects will be considered in management decisions as well.

While the Government of Nunavut has invested considerable effort into the development and use of less invasive research methods to study polar bears, there may be instances when collaring and physical mark-recapture studies are needed to collect more detailed information about a particular population or populations. The Government of Nunavut will seek the support of HTOs prior to implementing studies that utilize these methodologies.

Physical mark-recapture and collaring studies require researchers to use immobilizing drugs in order to safely handle polar bears. When a bear has been immobilized within one year of the date of harvest, \$1000.00 compensation will be paid to the hunter who harvested the polar bear. HTOs will be consulted and

informed of all research initiatives involving the use of chemical immobilization; harvesters can consult their local Conservation Officer to determine whether a bear has been previously immobilized. Any damage to the hide from research activities will be compensated for based on the reduced amount of the hide's market value. Also, any bear killed during DOE polar bear research activities will receive a tag from the nearest community and the community will be paid \$5,000.00 in compensation from the appropriate government authority. These compensation amounts will be reviewed during the 5 and 10 year reviews of the plan. ECCC and Parks Canada also have guidelines for research-related polar bear mortality. HTOs are encouraged to negotiate compensation packages with other researchers or companies that may destroy a bear in defence of life and property when the community reviews the respective research or development permits.

8.3 Habitat management and environmental stewardship (*Avatitinnik Kamatsiarniq*) objectives

Polar bears use most parts of the Arctic and sub-arctic habitat in which they live. From annual and multi-year ice to open water and land, they are always moving. Ensuring that polar bear habitat remains available and usable will take significant effort because of the magnitude of the Arctic and the fact that many threats originate elsewhere. Stewardship can be partially achieved through regulatory processes that occur within Nunavut. However, contaminants that are brought north by wind and ocean currents and climate change are issues that occur far beyond Nunavut.

Current habitat stewardship is further supported by the existing parks and protected areas in Nunavut, including National Parks, Territorial Parks, Migratory Bird Sanctuaries, and National Wildlife Areas.

Objectives that promote stewardship and protect habitat must be local and also consider the broader causes and issues. These objectives include:

- Ensure that stakeholders have the resources and information to participate effectively in regulatory reviews, such as Environmental Impact Assessments;
- Improve monitoring for contaminants in order to respond to potential health concerns resulting from consumption;
- Consider how increasing shipping and resource development activities may affect individual polar bears and populations, both separately and cumulatively;
- Focus research to improve the understanding of climate change impacts, both negative and positive, on ecological conditions that are important to polar bears and that inform conservation and management actions;
- Identify important habitats for polar bears and implement appropriate habitat protection measures through cooperation with appropriate agencies;

- Consider the creation of special management areas, parks, and other land use designations for additional habitat protection and stewardship.

8.4 People and bears (*Inuillu Nanuillu*) and objectives

The polar bear maintains a position of significant cultural importance to Inuit. Harvesting polar bears for meat, tradition, and economic benefit is still very important, and the harvest of one's first bear is a significant milestone in a hunter's life. Minimizing the number of bears that are killed in defence of life and property (DLPK) and maintaining the traditional harvest are important to all communities.

When a DLPK happens, the hide, meat, and all parts of harvested polar bears are turned over to the local HTO after the Conservation Officer has determined that it is a legitimate DLP kill. When there is an irregular or illegal kill, the Conservation Officer will seize the parts of the bear necessary to complete the investigation. The specimens of the killed bear are collected as normal. When it has been determined that the kill was accidental or a DLPK, the Conservation Officer shall ensure that all seized parts from the kill are turned over to the local HTO. The cleaning and drying of the hide is the responsibility of the HTO because the HTO retains the hide. In all cases, the hides in question must be properly stored and preserved and returned to the HTO as soon as possible to prevent damage and loss of economic revenue.

If there is any dispute about the distribution of the hide, meat, or parts of the bear from a DLPK, the decision is deferred to the appropriate RWO. There is no payment to the HTO or the hunter for specimens, or for cleaning and drying the hide of a bear taken illegally. As per the Nunavut *Wildlife Act*, all seized parts from bears taken illegally are disposed of as directed by the judicial authority.

The following objectives are aimed at reducing bear-human conflict and reducing injury/mortality:

- Continue to develop and implement community bear plans;
- Hire bear monitors when needed and train and equip them;
- Continue to develop and improve methods for protecting people, property, and meat caches;
- Ensure that the Wildlife Damage Compensation and Wildlife Damage Prevention Programs are functional and being used;
- Improve communications to the public about bear safety, deterrence, and available programs;
- Work with Hamlets and HTOs to improve local storage for meat in camps and communities as part of the bear-human conflict prevention program.

8.5 Working together (*Piliriqatiginniiq*) and objectives

8.5.1 Within Nunavut

This plan was developed with the direction of a co-management working group and the participation of all HTOs and communities. This is a positive step in improved cooperative management, and the following objectives will help to further improve cooperation within Nunavut:

- Involve Inuit in research, including design, field studies and reporting;
- Improve the collection and archiving of IQ so that it is accessible for planning and decision-making.

8.5.2 Between jurisdictions

Working together should also take place at the inter-jurisdictional level. Polar bear inter-jurisdictional agreements should be developed for all subpopulations that are shared with Nunavut. Domestic agreements are underway for some subpopulations and already exist between Canada and the United States, and Canada and Greenland. User-to-user groups should also pursue agreements on shared populations; one such agreement already exists in the western portion of the Kitikmeot and the Inuvialuit in NWT.

The following objectives will help to foster improved cooperation beyond Nunavut:

- Foster user-to-user agreements between Inuit organizations and other jurisdictions;
- Work toward developing compatible management regimes for shared populations;
- Build cooperative research programs in areas such as population monitoring, contaminants monitoring, and traditional knowledge studies;
- Continue to improve coordination between different levels of government and partners. Environment and Climate Change Canada, Parks Canada, DOE, RWOs and HTOs all have a role and an interest in implementation of this plan;
- Work toward joint decision-making processes involving all the boards linked to a shared subpopulation

8.5.3 Sharing information and knowledge

Simply having knowledge is not enough to manage the species. Ensuring that knowledge and information are shared will help all co-management partners to make better informed decisions. Currently, information flow is sporadic and all parties need to make improvements. This is best done by formalizing information sharing through communications and outreach:

- Develop a communications strategy for sharing information;
- Develop data sharing agreements with other agencies and jurisdictions;
- Ensure that the results of studies, both scientific and IQ, are shared with all co-management partners;
- Continue to contribute to the Polar Bear-Human Interaction Management System, work with the human-bear conflict subcommittee of the Range States and outside organizations to quantify and characterize successful polar bear deterrent measures.

9. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PLAN

Achieving the objectives identified above will require cooperation of co-management partners, jurisdictions and significant investment of financial and human resources. No changes to existing TAH will occur until new information becomes available, the current management objective of managing for maximum sustainable harvest will continue. New information (see Appendix D) will be presented to the NWMB (when available) along with a review of the management objective for the subpopulation and a review of any new scientific research or IQ study. At that time, a new TAH will be recommended that is consistent with the subpopulation management objective and the objectives of this plan.

The co-management structure in Nunavut requires an NWMB decision for any change to TAH, management objectives, or NQL. It is difficult to predetermine which action, or actions, will be undertaken within the co-management framework and as a result of the NWMB decision-making process as each individual scenario will have its own set of circumstances, including management objective, Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit, population size and trend, as well as population projections under differing harvest scenarios. As the primary decision-making body, the NWMB makes decisions, and no plan or action can be prejudged in this format. This does not mean that action will not be taken, as the goal of the management plan is *"To maintain viable and healthy polar bear subpopulations for current and future generations, and to ensure that polar bears remain an integrated and functioning part of the ecosystem while monitored and appropriate harvests are allowed."*, rather that the outcome will be based on the best available information at the time. In that context, the following are examples, identified by co-management partners, of what actions may be taken in order to implement this plan.

Prior to action being taken, there will be appropriate consultation and dialogue with co-management partners and neighbouring jurisdictions to ensure success.

9.1 Harvest Management

Management Action	Priority	Timeline
Undertake a review of the sustainable removal rates for females	high	3 years
Test revisions to the flexible quota system to ensure they are administratively feasible (revisions will switch to a 1:1 reduction in TAH the following year for overharvest, i.e. if one female is overharvested the reduction will be only one female the following year (If a female overharvest cannot be accommodated through credits or from the following year's TAH than regular flex quota reductions will apply were male credits will go into the bank as opposed to being automatically available).	high	2 year
Expand and increase harvest bio-characteristics reporting upon peer review of research objectives	high	5 year
Improve handling of hides taken as DLPK to ensure no loss in hide value	high	Ongoing
Ensure harvest reporting and sample submission is adequate to address needs	high	Ongoing
Develop a training program for Inuit in communities to establish an Inuit data collection program for hunter effort and interviews and collection of polar bear bio-characteristics	moderate	5 years

9.2 Information and Knowledge Gathering (Qanuqtuurniq): Actions

Habitat Management and Environmental Stewardship (*Avatitinnik Kamatsiarniq*):
Actions

Management Action	Priority	Timeline
Develop a knowledge and information sharing framework for co-management partners	High	2 years
Gather local and Inuit knowledge and incorporate into planning and decision-making	High	Ongoing
Strive to increase the involvement of Inuit in research, planning, and decision-making	High	Ongoing
Conduct population assessments as per the	High	Ongoing

inventory schedule and make the results publicly available in a timely manner		
Continue to develop, evaluate and apply research techniques that will provide the essential information with minimal or no impact on polar bears	Medium	Ongoing
Develop a 25 year research strategy for polar bear ecosystem-based monitoring identifying and prioritizing research gaps	Medium	2017
Build partnerships with external researchers and governments to increase DOE capacity both for science and IQ, and implement the 25 year research strategy through outside funding and partnerships	Medium	Ongoing

9.3 Habitat Management and Environmental Stewardship (*Avatitinnik Kamatsiarniq*) Actions

Management Action	Priority	Timeline
Encourage the development, sharing and implementation of best management practices with stakeholders, tourism operators, and industry	Moderate	Ongoing
Seek to build capacity in all co-management organizations to better participate in regulatory review processes	Moderate	Ongoing
Continue to participate in the contaminant monitoring program for polar bears	Moderate	Ongoing
Study effects of marine shipping and development of mitigation measures	Moderate	10 years

9.4 People and Bears (*Inuillu Nanuillu*) Actions

Management Action	Priority	Timeline
Seek program funding to train and equip bear guards	High	Ongoing
Develop educational material (e.g., posters, fact sheets, website material) for communities, tourists, mining camps, etc., on best practices to minimize human-bear interactions	High	Within 2 years
Develop, adopt and implement community bear management plans and community human-bear-interaction protocols	Moderate	Within 3 years
Develop a communications plan and education materials for bear safety	Moderate	Within 3 years

Conduct a review of Damage Compensation and Damage Prevention Programs	Moderate	Within 3 years
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9.5 Working Together (*Piliriqatiginniig*) Actions

Management Action	Priority	Timeline
Seek cooperative research partners to build further capacity in IQ studies and scientific research	High	Ongoing
Build capacity in HTOs to provide support and participation in research projects	High	Within 3 years
Develop a knowledge and information sharing framework for co-management partners	High	2 years
Identify inter-jurisdictional agreements near completion and ensure resources to finalize	High	Ongoing
Identify inter-jurisdictional agreements that need to be pursued and ensure resources to initiate	Moderate	3 years
Explore research agreements with neighboring jurisdictions for shared populations	Moderate	5 years
Improve cooperation with federal agencies such as Parks Canada and Canadian Wildlife Service so that their land management efforts also support this plan	Moderate	5 years

10. PLAN REVIEW

To ensure that the goal and objectives of this management plan have been realized, it is essential to measure progress as the plan is implemented. At 5 and 10 years, a co-management working group will conduct a mid-term review of objectives with respect to progress made. Where objectives have been met, they will be revised according to current needs. Where objectives have not been met, additional actions and new timelines may be identified. Co-management is an ongoing effort that evolves in line with available knowledge and information. The review will consider the number of polar bears in each subpopulation, their health, the trends (population, reproduction, survival rates etc.), the conservation of habitat (largely the sea ice, but also denning areas), the reduction of human-bear conflict occurrences and resulting decrease in DLPKs, and the incorporation of IQ.

APPENDICES

Appendix A - 2016 PBTC Status Table

1. Purpose

Under its Terms of Reference, the Polar Bear Technical Committee (PBTC) is to provide an annual report to the Polar Bear Administrative Committee (PBAC) on the status of each of Canada's 13 sub-populations of polar bears that is based upon the best available scientific information and Traditional Ecological Knowledge.

This document defines the various terms used in the Status Table and the basis on which the status of each sub-population was assessed by the PB TC in February 2014.

2. Definitions

2.1 Population estimate

The most recent estimate of abundance reviewed and accepted by the PBTC.

2.2 Historic Trend

Historic trend is the PBTC's assessment of changes in abundance that a sub-population may have experienced since the signing of the international *Agreement on the Conservation of Polar Bears* (1973), which led to current management practices and research. The most recent population estimate and the first comparable documented historic estimate are examined. If a direct comparison of abundance estimates cannot be made or there is only a single estimate of abundance, other lines of evidence may be used in this assessment.

2.3 Recent Trend (15 Years Ago to Present)

Recent trend is the PBTC's assessment of the direction of abundance over the last 15 years. The objective of this assessment is to inform the P BAC as to whether a sub-population has increased, decreased, or remained stable. Recent trend is assessed by comparing the most recent population estimate to the previous population estimate. If a direct comparison of population estimates cannot be made or is not applicable, other lines of evidence such as population viability analyses, productivity indicators, and recent harvest pressure may be used to infer any changes in recent abundance.

2.4 Local and/or TEK assessment

This column represents known documented traditional ecological knowledge or Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit on the status of each of the polar bear subpopulations.

2.5 Future Trend (Present to 10 Years into the Future)

Future trend is the PBTC's assessment of the anticipated direction of abundance. The objective of this assessment is to inform the PBAC as to whether a sub-population is likely to increase, decrease, or remain stable over the next 10 years. Multiple lines of evidence including but not limited to population estimates, population viability analyses, productivity indicators, harvest pressure, and traditional ecological knowledge may be used in this assessment.

2.6 Potential Maximum Removals

The annual total number of human-caused polar bear mortalities from a sub-population allowed under quota(s), Total Allowable Harvest, Total Allowable Take, and/or voluntary agreements. When the annual harvest is reported it generally include all human caused mortalities including DLPs, mortalities due to research, and mortalities due to human activities e.g. consumption of toxic materials related to development.

3. Historic Trend Assessment

3.1 Steps to Assess Historic Trend

Compare current population estimate with the first documented and comparable historic population estimate. When a current estimate is directly comparable to an historic estimate, a designation without any qualifier (i.e. reduced, stable, or increased) may be used.

If the current estimate is not directly comparable to an historic estimate because of differences in study area, or methods, a comparison may be made but any assessment of changes in abundance are inferred. In this case, a qualifier is required (i.e. likely reduced, likely stable, or likely increased).

When population estimates cannot be compared, other lines of evidence such as the most recent population attributes of the sub-population (e.g. age structure) may be used to infer changes in the abundance of the sub-population. This does not include TEK. Again, a qualifier is required (i.e. likely reduced, likely stable, or likely increased).

When there is insufficient information or lack of confidence in available

information to make an assessment of change in abundance, the sub-population is assessed as uncertain.

Additional text is provided in the comments section of the status table. It includes listing items such as major threats and other lines of evidence that may have been used.

3.2 Status Designations

Reduced	Current population estimate is statistically significantly lower than historic population estimate
Stable	Current population estimate is not different from historic population estimate
Increased	Current population estimate is statistically significantly higher than historic population estimate
Likely Reduced	Current or inferred current population abundance is lower than historic or inferred historic population abundance
Likely Stable	Current or inferred current population abundance is not different from historic or inferred historic population abundance
Likely Increased	Current or inferred current population abundance is higher than historic or inferred historic population abundance
Uncertain	Insufficient information or lack of confidence in available information to make an assessment

4. Recent Trend Assessment

4.1 Steps to Assess Recent Trend

Compare current population estimate with previous population estimate assuming current population estimate is appropriately recent. When a current estimate is directly comparable to its previous population estimate, a designation without any qualifier is made (i.e. reduced, stable, or increased).

If the current estimate is not directly comparable to its previous population estimate because of differences in study area, methods, or is outdated, and cannot be updated by PVA, a comparison may be made but any assessment of changes in recent population abundance are inferred and a qualifier is required (i.e. likely reduced, likely stable, or likely increased).

When population estimates cannot be compared or are not applicable to assess recent trend, other lines of evidence such as the most recent population attributes of the sub-population (e.g. age distribution) may be used to infer any changes in the abundance of the sub-population. This does not include TEK. Again, a qualifier is required (i.e. likely reduced, likely stable, or likely increased).

When there is insufficient information or lack of confidence in available information to make an assessment of changes in population abundance, the sub-population is assessed as uncertain.

Additional text is provided in the comments section of the status table. It includes listing items such as major threats and other lines of evidence that may have been used.

4.2 Recent Trend Designations

Decline	Current population estimate is statistically significantly lower than previous population estimate
Stable	Current population estimate is not different from previous population estimate
Increase	Current population estimate is statistically significantly higher than previous population estimate
Likely Decline	Current or inferred current population abundance is lower than previous or inferred previous population abundance
Likely Stable	Current or inferred current population abundance is not different from previous or inferred previous population abundance
Likely Increase	Current or inferred current population abundance is higher than previous or inferred previous population abundance
Uncertain	Insufficient information or lack of confidence in available information to make an assessment

5. Future Trend Assessment

5.1 Steps to Assess Future Trend

Compare current population estimate with future population estimate but not exclusive to a population viability analysis (PVA). P VAs are considered in the assessment as long as the data

derived vital rates used to generate the simulations are not older than 15 years. In all these cases, a qualifier is required (i.e. likely reduced, likely stable, or likely increased).

In addition to PVAs, other lines of evidence (e.g. body condition, litter size, sea ice trend, TEK) may be used to predict future trend of a sub-population.

When there is contradictory evidence, insufficient information or lack of confidence in available information to make an assessment of future changes in population abundance, the sub-population is assessed as uncertain.

Additional text is provided in the comments section of the status table. It includes listing items such as major threats and other lines of evidence that may have been used.

5.2 Future Trend Designations

Likely Decline Future population abundance predicted to be lower than current population abundance

Likely Stable Future population abundance predicted not to be different from current population abundance

Likely Increase Future population abundance predicted to be higher than current population abundance

Uncertain Contradictory evidence, insufficient information, or lack of confidence in available information to make an assessment.

Subpopulation	Estimate	±2 SE or 95% CI	Year of Population Estimate	Method	Historic Trend	Local and/or TEK assessment	Recent trend	Future trend	Historic annual removal (5 yr mean)	Historic annual removal (3 yr mean)	Historic annual removals (last year)	Potential Maximum Removals (last year)	Comments/Vulnerabilities/Habitat	Jurisdiction
Baffin Bay	2,074	1542-2606	1997 ¹	M\R	likely reduced	stable ²	likely decline ³	uncertain ⁴	146	136	136	133 (NU:65+GL:68)	currently being reassessed, high harvest, decline in sea ice, increased shipping	NU, GL
Davis Strait	2,158	1833-2542	2007 ⁵	M\R	likely increased	increased ⁶	likely increase ⁷	likely decline ⁸	110	114	95	QC + 75 (NU:61+NL:12+GL:2)	based upon 2007 survey information, high harvest; decline in sea ice;	NU, QC, Nfld & Lab, GL
Foxe Basin	2,580	2093-	2009-10 ⁹	A	stable	increased ¹⁰	stable ¹¹	likely decline ¹²	106	103	114	QC + 123	long term decline in sea ice; potential for increased shipping for mineral extraction	NU, QC
Gulf of Boothia	1,592	870-2314	2000 ¹³	M\R	likely stable	increasing ¹⁴	likely stable ¹⁵	likely stable ¹⁶	60	62	67	74	Current and projected habitat change may affect productivity of ecosystem. Subpopulation has high vital rates and low harvest.	NU
Kane Basin	164	94-234	1997 ¹⁷	M\R	likely reduced	Increasing ¹⁸	Uncertain ¹⁹	uncertain ²⁰	5	5	3	11 (NU:5+GL:6)	currently being reassessed, likely a sink population connected with Baffin Bay, small population, decline in sea ice;	NU, GL
Lancaster Sound	2,541	1759-3323	1995-7 ²¹	M\R	likely stable	Increasing ²²	Uncertain ²³	uncertain ²⁴	87	85	80	84	historic sex-skewed harvest, habitat decline, potential for increased shipping for mineral extraction	NU
M'Clintock Channel	284	166-402	2000 ²⁵	M\R	likely reduced	stable ²⁶	likely increase ²⁷	uncertain ²⁸	3	4	5	5	increasing oil/gas development; loss of multi-year ice; currently being reassessed	NU
Northern Beaufort Sea	1,291*	n/a	2006 ²⁹	M\R	likely stable	stable ³⁰	likely stable ³¹	likely stable ³²	43	39	35	77 (NU:6+ NWT:71)	TEK study complete; increasing oil/gas development; decline in sea ice;	NU, NWT
Norwegian Bay	203	115-291	1997 ³³	M\R	uncertain	stable ³⁴	uncertain ³⁵	uncertain ³⁶	2	2	1	4	small, isolated population	NU
Southern Beaufort Sea	1,215*	n/a	2006 ³⁷	M\R	uncertain	stable ³⁸	likely decline ³⁹	likely decline ⁴⁰	40	32	22	56 (US:35 + ISR:21)	Bromaghin et al. 2015 under review by Polar Bear Technical Committee - more indepth discussion to happen in 2017; annual variability in ice conditions results in changes in density; bears are shifting to NB because of ice conditions; TK study completed; potential for oil/gas development	US, YK, NWT
Southern Hudson Bay	943	658-1350	2012 ⁴¹	A	stable	stable James Bay; increased in East Hudson Bay ⁴²	stable ⁴³	uncertain ⁴⁴	59	46	43	45 (NU:20 + QC:24 + ON:1)	Uncertain due to contradictory lines of evidence: large declines of body condition, declines in survival rates yet no change in abundance, TEK indicates winter body condition has not changed, TEK indicates that reproductive rates have improved, TEK and science indicate changes in sea ice, ice free season increased by 30 days between 1980-2012. recent high harvest, habitat decline; decline of permafrost-based denning habitat; revised voluntary harvest agreement of 45 currently in effect.	NU, QC, ON

Viscount Melville Sound	161	93-229	1992 ⁴⁵	M\R	likely reduced	increased ⁴⁶	likely stable ⁴⁷	uncertain ⁴⁸	5	5	2	7(NU:3 +NWT:4)	currently being reassessed	NU, NWT
Western Hudson Bay	1,030	754- 1406	2011 ⁴⁹	A	likely reduced	increased ⁵⁰	likely stable ⁵¹	likely decline ⁵²	25	28	28	24 (NU) + Manitoba	sea ice decline; harvest; declines in body condition and lower productivity compared to adjacent Foxe Basin and South Hudson Bay subpopulations; historic decline in abundance from late 1980s through late 1990s linked to reduced survival due to timing of sea ice breakup; recent analysis indicated relative stability in subpopulation from 2001-2010, a period during which there was no significant trend in sea ice freeze up or breakup; continued linkage between female survival and sea-ice conditions.	MB, NU

From the Polar Bear Technical Committee, 2016 (this document is revised annually by the PBTC, the most current version will always be considered as relevant at the time)

Notes

M/R - Physical Mark Recapture Survey

A - Aerial survey

n/a - not available

* The revised estimates for NB and SB is the result of management boundary change. It is based on a USGS analysis.

2016 PBTC Status Table Footnotes

1. Taylor et al. 2005
2. Dowsley 2005a; Dowsley 2005b; Dowsley 2007; Dowsley and Taylor 2006; Nunavut Wildlife Management Board (NWMB) Public Hearing minutes and submissions for April 2008, September 2009;
3. Combined harvested considered unsustainable: Taylor et al. 2005 plus simulations in PBSG 14 and 15 proceedings suggest abundance of 1,546 in 2004
4. Vital rates for Riskman PVA are 18 years old; TEK indicates population is stable; there is current research and ongoing assessment
5. Peacock et al. 2013
6. Kotierk 2010a, 2010b
7. Peacock et al. 2013; Stirling 1980.
8. The impact of a TAH increase on the population has not been modeled; predicted trend after survey was completed at harvest levels in 2007 was considered stable (Peacock et al. 2013); NWMB Davis Strait public hearing submissions May 16-17, 2011
9. Government of Nunavut (GN) final report 2012
10. Sahanatien pers. com. 7 Feb 2013; Dyck pers. com. 7 Feb 2013; Canadian Wildlife Service Nunavut consultation report 2009
11. GN report 2012; Atkinson et al. 2010; Taylor et al. 2006; Taylor and Lee 1995
12. No signs of deteriorating body condition or litter size (GN report 2012)
13. Taylor et al. 2009
14. Keith et al. 2005; Canadian Wildlife Service Nunavut consultation report 2009
15. For the period 2000–2015, assuming all sources of removals in the population sum to 74 bears/yr, the population can be expected to persist at a stable population size (Taylor et al. 2009)
16. Hunters in area reporting ice conditions have improved productivity, harvest levels remain stable (Dyck pers com. 2013)

17. Taylor et al. 2008
18. Canadian Wildlife Service Nunavut consultation report 2009
19. Population simulations of existing data suggest that only a very small quota (<2) may be sustained for this subpopulation (Taylor et al. 2008).
20. Vital rates for PVA are 17 years old, current research and ongoing assessment
21. Schwinsburg et al. 1980; Taylor et al. 2006; Taylor et al. 2008
22. Canadian Wildlife Service Nunavut consultation report 2009
23. For the period 1997-2012, the population would be expected to be stable under the historical harvest regimen (1993-97). At the current mean harvest rate of 78 bears/yr (2002-2006), we estimate that the population is more likely to decline than to increase (Taylor et al. 2008).
24. Vital rates for Riskman PVA are 16 years old
25. Taylor et al. 2006
26. Inuit report that bears are moving to neighbouring areas throughout the region. (Keith et al. 2005; CWS Nunavut consultation report 2009)
27. Likely an increase based on quantitative assessment of growth rate (Taylor et al. 2006)
28. Vital rates for PVA are 14 years old; several research planning consultations has been completed; further consultations ongoing.
29. Griswold et al., unpublished; Stirling et al. 2011
30. Pokiak pers. comm. 7 Feb 2013; Carpenter pers. com. 7 Feb 2013
31. Population size used for management was historically adjusted to 1,200 due to bias in population estimate (Amstrup et al. 2005; Stirling et al. 2011).
32. Durner et al. 2009, Stirling et al. 2011, and TEK (Joint Secretariat, unpublished) indicate stable population and habitat conditions may improve in short-term
33. Taylor et al. 2006; Taylor et al. 2008
34. Canadian Wildlife Service Nunavut consultation report 2009
35. Vital rates for Riskman PVA are 17 years old and vital rates were substituted from other populations (Taylor et al 2008); no recent work in the area
36. Vital rates for Riskman PVA are 17 years old and vital rates were substituted from other populations (Taylor et al. 2008)
37. Griswold et al., unpublished; USGS 2010
38. Pokiak pers com. 7 Feb 2013; Carpenter pers. com. 7 Feb 2013
39. Population estimate is lower but not statistically different from previous population estimates (Amstrup et al. 1986, Regehr et al. 2006).
Quotas were based on the understanding that the total harvest of independent females would not exceed the modeled sustainable maximum of 1.5% of the population (Taylor et al. 1987) and that a 2:1 ratio of males to females would be maintained in the total quota harvested (Stirling 2002)
40. Based on sea ice declines (Durner et al 2009), changes in body conditions measured in Alaska (Rode et al. 2010) and modeling (Regehr et al. 2010)
Estimated risk of future decline is based on vital rates estimated from 2001-2006 data used in demographic models that incorporate sea ice forecasts.
41. Obbard et al. 2013
42. NMRWB Public Hearing Inukjuak February 2014
43. Based on comparison with previous subpopulation estimates (Obbard et al. 2013; Obbard 2008; Kolenosky 1994).
44. Body condition decline, vital rate declines and changes in ice conditions; Inuit observations show no decline in body condition or abundance (Obbard pers. com. 2014, Obbard et al. 2013, NMRWB, unpublished)
45. Taylor et al. 2002
46. Canadian Wildlife Service Nunavut consultation report 2009; community consultations in 2012 and 2013
47. Harvest managed for population growth since last survey including a 5 year moratorium; comparable litter size in 2012 (GNWT unpublished)
48. Vital rates for Riskman PVA are 22 years old; population reassessment currently in process

49. Stapleton et al. 2014

50. Canadian Wildlife Service Nunavut consultation report 2009, Kotierk 2012, NWMB Public Hearing minutes 2005; Tyrrell 2006

51. Lunn et al. 2014 Unpublished Report

52. Based on body condition, abundance estimates, reduced reproductive productivity, and changes in ice conditions (Stirling and Parkinson 2006, Stapleton et al. 2014, Lunn pers. com.)

Appendix B – Subpopulations and Status

Appendix B I – Baffin Bay (BB) subpopulation status

Brief history

A 1989 subpopulation estimate of 300-600 bears was based on mark-recapture data in which the capture effort was restricted to shore-fast ice and the floe edge off northeast Baffin Island. However, Inuit knowledge indicated that an unknown proportion of the subpopulation is typically offshore during the spring and was unavailable for capture. A second study (1993-1997) was carried out during September and October, when all polar bears were on land and the estimated number of polar bears in BB was 2,074. In 2004, abundance estimates were revised to fewer than 1,600 bears, based on population viability simulations using vital rates from the capture study and new information that included Greenland's harvest records. This resulted in significant reductions in TAH that are still in place in 2016. A genetic mark-recapture survey was completed in 2013 and a new population estimate will be available in late 2016.

Current Status: 2,074 bears (1997)
Science – reduced
IQ – stable
current TAH – Nunavut 65
– Greenland 67

Subpopulation recommendations:

- Maintain current population abundance and review management objectives and TAH when the new inventory study is complete.
- Communities believe that the population size is sufficient and should not be managed for increase. New combined TAH for Nunavut and Greenland will be based on new population estimates and recommendations from scientific working groups on what a sustainable harvest would be to keep the population stable at that level.
- Upon receipt of the new population assessment and establishment of a sustainable TAH seek a review of the non-detrimental findings to allow for the export of hides and other bear parts.
- Re-assess the population boundary between BB and KB
- Increase cooperation between all jurisdictions that share this population to ensure a sustainable harvest

Appendix B II – Davis Strait (DS) subpopulation status

Brief history

The initial subpopulation estimate of 900 bears for DS was based on an estimated correction from the original mark-recapture calculation of 726 bears, which was felt to be too low. In 1993, the estimate was increased to 1,400 bears and then to 1,650 in 2005. These

increases were to account for the bias as a result of springtime sampling, the fact that the existing harvest appeared to be sustainable and was not having a negative effect on the age structure, and traditional knowledge that suggested more bears had been seen over the last 20 years. The most recent inventory of this subpopulation was completed in 2007; the new subpopulation estimate is 2,158. The population is characterized by low recruitment rates and high population density where sea ice conditions are deteriorating and variable. A new 2-year study is planned to begin in 2017.

Current status: 2,158 bears (2007)

Science – not reduced

IQ – increased

current TAH – Nunavut = 61

– Nunavik = 32

– Nunatsiavut = 12

– Greenland = 3

Subpopulation recommendations:

- Maintain current population abundance and review management objective and TAH when a new inventory study is complete.
- Re-assess the FB/DS boundary near Kimmirut.
- Increase cooperation among all jurisdictions that share this population to ensure a sustainable harvest
- Hold joint hearings of relevant boards
- Encourage inter-jurisdictional discussions between user groups to identify appropriate allocation between regions

Appendix B III – Southern Hudson Bay (SH) subpopulation status

Brief history

The initial estimate of population numbers came from a three-year (1984-1986) mark-recapture study, conducted mainly in the Ontario portion of the subpopulation. This study and the more recent telemetry data have documented seasonal fidelity to the Ontario coast during the ice-free season, and some intermixing with the Western Hudson Bay and Foxe Basin subpopulations during winter months. In 1988, a population-modeling workshop suggested an increase in the calculated subpopulation estimate from 900 to 1,000 bears, because portions of the eastern and western coastal areas were not included in the area during original sampling. Additionally, the area away from the coast may have been under-sampled due to difficulties in locating polar bears inland (i.e., below the tree line). Thus, some classes of bears, especially pregnant females, were believed to be under-sampled. A new analysis of the 1984-1986 capture data produced an estimate for the study area of 634 and, for 2003-2005, 673. In addition, there are some areas in which it is unsafe to capture bears. An aerial survey conducted between 2011 and 2012 by Ontario estimates the SH abundance at 951 bears. A voluntary inter-jurisdictional harvest agreement was agreed upon which expires in 2016.

Current status: 943 bears (2016)

Science – stable

IQ – increasing

current TAH – Nunavut = 25 (Voluntary agreement reduced it to 20 expires 2016)

– Ontario = 3

– Quebec = 22

Subpopulation recommendations:

- Maintain current population abundance and review management objective and TAH when a new inventory study is complete.
- Increase cooperation among all jurisdictions that share this population to ensure a sustainable harvest
- Help Quebec to develop a management plan and system to ensure that TAH is respected and followed and all harvesting is reported.
- Continue with inter-jurisdictional user-to-user discussions to ensure agreement on the fair allocation of the agreed TAH.

Appendix B IV – Western Hudson Bay (WH) subpopulation status

Brief history

The subpopulation was estimated to be 1,194 in 1987 and 935 in 2004. Before 1998, the subpopulation had apparently remained the same, indicating that DOE research conducted in 2011 using aerial surveys provided a new estimate of 1,030 bears. However, this estimate and the previous one have overlapping confidence intervals, suggesting no change, although techniques of past research projects differed. A recent new analysis by Environment and Climate Change Canada also confirmed that the population remained stable at least for the past 10 years.

Current status: 1,030 bears (2013)

Science – stable

IQ – increase

current TAH – Nunavut = 28

– Manitoba = 8

Subpopulation recommendations:

- Maintain current population abundance and review management objectives and TAH when a new inventory study is complete.
- Increase cooperation with Manitoba

Appendix B V – Foxe Basin (FB) subpopulation status

Brief history

A total subpopulation estimate of 2,119 was developed in 1996 using mark-recapture analysis based on tetracycline biomarkers. IQ suggests that the subpopulation of polar bears has increased (GN consultations in FB communities 2004-2009); the subpopulation estimate was increased to 2,300 bears in 2005 based on IQ. The 2009-2010 aerial surveys produced a new population estimate of 2,580, indicating that the population has remained relatively stable over time.

Current status: 2,580 bears
Science – stable
IQ – increasing
current TAH – Nunavut = 123
– Nunavik = 7

Subpopulation recommendations:

- Maintain current population abundance and review management objectives and TAH when a new inventory study is complete.
- Increase cooperation among all jurisdictions that share this population to ensure a sustainable harvest
- Hold joint board hearings and meetings

Appendix B VI – Gulf of Boothia (GB) subpopulation status

Brief history

Based on IQ, a recognition of sampling deficiencies, and polar bear densities in other areas, an interim subpopulation estimate of 900 was established in the 1990s. After a mark-recapture survey between 1998 and 2000, the subpopulation was estimated to number 1,592. The status of GB is stable, or slightly increasing. A new 3-year population study began in 2015.

Current status: 1,592 bears (2000)
Science – not reduced
IQ – increasing
current TAH – Nunavut = 74

Subpopulation recommendations:

- Maintain current population abundance and review management objectives and TAH when the new inventory study is complete.

Appendix B VII – M’Clintock Channel (MC) subpopulation status

Brief history

An estimate of 900 bears was derived from a six-year study undertaken in the mid-1970s. Following the completion of a mark-recapture inventory in the spring of 2000, the subpopulation was estimated to number 284. A moratorium was put in place, followed by a significantly reduced harvest that was in place until 2015/16 where an increase in TAH

occurred. The management objective for this population is recovery. A genetic mark-recapture study was started in 2014 and will be completed by 2017. Communities indicate that there has been a recovery in the bear population since the TAH reduction and that bears are seen in areas now where in previous years none were present. The number of bears currently in MC was deemed to be "about right" by locals, with few if any individuals supporting an increase above the current population level. The new estimate will likely be available in 2017.

Current status: 284 bears (2000)
Science – reduced, but likely increasing
IQ – increasing
current TAH – Nunavut = 12

Subpopulation recommendations:

- Maintain current population abundance and review management objectives and TAH when the new inventory study is complete.

Appendix B VIII – Lancaster Sound (LS) subpopulation status

Brief history

The subpopulation estimate of 2,541 is based on an analysis of both historical and current mark-recapture data up to 1997. This estimate is considerably larger than a previous estimate of 1,675 that included Norwegian Bay. Currently, there are no data available to assess the population size.

Current status: 2,541 bears (1998)
Science – stable
IQ – n/a
current TAH – Nunavut = 85

Subpopulation recommendations:

- Maintain current population abundance and review management objectives and TAH when a new inventory study is complete.

Appendix B IX – Kane Basin (KB) subpopulation status

Brief history

The size of the subpopulation was estimated to be 164 bears, based on a mark-recapture study undertaken between 1994 and 1998. The small population was believed to be in decline due to overharvesting, and a collaborative study between Greenland and Nunavut was begun in 2011 to examine population boundaries and abundance. The final year of a genetic mark-recapture study was completed in the spring of 2014. A new estimate will be available in 2016.

Current Status: 164 bears (1997)

Science – reduced
IQ – stable
current TAH – Nunavut = 5
Greenland = 3

Subpopulation recommendations:

- Maintain current population abundance and review management objectives and TAH when the new inventory study is complete.
- Re-assess population boundaries between BB and KB
- Work closely with Greenland to ensure that a sustainable harvest occurs

Appendix B X – Norwegian Bay (NW) subpopulation status

Brief history

The current (1993-97) estimate is 203. Data collected during mark-recapture studies and from satellite radio tracking of adult female polar bears, indicate that most of the polar bears in this subpopulation are concentrated along the coastal tide cracks and ridges along the north, east, and southern boundaries. This population is genetically distinct compared to other polar bear populations.

Current status: 203 bears (1998)
Science – data deficient
IQ – n/a
current TAH – Nunavut = 4

Subpopulation recommendations:

- Maintain the current population abundance and review management objectives and TAH when the new inventory study is complete.

Appendix B XI – Viscount Melville Sound (VM) subpopulation status

Brief history

The current subpopulation estimate of 161 was based on a mark recapture survey completed in 1992. GNWT is currently completing a mark-recapture study and a new estimate should be available in 2017.

Current status: 161 bears (1992)
Science – data deficient
IQ – increasing
current TAH – Nunavut = 3
– NWT = 4

Subpopulation recommendations:

- Maintain the current population abundance and review management objectives and TAH when the new inventory study is complete.

- Increase cooperation among all jurisdictions that share this population to ensure a sustainable harvest.

Appendix B XII – Northern Beaufort Sea (NB) subpopulation status

Brief history

The 1998 subpopulation estimate was 1,200 bears. A 2006 mark-recapture survey suggested that the size of the NB subpopulation has remained stable at approximately 980 bears.

Current status: 980 bears (2006)
 Science – stable
 IQ – increasing
 current TAH – Nunavut = 6
 – NWT = 71

Subpopulation recommendations:

- Maintain the current population abundance and review management objectives and TAH when the new inventory study is completed.
- Increase cooperation among all jurisdictions that share this population to ensure a sustainable harvest.

Appendix C – Flexible quota system

Rationale and administration of the flexible quota system

INTRODUCTION

The flexible quota system for polar bears assumes that the annual maximum sustainable yield of males and females for a given population has been divided among the communities that share the population. Each community receives its share of the maximum sustainable harvest of males and females as an annual baseline allocation. For polar bears, the maximum harvest that can be sustained is realized when the harvest is two males for every female. However, not every community can harvest exactly two males per female every year. In some years, the full allocation may not be taken. In other years, the kill may exceed the annual base allocation of males or females. The flexible quota calculation takes these variations into account:

- 1) Any “credits” from previous years when not all the bears were harvested,
- 2) The total number of males killed or removed from the population, and;
- 3) The total number of females killed or removed from the population.

ADMINISTRATION/ACCOUNTING

The flexible quota system is nothing more than a system for administering the portion of the total population maximum sustainable yield. First, the sustainable yield of males and females for a given population must be identified. If a subpopulation has management

objective that requires a TAH to be above the maximum sustainable yield to reach a specific objective then that must first be identified. Then the base annual allocation for each subpopulation is established and the flexible quota system is used to adjust the TAH as required to keep the harvest within the management objective.

Simulation modelling has shown that, for polar bear populations, about twice as many males as females can be harvested. The sustainable number of females is defined as the number that can be removed without causing a decline in the number of females in the population (generally considered to be approximately 1.5 % of the population). However, it is different for the males. Because the males do not produce the cubs, twice as many can be taken. A 2M:1F harvest sex ratio does reduce the number of males in the population to about 70% of the number that would be present if the harvest were unselective. The mean age of the males in the population is also reduced by about two years. However, this has the effect of focusing the harvest on younger males in the more abundant age classes. We assume that the females can still find mates and that younger bears mate just as successfully as older bears. The available data support this. There is no evidence of diminished reproduction, even in populations where it is clear that over-harvesting has depleted the males. Males are reproductively mature by the time they are between 4 and 5 years old, and on average females are only available to mate every two years because of extended parental care.

The annual base allocation value is an annual allotment that does not vary. However, if a community over-harvests either males or females in a given year, that over-harvest must be compensated for by reducing the annual actual allocation.

The actual sex ratio is only taken into consideration when the kill of females has exceeded the sustainable number (i.e., the actual allocation for that year). The reason is to avoid penalizing a community that shuts down the harvest when the last female has been taken. It is the number of bears taken that really matters. The proportion of females in the harvest is only an indication of what the sex ratio for the next year will be. As long as a community has not exceeded the allowable kill of males or females, there is no reduction in TAH, regardless of the sex ratio of the kill.

Credit is given for any unused current allocation of males and females. The credits can be either male or female. Credits are specific to a given subpopulation and cannot be used for other subpopulations. Credits shall be administered by the responsible RWO and the RWO shall make the allocation of credits as appropriate. If a female credit is requested, there must be a male credit available to exchange, because there cannot be more negative male credits than positive female credits. It is sustainable to over-harvest the males as long as an equivalent number of females is under-harvested. As long as there is at least one positive female credit for each negative male credit, there is no reduction to the TAH. This means that as long as the total TAH is not exceeded, and as long as the females are not over-harvested, the TAH for the following year will stay at the maximum base allocation.

Credits are a special case because they represent individuals that were not taken, so they are in addition to the estimated population. Credits are administered separately. Credits

accumulate until the next population inventory, and then they are zeroed because the total population is taken into effect when a new TAH is determined.

1. All human-caused mortality to polar bears will be taken from the TAH of the nearest community. In the event that the human-caused mortality exceeds the TAH, extra tags will be issued and the TAH for the following year will be correspondingly reduced in line with the flexible quota system.
2. A naturally abandoned cub will be counted as a natural death and not counted against the TAH.
3. Any bear that is found near death can be killed as a humane action and, once the Conservation Officer has certified that the bear was near death, the humane kill will not be counted against the TAH.
4. When a Nunavut beneficiary kills a bear, the tag will come from that person's home community if that community has a TAH in the population that the bear was harvested from. Otherwise, the nearest community must provide the tag.
5. When a female with cubs, yearlings, or juveniles is killed, the cubs, yearlings and juveniles are also regarded as killed (even if they run away). For TAH determination purposes, the cubs and yearlings are counted as males and only $\frac{1}{2}$ tag each. The juveniles are counted as whole tags of whatever sex they are. If the cubs run away after the female is killed, the cubs are counted as $\frac{1}{2}$ tag and all male, however the yearlings and the juveniles are each counted as whole tags and the sex is counted as $\frac{1}{2}$ male and $\frac{1}{2}$ female.
6. If credits are available, they may be used to address all types of kills, including accidental, illegal, and defence kills.
7. If a community shuts down its harvest after exceeding the maximum allowable females, the unused tags are counted as harvested males **for calculating the proportion of females only** so as not to penalize the community for shutting down the harvest before filling all the tags. If a community does not exceed the current allocation for females, for TAH calculation purposes the harvest sex ratio is assumed to be 0.33 (i.e., 2 males:1 female).
8. Subpopulation credits accumulate until the next population inventory results are final. Then all credits are set back to zero because the new TAH is based on the new population information, and the entire sustainable take is allocated to the new TAH. Any credits will be realized as TAH increases if the population information was accurate and the credits are not used. The communities then resume collecting credits from the new start, as before.

Appendix D – Research Schedule

Proposed schedule to conduct subpopulation status by scientific method and collection of IQ, as of 2016

Subpopulation	Previous survey year and method	Next survey year and method	Previous IQ survey	Proposed IQ survey
Baffin Bay	2011-2013 Genetic mark-recapture	2021 To be determined	2015	2022
Davis Strait	2005-2007 Mark- recapture	2017-18 Genetic mark-recapture	2007-2008	2018
Foxe Basin	2010-2011 Aerial survey	2017 Aerial survey	2008-2009	2018
Gulf of Boothia	1998-2000 Mark -recapture	2015-2017 Genetic mark-recapture	n/a	2017
Kane Basin	2012-2014 Genetic mark recapture and aerial survey	2021 To be determined	n/a	2024
Lancaster Sound	1997 Mark-recapture	2018-20 To be determined	n/a	2019
M'Clintock Channel	1998-2000 Mark-recapture	2014-2017 Genetic mark recapture	2002-2006	2016
Northern Beaufort Sea	2006 Mark-recapture	2019	n/a	TBD
Norwegian Bay	1998 Mark-recapture	2018 To be determined	n/a	2018
Southern Hudson Bay		2016 Aerial survey	2013	TBD
Viscount Melville	2012-2014 Mark-recapture	TBD	n/a	TBD
Western Hudson Bay and Southern Hudson Bay	2011 Aerial survey	2016 Aerial survey	2011-2012	2021

This schedule is tentative and assumes full availability of funds and human resources. The priorities and needs may shift over the coming years, which will affect timing of this schedule. TBD-To be determined

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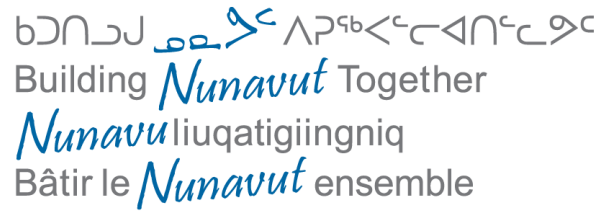
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A large polar bear stands on a rocky shore, looking down at two smaller cubs. The cubs are also looking down at the ground. The background shows a body of water with waves breaking. The scene is captured in a cinematic style with a blue color grade.

OUTLINE

- DIRECTION
- DEVELOPMENT OF THE PLAN
- CONSULTATION HISTORY
- KEY COMPONENTS
- PUBLIC SAFETY
- CHANGES
- GOING FORWARD



DIRECTION

- Replace the Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs)
- Be more inclusive of Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit (IQ)
- Identify the importance of working together
- Define roles and responsibilities of the stakeholders
- Identify challenges and solutions to conservation issues

DEVELOPMENT

- Identify a working group composed of **GN**, **NTI**, **NWMB**, and **RWO** members to direct and coordinate development of a new polar bear management plan
- The group sought advice from the Inuit Wildlife Advisory Committee (June 2013) on an appropriate approach to develop a new management plan and consult with Inuit
- Based on this input the group developed the outline and general text of a draft over the summer and fall of 2013 and prepared to engage all communities

DEVELOPMENT

- Consultations in all Nunavut communities were conducted from February to April 2014 to obtain information needed to complete the draft plan
- The draft plan was sent back to **HTOs** for review prior to regional follow up meetings
- Three regional meetings were held in June 2014 to provide specific directions to finalize the draft

CONSULTATION

- A consultation team was identified for each region consisting of the **RWO Chair**, **NTI** staff, **DOE** staff, Secretariat support, and facilitator
- Respective regional teams visited every community and met with HTO's and the public
- The teams went to communities to listen and collect feedback to use in developing the plan



CONSULTATION

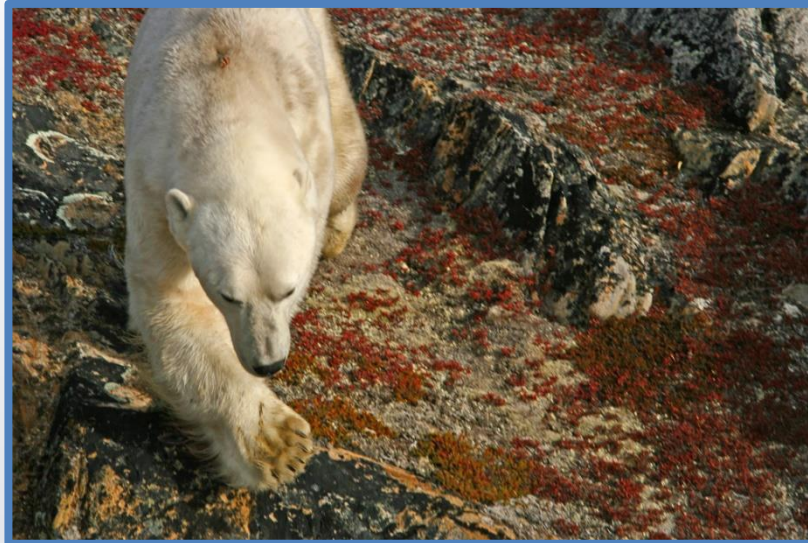
- The HTO and Community feedback was used to complete a draft plan
- Then 3 separate regional meetings were held, with representatives from each community, to get specific feedback on how to move forward with implementation
- The draft plan and process was also reviewed by the Ministers Elders Advisory Committee

KEY COMPONENTS OF PLAN

- The plan acknowledges that in some parts of Nunavut there are too many bears, both for **public safety** and the **environment**
- The Goals of the plan include
 - maintain viable and healthy subpopulations of polar bears
 - assure that they remain as a functioning part of the landscape

KEY COMPONENTS OF PLAN

- The Guiding Principles identify the need to fully integrate **IQ** in polar bear management, and to consider **public safety** and the **best available scientific data and IQ** when making decisions



KEY COMPONENTS OF PLAN

- The plan has a section on challenges to polar bear management which includes:
 - Tourism
 - industrial activities
 - Contaminants
 - habitat change
 - **human-bear conflict**
- The plan has a section on objectives which identifies how to respond to challenges and includes harvest management and monitoring

KEY COMPONENTS OF PLAN

- There are **NO changes to TAH** within the plan. Those changes will occur as new information becomes available and will go through the regular NWMB process following additional consultations.



Public Safety

- There have been some concerns raised about Defence of Life and Property Kills (DLPKs) coming off the TAH
- The TAH recommendations are based on harvest sustainability and management objectives
- By having the option to set a management objective for a decrease, we can address some issues associated with public safety but certainly not all.

Public Safety

- TAHs cannot address all public safety concerns
- The plan identifies additional actions to help with public safety
- The GN provides funding and resources toward public safety measures and equipment for communities and for people who travel on the land
- Changes to harvest levels are not the only option, we collectively need to do more

CHANGES

- No more automatic harvest moratorium on a decline of 10%, each situation will be reviewed individually
- More inclusive of IQ and Inuit perspective
- Maintains the flexible quota systems good parts yet makes it less punitive
- Focus on setting management objectives which could include managing polar bears for a decrease

GOING FORWARD

- Working together to determine subpopulation goals and actions as new information becomes available
- Continue to respond to concerns by striving to improve research and collection of IQ
- To be responsive to observed changes in populations, concerns for public safety, and ecosystem health

THANK YOU
QUANAQUTIN
MERCI



Consultation Summary for the Draft Nunavut Polar Bear Co-Management Plan, revised as a result of input received through the NWMB Public Hearing

October 15 , 2016, Nunavut Inuit Wildlife and Environment
Advisory Committee, Rankin Inlet

October 20, 2016, Kitikmeot Region Wildlife Board AGM,
Cambridge Bay

October 26, 2016, Kivalliq Wildlife Board AGM, Rankin Inlet

November 7, 2016, Qikiqtaalik Wildlife Board AGM, Iqaluit

Department of Environment, Government of Nunavut
Iqaluit, Nunavut

Executive Summary

Government of Nunavut, Department of Environment (DOE) representatives conducted consultations with the three Regional Wildlife Organizations and the Nunavut Inuit Wildlife and Environment Advisory Committee (NIWEAC) between 15 October and 7 November 2016. The primary purpose of these consultations was to advise co-management partners of revisions to the draft Polar Bear Co-Management Plan that were made as a result of input received during the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board (NWMB) public hearing process.

Although there was significant consultation to develop the draft submitted to the NWMB for approval in the fall of 2015, relevant comments and edits received during the written public hearing held by the NWMB resulted in edits to the draft. The changes to the draft were largely organizational and for provision of further clarity. A high level review and explanation of what was changed and why, as well as changes that were suggested and not made, were considered by the working group. The Regional RWOs Annual General Meetings were an appropriate venue for those consultations, as well as the NIWEAC fall meeting, as this meeting was instrumental in formulating the original working draft in 2014.

This report attempts to summarize the comments made by participants at the meetings and how those comments were addressed.

Preface

This report represents the Department of Environment's best efforts to accurately capture and translate all of the information that was shared during consultation meetings with the RWOs and NIWEAC.

The views expressed herein do not necessarily reflect those of the Department of Environment or the Government of Nunavut.

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1.0 Summary Purpose and Structure

This summary is intended to summarize comments, questions, and concerns raised during consultation meetings held with the RWOs and the NIWEAC on the Draft Polar Bear Co-Management Plan (PBMP). Although there was significant consultation to develop the draft submitted to the NWMB for approval in the fall of 2015, relevant comments and edits received during the written public hearing held by the NWMB resulted in edits to the draft. The changes to the draft were largely organizational and for provision of further clarity. A high level review and explanation of what was changed and why, as well as changes that were suggested and not made, were considered by the working group.

2.0 Purpose of Consultations

The primary purpose of the consultations was to engage the RWOs in a dialogue on the current status of the draft PBMP and to present revisions to the draft that were made as a result of comments received during the NWMB's written public hearing. This approach was advised by the NWMB. It is important to note that any revisions to the draft were only considered if they were consistent with what was heard from communities, and what was said to communities, during consultations.

2.1 Format of Meetings

The consultations were held during the AGMs of the three RWOs and the fall meeting of NIWEAC. All meetings were chaired by the respective Board Chairperson. A DOE representative was on the agenda to present the information at DOE's request. The presentation (Appendix A) lasted approximately 45 minutes with questions following ranging from 30-45 minutes per meeting. The translations were conducted simultaneously during the meetings.

2.2 Meeting Participants

All meetings were attended by Board members at each of the three RWOs and Chaired by the respective RWO Chairman. Additional participants were from the Nunavut Inuit Wildlife Secretariat, NWMB, Department of Fisheries and Oceans, Environment and Climate Change Canada, and Nunavut Tunngavik Inc. The representative from DOE was Chris Hotson.

3.0 Consultation Summary

The development of the PBMP has been lengthy with community consultations on the draft occurring in the winter of 2014, and regional follow up meetings occurring in the spring of 2014. It was determined that consultation with stakeholders (e.g. RWOs) was appropriate to inform them of the current status of the PBMP and to advise what changes had occurred to the draft PBMP since its submission to the NWMB for approval in 2015. Presenting to the RWO AGMs and the NIWEAC fall meeting was considered appropriate stakeholder consultation to allow for advice and input on the process and to allow for further dissemination to Hunters and Trappers Organizations through their participation on the RWO Boards. The PowerPoint presentation as well as the current draft PBMP was also sent to each HTO for information following the AGMs. This approach to disseminating the information enabled those Board members who were in attendance at the AGMs to update their respective HTO Boards.

The presentation reviewed what has been done to date and then explained specific changes that were made to the draft (e.g. splitting threats and challenges into two sections, splitting industrial activity and tourism into two threats, changing the wording of the roles of Parks Canada and ECCC, plus editorial fixing). It was explained that some comments received during the written public hearing were considered but not included when making edits to the draft as they would not have enhanced the quality or clarity of the draft (e.g. a comment that there are not more bears than in the 1960's, which did not correspond with what was heard during consultations).

The questions received during this round of consultations were similar to what was heard during initial consultations with HTOs and communities. Most were queries as to whether the plan was addressing issues that Inuit have stated are important throughout the consultations and development of the PBMP.

These questions are listed below along with an explanation of what was said at the time, or how the issue was resolved after the consultations.

- There are too many bears now - *this perspective has been adequately included in the draft as proposed.*
- Public Safety is a concern with the perceived higher concentrations of bears - *this has been covered in the draft and specific actions developed to help address this concern including: 1) improved education for bear safety; 2) improved training for polar bear monitors for communities; 3) better access to deterrent methods (bear bangers/ flares etc.).*
- Cabin /property damage is a problem and the compensation programs are difficult to access - *this has been addressed in the draft and actions developed to address this concern include reducing the complexity of forms and providing assistance in completing forms through Conservation Officers in the communities.*
- Negative and inaccurate public opinion about status of polar bears - *the concern is that world media misrepresents the status of polar bears while Inuit are experiencing high concentrations of bears and public safety concerns. Although negative public opinion and inaccuracies are beyond the scope of the PBMP, there is a strong message in the draft that: 1) bears pose a safety risk; 2) there are too many bears in some areas and other species (birds and seals) are being harmed; and 3) Inuit have been managing the species well.*
- Loss or damage to hides being held while under investigation for Defense Kills - *this concern is identified in the draft PBMP and actions to resolve investigations in a timely manner and to ensure no loss in hide value are identified.*
- A concern was raised about a recent event where an Inuk hunter was in a community other than his own and had a Defense of Life and Property Kill. The question arose regarding this incident and what community the tag was to come from - the hunter's home community or the community he was visiting - *A review of the previous Memorandum of Understanding's text and the current draft PBMP text was undertaken and the current draft was revised to remove the uncertainty in that situation.*

4.0 Conclusion- Next Steps

The Department of Environment considered the comments and suggestions received during the consultation meetings in finalizing the draft plan for resubmission to the NWMB Public Hearing Process.

Submission to the NWMB is expected in February 2017. The expectation is for the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement decision-making process to be completed, and for the PBMP to be implemented, on July 1, 2017.

Appendix A- Presentation used during consultation meetings

17/11/2016

[illegible][illegible]

Direction

- To develop a plan that better represents what Inuit see and believe in regard to polar bears
- To try and develop a plan that could be adopted under the Species at Risk Act (SARA)

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What have we done?

- Formed a working group of stakeholders
- Prepared and reviewed an outline with IWAC in June 2014
- Developed a rough draft

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What have we done?

- Consulted with all communities in the winter of 2013
- Revised and finalized a draft based on input
- Held regional meetings to review and improve draft and review management objectives in spring 2013
- An internal DoE review shortened and simplified

The NWMB Process

- Submitted to NWMB and they held a written hearing
- NWMB reviewed input received during written hearing and adjourned meeting
- Asked Minister to consider input received

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What we did not change

- The tone and intent, to develop a plan that better represents what Inuit see and believe

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What we did not change

- Wanted more supporting science
- Concerns about meat caching as
- The fact that people see more bears in almost all areas
- The tone and intent, to develop a plan that better represents what Inuit see and believe

Ldσ^abc ΔPΔc▷^aΓcJ^c

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Next Steps

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$$\Lambda\sigma\mathcal{L}\mathfrak{A}^{\mathfrak{b}}\mathcal{J}\mathcal{L}\sigma\mathcal{L}\mathfrak{A}^{\mathfrak{c}}$$

- Ensure that the draft reflects what we heard and what we said during consultations
- Resubmit to the NWMB for approval
- Implement for the 2017-2018 Season

Questions?

¿Puede ser?

Thank you/ᄒᆞᆫᄃᆞᆫ ᄃᆞᆫᄃᆞᆫ



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Building Nunavut Together
Nunavutliuqatigiingniq
Bâtir le Nunavut ensemble

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Department of Environment

Avatiliqiyikkut

Ministère de l'Environnement

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Outline

- What have we done?
- What was the outcome of the NWMB Hearing?
- What were the changes to the draft plan?
- Next steps?

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- $\rho_{\dot{\sigma}^b} \wedge c_{\rho L} c^b \wedge \dot{C}?$
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 $b \cap L \dot{\sigma}^b \Gamma^c \dot{\sigma}^c \text{ᵇ} \sigma^b \cap^c \cap \sigma^b \dot{\sigma}?$
- $\rho_{\dot{c}} \triangleright^b \dot{<}^c \triangleleft \rho^b \cap \mathcal{C} \triangleright \dot{<}^c \rho^c \text{ᶜ} \dot{<}^b \text{ᶜ} \rho \triangleright \cap <^c \sigma \cup \cap \dot{\Gamma}?$
- $\wedge^b \dot{C} \sigma \wedge c_{\rho} \Gamma \triangleleft^c \dot{\sigma}^b?$

Direction

- To develop a plan that better represents what Inuit see and believe in regard to polar bears
- To try and develop a plan that could be adopted under the Species at Risk Act (SARA)

ՉԳՆՈՒԳՆ

- [illegible]

What have we done?

- Formed a working group of stakeholders
- Prepared and reviewed an outline with IWAC in June 2014
- Developed a rough draft

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- [illegible]

What have we done?

- Consulted with all communities in the winter of 2015
- Revised and finalized a draft based on input
- Held regional meetings to review and improve draft and review management objectives in spring 2015
- An internal DoE review shortened and simplified

ρ_rσ^b ΛC_rL_C^{9b}ΛC?

- ለጥቅም ሆኖ የሚያገለግል ልማት ማዘጋጀት ዘመናዊ ልማት ማዘጋጀት 2015
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The NWMB Process

- Submitted to NWMB and they held a written hearing
- NWMB reviewed input received during written hearing and adjourned meeting
- Asked Minister to consider input received

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Results of the review

- DoE reviewed all input
- Made some changes to text to reflect concerns
- Did not make other changes because it was contrary to what we heard and what we said

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Changes to the draft

- Wanted more detail on climate change

◁ √ ∩ C ▷ σ^u ∩^c √ ∅^c ⊂^q b <^q b √ ▷ ∩^c

- $\wedge^b b^a \sigma \mathcal{P} L \subset \triangleright \zeta^c C \triangleright^q b \triangleright \sqrt[q]{b^b} \supset \sigma^b \sqrt{\subset} \triangleright^<$
◁ √^u ∩^q σ^u ∪ σ^c

Changes to the draft

- Threats and Challenges is now two sections

◁▷σ^aρ^c ρ^b↯↱^c↱^b▷▷

- ስንደርግ ለሌሎች ለሚቀርቡ ስራዎች ለሚሰጡ ስልጣኖች ላይ ማረጋገጥ

Changes to the draft

- Wanted industrial activity separated from tourism

◁▷σ^aρ^c ρ^b↖^b↗^cρ^c

- ለፈረንሳይኛ ካዕልናጠናፈረ ለጥራትናጥራት ፈጣሪነትናጥራት ፈጣሪነትናጥራት

Changes to the draft

- Wanted changes to the wording of role of ECCC and PC

◁▷σ^aρ ρ⊗C↔^b↖^bρ▷∩

- $\Lambda \leftarrow L \rightarrow C \rightarrow S^C \leftarrow R \rightarrow P^S \sigma^S \rho^S \sigma^C \rightarrow b \rightarrow b^C \rightarrow C^S \rho^C$
 $\Lambda \leftarrow C \rightarrow R \leftarrow S^C \rho^C \leftarrow R \leftarrow P^S \sigma^S \rho^S \sigma^C \leftarrow b \rightarrow b^C \rightarrow C^S \rho^C$
 $\leftarrow R \rightarrow P^S \sigma^S \rho^S \sigma^C \leftarrow b \rightarrow b^C \rightarrow C^S \rho^C$ (ECCC) $\leftarrow L \rightarrow$
 $\Gamma^S \cup \Delta^S \rho^S \leftarrow C \rightarrow R \rightarrow P^S \sigma^S \rho^S \sigma^C \leftarrow b \rightarrow b^C \rightarrow C^S \rho^C$ (PC)

Changes to the draft

- Wanted references included

◁ℙℙC▷σ^qℓ^c ℙℑ^cℒ^{qb}<^qqbℙ▷ℓ^c

- ∧ℳℒ▷ℑ^cℒ ℒσ^cℓℙ^qℓ^c ∧^{qb}ℙ▷ℒ▷ℙℒ^qd^c⊃ℓ^c

Changes to the draft

- Wanted actions section more robust

◁P▷C▷σ^aΓ^c ρ⊳^cΓ^ab<^a[•]bρ▷Π^c

- Λ↵L↵▷Γ^c↵ Λ↵Π↵◁PΠ^b↵^c ΠΠ↵^bρLσ^aΓ^c
↵^aρ↵↵Π^b

Sample Action Table

Management Action	Priority	Timeline
Undertake a review of the sustainable removal rates for females	high	3 years
Test revisions to the flexible quota system to ensure they are administratively feasible (revisions will switch to a 1:1 reduction in TAH the following year for overharvest, i.e. if one female is overharvested the reduction will be only one female the following year (If a female overharvest cannot be accommodated through credits or from the following year's TAH then regular flex quota reductions will apply were male credits will go into the bank as opposed to being automatically available).	high	2 year
Expand and increase harvest bio-characteristics reporting upon peer review of research objectives	high	5 year
Improve handling of hides taken as DLPK to ensure no loss in hide value	high	Ongoing
Ensure harvest reporting and sample submission is adequate to address needs	high	Ongoing
Develop a training program for Inuit in communities to establish an Inuit data collection program for hunter effort and interviews and collection of polar bear bio-characteristics	moderate	5 years

Changes to the draft

- Hired editors to reduce duplication and improve the draft for better reading

◁▷σ^aρ ρ⊗C^b<^bρ▷η

- [illegible]

What we did not change

- Wanted more supporting science

Ldσ^aΓC ΔPΔC▷^{aa}ΓCJ^C

- Λ^ΔL▷^{CC} Δb^ΔΓ^bΔσ^bhσ^b
^b▷^ΔΓ^ΔΔσ^ΔJ^C

What we did not change

- Wanted more supporting science

Ldσ^aΓC ΔPΔC▷^{aa}ΓCJ^c

- ΔPⁱΔC▷^aσ^b Ldσ^aΓ σ^aρ^bσ^b
σ^aρ^bσ^aΓ▷^a Δb▷^{aa}ΓC▷P▷σ^aΓ^aσ^c

What we did not change

- The fact that people see more bears in almost all areas

Ldσ^uΓC ◁PΔC▷^uΓCJ^C

- q₁q^uΓ^aσ^uΓ₁^C Δ₁Δ^C
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q₁Γ₁Δ^aq₁b^uΓ^CΓ₁◁^ub^u q₁q₁σ

What we did not change

- The tone and intent, to develop a plan that better represents what Inuit see and believe

↳ $\sigma^{\mu\nu} \ll \rho \Delta c \gg^{\mu\nu} \rho c J^{\nu}$

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 $\exists x \exists y (x \neq y \wedge \neg \exists z (x \neq z \wedge y \neq z))$

What we did not change

- Wanted more supporting science
- Concerns about meat caching as
- The fact that people see more bears in almost all areas
- The tone and intent, to develop a plan that better represents what Inuit see and believe

↳ σ^z ከ Δ ጋር σ^z ከ J

- [illegible]

Next Steps

- Ensure that the draft reflects what we heard and what we said during consultations
- Resubmit to the NWMB for approval
- Implement for the 2017-2018 Season

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2017-2018-Γ
ΔρΔ^εb<^εcΔ^ερ^εησ^εησ

Questions?

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Thank you/^cd^aq^b

Kitikmeot Regional Wildlife Board

Submission to the Nunavut Wildlife Board

On the

In-person Polar Bear Management Plan Public Hearing

November 2018

The Kitikmeot Regional Wildlife Board has heard in the past about how harvesters want changes made in the current polar bear management system. The management of polar bears in our view, has been successful in rise of the polar bear population and that it is more than sustainable, even if frequent harvesting is practiced.

In the past, elders stated that in their days, harvesting of polar bears were infrequent and didn't come along very often. Today, we have so many polar bears that it is not possible to cache meat in the summer and expect to pick it up in the winter as polar bears will have already gotten to it. Even camping in the summer is practiced seldomly now because of fear of polar bears.

Today our method of harvesting of polar bears is using the "Male/Female" sex selective ratio. This is cumbersome to practice because if and when there are too many females are harvested even by one, it takes away the community quota without even filling it. Then, if we are lucky enough to go back to our full quota for the next harvest season, we have to ask for a credit from another HTO who shares the same sub-population. Harvesters should not have to suffer such losses just because of one female overharvest. Especially when an HTO has to go to another HTO for a credit tag.

When a family group is unintentionally harvested, an investigation ensues from the Government of Nunavut, Department of Environment. Inuit are not used to this practice because it makes them look like criminals. This has resulted in Inuit losing their culture and tradition. It can be very intimidating for a person that has never even gone to court to have to face the judge and lawyers just for harvesting a polar bear. It also hurts the affected HTO's when this happens. We as wildlife management leaders, would like this to change as we believe it does not reflect the values of Inuit, their culture, beliefs and their worth. I cannot emphasize enough on how this should not be practiced anymore. There are better ways to deal with this type of harvest, after all, it was practiced before the management system was placed and the population did not decline.

The polar bear is an icon in the views of the world and everyone is so afraid that they will disappear when the Arctic becomes ice free. Inuit believe this will not happen because as Inuit, we all know and have seen polar bears fatten up in the summer. There is ample evidence that they are able to catch ringed seals in open water. We credit *Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit* for this

knowledge. We also believe polar bears are able to adapt to changes in environmental conditions. They are very capable of surviving in the most harsh environments.

Another piece of information to consider is how they are portrayed in the public media such as documentaries. Narrators often see them as not able to adapt to changes in sea ice, unable to catch seals and this is very frustrating for Inuit to watch because we do not have the tools to correct these inaccuracies; we do not have resources to touch bases with movie actors, singers and song writers who often narrate and provide these messages. Often, we are not even considered when we say, there are too many polar bears and we know because of *Inuit Qaujimajatunqangit*.

It is time to change the management system because Inuit have been managing the polar bears for thousands of years. We know what we are doing and western science and modeling has become too dominant in the wildlife management system. These models make too many assumptions and do not consider Inuit Qaujimajatunqangit. Inuit need flexibility in harvesting of polar bears. The time is now to consider our own people.

I thank you for having the Kitikmeot Regional Wildlife Board at this in-person public hearing, I can go on and on but we have to consider the timeline for other presenters.

Joe Ashevak
Chairperson

Prepared by: Ema Qaggutaq
Date: October 8, 2018
Kitikmeot Regional Wildlife Board

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 'Stanley Adjuk', with a stylized, looping design.

October 12 2018



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Kivalliq Wildlife Board

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1. Introduction, Background, and Objectives

The Kivalliq Wildlife Board (KWB) is the Regional Wildlife Organization (RWO) for the Kivalliq Region. The board consists of representatives from each community Hunters and Trappers Organization (HTOs) in the Kivalliq region and a chairperson elected by the HTO representatives.

The mandate of RWOs and HTOs is provided in Article 5.7 of the 1993 *Nunavut Agreement*.¹ The *Nunavut Agreement* gives HTOs and RWOs a broad mandate to oversee and manage Inuit wildlife harvesting in their respective communities and regions. The *Nunavut Agreement* also provides HTOs with a mandate to represent the interests of Inuit hunters and their hunting rights, including the right to sue on behalf of members for rights infringements (5.7.15).

KWB has been actively involved in the co-management of the Western Hudson Bay (WH) and Foxe Basin (FB) Polar Bear Sub-Populations for several years. Before and after the signing of the *Nunavut Agreement* and the creation of the Nunavut territory, KWB has been a strong proponent of including Inuit Qaujimagatugangit of Elders and expert hunters in management decisions about polar bears as well as other wildlife. KWB, along with five Kivalliq HTOs, worked with the Government of Nunavut (GN) Department of Environment (DoE) and the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board (NWMB) to create and sign the *Polar Bear Management Memorandum of Understanding for the Management of the "Western Hudson" Polar Bear Population*². Also, KWB, along with three Kivalliq HTOs, worked with the Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board, four Qikiqtani HTOs, the GN DoE, and the NWMB to create and sign the *Polar Bear Management Memorandum of Understanding for the Management of the "Foxe Basin" Polar Bear Population*³. These MOUs currently provide the framework for polar bear management in the Kivalliq. Every year the KWB works with the HTOs to allocate tags that correspond to the Total Allowable Harvest (TAH) of these sub-populations and does its best to meet management requirements.

¹ Nunavut Tunngavik Inc. and Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development and Federal Interlocutor for Métis and Non-Status Indians. (2010). *Agreement Between the Inuit of the Nunavut Settlement Area and Her Majesty the Queen in right of Canada as amended*.

² Arviat HTO, Baker Lake HTO, Aqigiq HTO (Chesterfield Inlet), Aqiggiaq HTO (Rankin Inlet), Issatik HTO (Whale Cove), Kivalliq Wildlife Board, and GN Department of Environment. (2005). *Polar Bear Management Memorandum of Understanding for the Management of the "Western Hudson" Polar Bear Population*.

³ Aqigiq HTO (Chesterfield Inlet), Arviq HTO (Nauyasat), Aiviit HTO (Coral Harbour), Hall Beach HTO, Igloodik HTO, Aiviq HTO (Cape Dorset), Mayukalik HTO (Kimmirut), Kivalliq Wildlife Board, Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board, and GN Department of Environment. (2005). *Polar Bear Management Memorandum of Understanding for the Management of the "Foxe Basin" Polar Bear Population*.



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The final revised management plan will replace the current MoUs and implemented once approved. Because the QWB's previous submission has been largely ignored in our opinion, it will probably be impossible to revise sections of the plan upon request by HTOs or RWO to actually meet the needs of the communities in future, if the current revised plan is approved. That leads the QWB to call for rejection of the revised plan at this time.

On the attached pages, you will find more specific comments on the revised Plan itself, in case the NWMB or DOE may at some point decide to address them in demonstrable and significant ways.

Sincerely,

James Qillaq
Chairperson, Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board

cc. 13 HTOs in Qikiqtaaluk region
Aluki Kotierk, President, Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated
Stanley Adjuk, Chairperson, Kivallik Wildlife Board
Joe Ashevak, Chairperson, Kitikmeot Regional Wildlife Board
Department of Environment, Government of Nunavut

Preliminary Comments on the revised Nunavut Polar Bear Co-Management Plan

Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board

Submitted to the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board

May 19, 2017

The following comments are preliminary in nature. The Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board (QWB) reserves the right to make additional comments and recommendations, pending additional information and opinions that may arise from QWB members and HTO members in Qikiqtaaluk Region, or in response to other co-management partners.

1. In the QWB's 2015 submission to the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board (NWMB), we identified that one of its top priorities was for the Nunavut Department of Environment (DOE) to specify actions that it will take to improve its communication with the co-management partners and Inuit in general, to allow more engagement of stakeholders, and to foster greater cooperation with its co-management partners.

During the intervening 16 months before resubmitting its revised Plan, DOE did not engage the QWB to develop such actions and incorporate specify actions into the Plan to the best of our knowledge. In our opinion, that is a demonstrable failure by DOE to directly address one of the QWB's highest priorities.

Instead DOE have the following actions listed; all of which are overly vague, of inadequate priority, and most are far too long or unclear in their timelines, in the QWB's opinion:

"9.4 Develop a communications plan and education materials for bear safety", Moderate priority, Timeline: Within 3 years"

"9.3 Seek to build capacity in all co-management organizations to better participate in regulatory review processes", Moderate priority, Timeline: Ongoing"

9.5 "Build capacity in HTOs to provide support and participation in research projects", High priority, Timeline: Within 3 years

In addition, during the March 2017 regular and in-camera NWMB meetings, representatives of DOE spoke very strongly and at length against further in-person public hearings on a Plan that is very important to Nunavummiut. This is further continuing evidence that DOE does not truly appreciate the

needs of members of HTOs and other Inuit to present and be listened to by traditional means.

2. In the QWB's 2015 submission to the NWMB, we identified that a second top priority for the revised Plan to develop with all co-management partners very clear plans to collect Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit (IQ) about polar bear in Nunavut and to develop methods to substantively incorporate IQ into future management of polar bears.

The QWB devoted over 2 pages of our 2015 submission to this topic! That is a very clear expression of how important this issue is. We will not repeat all that here again.

During the intervening 16 months before resubmitting its revised Plan, DOE did not engage the QWB in an effort to develop specific and substantial actions for the collection and development of IQ about polar bears and their management. In our opinion, that is a demonstrable failure by DOE to directly and seriously address yet another of the QWB's highest priorities.

In the revised Plan, we did not see any clear and high priority actions on this topic; only vague objectives without priority assignments, like: 8.2.1 "Improve and continue gathering and archiving IQ in relation to polar bears and their habitat" and 8.2.2 "When possible, a concurrent IQ study will be conducted to complement the population inventory."

This is unsatisfactory in our opinion. Elders pass away on an on-going basis. Each passing is a critical loss of knowledge. The QWB has never envisioned that the value of IQ collection and research is dependent on the timing of DOE's scientific inventories. Apparently, DOE does not see IQ as being of value in its own right.

Independently, QWB has taken steps to further investigate and has begun to develop an applicable IQ strategy. From 1980s through the early 2000s, viable, scientifically peer-reviewed and published IQ research methods and management strategies were successfully developed and implemented in conjunction with South Baffin caribou. That IQ work included but was not limited to: historical and current distribution and abundance knowledge (as expressed by Inuit), ecology and habitat relationships over a period of 90 years, plus reliable and subsequently proven concepts and predictions by Inuit, even including an IQ-based management plan (that was not implemented). A similar strategy and methodology can be implemented for polar bear populations in Qikiqtaaluk.

Now, the QWB calls on DOE to commit to providing significant financial resources to fully enable the QWB itself to build and lead a team of experts and future trained Inuit to develop and implement an on-going polar bear IQ research program that in future will provide significant input to a series of community-based and sub-population-based management plans. We call on DOE to commit to funding this QWB-led program in the Nunavut Polar Bear truly-Co-Management Plan, as a high priority to begin by October 2017.

3. In the QWB's 2015 submission to the NWMB, we called for a section in the plan on the dangers of polar bears, to ensure that the plan speaks to the very real danger that polar bears pose to people.

We note that in the Introduction of the revised Plan that DOE now recognizes that Inuit have seen that most polar bear populations are increasing, while science seems to see that most populations are either stable or declining. We believe that the scientific evidence for such conclusions is weak, for example, as evidenced by the recent change in the interpretation of the trend of Baffin Bay bears dating back to 2012-13.

In the Introduction of the revised Plan, it also states that the focus of polar bear management supposedly now shifts to maintaining, or reducing numbers in areas where public safety is a concern and/or where there are detrimental effects on the ecosystem due to increased numbers of polar bears. However, there appears to be little follow through in the rest of the document.

For which populations does this new focus apply?

In our reading, the Plan does not give new and clear management objectives in section 8.1.3, either in general or for specific populations that comply with this supposed new focus.

For example, eliminating sex-selective harvest is stated as being dependent on status, trend **and** management objective. Among the 3 stated management objectives, there is no option to allow a decline to continue through harvesting in a case where there may be public safety concerns. Accordingly, the Plan states that once a decline is detected, the TAH **has** to be reduced, and this requirement is not made contingent on issues of public safety!

A table(s) is needed to show the HTOs and RWOs what the full array of TAH, trend and management objectives that may be considered.

Serious and sincere engagement by DOE of the stakeholders is required to set population objectives based on public safety and ecosystem conditions, and IQ is critical to develop and negotiate such objectives.

Further, the revised Plan presents the issue of public safety from a bear-centered view, most often as DLPK. That is as a killed bear.

References to "fear" felt by Inuit are missing, as are words like "danger" and "attack", words which QWB purposely used in its 2015 submission because they properly reflect the reality in the communities. It appears to us that DOE does not take this issue and reality seriously!

Related to this, is the issue of: "How many bears are enough? How many are too many?" And "What are the target population sizes desired by biologists?"

Inuit have been asking these questions for decades without any substantial replies giving clear targets!

As climate changes, bears may be moving toward communities, so there could be a growing problem. Inuit know that polar bears are highly adaptable animals, which can deal with highly varied and changing ecological conditions. They are adapted to climatic conditions of southern Hudson Bay to Kane Basin and the Canadian High Arctic Islands. Inuit know the adaptability of bear, they respect bears greatly for this adaptability. Just because bears may change in physical condition, there is no evidence that we know of that proves that populations will decline as a result. And thus, there is no evidence that TAHs should be reduced because of climate change or changing condition of bears. But that is the implication whenever governments and their biologists talk about climate change.

On the other hand, Inuit recognize that climate change is more likely to bring bears into closer proximity to humans, causing public safety issues. While bear populations remain resilience to population declines in the face of climate change, in the opinion of knowledgeable Inuit.

The Plan must identify actions that WILL be taken to develop target population levels for all populations in Nunavut. These target population levels must be developed in close and full collaboration with ALL HTOs and RWOs, and public safety issues must be incorporated into the setting of population targets.

As already stated by the QWB in 2015, sections on public safety must be added for background information and in terms of action items. In addition,

the concept of human-tolerance for polar bears in and around communities needs to be an integral component for developing population target levels.

As well, a much stronger and more serious commitment to on-going community-based public-safety monitoring and deterrent programs with very clear and measurable actions must be added to the Plan.

4. The Plan should address how DOE will advocate and justify for removal of polar bears as “special concern” under SARA, removal of all negative NDFs by the federal government, and allowance of unsold hides when negative NDFs are removed. Clear action items on these issues are required.
5. The analyses and interpretation of study results must become an open and collaborative process. RWOs must be able to assign knowledgeable representatives to collaborate in the interpretation of the results of surveys and other scientific studies. These representatives may be traditionally trained Inuit and scientifically trained persons as the RWOs may chose.

After the survey of the Baffin Bay sub-population, the PBTC, PBAC and scientific Authority could not finalize how to interpret with the results. Three communities are still waiting 5 or 6 years after the survey was completed. This situation is wholly unacceptable, TAH decisions must be more efficient!

Future studies require guaranteed publication of results in a timely manner. As a high priority, the recommendation of new TAHs must be dealt within no more than 2 years after the completion of field surveys or studies, and within 1 year if management objectives change in the absences of new surveys.

As well, once the QWB is funded to undertake IQ research, the results of IQ research must be equitably incorporated into all management decisions with comparable timelines, to enable more efficient decision making of management objectives, target population levels and TAH determinations.

6. With support from NTI, the three RWOs have advocated to completely abolish the intrusive science or drugging any polar bears. In our opinion, section 8.2.2 (Page 25, 5th paragraph) should be completely removed.



October 12, 2018

Dear Mr. Shewchuk,

Re: Nunavut Wildlife Management Board (NWMB) in-person public hearing to consider the revised Nunavut Polar Bear Co-Management Plan

Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated (“NTI”) appreciates this additional opportunity to provide comments on the Government of Nunavut’s (“GN”) proposal with respect to the NWMB decision to consider the revised Nunavut Polar Bear Co-Management Plan (“Draft Plan”). This submission is provided in addition to NTI’s May 24, 2017 comments on the Draft Plan.

A. General Comments

Below, NTI sets out its general views with respect to the Draft Plan and some of the key issues underlying polar bear management moving forward.

1. NTI emphasizes the importance of ensuring that *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit* (“IQ”) is adequately considered and included in Polar Bear management.

As the NWMB has recognized, the integration of IQ is an essential part of all decision-making with respect to wildlife management in Nunavut.¹ As identified in s. 1(2) of Nunavut’s *Wildlife Act*, “the guiding principles and concepts of IQ are important to the management of wildlife and habitat” in Nunavut, and must be incorporated into NWMB decision-making.² Article 5 of the Nunavut Agreement also includes an objective of creating a wildlife management system that “serves and promotes the long-term economic, social and cultural interests of Inuit harvesters” and that “promotes public confidence, particularly amongst Inuit.”³ There is a reasonable expectation that both scientific and IQ contribute to the discussion and decision making processes.

Meaningful inclusion of IQ in co-management and especially polar bear management is essential to ensure that Inuit harvesting rights under the Nunavut Agreement are respected, conservation objectives are met, and public safety is upheld.

However, IQ has not always been sufficiently incorporated by decision-makers in Nunavut.⁴ At times, wildlife management approaches “have lacked an appropriate historical context to fully

¹ NWMB Website, “Frequently Asked Questions,” accessed October 3, 2018, accessed at: <https://www.nwmb.com/en/about-nwmb/faqs#q-9-how-does-the-nwmb-incorporate-tek-iq-in-wildlife-management>

² See e.g. *Wildlife Act*, SNu 2003, c. 26, ss. 1(2), 8.

³ Nunavut Agreement, Article 5.1.3(b)

⁴ Gabriel Nirlungayuk & David S. Lee, “A Nunavut Inuit Perspective on Western Hudson Bay Polar Bear Management and the Consequences for Conservation Hunting,” in *Inuit, Polar Bears and Sustainable*

appreciate the different understandings possessed by local resource users.”⁵ As the NWMB is aware, the disconnect between the sentiment in certain scientific communities and IQ has been pronounced in various previous polar bear management discussions. For example, the NWMB reduced the Western Hudson Bay (“WH”) polar bear Total Allowable Harvest (“TAH”) from 2007-2009 based on scientific advocacy about decreased bear numbers, despite the existence of IQ to the contrary.⁶ While the weaknesses of the use of that scientific data in modelling approaches were eventually identified,⁷ the harvest totals had already been reduced, and public trust eroded in affected Inuit communities.

NTI is very supportive of all attempts made in the Draft Plan to create a system that values IQ and integrates it demonstrably into decision-making. NTI wants to emphasize the importance of ensuring that the references to IQ in the Draft Plan are transformed into meaningful action. NTI looks forward to working with NWMB to develop a flexible, comprehensive framework for polar bear management that successfully integrates IQ into management actions that uphold Inuit harvesting rights. To satisfy Article 5 of the Nunavut Agreement, Nunavut’s polar bear management framework must carefully weigh the available information and approaches including past experience.

2. NTI emphasizes primary goal of human safety.

Public safety has become an acute concern; the current polar bear harvest management system, in addition to being a system of penalization, is a system that puts Nunavut Inuit in jeopardy. NTI cannot endorse a system that exposes Inuit to life-threatening situations. The identification of a novel and adaptive mechanism that will allow for a reasonable, defensible solution to the issue of public safety may require time and discussions than will be provided by the upcoming public hearing. Therefore, NTI raises the need – and provides the blueprint – for immediate action to effectively address the bear-related public safety concerns of Nunavut Inuit.

NTI supports and welcomes the Draft Plan’s emphasis on public safety, and recognition that in many communities, “the polar bear may have exceed the co-existence threshold.”⁸ As community consultations with respect to the Draft Plan clearly established, public safety is a major concern for Inuit and must be a top consideration for the NWMB.⁹

As set out below, NTI wants to ensure that the Draft Plan sufficiently incorporates public safety concerns into its objectives and actions. NTI also wants to ensure that the paramount needs of public safety are achieved without being punitive to Inuit harvesting rights or other Inuit interests.

3. NTI requests confirmation that the Draft Plan is not mandatory and can be reviewed and updated as required.

As stated briefly in NTI’s May 2017 submission, NTI understands that this plan is not intended to be mandatory. It is NTI’s view that communities, governments or affected parties should be able to seek NWMB review of plan components – including sub-population management objectives – if and when components of the plan require updating or amendment. It is also important to ensure that actions taken under the plan are consistent with Article 5 of the Nunavut

Use: Local, National, and International Perspectives, eds. Milton M.R. Freeman and Lee Foote (Edmonton: CCI Press, 2009) at p. 141 [Nirlungayuk & Lee].

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 135-136.

⁷ Markus Dyck et. al., *2016 Aerial Survey of the Western Hudson Bay Polar Bear Sub-Population: Final Report* (Igloolik: Nunavut Department of Environment, 2017) at pp. 3-4.

⁸ Draft Plan, p. 6.

⁹ Nunavut Polar Bear Co-Management Plan Consultation Summary, Fall 2016, p. 2.

Agreement and there is a process to ensure that consistency. For the plan to be effective and to ensure ongoing compliance with the Nunavut Agreement, there needs to be a mechanism through which the plan and its objectives can evolve as required.

B. Specific Comments Regarding Draft Plan

1. Draft Plan should contemplate development of framework / process for potential exclusion of DLPKs from TAH.

NTI is concerned about the continued counting of Defense of Life and Property Kills (“DLPKs”) towards the TAH in communities.

As the Draft Plan recognizes, “[h]uman-bear interactions have increased and led to an increase in defence of life and property kills (DLPK).”¹⁰ Human-bear interactions continue to rise, and to lead to dangerous and sometimes fatal outcomes; this summer alone, two people were killed by polar bears in Nunavut.¹¹

Although the Draft Plan recognizes that polar bears pose an increasing public safety risk, and takes steps to address that risk (i.e., by hiring bear monitors and improving communication with the public), the Draft Plan should address one of the fundamental flaws with the current system: as long as DLPKs count towards the TAH, there will be strong social, cultural, and economic pressures that may limit necessary self-defense actions, even when there are serious and immediate risks to human life or a person’s property. While the Draft Plan attempts to mitigate some of these pressures (i.e., by stating that hides should be turned over to the local HTO as soon as possible), NTI wishes to ensure that Inuit feel able to take necessary actions to preserve public safety.

In addition to posing a serious public safety issue, the continued counting of DLPKs towards the TAH can interfere with the transmission of IQ, and to the continuation of a number of traditional hunting and fishing practices. For example, as there is currently concern regarding whether and when a DLPK by a hunter from one community will count towards another community’s TAH if the hunter is closer to that community’s territory, some hunters may be concerned about hunting outside of their areas. Similarly, as there is a perception of increased danger for hunters in camps engaging in non-polar bear hunting (i.e., for seals) as a result of polar bears, some hunters may alter or limit their current hunting practices to avoid being forced to choose between a DLPK or potential harm by a bear.¹²

In Part 1 (the Introduction), the Draft Plan also specifies that, in areas where increased polar bear abundance brings about a public safety concern and/or detrimental ecosystem effects, the focus of management ought to shift to the stabilization or reduction of polar bear numbers. Although NTI agrees with the notion that fewer bears likely entails fewer hazardous human-bear encounters, we must also point out that it is problem bears and/or bears encountered in problematic circumstances – rather than the entire bear population – that specifically need to be targeted in order to alleviate public safety concerns; reducing subpopulations to almost any level does not necessarily ensure that none of the remaining bears will endanger life or property.

¹⁰ Draft Plan, p. 19

¹¹ See e.g. “Nunavut hunter killed in summer’s second fatal polar bear attack,” *Nunatsiaq News*, August 28, 2018, accessed at: http://nunatsiaq.com/stories/article/65674nunavut_hunter_killed_in_summers_second_fatal_polar_bear_attack/

¹² See e.g. Nunavut Polar Bear Co-Management Plan Consultation Summary, Fall 2016, p. 2; submission of the Mittimatalik Hunters & Trappers Organization to NWMB regarding potential modifications of the WH TAH, May 3, 2018; submission of Hall Beach Hunters and Trappers Association regarding Draft Plan, May 15, 2017.

For these reasons, the Draft Plan should more clearly consider a potential objective or process for exclusion of DLPKs from a TAH in certain or all warranted situations.

As part of the Draft Plan, materials should be developed to consider whether and when DLPKs should not be counted towards TAH so that Inuit can know in advance that they can take actions to preserve public safety without being penalized or jeopardizing the interests of other Inuit.

Recommendation:

- NTI recommends the implementation of exclusion of DLPKs from TAHs. There should be a review of the results of the measure by the mid-term, 5-year review of the Draft Plan.
- Specifically, on page 27:
 - At the bottom of the first paragraph, add the following sentence: “In the future, and in appropriate circumstances, there may be a basis for considering the exclusion of DLPKs towards TAH.”
 - At the bottom of the page, add the following objective: “Develop framework for assessing when, and in what regions / contexts, DLPKs should not be counted towards TAH.”
- On page 31, add the following management action: “Develop framework for assessing when, and in what regions / contexts, DLPKs should not be counted towards TAH,” with a “High” priority and a timeline of “within two years.”

2. Draft Plan should contemplate process for adapting or moving away from flexible quota system, especially in the context of sex-selective harvest and DLPKs.

Inuit harvesters and organizations have consistently expressed misgivings about the way the flexible quota system is managed and applied. The over-harvesting of female problem bears, for example, is one instance where the flexible quota system compounds the already negative impact of DLPKs on community tag allocation. As NTI submitted during the November 2017 in-person hearing on the TAH for the WH subpopulation, the NWMB could, by substituting the flexible quota system – and its associated credits and penalties – with multi-year fixed TAHs further promote the conditions necessary to the meeting of shared management objectives.

In NTI’s view, the Draft Plan requires amendment to address Inuit concerns with the flexible quota system and to create a framework for reassessing or revising that system as appropriate. The current framework poses a number of challenges and barriers, including:

- Over-penalization of communities in situations where mistaken kills of female bears and DLPKs combine to reduce or even eliminate communities’ TAH for the following year (or years); and,
- Administrative barriers leading to delays and issues in processing of application for credits.

The Draft Plan does not adequately recognize these limitations, or set out a framework for addressing issues with the current system. This has the potential to result in limits on Inuit

harvesting rights that do not meet the justification standard under 5.3.3 of the Nunavut Agreement and decisions that do not appropriately reflect IQ.

Recommendation:

- On page 21, at the bottom of the second paragraph, add the sentence: "Inuit have expressed concerns that the Flexible Quota System can lead to over-penalization of communities and administrative barriers, and these concerns should form a part of future discussions regarding harvest management of bears in Nunavut."
- On page 23, under action (2), add a bullet: "Implement temporary moratorium or amendment to flexible quota system that penalizes communities for overharvest of females."¹³

3. Draft Plan should properly recognize Inuit concerns with sex-selective harvest.

Inuit harvesters have repeatedly voiced reservations about the 2:1 male/female sex-selective harvest. In this regard, NTI notes that the Draft Plan outlines that the elimination of the sex-selective harvest can be considered on a case-by-case basis to address evolving management objectives and concerns (e.g., public safety). NTI accordingly welcomes the GN-recommended shift to a 1:1 harvest for the Baffin Bay subpopulation.

In NTI's view, the Draft Plan fails to adequately capture and address the ongoing debate around the appropriateness of maintaining a sex-selective harvest. Several HTOs have raised concerns about a sex-selective harvest. In the submission of the Mittimatalik Hunters & Trappers Organization, for example, a sex-selective harvest is especially problematic as female bears appear to pose greater danger to humans.

As drafted, the Draft Plan identifies potential avenues for moving away from a sex-selective harvest, but does not accurately address the underlying concerns. NTI wishes to ensure that any limitations on Inuit harvesting rights are based on IQ and justified under 5.3.3 of the Nunavut Agreement.

Recommendation:

- On page 22, after the second paragraph, add a new paragraph: "However, Inuit have expressed concerns regarding the current sex-selective harvesting system. Among other concerns, HTOs have expressed their views that the system unfairly penalizes communities for accidental overharvesting of female bears, leading to TAH reductions in future years."

¹³ In this respect, NTI agrees with the Kivalliq Wildlife Board's submission to the NWMB with respect to the TAH for the WH sub-population, November 24, 2017, p. 8.

4. Draft Plan should address issues posed by Manitoba polar bear tourism.

Among the other factors contributing to increased concerns regarding public safety, NTI is concerned that polar bear tourism in Manitoba has resulted in bears becoming habituated to humans and dogs, and, as a result led to increased presence of bears in and near communities. The Draft Plan should identify that risk and identify the need to develop a proposed framework for working with Manitoba to address it.

Recommendation:

- On page 28, in section 8.5.2, add a bullet: "Work with other jurisdictions in Canada to address public safety concerns and to develop coordinated responses."
- On page 32, add an action: "Explore frameworks or coordinated approaches with neighboring jurisdictions regarding human safety," with a "Moderate" priority and a timeline of "3 years."

5. Draft Plan should address divergence between scientific knowledge and IQ regarding characterization of sub-populations.

NTI is concerned that the Draft Plan fails to sufficiently address the limitations with sub-population characterization. As NTI stated in its May 24, 2017 submissions, Inuit have expressed the view that bears move between subpopulations. Although NTI does not necessarily recommend a comprehensive revision to the current system, it does take the position that the Draft Plan should address this disconnect between IQ and current scientific characterizations (although NTI supports the statement at the bottom of p. 18, it is of the view that there should be further content with respect to potential action).

Recommendation:

- On page 24, at the end of the third paragraph, add the sentence: "Additionally, as Inuit have repeatedly expressed the view that polar bears appear to move between subpopulations, there may be an increased role for IQ to play in the ongoing identification and characterization of sub-populations."
- On page 41, at the top of the page, there should be a note: "Although this Appendix sets out the current characterizations, statuses and recommendations relating to Nunavut polar bear sub-populations, IQ indicates that there may be some overlap between these populations, as certain bears may move between subpopulations."

6. Draft Plan should address importance of preventing and mitigating property damage.

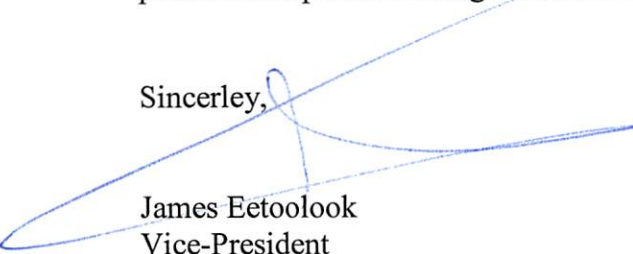
Although human safety remains the primary concern, a number of HTOs have also expressed concerns about the damages caused by bears to personal property, including cabins and cache meat. This damage, especially when it goes uncompensated, serves to reinforce perceptions about an overabundance of bears and corresponding negative impacts on local communities. Although NTI supports the objectives and recommendations relating to review and improvement of existing damage compensation and prevention programs, it also takes the position that the Draft Plan should include a statement identifying this issue.

Recommendation:

- On page 19, after paragraph 2, add a paragraph: "In addition to losses associated with DLPKs, human-bear interactions can also lead to property damage, including damage to cabins and bear destruction of food caches. Even when these interactions don't lead to DLPKs or injury to humans, they still lead to negative impacts in communities."

Thank you for this opportunity. NTI looks forward to speaking to these and, if necessary, other points at the public hearing next month.

Sincerley,



James Eetoolook
Vice-President
Nunavut Tunngavik Inc.



www.tunngavik.com

May 24, 2017

Daniel Shewchuk
Acting Chairperson
Nunavut Wildlife Management Board
P.O. Box 1379,
Iqaluit, NU
X0A 0H0

Dear Mr. Shewchuk:

Re: Public Hearing of the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board (NWMB) to consider the revised Nunavut Polar Bear Co-Management Plan, Iqaluit, Nunavut, June 6-8, 2017

Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated (NTI) appreciates this opportunity to provide comments on the Nunavut polar bear co-management plan.

A. GENERAL COMMENTS

These comments are based on the consultations conducted by the Government of Nunavut.

- 1) Several HTOs especially in the Baffin and Kitikmeot region expressed concern over the male sex selective harvest. For example, during consultations in the Baffin and Kitikmeot region, communities expressed problems with the 2:1 sex ratio for at least two major reasons. Firstly, for some areas, there are fewer females available. Secondly, the high penalties that communities experience in quota reductions the following year(s) when females are overharvested. A 1:1 ratio was provided as a solution but the response by Government to this change remains uncertain. For example, we suspect that the communities would be very surprised to learn that their total TAH would be lowered. This would result if the Government response was not to increase the number of available females but instead lower the number of available males to meet the 1:1 sex ratio.
- 2) Inuit have repeatedly expressed that bears move between the current subpopulation boundaries. For example, affected communities have expressed that Gulf of Boothia and M'Clintock Channel subpopulations share polar bears. Inuit have also expressed that

bears move and mix within Hudson Bay. A recent study provides evidence for fine-scale structure, but there remains varying levels of gene flow between clusters within the Hudson Bay region (Viengkone et al. 2016¹).

- 3) Inuit and NTI have also expressed concerns over the management and application of the flexible quota system. For example, when there has been application for credits, the release of tags by the Government has sometimes been forwarded to the NWMB for approval. This is considered an unnecessary administrative step. It is expected that the TAH will continue to be provided to the RWOs for allocation to communities and that credit requests will be satisfied in a reasonable amount of time.

B. DETAILED RECOMMENDATIONS

NTI's detailed recommendations are made in order to

- improve the plan's descriptions of *Nunavut Agreement* requirements,
- clarify responsibility for the plan,
- clarify the intent of the plan, and
- add a recommendation regarding the federal government's implementation of the *Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species* (CITES).

Author

On the title page, identify the Government of Nunavut as the plan's author.

Proponent, and approval process

In the Preface or Executive Summary, note that the Government of Nunavut is proposing that the NWMB approve this management plan. In addition, note that the plan will be adopted upon the NWMB's decision being accepted or varied by Nunavut's Minister of Environment.

References to the *Nunavut Agreement*

Throughout the document, replace "Nunavut Land Claims Agreement" or "NLCA" by "*Nunavut Agreement*" or "Agreement".

PREFACE – page 1

In the first paragraph, fourth sentence, add the following underlined words:

¹ Viengkone M., A.E. Derocher, E.S. Richardson, R.M. Malenfant, J.M. Miller, M.E. Obbard, M.G. Dyck, N.J. Lunn, V. Sahanatien, and C. Davis. 2016. Assessing Polar Bear (*Ursus maritimus*) population structure in the Hudson Bay region using SNPs. *Ecology and Evolution* 6(23): 8474-8484.

“The *Nunavut Agreement* recognises Inuit harvesting rights and requires that Inuit play an effective role in all aspects of wildlife management.”

In the second paragraph, second sentence, add the following underlined words:

The NWMB has the discretionary responsibility of approving management plans (Article 5 section 5.2.34 d(i))

In the second paragraph, reword the last sentence as follows:

(from) This plan has been prepared in cooperation with Nunavut Tunngavik Inc., the Department of Environment, Regional Wildlife Organizations, Hunters and Trappers Organizations, and Inuit community members from throughout Nunavut.

(to) This plan has been prepared by the Department of Environment in cooperation with Nunavut Tunngavik Inc., Regional Wildlife Organizations, Hunters and Trappers Organizations, and Inuit community members from throughout Nunavut.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY – page 2

In the second paragraph, reword the first sentence as follows:

(from) This intent of this plan is: 1) to provide guidance and direction to co-management partners for decision-making;

(to) [same as above, except delete “and direction”]

Note: NTI does not understand this management plan as intended to trigger the Government’s duty to implement NWMB decisions, or to give mandatory instruction to the Government, NWMB, RWOs or HTOs. The Preface, for example, states that “[i]mplementation of this management plan is subject to ...priorities ... of the participating jurisdictions and organizations.”

TABLE OF CONTENTS – pages 3-5

Add the following new subheadings:

6.1 Decision criteria

6.2 Principles of Conservation

Add a new sub-heading, “**6.3 Co-Management Partners**”, and re-number the current sections 6.1-6.6, **6.3.1-6.3.6**.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS – page 5

Place the acknowledgements at the end of the document.

1. INTRODUCTION – page 6

In the first paragraph, reword the second sentence as follows:

(from) Restrictions (e.g., limiting the number of polar bears harvested per year per subpopulation) were the primary means of population recovery in regions where abundance was reduced as the result of unsustainable harvest.

(to) Restrictions (e.g., limiting the number of polar bears harvested per year per subpopulation) were the primary means of population recovery in regions where abundance had been reduced [].

2. GUIDING PRINCIPLES – page 7

Reword the last guiding principle as follows:

(from) Where there are threats of serious or irreparable damage to polar bear populations or habitat, lack of certainty will not be a reason for postponing reasonable or precautionary conservation measures.

(to) Inuit harvesting will be limited for conservation reasons only to the extent that a limitation is necessary and only according to the Principles of Conservation. Subject to those requirements of the *Nunavut Agreement*, lack of certainty will not be a reason for postponing [] conservation measures where there is a sound and credible case, based on evidence, that a risk of serious or irreparable damage to polar bear populations or habitat exists,

Note: This recommendation reflects s. 5.3.3 of the *Nunavut Agreement*, the Principles of Conservation, and the following statements in the Government of Canada’s policy on application of the precautionary approach to resource management:

[the precautionary principle] “cannot be applied without an appropriate assessment of risks.” (page 3). ...“Sound scientific information and its evaluation must be the basis for applying precaution” (page 7). “The emphasis should be on providing a sound and credible case that a risk of serious or irreversible harm exists” (page 7).

Government of Canada, *A Framework for the Application of Precaution in Science-based Decision Making about Risk* (Privy Council Office, 2003).

3. GOAL OF THE POLAR BEAR MANAGEMENT PLAN – page 8

Re-word the goal as follows:

(from) To maintain viable and healthy polar bear subpopulations for current and future generations, and to ensure that polar bears remain an integrated and functioning part of the ecosystem while monitored and appropriate harvests are allowed.

(to) To maintain vital and healthy polar bear subpopulations capable of sustaining harvesting needs for current and future generations, and to ensure that polar bears remain

an integrated and functioning part of the ecosystem while monitored, sustainable harvests occur.

Note: This recommendation takes into account the Principles of Conservation and Inuit harvesting rights in the *Nunavut Agreement*.

4. SPECIES DESCRIPTION - page 8

Under 4.3.1, Global range, second last line, add “according to Canada’s Polar Bear Technical Advisory Group” after “current status”.

Under 4.3.2, Nunavut range, reword the last sentence as follows:

(from) A more detailed background and description of Nunavut’s polar bear subpopulations is provided in Appendix B.

(to) A more detailed background and description of Nunavut’s polar bear subpopulations, together with management recommendations for each subpopulation, are provided in Appendix B.

5.3 Legislative frameworks and agreements – page 13

In the first sentence, add the words underlined below:

In Nunavut, wildlife is managed according to Article 5 of the *Nunavut Agreement*. Article 5 recognizes the right of Inuit to harvest polar bears and trade in polar bear products. It also sets out the creation of the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board (NWMB), which is the primary instrument of wildlife management in Nunavut, and defines the roles of the NWMB, government, Hunters and Trappers Organizations (HTOs), and Regional Wildlife Organizations (RWOs)

6. POLAR BEAR CO-MANAGEMENT IN NUNAVUT – page 14

Immediately after the title, add the following:

The *Nunavut Agreement* and *Wildlife Act* provide the overarching criteria and principles under which Inuit harvesting of polar bears is managed.

6.1 Decision criteria

Conservation, public health and public safety are among the purposes for which Inuit harvesting of polar bears may be limited. Decisions made by the NWMB and Minister must limit Inuit harvesting only to the extent necessary.

6.2 Principles of Conservation

Decisions made by the NWMB and Minister for conservation reasons must apply the following principles:

(a) the maintenance of the natural balance of ecological systems within the Nunavut Settlement Area;

- (b) the protection of wildlife habitat;
- (c) the maintenance of vital, healthy, wildlife populations capable of sustaining harvesting needs as defined in this Article; and
- (d) the restoration and revitalization of depleted populations of wildlife and wildlife habitat.

Insert a new sub-heading, “ **6.3 Co-Management Partners**”, immediately before the sentence commencing with “The following co-management partners participate”. Re-number the current sections 6.1-6.6 sections **6.3.1-6.3.6**.

6.1 – page 14

Re-word the last sentence follows:

The Nunavut Agreement is paramount over legislation, and is constitutionally protected under Canada’s Constitution Act, 1982.

6.2 NWMB – page 14

Re-word the second sentence as follows:

(from) In addition, it approves management plans and the designation of rare species.

(to) In addition, it may approve management plans and the designation of rare species.

6.6 Government of Canada – page 15

Add the underlined sentence below:

Canada signs international agreements on behalf of all jurisdictions and has responsibilities to coordinate international management actions for polar bears, with the advice of the co-management boards and jurisdictions. It is involved in international polar bear management including the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) and the 1973 *Agreement on the Conservation of Polar Bears*. When developing positions that relate to international agreements affecting Inuit harvesting rights in the Nunavut Settlement Area, the Government of Canada is required under the Nunavut Agreement to include Inuit in discussions.

Figure 2 The Co-Management Framework in Nunavut - page 16

Give NTI and similar organizations their own oval named “NTI and other representative Aboriginal Organizations”.

Distinguish between the proposal for decision and recommendations made by other parties.

Delete reference to polar bear MOUs.

Give “hearings” its own box and rename this box “NWMB hearings”.

In the box following the NWMB’s first decision, add the following: “Government accepts, is deemed to accept, or rejects”. In the next oval, replace “Accepts” with “Accepted”.

Replace “Government” with “Minister” in the boxes.

Remove the components referring to judicial challenges of NWMB decisions.

Note: The Minister’s duty to implement final NWMB decisions forthwith applies as soon as the decision is accepted or varied.

Rename the last box as follows:

(from) Responsible Minister implements Management Action

(to) Responsible Minister implements accepted or varied NWMB final decision.

7.5 Population boundaries – page 18

In the first paragraph, reword the last sentence as follows:

(from) It is important to recognize that these boundaries have formed the basis for management actions for over four decades, and have been beneficial to managers for setting harvest levels and for researchers focusing their population assessment studies.

(to) It is important to recognize that these boundaries have formed the basis for management actions for over four decades, and have been relied on by managers to set harvest levels and by researchers focusing their population assessment studies.

7.8 Trade – page 20

At the conclusion of this section, add the following:

Under the Nunavut Agreement, Inuit have the right to sell polar bear hides outside the Nunavut Settlement Area and to receive an export permit for this purpose on demand unless there is good cause for refusal. It is a recommendation of this plan that, when making and reviewing non-detriment findings under CITES, Canada’s Scientific Authority should presume that final decisions of the NWMB respecting TAHs reflect the sustainable harvest level of polar bear subpopulations in Nunavut.

8.1.1 Harvest Management – page 21

In the first paragraph, reword the second sentence as follows:

(from) As new information becomes available, co-management partners work together to establish a Total Allowable Harvest (TAH) for each polar bear population.

(to) As new information becomes available, co-management partners work together to consider or review a Total Allowable Harvest (TAH) for each polar bear population.

In the second paragraph, reword the first sentence as follows:

(from) Once the TAH is established, local communities are given the choice whether they wish to harvest the set number of bears for their own needs or to allocate a portion of the total for sport hunts

(to) Where a TAH is established, HTOs have the choice whether they wish to harvest the set number of bears [] or to allocate a portion of the total for sport hunts.

In the third paragraph, reword the first sentence as follows:

(from) While the TAH for each polar bear population is subject to change, the following harvest restrictions are legislated in the Nunavut Wildlife Act and do not vary according to population dynamics or annual removals.

(to) While the TAH for each polar bear population is subject to change, the following harvest restrictions have been established by the NWMB for enactment in the Nunavut *Wildlife Act*, and do not vary according to population dynamics or annual removals.

8.1.3 Harvest Reporting and Monitoring – page 22

Re-word the last sentence on page 23 as follows:

(from) DOE will consider these requests on a case-by-case basis, and only as new information becomes available;

(to) The NWMB will consider these requests on a case-by-case basis, and only as new information becomes available.

8.3 Habitat management and environmental stewardship (Avatitinnik Kamatsiarniq) objectives – page 26

Add, following the objectives already listed, the following:

- Generally, assist Canada to meet its obligation under Article II of the *International Agreement on Conservation of Polar Bears* to “take appropriate action to protect the ecosystems of which polar bears are a part, with special attention to habitat components such as denning and feeding sites and migration patterns.”

9. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PLAN – page 29

Throughout this section, clarify where in the document the reader may find “the management objective for the subpopulation”.

In the first paragraph:

- delete the following statement: “No changes to existing TAH will occur until new information becomes available.”
- reword the last sentence as follows:

(from) At that time, a new TAH will be recommended that is consistent with the subpopulation management objective and the objectives of this plan.

(to) At that time, a change to the TAH will be recommended that is consistent with the subpopulation management objective and the objectives of this plan.

- add as the closing sentence: “Otherwise, changes to TAHs may be considered according to the NWMB decision process”.

In the second paragraph:

- reword the first sentence as follows:

(from) The co-management structure in Nunavut requires an NWMB decision for any change to TAH, management objectives, or NQL.

(to) The co-management structure in Nunavut requires an NWMB decision for any change to TAH [] or NQL.

Note: As stated above, NTI does not understand this plan as intended to be mandatory. Therefore a community, government, or any affected party should be free to seek NWMB review of a subpopulation management objective at any time. The NWMB should change such an objective on review if persuaded that the objective adopted in this plan should be revised.

- reword the following phrase as per the reworded goal of the plan:

(from) The goal of the management plan is “*To maintain viable and healthy polar bear subpopulations for current and future generations, and to ensure that polar bears remain an integrated and functioning part of the ecosystem while monitored and appropriate harvests are allowed.*”

(to) The goal of the management plan is “*To maintain vital and healthy polar bear subpopulations capable of sustaining harvesting needs for current and future generations, and to ensure that polar bears remain an integrated and functioning part of the ecosystem while monitored, sustainable harvests occur.*”

Appendix A – page 33

Use the most up-to- date Polar Bear Technical Committee figures at the public hearing and in the plan submitted for approval.

Appendix B – page 41

Clarify throughout this Appendix whether “current ... abundance” is intended to be based on the most recent survey results available, the figure for “current status” shown, or a different source.

At the public hearing, after seeking the views of the HTOs, the NWMB should consider adopting a management objective of decreasing current abundance for the Baffin Bay and Davis Strait subpopulations.

Note: NTI understands the NWMB and Government to be managing the Davis Strait subpopulation, in particular, for decrease.

Thank you again for this opportunity and NTI looks forward to taking part in the upcoming public hearing.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Arreak', with a stylized flourish extending to the left.

James T. Arreak

Chief Executive Officer

To: Nunavut Wildlife Management Board

As NWMB requested for written submission hearing from all HTA/HTO across Nunavut, Hall Beach Hunters' & Trappers' Association is submitting this letter as they have two issues with the proposed polar bear management plan. First of all, the names of the Inuktitut for polar bear, and harvested bears being use for nearest community.

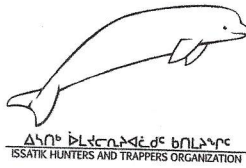
1

Second and final issue with the proposed polar bear management plan is the harvested bears would be taken out of the nearest community. In the proposed management plan states that "all bears harvested, whether for subsistence purposes, sport hunts, or in defence of life/property, are accounted for and subtracted from the annual TAH of the nearest community" (pg-21). Hall Beach HTA has spoken about this issue at the QWB annual general meeting for number of times that this needs to be modified more specific of how the tags would be taken out of nearest community. Hall Beach HTA are arguing that if Igloolik residents harvested past our area than it is certain that we would be giving out tags that Hall Beach residents has never harvested before or vice-versa. If Nunavut beneficiary harvested or some Qallunaa (who has a wife from the community and living in the community) harvested a bear whether for defence/property prevention it should be taken out of the beneficiary community, where he lives, not the nearest community. Also part of this issue that is in page 50- 4, if all the tags are filled up from beneficiaries community than the tag would be used from nearest community, Hall Beach HTA believes that this will have great impact for Hall Beach TAH as Igloolik residents are very common to see in our area during the peak of polar bear encounters in south of Hall Beach, HTA are recommending that the system we use still be in effect, where when no TAH is available in the community be used for future TAH.

In conclusion, Hall Beach HTA would like to see omission of Inuktitut Names that is currently in the proposed management plan and the harvested bears being used up for defense/property kills on nearest community be applied to only exploration and research activities.

Vice-Chair – Paul Nagmalik.





Polar Bear Management Plan Written Submission

Introduction

Issatik Hunters and Trappers Organizations (HTOs) are among the most important bodies created under the Nunavut Agreement (NA). They represent and provide service to Inuit in the communities on wildlife management and harvesting, program delivery, and are responsible for the implementation of several sections of the Nunavut Agreement.

The Board of Directors recommendations and comments;

1. Page 49 #1 in the Draft Polar Bear Management Plan states, "all human caused mortality to polar bears will be taken from the TAH of the nearest community..." The board of directors feels that the tags are not taken from the closet community, for 2 reasons; one being Whale Cove have major issues and concerns for it is a migrating route when the polar bears are migrating from south to north and nuisance bears come across the community; and the other is asking for a chance to harvest a bear of our choice and traditionally.
2. Page 50 #4 in the Draft Polar Bear Management Plan states, "when a Nunavut beneficiary kills a bear, the tag will come from the person's home community if that community has a TAH in the population that the bear was harvested from, otherwise, the nearest community must provide the tag."...the Board of Directors are asking for Page 49 #1 and Page 50 #4 to be observed more closely.



Kaniqliniq Hunters and Trappers Organization

Written Submission

Polar Bear Management Plan

1. Introduction

The Kangiqliniq Hunters and Trappers Organization (HTO) is a Designated Inuit Organization created for the community of Rankin Inlet under article 5.7 of the Nunavut Agreement. The HTO has a broad mandate to manage Inuit harvesting practices in the Rankin Inlet area while promoting conservation and safety of hunters.

The community of Rankin Inlet was established around the Rankin Inlet Nickel Mine which was operational from 1957 to 1962. Families from around the Kivalliq came to work at the mine. Collectively, current members of the KHTO have come from communities throughout the Kivalliq region as many have come to work for the prospective Meliadine Mine which is located approximately 30 km west north west of the community. Hunters in Rankin Inlet make up the membership of the HTO. Members harvest polar bears specifically from the Western Hudson Bay (WH) sub-population which is what our recommendations are based on.

2. Comments and Recommendations

2.1 Manage Western Hudson Bay Sub-Population at a Lower Abundance Level

The KHTO recommends managing the WH sub-population at a lower level than the 1400 bears identified in the MOU. Maintaining such a high population stresses the ecosystem and endangers humans due to increased bear and human interactions. Biologists who have conducted scientific surveys have never observed the bear population at a higher level, and abundance surveys were not conducted until the mid 1980's well after conservation efforts and total allowable harvests had been implemented. This gap in conservation efforts and research has created a false high for the baseline population upon which conservation efforts and management goals have been based on. The KHTO is pleased that the NWMB noted this in their recent decision to increase the TAH of the Western Hudson Bay sub-population.

2.2 Public Safety is a Top Priority

KHTO feels that the understated goal of Polar Bear management is public safety. By managing the bear population, you decrease the chance of human and bear Interactions. This decrease in interactions will go a long way to not only ensure public safety but, also, would decrease Inuit's fear of polar bears. Historically, bears were not animals to be feared but animals to be respected. Increased interactions and the habituation of WH bears have created a public fear of polar bears.

2.2.1 Increase Public Bear Safety Training

The Kangiqliniq HTO recommends the Government of Nunavut increase bear safety training in public schools. Traditionally bear safety was taught at a really young age, when hunters lived on the land. Due to the relatively recent introduction of public schools, the KHTO feels that there is a generational gap of bear safety.

2.3 Reduce Penalties for defense Kills

The KHTO supports a sex selective harvest. The KHTO understands the importance of maintaining a healthy female population. Where the KHTO is concerned is when defense kills happen. The penalties involved with defense kills of female bears exacerbates safety issues as hunters and campers fear being penalized for defending life and property from problem bears. The KHTO recommends that in the case of defense kills, that penalizations should remain at 1 credit regardless of the sex of the bear

3. Further Comments

3.1 Holistic Approach to Conservation

The KHTO believes that a more holistic approach is needed in the conservation of the WH ecosystem. While the KHTO notes that the goal of the polar bear management plan is the conservation of bears, the HTO feels not enough emphasis is placed on conservation of different animals within the WH eco-system. It is important that the entire ecosystem is healthy in order for bears to be healthy.

3.2 Concern with Manitoba Polar Bear Tourism

The KHTO is concerned with the habituation of bears in Manitoba caused by the polar bear tourism industry. The KHTO feels that the habituation of bears to humans before they have reached Nunavut communities exacerbates the amount of human and bear interactions as the bears no longer fear humans. The KHTO recommends that the Government of Nunavut's Department of Environment work with Manitoba's tourism industry and government to establish best practices pertaining to bear deterrence programs and tourism regulations.

3.3 Administration of Defense Kill Tags and Credits.

Item 4 of page 49 of the Draft Polar Bear Management Plan states, "When a beneficiary kills a bear, the tag will come from that person's home community if that community has a TAH in the population that the bear was harvested from. Otherwise the nearest community must provide a tag."

The KHTO feels that it would be more appropriate that the tag come from the home community. IQ says that WHB bears is a "sink" for Foxe Basin Bears, this has also been noted through genetic studies of polar bears. In the case of a defense kill bear of the Foxe Basin region, the KHTO feels it would be sufficient to remove the tag from the home community of the hunter.

3.4 Harvest Risk Assessment

The KHTO does not support the implementation of the Harvest Risk Assessment that NWMB recommended to the GN in the decision on the WH total allowable harvest adjustment in 2018 (and which the GN accepted). Section 1.2.2 of the NWMB governance manual states that NWMB's mission is "conserving wildlife through the application of Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit and scientific knowledge". The KHTO feels that through implementing the harvest risk assessment the NWMB would undermine very pertinent traditional knowledge that has been shared to the NWMB. Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit cannot accurately be implemented into a predictive model.



KIMMIRUT NU, XOA-ONO

E-Mail: kimmiruthto@qiniq.com

Daniel Shewchuk
A/Chairman NWMB

Joe Arlooktoo
HTA Chairperson
Mayukalik HTA- Kimmirut



Mittimatalik Hunters & Trappers Organization
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Email: htopond@qiniq.com cCns/4f5

Proposal for Polar Bear Management

May 3, 2018

1. Hunter on the land has been killed by a bear in Kivalliq.
2. Hunters while in camp almost lost life near Arctic Bay.
3. Hunters are losing cache meat to hungry bears.
4. Seal pups born are caught and eaten by bears at Baffin Bay area.
5. Hunters are losing Polar Bear Quota tags due to bears being caught going to camps due to bears being caught going to camps (emergency kill only).
6. Hunters using Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit cache meat for winter months using \$20,000 for hunting equipment such as boat, motors, grub, gas, bullets, etc. when in fact they will be losing meat to bears.

Therefore we request a public hearing or through documents:

- Communities be allowed to hunt bears if they come within 1 mile of a community and not affect quota including hunting areas also where meat is cached. And spring camps where seal pup is hunted in all inlets between Qikiqtarjuaq and inlets up to Pond Inlet area. (Baffin Bay area)
- Community HTO's in Qikiqtarjuaq, Clyde River, Pond Inlet have hearing for seal and birthing areas.



Mittimatalik Hunters & Trappers Organization
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Email: htopond@qiniq.com

To Board of
Nunavut Wildlife Management Review Board
Iqaluit, Nu

May 17, 2017

RE: Resubmission of the Draft Nunavut Polar Bear Co-Management Plan Review

Mittimatalik HTO Board has reviewed the Resubmission of the Draft Nunavut Polar Bear Co-Management Plan and have following comments and suggestion based on their review.

1. Mittimatalik HTO would like to see Polar Bear Quota be removed within Baffin Region and Baffin Bay area; for reason being;

- Quota for Nunavut Beneficiaries should not be necessary to hunt Polar Bear because quota is useless for Inuit hunters, as we don't have benefit to sell furs to outside Canada and UK was not to transport Polar Bear furs anymore from Baffin Bay area. Quota should only belong to Sport's Hunter's.

1. If re-movement of Quota becomes effective or approved. We would want the Hunter's and Trapper's Organization to Manage and Administer the Total Allowable Harvest in order to maintain the Polar Bear population. And establish a Polar Bear Administrative Committee to regulate and enforce the Polar Bear harvest and to come up with good plans about Total allowable Harvest of Polar Bear

2. If quota can't be removed we would like our Polar Bear quota increased to 80 Total Allowable Harvest because 21 Total Allowable Harvest is too low as Polar Bears population have been increasing. It's becoming a concern within our Wildlife and Environment. And increasing of Polar Bears has been causing so much disturbance within the food we eat; the caches of meats that are trying to be harvested by hunters are just getting eaten by Polar Bears. Not just the food we eat is being disturbed. Polar Bears are also being seen more getting close to the Communities that can cause danger to the community or even harm to

anyone. Also cabins are getting destroyed by Polar Bears. Hunter's work very hard to hunt and to harvest good food but the caches of meats are just getting eaten by Polar Bears therefore we want hunters to be compensated if the cache of meats gets eaten by Polar Bear or If cabin were destroyed by Polar Bear for reason being Gas, food supplies and Bullets are very expensive to buy and a lot of hunters are unemployed and work hard to harvest food for the community

3. Baffin Bay Polar Bear quota is being shared by 3 communities. We feel that each communities should have separate Quota. We want to see each communities have separate quota reason Polar Bear quota is too low when it's shared by 3 communities

2. Balancing Female and Male Polar Bear hunting

We would like the Polar Bear hunting to be more balanced. For reason being

- Female Polar Bears with cubs have been seen more getting close to communities than male Polar Bears and it seems to be becoming more common and concerning because female Polar Bears are increasing because male Female Polar Bear with cubs are more increasing than Male Polar Bears are harvested more everywhere in Nunavut and Female Polar Bears are not getting cubs as they should because male Polar Bears are decreasing. And Female Polar Bears with cubs are known to be more dangerous to harm than male Polar Bear. Also sometimes Female Polar Bears get mistaken for male Polar Bear. Hunter's sometimes catch Female Polar Bear by mistake, when a hunter catches female Polar Bear by mistake 2 tags have to be eliminated. We would like that removed



Nattivak Hunters & Trappers Association

Nunavut Wildlife Management Board
P.O. Box 1379
Iqaluit, Nu
X0A 0H0

Thursday October 11, 2018

Polar Bear Management Public Hearing

Nattivak HTO Board of Directors input and comments regarding revised polar bear management.

Defence Kill: While there's Polar bears in the community that have to be killed by defence, the tag gets taken out from the Quota and when there's female overage the Polar Bear hunt then closes. We have used this law for many years. A suggestion for the Government for example, when there's Polar bear defence kill the harvester could use the tag under its name instead of taken out from the Quota.

Damage Cabins: If the polar bear deterrents can be available to the people such as electric fence wall, cable, and bangers as the cabins often get damaged by Polar Bears. A suggestion is if there can be application available to the community.

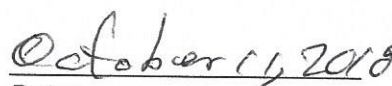
Polar Bear Monitor: In many communities there are no Conservation officer including Qikiqtarjuaq, a suggestion for the Government is to bring a job offer for Polar Bear Monitor while there is no Conservation Officer. As there are many people who are qualified for Polar Bear monitor in the community. For many years we've had Bi-Law officer and RCMP dealing with Polar Bears. This would be an opportunity for people in the community willing to help out as monitor.

If you have any questions, concerns, and or comments you can contact the Chairperson Jacopie Audlakiak during regular business hours to: (867) 927-8836

With Regards,

Jacopie Audlakiak


Nattivak HTO Chairperson


Date:

Southern Hudson Bay Polar Bear Management
System -- Sanikiluaq, Nunavut

For
Nunavut Wildlife Management Board Public Hearing
on Nunavut Polar Bear Management Plan

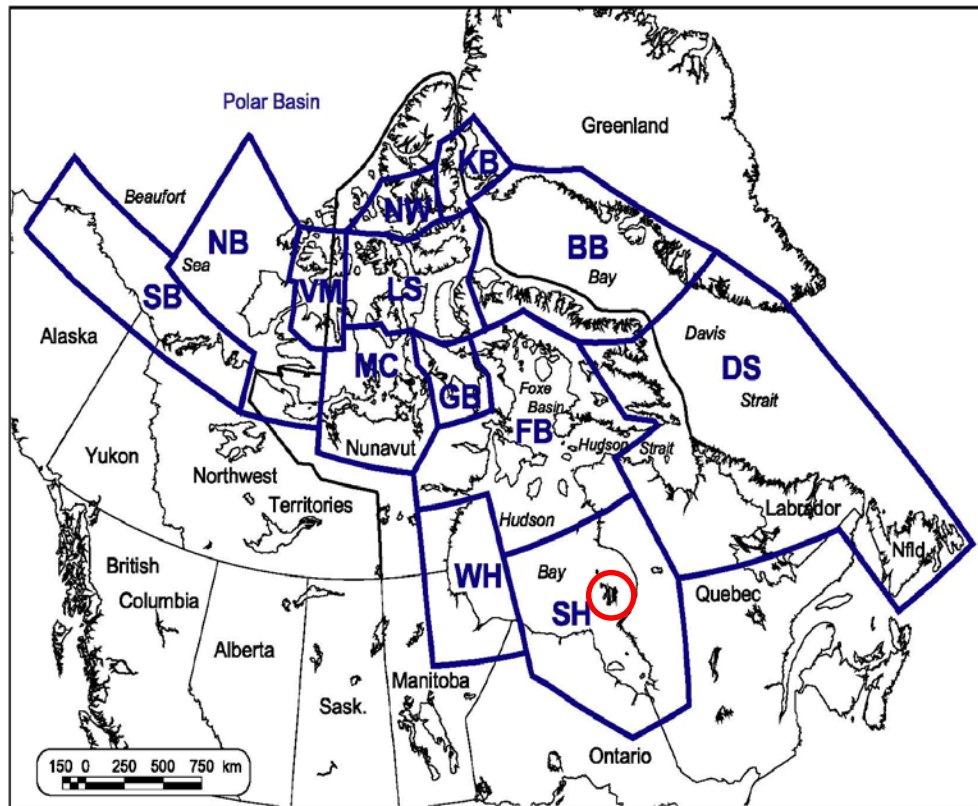
Sanikiluaq Hunters & Trappers

SHB Polar Bear Management System Nunavut



- Sanikiluaq, Nunavut
- Current population 882 (2016)
- The community has used a quota system for over 40 years
- Since 2005, the community has used the MOU which includes a flexible quota system and sex ratio

SHB Polar Bear Management System Nunavut



- Since 2005, Sanikiluaq has been using the flexible quota system.
- This system is based on the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between Sanikiluaq and the Government of Nunavut.
- The community has followed the flexible quota system for the past 11 years. Its purpose is to conserve the population and maintain a sustainable harvest level.

SHB Polar Bear Management System Nunavut



- The system also prohibits harvest of family groups, bears in dens, or cubs.
- However, for cultural reasons, a cub can be harvested through a request to the Government of Nunavut.
- The sex selective system means that one female can be harvested for every two males that are harvested.
- The community has been following this system and has not expressed any concerns

SHB Polar Bear Management System Nunavut



- Under the system, every person in Nunavut has the right to protect life and property.

Sustainable Harvest Management

HARVEST SEASON	TOTAL ALLOWABLE HARVEST (TAH)	ACTUAL HARVEST
2005/2006	25 (17 Males: 8 Females)	25 (16 Males: 9 Females)
2006/2007	25 (17 Males: 8 Females)	25 (17 Males: 8 Females)
2007/2008	25 (17 Males: 8 Females)	25 (18 Males: 7 Females)
2008/2009	25 (17 Males: 8 Females)	26 (18 Males: 8 Females)
2009/2010	25 (17 Males: 8 Females)	25 (17 Males: 8 Females)
2010/2011	25 (17 Males: 8 Females)	30 (21 Males: 9 Females)
2011/2012	25 (17 Males: 8 Females)	25 (17 Males: 8 Females)
2012/2013	25 (17 Males: 8 Females)	26 (22 Males: 4 Females)
2013/2014	25 (17 Males: 8 Females)	27 (17 Males: 10 Females)
2014/2015	25 (17 Males: 8 Females)	20 (14 Males: 6 Females)
2015/2016	25 (17 Males: 8 Females)	20 (14 Males: 6 Females)
2016/2017	25 (17 Males: 8 Females)	20 (13 Males: 7 Females)
Totals	300 (204 Males: 96 Females)	294 (204 Males: 90 Females)

- Over this period, the community has harvested bears within the total allowable harvest and also maintained a 2:1 male to female sex ratio harvest.
- In some years, the community has used credits accumulated from unused harvest from previous years as permitted through the flexible quota system
- Since 2014, the community has respected a user to user agreement

SHB Polar Bear Management System Nunavut



- Sanikiluaq HTO has requested credits that they have accumulated from unused harvest in previous years.
- This is part of the flexible quota system currently in place.
- The community of Sanikiluaq has successfully adopted and used this system.

SHB Polar Bear Management System Nunavut



- By using the system, the Sanikiluaq HTO has helped conserve the polar bear population, through a sustainable harvest.
- The HTO has responsibly and successfully managed the system and polar bear harvest for many years.

Issues



- Some concerns include a high population of polar bears that destroy bird colonies which are not in balance with the environment
- Eider ducks are very important part of Sanikiluaqmiut diet
- Another concern is encounters with polar bears in the community.
- Sanikiluaq HTO has been working on establishing a community bear management plan, which identifies preventative measures and deterrent procedures to protect people and property from bears that come close to the community.
- Therefore, harvest remains important not only for cultural reasons but also to maintain bears at numbers that maintain natural balance

SHB Polar Bear Management System Nunavut

- Sanikiluaq is an excellent example of how HTO's in Nunavut conduct responsible harvest practices that are sustainable and respectful of the principles of conservation.

Thank You



OCT 10 2018

Mr. Dan Shewchuk
Chairperson of the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board
1106 Ikaluktuutiak Road, Allavvik Building, 3rd Floor
P.O. Box 1379
Iqaluit NU X0A 0H0

Dear Mr. Shewchuk:

I am writing in response to the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board's notice of July 20, 2018 inviting interested organizations or persons to file written submissions and supporting documentation concerning the *Proposal for NWMB Decision to consider the revised Nunavut Polar Bear Co-Management Plan*. Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC) previously submitted written comments regarding the Proposal on May 18, 2017, for the adjourned in-person public hearing of June 2017. ECCC's submission included both a letter from my predecessor, Robert McLean, Director General, Assessment and Regulatory Affairs, Canadian Wildlife Service, and an enclosure that included detailed comments developed by Departmental staff. ECCC requests that our original submissions be retained and entered into the record for the rescheduled in-person hearing of November 13-16, 2018. These comments have been aggregated and are included in a single enclosure [see: ECCC submission November 2018 – Enclosure]

In addition to confirming ECCC's original submissions, I would like to take this opportunity to publically acknowledge the grief and frustration felt by many people in Nunavut following the recent deaths of two Inuit men from polar bear mauling incidents near Arviat and Nauyasat. Incidents like these remind us that protecting human safety should and must be of paramount concern. I am aware that the Government of Nunavut administers a very important Wildlife Deterrence Program to reduce the risk to human life by wildlife, reduce destruction of property by wildlife, and reduce the number of defence kills. I have instructed ECCC staff under my direction, to make every effort to work collaboratively with the Government of Nunavut to strengthen and enhance existing programs and to listen to community members, hamlets, Hunters and Trappers Organizations, and conservation officers about their concerns. While the *Nunavut Polar Bear Co-Management Plan* addresses wildlife deterrence, it may be helpful to further elaborate on sections of the Proposal that pertain to mitigation strategies. In particular, it is the view of ECCC that plans developed with community-level participation to address public safety concerns that promote the use of non-lethal polar bear deterrents, such as bear guards, auditory/pyrotechnic deterrents, and fortification of food caches stand best chance of protecting human safety and conserving healthy polar bear subpopulations.

Two ECCC departmental representatives (Dr. Samuel Iverson and Lauren Schmuck) will be present at the public hearing on November 16 to present ECCC's submission and answer any questions that arise.

Sincerely,



Julie Spallin
Director General, Assessment and Regulatory Affairs
Canadian Wildlife Service

Enclosures:

- ECCC submission November 2018 – Enclosure

General comments

Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC) commends the Nunavut Department of Environment for its ongoing commitment and significant effort to develop a polar bear management plan for the territory. The comments provided below are intended to be constructive and to clarify some sections. Overall, ECCC supports the Nunavut Polar Bear Co-Management Plan and looks forward to its successful implementation.

While it is recognized that the Plan has evolved and been improved significantly since the last iteration, our review identified three priority topics for suggested further revision. These topics warrant further attention with the aim to improve Canada's ability to communicate a stewardship message and demonstrate a commitment to responsible management both domestically and internationally. Specifically: (1) clarifying the goal and conservation objectives of the Plan, (2) addressing the observed and projected impacts of climate change on polar bear subpopulations more equitably, and (3) restructuring the document to separate threats to the population from challenges in implementing the Plan.

(1) Goal and conservation objectives of the Plan

The Introduction to the Plan casts the polar bear in Nunavut as a species for which the primary concern is population maintenance or reduction in response to public safety concerns and damage to the ecosystem. This characterization is inconsistent with the federal listing of the polar bear as a species of Special Concern in Canada and at various levels of at-risk in several of Canada's provinces and territories. While polar bears are not listed as an at-risk species in Nunavut and stakeholders in Nunavut may not be in uniform agreement about the threats identified in the National Polar Bear Conservation Strategy for Canada (2011), it is nonetheless important that the Co-Management Plan demonstrate an appreciation and understanding of these threats and willingness to take management action should it be deemed necessary by Nunavut wildlife management authorities. The conservation goal stated in Section 3 of the Plan: "To maintain viable and healthy polar bear subpopulations for current and future generations, and to ensure that polar bears remain an integrated and functioning part of the ecosystem while monitored and appropriate harvests are allowed" is appropriate. However the Introduction should highlight the program that is in place to monitor polar bear status and trends and assure interested parties that appropriate management actions will be taken if significant declines occur.

(2) Climate change

The issue described above is particularly pertinent with respect to ongoing climate change in the North and, in particular, its impacts with respect to projected declines in sea ice coverage. The Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC) recommendation that Canada list the polar bear as a species of Special Concern was based primarily on projected sea ice decline and the potential impact that longer ice-free seasons could have on polar bear foraging ecology and population viability. A key consideration is that the projected declines in sea ice coverage go well beyond what has been observed by both Inuit living in the North and scientists and, thus a precautionary approach to management is advised. It is ECCC's view that a management plan that does not seriously consider the potential negative impacts of climate change on polar bears over both the short- and long-term does not demonstrate due diligence with respect to threat identification and mitigation.

(3) Threats and challenges

As suggested in ECCC's previous review of Nunavut's Polar Bear Co-Management Plan, it is recommended that the description and assessment of threats be separate from the challenges. Threats are defined as the proximate activities or processes that have caused, or may cause in the future the destruction, degradation, and/or impairment of the species being assessed. Naturally limiting factors such as aging or disease are not normally considered threats unless they are altered by human activity. Thus, issues such as habitat alteration from climate changes or disturbances from shipping qualify as threats. In contrast, challenges that complicate the implementation of management actions, such overlapping jurisdictional responsibilities, are not in and of themselves threats. Managing threats is best accomplished when they are classified, ranked, and specific management actions are identified for each threat to mitigate or alleviate its impact. ECCC's suggestion is to divide Section 7 into separate sections for "Threats" and "Management Challenges" and for greater attention to be paid to threat assessment and prioritization.

Detailed comments

Reference	Comment
Recurring	<p>It would be preferable if citations were included in the text. This is particularly relevant in situations when factual scientific or <i>IQ</i> information is presented.</p> <p>Change to Environment <u>and Climate Change</u> Canada throughout document</p> <p>Change Parks Canada to <u>Parks Canada Agency</u></p>
p. 2, Executive Summary	<p>The Executive Summary describes key procedural and administrative elements of the management plan (i.e., it was cooperatively developed, it is intended to replace the MOUs that have directed management efforts to date, and it emphasizes the central role that <i>IQ</i> plays alongside science in decision making). However, the Executive Summary does not describe key biological and legislative considerations. This information should be included.</p> <p>For example, in the <i>Inuvialuit Settlement Region Polar Bear Joint Management Plan</i> the summary includes paragraphs describing the relevant federal and NWT at-risk listing designations for polar bear that led to the plan being developed, the conservation goal in the ISR (long-term population persistence while maintaining traditional Inuvialuit use), and the principle threats and challenges facing the species (detrimental human activities, climate change). Similarly, the <i>Recovery Strategy for Polar Bear (Ursus maritimus) in Ontario</i> includes an overview of the species distribution and its status in the province, critical habitats for protection (maternal denning sites, spring feeding areas and fall staging areas), and an overview of the main threats and challenges as identified by Ontario (climate change, mortality from negative human-bear interactions).</p>
p. 6, Introduction	<p>It would be beneficial to include an explanation as to why this plan has been developed and Nunavut's key role in global polar bear management and conservation. With respect to the former, a federal management plan became legally required upon designation of the polar bear as a species of Special Concern in 2011. Recognizing that the provinces and territories have the primary responsibility for management of polar bears, there was agreement that the national plan would include a compendium of regional/jurisdictional plans. With respect to Nunavut's role in polar bear management, the territory is home to 12 of the world's 19 subpopulations representing more than half the world's polar bears and, therefore, management actions taken by Nunavut are of paramount importance for ensuring long-term persistence of</p>

	<p>the species.</p> <p>Although the rationale for why the polar bear has not been listed as an at-risk species under the <i>Nunavut Wildlife Act</i> is clearly explained in the document, it would strengthen Canada's ability to communicate a stewardship message to domestic and international audiences if the document was to strike a more judicious tone with respect to the conservation concerns that are commonly advanced for polar bear. While stakeholders in Nunavut may not be in complete agreement about the level of risk to polar bear population viability posed by climate change and other threats listed in the <i>National Polar Bear Conservation Strategy for Canada</i> (2011), it is in the national interest that Nunavut's Plan acknowledges these concerns, articulates an understanding of their basis, and makes it clear that Nunavut would respond with appropriate management actions should specific actions be deemed necessary.</p> <p>Finally, a major point of emphasis in the Introduction is public safety and the potential for negative impacts of polar bears on the ecosystem. While public safety is certainly a valid and important concern, there is little scientific support for negative ecosystem effects. The text should be counter-balanced by mention of population objectives and a goal of ensuring that subpopulations neither increase above nor decline below agreed upon targets for population size. As written, considerable detail is omitted with respect to the reasons human-bear conflict is on the rise (i.e., it is a potential by-product of sea ice decline and human population expansion), the effectiveness of deterrence programs, and the implications that a population reduction program would have on harvest quotas (i.e., if the goal is to maintain bear numbers at a lower overall abundance then the annual total allowable harvest level would also need to be adjusted downward once the desired lower abundance was achieved).</p>
p. 7, Introduction para. 3 and 4	<p>A point of clarification with respect to how the current system of polar bear harvest management came into effect: it was the international community that raised alarm about the non-selective and unregulated harvest of polar bears in the 1950s and 1960s. This facilitated an international meeting in 1965 that eventually led to the 1973 <i>Agreement on the Conservation of Polar Bears</i>. It was during the drafting of the language of the Agreement that Canada developed a quota system in order to meet its commitments upon signing of the Agreement. The Nunavut MOUs came about much later.</p>
p. 7, Introduction para. 4	<p>With respect to the five polar bear range states: technically the 1973 Agreement was signed by Denmark because Greenland had not yet been granted control of its natural resources.</p>

p. 8, Section 3	Suggest adding a footnote that provides a definition of what a viable and healthy population is considered to be.
p. 8., Section 4	Suggest adding the CITES status under 4.1
p. 9, Section 4.3.1, para. 1	<p>Suggest modifying to state 14 subpopulations are in Canada, including the Arctic Basin. This is the approach being taken by COSEWIC and the Environment and Climate Change Canada and we should ensure consistency among the different parts of the National Management Plan where possible.</p> <p>In the last sentence, suggest adding the approximate percentage of Canada's polar bears that occur in Nunavut.</p>
p. 9, Section 4.3.1, para. 2	Suggest specifically naming the eight subpopulations that are shared by Nunavut and other jurisdictions, and the four subpopulations that only occur in Nunavut.
p. 9, Section 4.3.1, para. 3	Globally, all polar bears are divided into 19 "subpopulations", 13 (excluding bears of the Arctic Basin) of which are in Canada <u>and/or shared between Canada and Greenland or the United States</u> .
Figure 1	<p>Suggest shading the entire Nunavut Settlement Area so that it is clear to see that the Belcher Islands are part of NU.</p> <p>Suggest that map may need to be updated to show the new southern boundary of the Davis Strait subpopulation, as agreed upon by PBAC members at the PBAC F2F meeting that occurred in May 2018.</p>
p. 11, Section 4.4.3 Diet	Suggest a more detailed summary of scientific findings regarding the use of terrestrial prey items and the extent to which marine mammal versus other prey items contribute to polar bear condition. The scientific literature on this topic is clear and indicates that seals are the single-most critical component of polar bear diets; eggs, berries, and seaweed do not contribute significantly on a population level.
p. 12, Section 5.1	The abbreviations 'DOE', 'RWO' and 'HTO' are not defined until section 5.3. Suggest defining them the first time they are used, in section 5.1.
p. 12, Section 5.2	Please clarify: "Management in Nunavut has focused on sustainable harvest using population estimates derived from scientific studies <u>and IQ.</u> " or is the point that the author is trying to make that in the past decisions were made

	on the basis of science alone and only recently has IQ also been considered.
p. 13, Section 5.2 The Nunavut perspective	Suggest explaining that the statuses of each polar bear subpopulation is determined by the PBTC and briefly explaining what the PBTC is. A brief explanation of PBAC would be beneficial as well.
p. 13, Section 5.3	<u>Agreement on the Conservation of Polar Bears</u> not International Agreement on the Conservation of Polar Bears
p. 13, Section 5.3 Legislative frameworks and agreements	Suggest modifying the second sentence of fourth paragraph to read ‘While there are no associated effects on Inuit harvest or management actions as a result of this listing, a national management plan must be developed....’ Suggest modifying the third sentence of the fourth paragraph to read ‘This Nunavut-based management plan will be adopted in whole as a part of the national polar bear management plan.’
p. 14, Section 5.3	<u>Davis Strait</u> not Davis Straits
p. 14, Section 5.3	<u>The Canada-US Agreement is limited to the Southern Beaufort</u> subpopulation not polar bears in general
p. 14, Polar Bear Co-Management, Section 6	This section does not identify the roles for other provinces, other co-management boards, or other countries. These relationships influence management decisions (particularly harvest) in most subpopulations. Additional text would be useful with respect to how harvesting rights in other jurisdictions are considered in Nunavut management planning (and vice versa).
p. 15, Section 6.5	Suggest stating that the Government of Nunavut also works with the Government of Canada (Environment and Climate Change Canada) and the Government of Greenland to manage and conserve polar bears in the shared Kane Basin and Baffin Bay polar bear subpopulations.
p. 15, Section 6.6	the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species <u>of Wild Fauna and Flora</u> (CITES)
p. 15, Section 6.6	With respect to international agreements: note also that polar bear are listed under the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS). While Canada is not a signatory, ECCC may be involved in

	meetings and discussions to ensure that Canada's management of polar bears is well represented.
p. 16, Section 7	<p>Given the threats and their recognized and/or potential impacts on the species further rationale should be offered as to how a management system that permits hunting (and in some cases may seek to reduce population size via a managed hunt) is compatible with conservation goals. One useful source of information to consult would be <i>the United States Fish and Wildlife Service Polar Bear Conservation Management Plan</i>, Section E (The compatibility of harvest with conservation and recovery) and Appendix C (Population Dynamics and Harvest Management). The USFWS document makes a strong argument that polar bears can be harvested even if they are vulnerable to population decline or known to be in decline so long as adequate monitoring occurs and certain conditions are met with respect to harvest management practices.</p>
p. 16, Section 7	<p>As suggested in the previous review of Nunavut's Polar Bear Co-Management Plan by ECCC, for the Plan to be of optimal utility as a component of a federal management plan "Threats" should be distinguished from "Challenges". Threats are defined as the proximate activities or processes that have caused, are causing, or may cause in the future the destruction, degradation, and/or impairment of the species being assessed in the area of interest. Thus, issues such as habitat alteration from climate change or disturbances from shipping qualify as threats, whereas issues such as population boundaries and trade are challenges to implementation, but are not in and of themselves threats. Managing threats is best accomplished when they are classified, ranked, and specific management actions are identified to mitigate or alleviate their impact.</p> <p>ECCC's suggestion is to divide Section 7 into separate sections for "Threats" and "Management Challenges" and for greater attention to be paid to threat assessment and prioritization.</p> <p>It is currently not clear whether the threats listed in section 7 are listed in any particular order (i.e. highest concern threat to least concern threat). Even if they are not listed in any particular order, suggest stating this.</p>
p. 16, Section 7.4.1	<p>Climate change is downplayed as a conservation threat. In the Nunavut Plan it is sub-bullet under the 4th ranked threat (habitat alteration), whereas in other assessments (IUCN Red List, National Polar Bear Conservation Strategy for Canada, Ontario Recovery Plan, ISR Joint Management Plan) climate</p>

	<p>change/sea ice loss is ranked as the top threat.</p> <p>Suggest making a more robust review of the scientific literature on this topic to demonstrate that the risks are well understood.</p> <p>The statement “Although there is growing scientific evidence linking the impacts of climate change to reduced body condition of bears and projections of population declines, no declines have currently been attributed to climate change” is not in alignment with scientific evidence. See for example:</p> <p>Regehr, E.V., Lunn, N.J., Amstrup, S.C. and Stirling, I. 2007. Effects of earlier sea ice breakup on survival and population size of polar bears in western Hudson Bay. <i>Journal of Wildlife Management</i> 71:2673-2683.</p> <p>Lunn, N.J., Servanty, S., Regehr, E.V., Converse, S.J., Richardson, E. and Stirling, I. 2016. Demography of an apex predator at the edge of its range – impacts of changing sea ice on polar bears in Hudson Bay. <i>Ecological Applications</i> 26:1302-1320.</p>
p. 18, Section 7.5, Population boundaries	<p>Population <u>B</u>oundaries, not Population boundaries. Consistent use of capital letters should be checked in section headings throughout the document.</p> <p>Section number is 7.5 repeated two sections in a row.</p>
p. 19, Section 7.5, Population boundaries	<p>The scientific view is that bears do not routinely travel across different geographic regions of the Canadian Arctic (this is amply demonstrated by genetic data, telemetry data, and harvest recovery data). Rather the scientific information serves as a quantitative basis for delineating management units considering the frequency with which long-distance dispersal events occur.</p>
p. 19, Section 7.5, Polar Bears and People	<p>It is worth noting that the Government of Nunavut has an effective deterrence program in place to reduce human-bear conflicts.</p>
p. 19, Section 7.5, Polar Bears and People	<p>Suggest providing a citation or description of the source(s) of information for the statement that it is recognized in many areas across Nunavut that there are more bears now than 40 or 50 years ago.</p>
p. 21, Section 8.1.1, Harvest Management	<p>The description of harvest management is very well described. In the <i>National Polar Bear Conservation Strategy for Canada</i> (2011) harvest above quotas is listed as a potential threat. This is a management success and it may be useful to include harvest above quota as a potential threat in this management plan.</p>

	<p>The information provided in this section would then demonstrate that Nunavut takes the threat seriously and has taken appropriate management actions to ensure harvest is sustainable and remains so in the future.</p> <p>Small points/questions:</p> <p>Unused TAH credits are zeroed when a new population estimate is generated?</p> <p>Provisions exist that allow Elders to harvest a cub if a permit is issued in advance?</p> <p>Suggest referring to 'sport hunts' as 'guided hunts' instead.</p> <p>In paragraph 3, missing the word 'to' in front of 'population dynamics'.</p> <p>In bullet point #3, missing the word 'bear' between 'polar' and 'that'.</p>
p. 24, Section 8.2.1, Gaining Knowledge	While some data can be collected through hunters not all of the information required for effective management can be obtained this way.
p. 26. Section 8.3	Suggest changing bullet: Improve monitoring for contaminants <u>and disease</u> in order to respond to potential health concerns resulting from consumption
p. 27, Section 8.4 People and Bears	The Government of Nunavut has important programs in place to minimize the occurrence of human-bear conflict, such as the Wildlife Damage Prevention Program and the Wildlife Damage Compensation Program. As it is currently written, the Nunavut Polar Bear Co-Management Plan does not give a lot of emphasis to these programs. As the 'Management Plan Objectives' section of the co-management plan introduces objectives aimed at reducing bear-human conflict and reducing injury/mortality, it would be beneficial to add language to this section that further elaborates on the Government of Nunavut's human-bear conflict mitigation programs, and identifies community-level human-bear conflict mitigation plans as a best practice.
p. 28, Section 8.5.2	<p>Clarify issues on which efforts for co-management across jurisdictions are ongoing and where new initiatives are required.</p> <p>Suggest explaining that the Canada-Greenland MoU includes Nunavut as well, as the way that this is currently worded suggests that Nunavut is not currently involved in this MoU.</p>

p. 29. Section 9	The goal as described in the implementation section has departed from the goal as described earlier in the plan and particularly in relation to the goal as stated in Section 3.
p. 29, Section 9	No changes to existing TAH <u>or non-quota limitations such as sex selective</u> harvest will occur until new information becomes available,...
p. 30-32. Section 9 – Implementation tables	<p>The information included in the tables is very useful. They could be improved by also including specific actions, timelines, and potentially financial implications for the involved parties.</p> <p>Suggest the action: Develop a training program for Inuit in communities to establish an Inuit data collection program... be elevated to high priority</p> <p>Moderate and medium are used interchangeably. Suggest choosing one term for consistency.</p> <p>The tables in section 9 are very useful. Suggest also including a column identifying which co-management partner will be responsible for taking the lead on each of these management actions.</p>
p. 31, Section 9.3	Many of the actions included under Environmental stewardship are in alignment with the objectives of the Circumpolar Action Plan. It would be helpful to mention that the data and information collected in Nunavut feeds into international agreements.
p. 31, Section 9.4	Suggest that the Management Action 'Develop, adopt and implement community bear management plans and community human-bear-interaction protocols' should be 'High' priority. Currently classified as 'Moderate'.
Appendix A	<p>Question the value of including the PBTC status table in the management plan given the fact that they are updated every year and will quickly be outdated. Suggest that a reference and web link could be provided to direct readers to their content.</p> <p>There is an unnecessary space between the 'PB' and 'TC' on the second paragraph.</p>
Appendix B	Status assessments should be reviewed and updated for many of the subpopulations. Clarifications are also required for some items. These include:

	<p>Baffin Bay and Kane Bay– update with new information</p> <p>Davis Strait, Foxe Basin, Southern Hudson Bay – the Nunavik TAH is not a quota, is this number based upon recent harvest levels</p> <p>Northern Beaufort Sea – the number being used in the plan is not the same number being used in the ISR. This highlights the issue of how Nunavut will manage if there are different management objectives among neighboring jurisdictions that harvest the same subpopulation.</p> <p>Southern Hudson Bay – update with new information</p>
Appendix C, and D	<p>Suggest starting each appendix on a new page.</p> <p>Appendix C does not have a title.</p>
Appendix E	<p>Suggest including literature reviewed with the main body of the document and not in a separate Appendix.</p> <p>Left margin should be corrected.</p>



Nunavut Field Unit
P.O. Box 278
Iqaluit, NU X0A 0H0

May 19, 2017

Daniel Shewchuk
A/Chairperson
Nunavut Wildlife Management Board
P.O. Box 1379
Iqaluit, NU X0A 0H0

RE: Public Hearing of the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board concerning the revised Nunavut Polar Bear Co-Management Plan

Mr. Chairperson,

This letter is in response to your invitation of April 13, 2017 to provide submissions and participate in the public hearing to consider the revised Nunavut Polar Bear Co-Management Plan (Plan), developed by the Government of Nunavut. Thank you for the opportunity to participate in this important process; below is a broad overview provided on behalf of the Parks Canada Agency – Nunavut Field Unit.

First, I commend the NWMB and Government of Nunavut for being open to following a modified approval process over the past year and a half; it has resulted in a vastly improved Plan. Parks Canada acknowledges the Government of Nunavut's hard work and dedication to develop an immensely important plan that covers a vast area with such an array of stakeholder and public opinions.

As a manager of over 110,000 square kilometers of land within Nunavut, Parks Canada has a significant responsibility in the management of polar bears and their habitat. There are many examples of terrestrial and marine habitat managed by Parks Canada that is particularly sensitive and important to certain life history stages of polar bears. Some examples are the northern and eastern fiords of Auyuittuq National Park contain substantial denning areas; the coastal areas of Ukkusiksalik and Sirmilik National Parks are heavily used summering areas for polar bears of the Foxe Basin and Baffin Bay subpopulations, respectively.

The conservation of significant species, such as polar bears, and their habitat plays a central role within Parks Canada in Nunavut and nationally, and is a key component of our mandate:

"On behalf of the people of Canada, we protect and present nationally significant examples of Canada's natural and cultural heritage, and foster public understanding, appreciation and enjoyment in ways that ensure the ecological and commemorative integrity of these places for present and future generations."



Our mandate is to also present these significant examples of Canada's natural place to the public; thus, Parks Canada also has the important role of developing responsible tourism opportunities for Canadians. A primary concern when developing these opportunities is the need to ensure not only the safety of visitors, but also of polar bears, and managing the risk of bear-human conflict. To ensure this, Parks Canada continues to work closely with other federal and territorial government departments, non-government organizations, outfitters, and communities to develop bear safety programs, and tourism opportunities that are as informed as possible to reduce conflict and educate visitors on bear protection.

Being a federal authority, Parks Canada also has major responsibility in implementing the Species at Risk Act, including working closely in support of Environment and Climate Change Canada, which is leading the development of the National Polar Bear Management Plan. Collaboration between territorial and federal government will also be immensely valuable in the development of this national plan, ensuring it can also be implemented throughout the range of polar bears.

The following attachment includes detailed comments on the Plan; again, thank you for the opportunity to participate in the public hearing. We are encouraged by the progress in the development of the Plan and look forward to continuing to work with the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board, Government of Nunavut, Environment and Climate Change Canada, other co-management partners and the public to ensure successful sustainable management and long-term conservation of an iconic species.

Sincerely,

Jenna Boon

A Field Unit Superintendent

Attachments - 1



Appendix 1 – Parks Canada comments on the revised Nunavut Polar Bear Co-Management Plan

Prepared by: Peter Kydd, Acting Resource Conservation Manager, Nunavut Field Unit, Parks Canada Agency

Date: May 19, 2017

The revised Nunavut Polar Bear Co-Management Plan is greatly improved, for which the Government of Nunavut should be applauded. As always, the Government of Nunavut has done a great job respecting community input throughout the consultation process and incorporating local views and recommendations within the Plan. The Government of Nunavut has also done a great job of balancing Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit and science in the Plan. However, there are outstanding issues that are of concern with several components of the Plan. Many of these concerns are consistent with those of Environment and Climate Change Canada; generally, we are supportive of the detailed submission provided by Environment and Climate Change Canada.

Missed Opportunity for Collaboration

While in the revised Plan, Parks Canada has been included within the description of co-management partners and their roles, the continued absence of consultation and collaboration between the Government of Nunavut and Parks Canada is clear. Parks Canada manages a significant amount of land in Nunavut, much of which contains sensitive Polar Bear habitat. As Polar Bear is a federally listed species at risk, Parks Canada plays an important role in the development and implementation of a National Management Plan under the Species at Risk Act. Greater coordination between federal and territorial government departments would lead to a strengthened co-management system, reflected in effective territorial and federal management plans, collaborative use and sharing of resources and expertise, and a healthy, well-managed Polar Bear population.

Management for Status Quo

Parks Canada appreciates the inclusion of the most recent Polar Bear Technical Committee Status Table. However, there is still no discussion or rationale pertaining to why all subpopulation recommendations are to Maintain current population abundance and review management objectives and TAH when a new inventory study is complete. The PBTC Status Table clearly indicates that several populations are not stable, either decreasing (increasing the risk to bear survival), increasing (potentially increasing the risk to humans) or are uncertain; should these subpopulations not be managed accordingly, including taking the precautionary approach?

Citation of Research

The current draft of the Plan has done an insufficient job of citing literature throughout the document. It is encouraging to see a list of literature reviewed in the appendix of the Plan, but the lack of citations throughout document does not assist the reader in understanding what information, both from the scientific and Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit perspective, has been drawn



from where. Citing references through documents is consistent practice with recovery documents and management plans produced by other territorial, provincial and federal governments and would be greatly beneficial in this context.

Threats and Challenges

While there are some linkages between threats to Polar Bears and challenges in Polar Bear management, the inclusion of threats and challenges in one category seems odd; they have drastically different definitions and should be clearly distinguished from one another. Specifically, by understanding the descriptions of and concerns surrounding denning, population boundaries, and inter-jurisdictional considerations, these are obvious challenges in management. The remaining are the clear threats, and should be grouped accordingly.

Climate Change

As indicated in Parks Canada's review during the initial written hearing of the Plan, there is still substantial concern with the lack of discussion or reference to climate change and the impacts on polar bears. There is a growing body of peer reviewed literature that speaks to these changes and impacts on polar bears in Canada. The international community recognized climate change as the most significant threat to polar bears, and is explicitly stated in several agreements between jurisdictions. As stated before, this could impact Canada's reputation as leaders in polar bear conservation and provide other jurisdictions the opportunity to scrutinize polar bear management in Canada.

Implementation of the Plan

The description of Management Actions to be taken to reach each of the Management Plan Objectives is important, especially the revisions that have added priority levels and timelines to each action. Understanding that there are many actions to be completed, most within 3-5 years, this may be an opportune place to facilitate collaboration between co-management partners. Including an additional column, or description in the text preceding the tables, identifying key partners in achieving each action would identify areas where the Government of Nunavut will be looking to co-management partners, including Parks Canada and Environment and Climate Change Canada for assistance. To complete all management actions within the timelines indicated in the Plan, it is anticipated that the Government of Nunavut will need to work closely with co-management partners.

Parks Canada also sees value in the Government of Nunavut including, in the communications strategy for public outreach for bear safety, general information on the status of polar bears, and the need for conservation initiatives. Harvest management is in place for conservation purposes, delivering the message as to why there is a need for conservation is highly important, and will increase public awareness.

Summary

Generally, this Plan is largely improved from the 2015 draft; however there is still room for improvement. Of greatest concern are the lack of consultation and collaboration between Parks



Canada, Environment and Climate Change Canada and the Government of Nunavut; management for the status quo; and, the unsatisfactory description of threats from climate change. With improvements in these areas, Nunavut Polar Bear Co-Management Plan will be a strong guiding document, which will be smoothly implemented, and well respected throughout the polar bear management community.



LP&A
Société Makivik
Makivik Corporation
May 19, 2017

Daniel Shewchuk
Acting Chairperson
Nunavut Wildlife Management Board
P.O. Box 1379
Iqaluit, NU Z0A 0H0

**Re: Draft Makivik Submission to the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board - Nunavut
Polar Bear Co-Management Plan**

Dear Mr. Shewchuk,

Makivik Corporation (hereafter referred to as "Makivik") would like to thank the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board (NWMB) for the opportunity to provide this submission. As you are no doubt aware, Makivik Corporation is the birthright organization that represents the rights and interests of the Inuit of Nunavik (northern Québec). It is a signatory to the Nunavik Inuit Lands Claims Agreement (NILCA) which established the Nunavik Marine Region (NMR), of which the majority lies adjacent to the Nunavut Settlement Area (NSA).

In general, Makivik is supportive of the of the Government of Nunavut's Polar Bear Co-management Plan, and is especially pleased with the extensive community consultations that were undertaken to ensure that the plan reflects Nunavummiut values and attitudes. However, Makivik does have concerns with the area of application of the plan and how the plan could potentially be implemented.

There are two Areas of Equal Use and Occupancy (AEUO) identified in the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement (NLCA) and the NILCA. These AEUO are shared between Nunavut and Nunavik Inuit, and the respective rights of both Nunavut and Nunavik Inuit are set out in the NLCA s. 40 and the NILCA s. 27. On careful review of the Nunavut Polar Bear Co-management Plan, Makivik has concluded that the area of application of the plan is ambiguous. Nowhere in the plan does it state the geographical or jurisdictional boundaries within which the plan would apply. If the plan is meant to apply to the entire NSA, including the AEUO (as defined in NLCA s. 3), then Makivik finds the current version of the plan unacceptable, insofar as Nunavik Inuit have not been consulted on the plan, and have not had any opportunity to provide input into the current draft. Nunavik Inuit must be consulted on any plan that proposes changes to the current management regime in the AEUO and which could affect their rights. For instance, some of the non-quota limitations included in the plan, such as sex-selective harvesting, affect Nunavik Inuit rights to harvest in the AEUO, and any contemplation of acceptance and implementation of these limitations without consultation is contrary to the rights of Nunavik Inuit.

... / 2

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Furthermore, Makivik reiterates that for any decision the NWMB is contemplating for the AEUO, regardless of whether or not it is exclusive to the said AEUO, the NWMB must employ the decision-making process outlined in NLCA s. 40.2.14 and NILCA s. 27.6.1 and 27.6.2. For clarity, that process requires decisions to be made with two Makivik-appointed alternate members sitting in lieu of members appointed to the NWMB by Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated. Failure to do so would represent a breach of the processes for decision-making outlined in the Land Claims Agreements. In past decisions regarding polar bear, specifically the initial and final decisions on the establishment of a TAH for Foxe Basin polar bears, the NWMB has ignored this process, despite Makivik having raised attention to this matter in its submission to the public hearing.

In light of the ambiguity concerning the draft Nunavut Polar Bear Co-management Plan's area of application, Makivik proposes three possible alternatives:

- 1) That the plan be amended to clearly indicate that it does not apply to the AEUO;
- 2) That, if such an amendment is not made, the NWMB requests that the Government of Nunavut undertake meaningful and thorough consultations with Nunavik Inuit on the contents of the plan before it is approved by the NWMB;
- 3) i) That the NWMB make a decision now that is applicable to the NSA, but excluding the AEUO and

ii) Upon completion of consultations and integration of the Nunavik Inuit input into a revised plan, that the NWMB along with the Makivik-appointed alternate members would approve the revised plan applying only for the AEUO, in accordance with the NILCA and NLCA.

Makivik would like to correct several other elements of the draft Nunavut Polar Bear Co-management Plan. In Appendix B II, referencing the Davis Strait subpopulation, the plan erroneously states that Nunavik currently has a Total Allowable Harvest (TAH) of 32. In fact, there is no TAH (or Total Allowable Take – TAT) currently in place in either the Nunavik Marine Region or onshore Nunavik for this subpopulation. Makivik would also like to object to the recommendation for the Davis Strait subpopulation that the current population abundance should be maintained. In the outcome document produced after the 2010 user-to-user meeting held in Kuujuaq, the majority of parties to the meeting, including Makivik and the Government of Nunavut, expressed the desire that the management objective for this subpopulation was to reduce the abundance of polar bears. From a Nunavik perspective, this objective has not changed, as our communities with the Davis Strait subpopulation boundaries continue to experience a higher abundance of polar bears than is acceptable. Furthermore, the current abundance of Davis Strait polar bears is negatively impacting other species, such as the Common Eider and Ringed Seal, upon which these same communities depend.

For Appendix B III, the South Hudson Bay subpopulation, a TAT of 23 (not 22 as stated in the plan) has been established for the Nunavik Marine Region and parts of the Eeyou Marine Region. However, this TAT has not been implemented by the relevant Government Authorities, and

Mr. Daniel Shewchuk
May 19, 2017
Page 3 / 3

indeed is currently subject to court proceedings in a judicial review. Additionally, since expiry of the 2014 voluntary agreement (in November 2016), there is no TAH for Ontario, although there is a longstanding maximum harvest of 30 polar bears. Similarly, no TAT has been established in Nunavik for the Foxe Basin subpopulation.

Makivik trusts that the NWMB will take the necessary steps to ensure that all of the information presented in the Nunavut Polar Bear Co-management plan is accurate prior to its approval. As well, Makivik expects that the NWMB will adhere to the decision-making process for AEUO that is defined under the NILCA and NLCA. If the NWMB determines that doing so is not appropriate, the Board should provide a detailed rationale for its decision to exclude Nunavik Inuit from the decision-making process.

Again, Makivik is thankful for this opportunity to share its views with the NWMB as the board members deliberate this important matter and is confident that these comments will be seen as a productive and useful contribution to the decision-making process.

Sincerely,



Adamie Delisle-Alaku
Executive Vice-president,
Resource Development Department
Makivik Corporation



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May 19th, 2017

Daniel Shewchuk
Acting Chairperson, Nunavut Wildlife Management Board
P.O. Box 1379
Iqaluit, Nunavut, X0A 0H0

Via email: receptionist@nwmb.com

Dear Mr. Shewchuk:

Re: Comments on Nunavut Polar Bear Co-Management Plan

On behalf of WWF-Canada, thank you for the opportunity to submit comments on the Nunavut Polar Bear Co-Management Plan. We acknowledge the hard work from the Government of Nunavut (GN) that has gone into the drafting of this plan, including the many improvements from the previous draft, specifically the section on climate change and the addition of priorities and timelines for implementation.

We recognize the difficulty associated with drafting a management plan for such a wide-ranging species with multiple subpopulations and varying conservation perspectives. Few species elicit as wide a variety of viewpoints on the status, management goals, and future projections as polar bears, both within Nunavut and abroad. It is with these considerations in mind that we submit our comments on the co-management plan.

Section 2 – Guiding principles

The guiding principles for this plan are strong, and if adhered to, will ensure the proper management of polar bears in Nunavut. Of particular note is the need to ‘ensure that subpopulation information is available for timely conservation decisions and long-term sustainability’, and the acknowledgement that a ‘lack of certainty will not be a good reason for postponing reasonable or precautionary conservation measures’. In order to properly implement these two guiding principles, the GN will need to continue to invest heavily in polar bear monitoring and fulfill the survey schedule as listed in Appendix D. Obtaining updated population estimates for the Norwegian Bay, Northern Beaufort Sea, and Lancaster Sound subpopulations, all scheduled for assessment in 2018, is an especially high priority.

Section 5.3 – Legislative frameworks and agreements

Interjurisdictional agreements between Nunavut and neighboring provinces, territories and nations will be crucial to the success of both the Nunavut co-management plan, and the federal Species at Risk Act plan. We urge the GN to treat the renewal, and where necessary, development of interjurisdictional agreements with the highest priority.

The implementation of this plan will also need to consider the Circumpolar Action Plan (CAP) for polar bears, signed by the Government of Canada in 2015. While not a direct signatory, many of the actions in the CAP will be the responsibility of the GN. WWF will be creating a scorecard to monitor the implementation of the CAP across the range of the polar bear, and we look forward to engaging with both the Government of Canada and the GN to highlight the successes of the CAP and identify areas in need of further investment.

Section 7.4.1 – Climate change

Climate change represents one of the best understood threats to polar bears, but also the most challenging threat to combat at the local level. This draft of the plan includes greater reference to the anticipated negative effects of climate change on bears from a scientific perspective. While the vast majority of subpopulations are currently stable, the future trends are an area of concern. It will be important to continue to monitor the effects of climate change on polar bears to test the varying hypotheses regarding polar bears and declining sea ice, using both Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit and science.

Section 7.4.2 – Denning

While some denning areas are currently protected in Nunavut, the identification and protection of additional areas will be a necessary action of this plan. Multiple stakeholders and many of the community delegates at the March 2017 Qikiqtani public hearing for the Nunavut Land Use Plan (NLUP) expressed a strong desire to protect additional denning areas by land use designations. In many ways, the NLUP is the ideal avenue to pursue denning area protections, as the areas are not permanent, can include only seasonal restrictions, and can be altered according to changing community needs or shifts in polar bear distribution. As this plan moves into the implementation phase, we strongly encourage the GN to continue to engage with the Nunavut Planning Commission (NPC) to assign Special Management Area status to all known polar bear denning areas in Nunavut that seasonally prohibit incompatible uses that could disturb denning bears during the denning season.

Section 7.5 – Population boundaries

The proper management of polar bears in Nunavut will require accurate management unit designations to maximize harvest opportunities while ensuring sustainable subpopulations. As sea ice continues to decline, changes in subpopulation structure and distribution are expected. Currently, collaring studies are the only means by which these boundaries can be assessed and remain a necessary aspect of polar bear management.

Section 7.8 – Trade

WWF does not support uplisting polar bears on the Convention of International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES), and publicly commented against the September 2015 proposal to list polar bears on Appendix 1. The development and implementation of both the Nunavut and federal polar bear management plans will strengthen the case against an Appendix 1 listing. However, further actions, such as assigning a Special Management Area land use designation to all denning areas, continuing to monitor subpopulation structure and distribution through collaring studies, and increasing investment

in attractant management and the development of deterrent techniques to minimize human-polar bear conflict will further strengthen the non-detrimental finding from CITES and maintain the international trade of polar bears.

Section 8.1.3 – Harvest reporting and monitoring

If the objective is to decrease or maintain the population, and the total allowable harvest (TAH) is increased, it is noted that ‘appropriate monitoring must be conducted as a follow-up to measure the success of the management action’. The scale of what is considered ‘appropriate monitoring’ in this provision should be at the very least broadly defined in this plan so that the response of the GN can be evaluated following such a decision.

Section 8.2.1 – Gaining knowledge

The GN should improve information reporting related to polar bears and bear-human interactions through better attendance at the Polar Bear Specialists Group working group on human-polar bear conflict, and by contributing all available data to the Polar Bear Human Information Management System (PBHIMS). The GN should also prioritize research into the effectiveness of conflict mitigation techniques and attractant management in communities in conjunction with the hamlets and Hunters and Trappers Organizations across the territory. These actions may increase the polar bear co-existence threshold of Nunavummiut and avoid situations where the TAH is increased to manage human-polar bear conflict, which could be negatively perceived in international fora.

Section 8.3 – Habitat management and environmental stewardship (Avatitinnik Kamatsiarniq)

The GN should work with co-management partners to lead the way on research quantifying the effects of disturbance from industrial development on polar bears, from an IQ and science perspective. In the absence of concrete information on this subject, incompatible activities that could disturb denning polar bears need to be seasonally prohibited through land use designations.

The Last Ice Area (LIA), located in the High Arctic adjacent to the islands of the Canadian Arctic archipelago, is the area where summer sea ice will persist the longest based on climate modelling. Regardless of the debate on the importance of sea ice to polar bears, it is likely that the vast majority of polar bears will follow the sea ice. The management of the LIA, as critical polar bear habitat, will be a very important aspect of future iterations of this plan.

Section 9 – Implementation of the Plan

It is understood that while this plan is prescriptive in some regards, many management actions will come down to case-by-case decisions from the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board and subsequent decisions from the GN Minister of Environment. It will be important for both of these bodies to recognize and consider each of the objectives of this plan and interjurisdictional and international commitments when making decisions.

We applaud the addition of priority-setting and timelines for the management actions of this plan. However, given the short timeframe (less than five years) and ongoing nature of many of these actions, we believe that more frequent progress reporting is necessary, especially in the initial stages of the

plan, we suggest an interim report be drafted two years after the plan is implemented to track the progress of the plan and identify areas of improvement.

Section 9.3 – Habitat management and environmental stewardship (Avatitinnik Kamatsiarniq) actions

One particular action that we feel is not sufficiently prioritized is the study of the effects of marine shipping and development of mitigation measures on polar bears. Industrial development pressure is high in the Arctic, and the current ten-year timeline does not address the need to better understand the effects of disturbance on polar bears in order to allow for much needed industrial development while mitigating the impacts to wildlife. This action needs to be elevated to high priority and a timeline of no more than five years, with work beginning as soon as feasible.

Section 10 – Plan Review

As the jurisdiction with the most polar bears in the country, Nunavut's plan will be the cornerstone of polar bear management in Canada. As noted above, an interim review should come after two years so that problems can be identified. This is a first generation plan, and a review will not be onerous. WWF will also conduct a review of the progress of the plan after two years, which we hope will be a productive exercise to identify roadblocks that need to be addressed before the 5 year review mark.

Concluding remarks

WWF-Canada is supportive of this draft of the Nunavut Polar Bear Co-Management Plan. We have suggested minor revisions for consideration by the NWMB and the GN in their final drafting of the plan. We have also included areas of emphasis and future actions that will be necessary during the implementation of the plan, and we look forward to continued discussions on these topics. We thank the NWMB and the GN for the opportunity to submit comments which we feel will improve the plan, and look forward to expressing our points and hearing from others at the hearing in June in Iqaluit.

Sincerely,



Brandon Laforest
Senior Specialist, Arctic Species and Ecosystems
WWF-Canada

- C.c. Jason Akearok, Executive Director, Nunavut Wildlife Management Board
- C.c. Vicky Sahanatien, Director, Wildlife Management, Nunavut Wildlife Management Board
- C.c. Sarah Spencer, Wildlife Management Biologist, Nunavut Wildlife Management Board



July 20th, 2018

Aluki Kotierk
President of Nunavut
Tunngavik Inc.

Joe Ashevak
Chairperson of the Kitikmeot
Regional Wildlife Board

Christine Cleghorn and Stas
Olpiniski
Chairpersons of the Polar
Bear Administrative
Committee

Charlie Watt
President of
Makivik
Corporation



Re: Nunavut Wildlife Management Board in-person public hearing to consider the Government of Nunavut Proposal on the revised *Nunavut Polar Bear Co-Management Plan*

Through this letter, the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board (NWMB or Board) is extending an invitation to your department or organization to attend the Board's in-person public hearing regarding the Government of Nunavut - Department of Environment (Department of Environment) revised *Nunavut Polar Bear Co-Management Plan* (Plan). The NWMB is also inviting your department or organization to provide written, translated submissions and supporting documents for the Plan hearing.



2. Background

3. Date and location of the hearing

Box 1379
Iqaluit, NU X0A 0H0
 (867) 975-7300
 (888) 421-9832



4. NWMB Funding for representatives of Inuit harvesters

5. Best available information and NWMB Hearing Rules

NUNAVUT WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT BOARD
P.O. Box 1379, Iqaluit, NU, X0A 0H0
Phone: (867) 975-7300
Fax: (888) 421-9832
Email: receptionist@nwmb.com

6. Invitation to the public hearing

Please take note that, unless persuasive written and translated reasons are provided to the Board for late filing, the NWMB will not consider materials for this hearing that are not filed on time.



NOTICE OF NUNAVUT WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT BOARD IN-PERSON PUBLIC HEARING

Notice is provided on the **20th of July 2018** that the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board (NWMB or Board) will be conducting an in-person public hearing to consider the Government of Nunavut-Department of Environment's *Proposal for NWMB Decision to consider the revised Nunavut Polar Bear Co-Management Plan*. The hearing is scheduled to take place from the 13th to the 16th of November 2018, in Iqaluit, Nunavut at the Cadet Hall.

The Proposal and additional documents relevant to the hearing are available for download from the NWMB's website (www.nwmb.com), or by contacting the NWMB at the coordinates set out at the end of this notice.

The filing of submissions:

The NWMB is inviting interested organizations or persons, including any member of the public, to file written response submissions and supporting documentation concerning the Proposal by no later than **5:00 p.m. Iqaluit time on October 12th, 2018**. Unless persuasive written reasons are provided to the Board for late filing, the NWMB will not consider materials for this hearing that are not filed on time. The NWMB will make publicly available all the written materials filed, subject to relevant confidentiality or privacy concerns.

How to obtain more information:

To receive more information about filing or obtaining submissions or the rules applying to the written public hearing, please contact the NWMB:

NUNAVUT WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT BOARD

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Email: receptionist@nwmb.com

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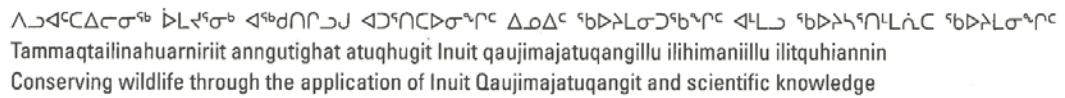
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Environment and Climate Change Canada	2 hours and 45 minutes
Parks Canada Agency	1 hour and 45 minutes
World Wildlife Fund	50 minutes
Public Comments/Questions	55 minutes

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Tammaqtailinahuarniriit anngutighat atquhugit Inuit qaujimajatuqangillu ilihmaniillu ilitquhiannin
Conserving wildlife through the application of Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit and scientific knowledge

Pre-Hearing Teleconference Nunavut Polar Bear Co-management Plan April 26, 2018

Nunavut Wildlife Management Board
Pre-Hearing Teleconference
Nunavut Polar Bear Co-management Plan
Thursday, April 26, 2018
NWMB and Other Participants/Observer

- Daniel Shewchuk Acting Chairperson
- Jason Akearok Executive Director
- Michael d'Eça Legal Advisor
- Kyle Ritchie Habitat and Species at Risk Management Biologist
- Evie Amagoalik Interpreter

• James Qillaq	Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board
• Jason Mikki	Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board
• Michael Ferguson	Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board
• Qovik Netser	Kivalliq Wildlife Board
• Ezra Greens	Kivalliq Wildlife Board
• Ema Qaggutaq	Kitikmeot Regional Wildlife Board
• Joe Ashevak	Kitikmeot Regional Wildlife Board
• Paul Irngaut	Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated
• Raymond Mercer	Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated
• Peter Kydd	Parks Canada Agency
• Markus Dyck	Government of Nunavut
• Rob Harmer	Government of Nunavut
• Drikus Gissing	Government of Nunavut
• Sam Iverson	Environment and Climate Change Canada
• Lauren Schmuck	Environment and Climate Change Canada
• Janice Traynor	Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada
• Erin Keenan	World Wildlife Fund



Pre-Hearing Teleconference Nunavut Polar Bear Co-management Plan

Page 2 of 8

1. *As arranged with INAC to address participant funding for this particular hearing (one-time arrangement only), the NWMB has secured sufficient funds to pay airfare, accommodation and per diem for one hearing delegate from each community (except the “host” community) to participate at the hearing [see the NWMB’s April 6th 2018 letter to hearing parties];*
2. *The hearing is to be held over a 4-day period in Iqaluit (likely October 8th to 11th 2018), with flexibility as to the dates required because of accommodation availability [see the NWMB’s April 6th 2018 letter]; and*
3. *All the co-management partners have a shared challenge to secure a longer-term solution to the difficult task of securing participant funding for future NWMB hearings. That funding must come from the Government, not from the NWMB’s limited and fixed (2013-2023) annual operating budget. The best way forward is to work together. The NWMB will be in further touch soon regarding next steps.*

Organization	Time
GN-DOE	$\frac{3}{4}$ day
NTI	$\frac{1}{2}$ day
RWOs and communities	2 days
All remaining parties	$\frac{3}{4}$ day

Discussion with Co-management Partners

Qikiqtaaluk Region

James Qillaq (QWB) stated that some communities weren't able to come before and asked if this has been corrected so that all communities could attend. NWMB's Chairperson responded that the NWMB met with INAC and acquired support so that all delegates from all communities could attend. He stated



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concerns about. They expressed their concerns very clearly at the March 2017 meeting, before NWMB called for the in-person public hearing. They disagreed with GN's position that there did not need to be more consultation. Added that QWB did express concern overall on the consultation that was done and the revised management plan.

NWMB's Chairperson stated that communities and regional organizations are the priorities for this meeting.

NWMB's Executive Director said that even if we start on the 9th, it still means travelling on Thanksgiving. The challenge is that now that we don't have the Arctic Hotel and part of Discovery is spoken for we need the space to accommodate a large group, there may be additional members from some communities. With Koojesse Room being the best spot, we have to compete with other organizations for the space. We'll hear what folks have to say for consideration, but it's important to be flexible with the times and location.

Qovik Netser stated concerns with hotel problem in Iqaluit, would they consider Rankin Inlet, it might be more flexible for hotels there. Had some issues arranging travel to Western Hudson Bay meetings, recommend that the Nunavut Inuit Wildlife Secretariat help take care of airfare and hotel booking.

Joe Ashevak, KRWB Chairperson, asked if instead of sending one delegate from each community; could it be one from each HTO and a representative from the RWO. NWMB's Executive Director stated that NWMB would cover one delegate per community and that in the past it has been RWOs that cover their



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Janice Traynor (INAC) stated that she is from the part of INAC that works with conservation and land use issues, the funding side of the department is not her focus. She understands the push from Institutions of Public Government (IPGs) with needing to be more consistent with that approach.

Raymond Mercer (NTI) stated that all his concerns are being raised, and instead of repeating, he'll leave it at that.

Drikus Gissing (GN) disagrees with QWB, that there wasn't a chance for input from communities. Stated that the plan was developed to meet Nunavut needs and as a national plan of the Species at Risk Act (SARA). Added that if the final plan doesn't meet SARA standards, it's not a big concern. Stated that it would be good for the Board to advise us as soon as possible for the dates of the hearing as they need to bring in Chris Hudson, who developed the plan, and he can answer a lot of questions and concerns.

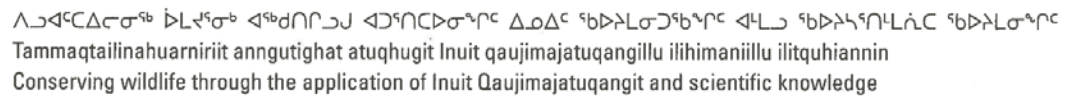
Sam Iverson (ECCC) thinks it's important for it to be a single hearing so all regions can hear other's concerns. It's also important to be able to hear the government presentations and there is ample time to ask questions and give responses. They don't intend to fill all their time allocation with presentations, but to listen as well. Noted that ECCC, in line with their requirements required by SARA, have made some suggestions for the plan some comments have been accommodated by the GN and some have not, so it would be good to have time to talk about it.

Nobody on the line.

Nobody on the line.

Nothing to add.

NWMB Chairperson said that it's great we've all been able to get together and talk about this, it's really important and thanked all participants for their input. Asked for any last comments by any Regional Wildlife Boards.



Next steps for the NWMB are to determine availability of hotel space and a conference room for the in-person public hearing in Iqaluit and to look into holding the hearing in November.

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

June 13th 2017

Drikus Gissing
Director of Wildlife,
Dept. of Environment
Government of Nunavut

Patrick Ballay
Acting Director of
Treaty Management East,
Indigenous and Northern
Affairs Canada

Paul Irngaut
Wildlife Director,
Nunavut Tunngavik Inc.

Joe Ashevak
Chairperson of the Kitikmeot
Regional Wildlife Board

James Qillaq
Chairperson of the
Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board

Stanley Adjuk
Chairperson of the
Kivalliq Wildlife Board

Samuel Iverson
Wildlife Management and
Regulatory Affairs
Canadian Wildlife Service

Dear Colleagues:

Re: Meeting/conference call to discuss next steps for adjourned Nunavut Wildlife Management Board Public Hearing concerning the revised *Nunavut Polar Bear Co-Management Plan*

This letter is follow-up correspondence from the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board (NWMB or Board) to its June 2nd 2017 announcement to adjourn the June 6th to 8th 2017 public hearing concerning the draft *Nunavut Polar Bear Co-Management Plan*.¹

The NWMB is of the view that it is essential for the hearing to be resumed at the earliest reasonable opportunity. Accordingly, the Board is inviting you to attend a proposed meeting/conference call on June 19th 2017, from 3:00 to 5:00 pm, to be held in the NWMB's Boardroom. The purpose of the meeting/call is twofold:

- (a) to attempt to ensure that appropriate steps are taken to prevent similar hearing adjournments in the future; and
- (b) to attempt to reach a consensus on the conditions and timing for resumption of the hearing - ideally in the fall of 2017.

By way of brief summary, the primary reasons for the hearing adjournment are the following:

1. Because the NWMB has no legal obligation to fund travel and accommodation costs for parties attending its hearings, there is no funding designated – or otherwise available - in the Board’s annual operating budget to pay for intervenor or party attendance at NWMB hearings;

¹ Attached to this letter are the following seven background documents: April 13th 2017 NWMB hearing invitation letter, May 26th 2017 Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board (QWB) withdrawal letter, May 30th NWMB reply letter to QWB, June 1st QWB follow-up withdrawal letter, June 2nd Kivalliq Wildlife Board withdrawal letter, June 2nd NWMB adjournment letter, and June 5th NWMB adjournment Press Release.

2. The Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board (QWB) and the Kivalliq Wildlife Board (KWB) believe that the NWMB – by not funding travel and accommodation costs for all affected Hunters and Trappers Organizations (HTOs) to participate in the hearing² - did not provide an equal opportunity for those HTOs to attend the hearing; and
3. QWB reports that no Qikiqtaaluk HTOs have any funding to attend NWMB hearings, and QWB does not have funding allocated to send HTO delegates to Board hearings.

The NWMB proposes that the agenda for the June 19th meeting/conference call be as follows:

- (a) Introductions and opening remarks;
- (b) Discussion regarding steps (including approximate timelines) required to ensure adequate funding is available for affected RWOs and HTOs to attend NWMB in-person hearings;
- (c) Discussion regarding conditions and timing for a prompt resumption of the *Nunavut Polar Bear Co-Management Plan* hearing – including the consideration of resuming the hearing as a written hearing only; and
- (d) Closing remarks.

The NWMB requests that you confirm, by no later than Thursday, June 15th 2017 at 5:00 pm Iqaluit time, your attendance (or attendance by a suitable representative of your organization) - and whether you require a translator - at the June 19th meeting/conference call.

Best regards,



Daniel Shewchuk
Acting Chairperson of the
Nunavut Wildlife Management Board

Attachments (7)

c.c. David Akeegok, Deputy Minister of Environment, Nunavut Department of Environment;
James Eetoook, Vice President, Nunavut Tunngavik Inc.;
Jason Mikki, Executive Director, Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board;
Ema Qaggutaq, Regional Coordinator, Kitikmeot Regional Wildlife Board;
Qovik Netser, Regional Coordinator, Kivalliq Wildlife Board;
Laura Gemmell, Acting Manager, Treaty Management East, Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada;
Lisa Pirie, Acting Head of Eastern Arctic, Canadian Wildlife Service, Environment and Climate Change Canada;
Caroline Ladanowski, Director, Wildlife Management and Regulatory Affairs Division, Canadian Wildlife Service, Environment and Climate Change Canada;
Jenna Boon, Nunavut Field Unit Superintendent, Parks Canada Agency;
Adamie Delisle Alaku, Executive Vice President, Makivik Corporation; and
Paul Crowley, Vice-President Arctic, World Wildlife Fund Canada
Annie Tattuinee, Executive Director, Nunavut Inuit Wildlife Secretariat

² The NWMB was able – for this hearing - to re-profile from its 2017-2018 operating budget sufficient funding to provide travel and accommodation assistance for 18 Regional Wildlife Organization (RWO) and HTO representatives to attend the hearing (6 from each Region; note: the Qikiqtaaluk Region has 13 affected HTOs). The provision of such funding was not an NWMB obligation; rather, it was a necessarily limited, voluntary donation – similar to a number of other limited donations provided without incident to RWOs and HTOs since 2008.



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

Hon. Joe Savikataaq
Minister of Environment
Government of Nunavut

Aluki Kotierk
President of Nunavut
Tunngavik Inc



Stanley Adjuk
Chairperson of the
Kivalliq Wildlife Board

Jobie Tukkiapik
President of Makivik
Corporation

Re: Public Hearing of the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board concerning the revised *Nunavut Polar Bear Co-Management Plan*

Through this letter, the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board (NWMB or Board) is extending an invitation to your department or organization to provide written, translated submissions and supporting documentation, and to also attend the NWMB's June 6th to 8th 2017 public hearing, regarding the Nunavut Department of Environment's revised *Nunavut Polar Bear Co-Management Plan* (revised Plan). Further details and instructions regarding submissions to and attendance at the hearing are set out below, in sections 4 to 7 of this correspondence.

In 2013 the Nunavut Department of Environment (Department) began coordinating the development of a draft Polar Bear Management Plan (original Plan), with the intention of

Box 1379
Iqaluit, NU X0A 0H0
 (867) 975-7300
 (888) 421-9832

replacing the current *Polar Bear Memorandum of Understanding* as the guiding document for polar bear management in the Nunavut Settlement Area.

In June of 2015, the Department submitted a *Proposal for Decision* to the NWMB for approval of the original Plan. The Board held a written public hearing in the fall of 2015, and subsequently decided to adjourn that hearing in order to permit the Department to carefully review the submissions received, and to consider revisions to the original Plan based upon its review.

The Department subsequently reviewed those written submissions, undertook and completed a number of revisions, and then conducted further consultations with relevant Inuit organizations during October and November of 2016. The result of that process is the revised Plan, submitted to the NWMB on February 2nd 2017. At the Board's March 2017 quarterly meeting, the NWMB decided to resume the *Nunavut Polar Bear Co-Management Plan* hearing process as an in-person public hearing.

3. Results of pre-hearing teleconferences

The NWMB has held two pre-hearing teleconferences concerning its planned resumption of the hearing process – one on February 15th, shortly after receiving the revised Plan, and the other on March 30th, following its quarterly meeting.

At the February 15th call, all participants¹ indicated that they would support whatever hearing format (written or in-person) the Board decided upon, and that they intended to participate in the hearing process.

At the March 30th call, attendees provided their views on a draft hearing agenda prepared by the NWMB.² Subject to proposed minor changes (since accepted by the Board), all participants agreed to the timelines and most other details set out in the hearing agenda, which is attached to this correspondence as Appendix A. The agreed-upon timelines for party submissions and resulting questions and answers during the three day hearing are as follows:

- ❖ Nunavut Department of Environment: 3 hours and 55 minutes;
- ❖ Nunavut Tunngavik Inc.: 2 hours;
- ❖ The Qikiqtaaluk Region (Regional Wildlife Organization and Hunters and Trappers Organizations): 3 hours and 15 minutes;

¹ In attendance were representatives of Nunavut Tunngavik Inc., the Kitikmeot Regional Wildlife Board, the Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board, the Arviat Hunters and Trappers Association (on behalf of the Kivalliq Wildlife Board), the Department, Environment and Climate Change Canada, Parks Canada, and the World Wildlife Fund Canada.

² In attendance were representatives of Nunavut Tunngavik Inc., the Kitikmeot Regional Wildlife Board, the Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board, the Kivalliq Wildlife Board, the Department, Environment and Climate Change Canada and the Polar Bear Administrative Committee. The NWMB will soon be issuing to all participants – under separate cover - a summary record of the pre-hearing teleconference.

- ❖ The Kivalliq Region (Regional Wildlife Organization and Hunters and Trappers Organizations): 3 hours and 15 minutes;
- ❖ The Kitikmeot Region (Regional Wildlife Organization and Hunters and Trappers Organizations): 3 hours and 15 minutes;
- ❖ Qaujimaniliit: 2 hours;
- ❖ Makivik Corporation: 1 hour;
- ❖ World Wildlife Fund Canada: 1 hour;
- ❖ Environment and Climate Change Canada and Parks Canada: 1 hour and 30 minutes; and
- ❖ Members of the public: 45 minutes.

4. Dates and location of the hearing

The “*Nunavut Wildlife Management Board Public Hearing to Consider the Government of Nunavut’s Polar Bear Co-Management Plan*” will take place over three (3) days - June 6th, 7th and 8th 2017 - in Iqaluit at the Cadet Hall. Day 1 begins at 9:00 am. The rest of the daily schedules are set out in the attached hearing agenda. Please note that the NWMB reserves the right to modify details of the agenda, including the daily schedules.

5. NWMB funding for attendance by representatives of Inuit harvesters

The Board is prepared to pay travel and accommodation costs for attendance by up to six (6) representatives from each region (consisting of Distinguished Elders/Qaujimaniliit and representatives of the Regional Wildlife Organization and/or Hunters and Trappers Organizations) – for a total of eighteen (18) participants in total. Selection of those representatives will be decided by the Regional Wildlife Organizations. Unfortunately, the NWMB has no further funding assistance available.

6. Best available information and NWMB Hearing Rules

Copies of the Department’s *Proposal for Decision* (Appendix B) and the NWMB Hearing Rules (Appendix C) are attached to this letter. These - and a number of additional documents comprising the best available information to date – including the revised Plan are also available for download from the NWMB’s online hearing registry (found at www.nwmb.com), or by contacting the Board at the following address:

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

7. Invitation and instructions to provide written submissions

Through this letter, the NWMB is extending an invitation to your department or organization to provide written submissions and supporting documentation³ in response to the Department's *Proposal for Decision*. **All written materials must be filed with the NWMB – in English, Inuktitut and Inuinnaqtun – by no later than 5:00 p.m. (Iqaluit Time) on May 19th 2017.** The requirement for translation does not apply to supporting documentation over ten (10) pages in length, as long as each supporting document that is not translated is accompanied by a concise, translated summary (English, Inuktitut and Inuinnaqtun) at least two (2) pages in length.

In addition, the Board is extending an invitation to your department or organization to attend the hearing as a party entitled to make oral submissions, and to ask and answer questions of the other parties. **In order to help ensure a fair and efficient hearing, the NWMB requires that a qualified representative of your department or organization confirm in writing – by no later than 5:00 p.m. (Iqaluit Time) on May 19th 2017 – attendance by your department or organization as a party at the public hearing.**

Subject to relevant confidentiality or privacy concerns, all submissions and supporting documentation will be placed on the NWMB's website/hearing registry, and will be available for download shortly after they are filed with the Board.

Please take careful note that, unless persuasive written and translated reasons are provided to the NWMB for late filing, the Board will not consider materials for this hearing that are not filed on time.

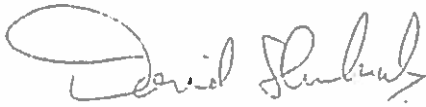
Materials may be filed with the Board in person, by courier or by mail. They must be clearly marked as pertaining to the *NWMB Public Hearing on the Polar Bear Co-Management Plan*. Delivery of the materials may also be made through fax or electronic transmission, but only if your department or organization confirms by phone with the NWMB – **by no later than the filing deadline** – that a complete and legible copy of the transmission has been received by the Board. Materials are deemed to have been filed on the actual day of receipt by the NWMB.

Please keep in mind that the more thorough, reliable and persuasive supporting evidence and justifications are for your submissions, the more weight they will be given by the NWMB in the *Nunavut Agreement* decision-making process.

If you require further information, please do not hesitate to visit the NWMB website or to contact the Board directly.

³ "Supporting documentation" refers to one or more studies, articles, opinions or other documents separate from a person's or organization's written submission, filed as additional evidence and/or argument in support of that person's or organization's submission.

Yours sincerely,



**Dan Shewchuk
A/Chairperson of the
Nunavut Wildlife Management Board**

Attachments (3)

- c.c. Drikus Gissing, Director of Wildlife, Nunavut Department of Environment;
Paul Irrgaut, Director of Wildlife, Nunavut Tunngavik Inc.;
Jason Mikki, Executive Director, Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board;
Ema Qaggutaq, Regional Coordinator, Kitikmeot Regional Wildlife Board;
Qovik Netser, Regional Coordinator, Kivalliq Wildlife Board;
Adamie Delisle Alaku, Executive Vice President, Makivik Corporation;
Lisa Pirie-Dominix, Acting Head of Eastern Arctic, Canadian Wildlife Service,
Environment and Climate Change Canada;
Caroline Ladanowski, Director, Wildlife Management and Regulatory Affairs
Division, Canadian Wildlife Service, Environment and Climate Change Canada;
Jenna Boon, Nunavut Field Unit Superintendent, Parks Canada Agency; and
Paul Crowley, Vice-President Arctic, World Wildlife Fund Canada;**

We do not recognize the proposed Hearing as being fair or valid under the spirit of the Nunavut Agreement.

Therefore, the QWB cannot participate in the public Hearing during June 6-8, 2017.


2. Through this letter, I notify the NWMB that the QWB rejects the revised Nunavut Polar Bear Co-Management Plan. It is unacceptable in its current form.

Further, the QWB officially withdraws its May 19 Written Submission regarding the revised Plan. We do this because we will be unable to discuss and explain fully our Submission, with the support and additional information that could be offered by all our HTOs if a full and fair Hearing was to be convened.

I regret that the QWB had to make these decisions, but we will not participate in the unfair treatment of the HTOs that we represent as the NWMB has asked us to do. We must stand up for basic principles of co-management, and the spirit of the Nunavut Agreement.

We trust that in future, the NWMB will enable the QWB and all its HTOs to represent their members fully, equally and in-person with respect to this Plan, which will be so important to the Inuit across Nunavut and in every community.

Sincerely,



Joshua Kango
Vice-Chairperson
Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board

cc. 13 Hunters and Trappers Organizations, Qikiqtaaluk region
James Eetoolook, Vice-President, Nunavut Tunngavik Inc.
Joe Ashevak, Chairperson, Kitikmeot Regional Wildlife Board
Stanley Adjuk, Chairperson, Kivalliq Wildlife Board
Drikkus Gissing, Director of Wildlife, Government of Nunavut

May 30th 2017

James Qillaq
Chairperson of the
Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board

Dear James:

Re: Withdrawal of the Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board from the Public Hearing of the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board concerning the revised *Nunavut Polar Bear Co-Management Plan*

1. Reasons for withdrawal by the Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board from the public hearing process

The Nunavut Wildlife Management Board (NWMB or Board) was dismayed by the May 26th letter from Vice-Chairperson Joshua Kango, informing the NWMB that the Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board (QWB) Executive Committee has decided to withdraw from the June 6th to 8th 2017 public hearing concerning the revised *Nunavut Polar Bear Co-Management Plan*.

In summary, the reasons provided for the withdrawal are the following:

1. The NWMB's April 13th offer to fund travel and accommodation costs for attendance by six Qikiqtani representatives at the hearing violates the spirit – and possibly even the letter – of the *Nunavut Agreement*;
2. In order for the hearing to be fair and valid, the NWMB would have to fund travel and accommodation costs for attendance at the hearing by representatives of all thirteen Hunters and Trappers Organizations from the Qikiqtaaluk Region; and
3. In such circumstances, QWB must stand up for the basic principles of co-management and the spirit of the *Nunavut Agreement*.

In the NWMB's view, QWB has based its decision on an unfortunate misunderstanding of the facts. I am very much hoping that the explanation below will convince you to reconvene a meeting of your Executive Committee to reconsider QWB's May 26th decision.

2. The NWMB has no legal obligation to fund travel and accommodation costs for parties attending an NWMB hearing

I want to assure you that the Board is under no legal obligation – whether from the *Nunavut Agreement*, other federal or territorial laws, the law made by judges (case law), or any contractual agreement – to fund travel and accommodation costs for parties attending an NWMB hearing. As a result, the NWMB has never received any type of intervenor or participant funding from the federal government.¹

¹ The NWMB is required by Section 5.7.13 of the *Nunavut Agreement* to provide “adequate funding” for the operation of HTOs and RWOs. However, the reference to “adequate funding” necessarily refers to RWO and HTO funding levels determined by the parties to the *Nunavut Agreement* (or, where those parties cannot reach agreement, by Canada) through

Nevertheless, the Board – following the basic principles of co-management and the spirit of the *Nunavut Agreement* – has consistently attempted to maintain a close working partnership with the Regional Wildlife Organizations (RWOs) and Hunters and Trappers Organizations (HTOs), including with respect to their participation at NWMB hearings.

Indeed, the Board has gone out of its way on a number of occasions over the years to secure funding from its own annual operating budget – funding designated for carrying out NWMB legal responsibilities under Article 5 of the *Nunavut Agreement*, but re-profiled in order to provide financial assistance to RWOs and HTOs. The provision of such funding is not an NWMB obligation; rather, it is a necessarily occasional, voluntary donation intended to ensure stronger RWO and HTO participation in the Nunavut wildlife management system.

By way of example, between 2008 and 2013, the NWMB held a total of one in-person pre-hearing conference and seven public hearings, all of which affected more than one Nunavut Region:

1. For four of the hearings, the Board did not offer any financial assistance to RWOs or HTOs for hearing attendance.² No HTO or RWO complained of being treated unfairly.
2. For the other three hearings, the NWMB provided modest financial assistance for hearing attendance.³ No HTO or RWO complained of being treated unfairly.
3. With respect to the single pre-hearing conference, the Board provided modest financial assistance for attendance.⁴ Once again, no HTO or RWO complained of being treated unfairly.

As a result of its consistent experience of no complaints during those six years, the NWMB reasonably understood that QWB had no concerns regarding this occasional, voluntary NWMB practice.

Over the years, the Board has taken additional important steps to help ensure RWO and HTO independence and participation at NWMB public hearings. For instance, the Board advised the Nunavut Implementation Panel - in its December 14th 2012 *Funding Proposal and Workplan for the Period from July 9th 2013 to July 8th 2023* – that the *Nunavut Agreement* parties must ensure adequate funding for RWOs and HTOs to participate at NWMB public hearings.⁵

Since the protection of Qikiqtani Inuit harvesting rights and Nunavut wildlife are necessarily essential QWB wildlife management responsibilities, the NWMB presumes that QWB made a similar recommendation in its own

implementation funding negotiations for each 10-year implementation planning period. The current planning period covers 2013 to 2023.

² No financial assistance: The March 6th 2008 Bowhead Whale total allowable harvest public hearing, the September 10th 2008 public hearing to list Grizzly Bear as a species of special concern, the February 10th 2009 Bowhead Whale total allowable harvest public hearing, and the April 13th 2010 public hearing to list Polar Bear as a species of special concern.

³ Modest financial assistance: The September 11th and 12th 2012 public hearing to establish basic needs levels for beluga, narwhal and walrus (12 delegates in total, shared between QWB, the Kivalliq Wildlife Board (KWB) and the Kitikmeot Regional Wildlife Board (KRWB)); the July 24th to 26th 2012 public hearing concerning the *Integrated Fisheries Management Plan for Narwhal*, including accompanying harvesting limitations (12 delegates in total, shared equally between QWB and KWB); and the September 10th and 11th 2013 Foxe Basin Polar Bear total allowable harvest public hearing (8 delegates in total, shared equally between QWB and KWB).

⁴ Modest financial assistance: The December 10th 2009 pre-hearing conference to list Polar Bear as a species of special concern (6 delegates in total: 2 for QWB, 2 for KWB and 2 for KRWB).

⁵ "...Informed RWO and HTO input into the hearing process – through the development of written and/or oral submissions, and attendance at the hearing – is crucial for informed and fair NWMB decision-making (NLCA S.5.1.2(h), 5.1.3(b)(ii), (iii) and (v), 5.2.26, 5.2.28, 5.2.34(f), 5.7.3(a) and (d), and 5.7.6(a) and (d))."

2013 to 2023 funding proposal and workplan regarding its funding needs for the current implementation planning period. The Board also presumes that the relatively significant budget increases achieved by the RWOs and HTOs for 2013 to 2023 include a reasonable level of funding for participation at NWMB hearings.

3. The NWMB's legal obligation is to hold procedurally fair public hearings

Among the most important of the Board's wildlife management responsibilities is the holding of procedurally fair public hearings. Procedural fairness includes three crucial elements: proper notice of the hearing, adequate disclosure of the relevant issues and facts, and the provision of a reasonable opportunity for affected harvesters to make their views known (via written submissions and/or the right to attend the hearing as a party). The NWMB has met all of those legal responsibilities with respect to this particular public hearing.

In fact, the Board has taken even more care than usual with the procedures it has followed in preparing for this highly important hearing:

1. The NWMB started with a written hearing in the fall of 2015, to which it properly applied the three crucial elements of procedural fairness;
2. In the course of that hearing, the NWMB decided that the draft *Nunavut Polar Bear Co-Management Plan* required further development; the Board therefore adjourned the hearing to permit the Department of Environment to carefully review the submissions received, and to consider revisions to the original Plan based upon its review;
3. The Department subsequently undertook and completed a number of revisions, and then conducted further consultations with relevant Inuit organizations during October and November of 2016; the result of that process is the revised draft Plan, submitted to the NWMB on February 2nd 2017; the Board then held two pre-hearing teleconferences with the hearing parties (February 15th and March 30th);
4. At the initial teleconference, all parties – including QWB - indicated that they would support whatever hearing format (written or in-person) the Board decided upon; after careful consideration, the NWMB decided that an in-person public hearing was warranted; and
5. During the second teleconference, the parties discussed concerns over the dates and location of the hearing, the length of the hearing, the number of party representatives for whom the NWMB would pay travel and accommodation costs, the proposed agenda, and the timelines for oral submissions and resulting questions and answers; at the end of the teleconference, the Board was careful to ask all of the participants if they had remaining concerns. No concerns or disagreements were expressed by any of the participants, including the QWB representatives.

Within just one week - on April 7th - the NWMB issued a summary of the discussions at the pre-hearing teleconference, the final version of the hearing agenda, and a formal hearing invitation letter to the parties. All three documents reflected the consensus reached at the March 30th teleconference.

During the following seven weeks, the Board received no questions, concerns or replies to the three April 7th documents. At the end of the work day on Friday, May 26th – approximately one week before the hearing is to commence – QWB unexpectedly delivered its withdrawal letter to the NWMB.

4. Conclusion

The NWMB's legal obligation is to provide a reasonable opportunity for affected harvesters and their representative organizations to respond to the *Proposal for Decision* that has been presented to the Board for approval. The NWMB is confident that it has met that legal obligation; in fact, the Board believes it has satisfied a very high standard in meeting all of its procedural fairness obligations to QWB and the other hearing parties. Accordingly, the NWMB met by teleconference on May 29th, and unanimously decided to proceed with the hearing as scheduled.

James, it goes without saying that QWB is entitled to not attend the public hearing, and to withdraw its written submission. However, the NWMB believes that QWB's withdrawal from this very important wildlife management process would be an unfortunate and unnecessary loss for all concerned – a loss that could be felt by Qikiqtani harvesters for many years to come. I therefore sincerely ask you, on behalf of the NWMB, to reverse the May 26th decision, and to have QWB once again play the thoughtful leadership role it has displayed at so many NWMB hearings over the years.

If you require further information or explanation, the NWMB's Executive Director and Legal Counsel would be happy to meet with you and/or your Executive Committee at a mutually convenient time prior to the commencement of the hearing.

Yours sincerely,



Dan Shewchuk
A/Chairperson of the
Nunavut Wildlife Management Board

c.c. Hon. Joe Savikataaq, Nunavut Minister of Environment;
Hon. Catherine McKenna, Minister of Environment and Climate Change Canada;
Atuki Kotierk, President of Nunavut Tunngavik Inc.;
Joe Ashevak, Chairperson of the Kitikmeot Regional Wildlife Board;
Stanley Adjuk, Chairperson of the Kivalliq Wildlife Board;
Chairpersons of the Nunavut Hunters and Trappers Organizations,
c/o the Executive Director, Annie Tattuinee, of the Nunavut Inuit Wildlife Secretariat;
Daniel Watson, Chief Executive Officer, Parks Canada Agency;
David Miller, President and CEO, World Wildlife Fund Canada;
Jobie Tukkiapik, President of Makivik Corporation;
Drikus Gissing, Director of Wildlife, Nunavut Department of Environment;
Paul Irngaut, Director of Wildlife, Nunavut Tunngavik Inc.;
Jason Mikki, Executive Director, Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board;
Ema Qaggutaq, Regional Coordinator, Kitikmeot Regional Wildlife Board;
Qovik Netser, Regional Coordinator, Kivalliq Wildlife Board;
Adamie Delisle Alaku, Executive Vice President, Makivik Corporation;
Lisa Pirie, Acting Head of Eastern Arctic, Canadian Wildlife Service, Environment and Climate Change Canada;
Caroline Ladanowski, Director, Wildlife Management and Regulatory Affairs Division, Canadian Wildlife Service, Environment and Climate Change Canada;
Jenna Boon, Nunavut Field Unit Superintendent, Parks Canada Agency; and
Paul Crowley, Vice-President Arctic, World Wildlife Fund Canada.

Sent by e-mail to: tsataa@nwmb.com

On behalf of the QWB, I am replying to your response to Mr. Kango's letter of May 26, 2017 regarding the polar bear plan hearing.

Further, it is not true that the QWB did not inform the NWMB about our concerns for 7 weeks.

In our view, NWMB had enough time to discuss QWB's concerns internally, and then engage the QWB in positive discussions. The NWMB did not engage us to build a consensus.

NWMB's ED essentially replied, No. The agenda had already been set, and he was unwilling to consider changes. He stated that each region would get the same amount of time, regardless

of how many delegates they send. Therefore, NWMB would not allow each of Qikiqtaaluk's 13 HTO representatives to fairly and reasonably make their views known on par with other HTOs.

Annie Tattuinee, Executive Director, Nunavut Inuit Wildlife Secretariat, also supported QWB's position, and spoke about the meaning of fairness and representation as per the spirit of the Agreement

Over the next month, the QWB became dismayed that the NWMB's did not engage us in a timely manner.

The NWMB apparently wants to hear from 12 delegates from 12 communities that have a basic TAH allocation of about 178 polar bears, but from only 6 of 13 communities with a TAH of about 312 bears. Those other 12 delegates will be funded by NWMB, and will be given twice as much time to speak. The QWB cannot accept that as fair. We do not accept that the NWMB has met its own stated criteria for "provision of a reasonable opportunity for affected harvesters to make their views known" in a procedurally fair hearing.

Very few of our HTOs have any funding for travel, and none specifically for attending NWMB Hearings. Similarly, the QWB does not have funding allocated for sending HTO delegates to NWMB Hearings.

In a teleconference today for all members of the QWB, our Board again decided not to participate in the NWMB hearing planned for next week. We gave the reasons for withdrawing from the public hearing in Mr. Kango's letter. We believe that the NWMB attempted to inaccurately reframe our reasons in its written response of May 30, 2017. Mr. Kango's letter stands on its own.

The QWB is willing to discuss a fair in-person public hearing process. If the NWMB becomes interested in reaching a true consensus, I suggest that the current Hearing process be postponed.

Sincerely,



Jason Mikki
Executive Director

cc. James Qillaq, Chairperson, QWB
Chairpersons, 13 Qikiqtaaluk HTOs
Chairpersons, Kivalliq and Kitikmeot RWOs
Paul Inngaut, NTI
Annie Tattuinee, NIWS



Mr. D. Shewchuck
 A/Chairperson
 Nunavut Wildlife Management Board
 PO Box 1379
 Iqaluit, NU X0A 0H0

Dear Mr. Shewchuk:

Equal and Fair Opportunity for All HTOs to Participate in Public Hearings

When NWMB is providing financial assistance to RWOs and/or HTOs to attend the hearings, it should be made explicitly clear how much funding will be provided to each RWO and HTO so that if the RWOs and HTOs need to supplement the funding, this can be planned and arranged. Ideally, the financial assistance that NWMB provides should be shared equally between all HTOs and the HTO expenses incurred to participate in meetings should be equivalent from HTO to HTO.



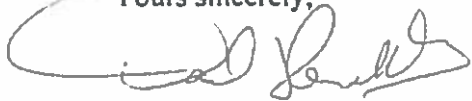
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Kivalliq Wildlife Board | Box 219 Rankin Inlet, NU | X0C 0G0 | t. 867-645-4860 | f. 867-645-4961 | www.kwbs.ca
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Tammaqtailinahuarniriit anngutighat atuqhugit Inuit qaujima jatuuqangillu ilihmaniillu ilitquhiannin
Conserving wildlife through the application of Inuit Qaujima jatuuqangit and scientific knowledge

Box 1379
Iqaluit, NU X0A 0H0
☎ (867) 975-7300
☎ (888) 421-9832

Yours sincerely,



Dan Shewchuk
A/Chairperson of the
Nunavut Wildlife Management Board

Attachments (4)

c.c. Drikus Gissing, Director of Wildlife, Nunavut Department of Environment;
Paul Imngaut, Director of Wildlife, Nunavut Tunngavik Inc.;
Jason Mikki, Executive Director, Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board;
Ema Qaggutaq, Regional Coordinator, Kitikmeot Regional Wildlife Board;
Qovik Netser, Regional Coordinator, Kivalliq Wildlife Board;
Adamic Delisle Alaku, Executive Vice President, Makivik Corporation;
Lisa Pirie, Acting Head of Eastern Arctic, Canadian Wildlife Service,
Environment and Climate Change Canada;
Caroline Ladanowski, Director, Wildlife Management and Regulatory Affairs
Division, Canadian Wildlife Service, Environment and Climate Change Canada;
Jenna Boon, Nunavut Field Unit Superintendent, Parks Canada Agency; and
Paul Crowley, Vice-President Arctic, World Wildlife Fund Canada;

~ PRESS RELEASE ~



**Adjournment by the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board of its June 6th to 8th 2017
Public Hearing concerning the *Nunavut Polar Bear Co-Management Plan***

(June 5th 2017 – Iqaluit, Nunavut) The Nunavut Wildlife Management Board (NWMB) has decided to adjourn its scheduled June 6th to 8th 2017 public hearing concerning the draft *Nunavut Polar Bear Co-Management Plan* until at least the fall of 2017. The NWMB made this decision following the receipt of correspondence from the Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board (May 26th and June 2nd 2017) and the Kivalliq Wildlife Board (June 2nd 2017), which announced that they would not be attending the hearing. The primary reason provided by the two Regional Wildlife Organizations for their withdrawal from the hearing was the lack of sufficient funding provided by the NWMB to pay travel and accommodation costs for all Hunters and Trappers Organizations to attend the hearing.

The NWMB has no legal obligation to fund travel and accommodation costs for parties attending its hearings. As a consequence, there is no funding designated in the NWMB's annual operating budget to pay for intervenor or party attendance at NWMB hearings. Nevertheless, the NWMB, for this particular hearing, was able to re-profile funding from its budget to pay attendance costs for a total of eighteen (18) Regional Wildlife Organization and Hunters and Trappers Organization participants from all three Regions (Qikiqtaaluk, Kivalliq, and Kitikmeot).

While the NWMB regrets that this misunderstanding about its funding obligations has led to the adjournment of the hearing, it is ready to work with Nunavut's Regional Wildlife Organizations and Hunters and Trappers Organizations - as well as with the Government of Canada and Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated - to ensure that affected Inuit wildlife organizations are able to participate in NWMB hearings.

To receive more information regarding the adjournment of the public hearing, please contact the NWMB:

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



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

Hon. Joe Savikataaq
Minister of Environment
Government of Nunavut

Hon. Catherine McKenna
Minister of Environment
And Climate Change
Canada

Aluki Kotierk
President of Nunavut
Tunngavik Inc

Joe Ashevak
Chairperson of the
Kitikmeot Regional
Wildlife Board

James Qillaq
Chairperson of the
Oikigtaaluk Wildlife Board

Stanley Adjuk
Chairperson of the
Kivalliq Wildlife Board

Chairpersons of the
Nunavut Hunters and
Trappers Organizations,
c/o the Executive Director
of the Nunavut Inuit
Wildlife Secretariat

Daniel Watson
Chief Executive Officer
Parks Canada Agency

Jobie Tukkiapik
President of Makivik
Corporation

David Miller
President and CEO
World Wildlife Fund
Canada

Dear Colleagues:

Re: Adjournment of the Public Hearing of the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board concerning the revised *Nunavut Polar Bear Co-Management Plan*

The Nunavut Wildlife Management Board (NWMB or Board) has regretfully decided to indefinitely adjourn its June 6th to 8th 2017 public hearing regarding the Nunavut Department of Environment's revised *Nunavut Polar Bear Co-Management Plan*. The reason for the adjournment is that the NWMB was informed on May 26th and June 1st by the Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board (QWB), and on June 2nd by the Kivalliq Wildlife Board (KWB), that they will not attend the hearing for the reasons provided in their letters attached to this correspondence.¹

The NWMB regrets that misunderstandings among co-management partners have led to this adjournment decision. The Board apologizes for the resulting inconvenience to hearing parties. Nevertheless, as a practical matter, the NWMB is of the view that the hearing cannot proceed at this time in the absence of two RWOs.

The Board will soon be in further touch regarding next steps.

¹ Accompanying this letter are copies of the May 26th and June 1st correspondence from QWB, May 30th correspondence from the NWMB, and June 2nd correspondence from KWB.

Yours sincerely,



Dan Shewchuk
A/Chairperson of the
Nunavut Wildlife Management Board

Attachments (4)

c.c. Drikus Gissing, Director of Wildlife, Nunavut Department of Environment;
Paul Irngaut, Director of Wildlife, Nunavut Tunngavik Inc.;
Jason Mikki, Executive Director, Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board;
Ema Qaggutaq, Regional Coordinator, Kitikmeot Regional Wildlife Board;
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Adamie Delisle Alaku, Executive Vice President, Makivik Corporation;
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Division, Canadian Wildlife Service, Environment and Climate Change Canada;
Jenna Boon, Nunavut Field Unit Superintendent, Parks Canada Agency; and
Paul Crowley, Vice-President Arctic, World Wildlife Fund Canada;



**Mr. D. Shewchuck
A/Chairperson
Nunavut Wildlife Management Board
PO Box 1379
Iqaluit, NU X0A 0H0**

Dear Mr. Shewchuk:

Equal and Fair Opportunity for All HTOs to Participate in Public Hearings

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Kivalliq Wildlife Board | Box 219 Rankin Inlet, NU | X0C 0G0 | t. 867-645-4860 | f. 867-645-4861 | www.niws.ca
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of how many delegates they send. Therefore, NWMB would not allow each of Qikiqtaaluk's 13 HTO representatives to fairly and reasonably make their views known on par with other HTOs.

Annie Tattuinee, Executive Director, Nunavut Inuit Wildlife Secretariat, also supported QWB's position, and spoke about the meaning of fairness and representation as per the spirit of the Agreement

Over the next month, the QWB became dismayed that the NWMB's did not engage us in a timely manner.

The NWMB apparently wants to hear from 12 delegates from 12 communities that have a basic TAH allocation of about 178 polar bears, but from only 6 of 13 communities with a TAH of about 312 bears. Those other 12 delegates will be funded by NWMB, and will be given twice as much time to speak. The QWB cannot accept that as fair. We do not accept that the NWMB has met its own stated criteria for "provision of a reasonable opportunity for affected harvesters to make their views known" in a procedurally fair hearing.

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In a teleconference today for all members of the QWB, our Board again decided not to participate in the NWMB hearing planned for next week. We gave the reasons for withdrawing from the public hearing in Mr. Kango's letter. We believe that the NWMB attempted to inaccurately reframe our reasons in its written response of May 30, 2017. Mr. Kango's letter stands on its own.

The QWB is willing to discuss a fair in-person public hearing process. If the NWMB becomes interested in reaching a true consensus, I suggest that the current Hearing process be postponed.

Sincerely,



Jason Mikki
Executive Director

cc. James Qillaq, Chairperson, QWB
Chairpersons, 13 Qikiqtaaluk HTOs
Chairpersons, Kivalliq and Kitikmeot RWOs
Paul Irngaut, NTI
Annie Tattuinee, NIWS

May 30th 2017

James Qillaq
Chairperson of the
Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board

Dear James:

Re: Withdrawal of the Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board from the Public Hearing of the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board concerning the revised *Nunavut Polar Bear Co-Management Plan*

1. Reasons for withdrawal by the Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board from the public hearing process

The Nunavut Wildlife Management Board (NWMB or Board) was dismayed by the May 26th letter from Vice-Chairperson Joshua Kango, informing the NWMB that the Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board (QWB) Executive Committee has decided to withdraw from the June 6th to 8th 2017 public hearing concerning the revised *Nunavut Polar Bear Co-Management Plan*.

In summary, the reasons provided for the withdrawal are the following:

1. The NWMB's April 13th offer to fund travel and accommodation costs for attendance by six Qikiqtani representatives at the hearing violates the spirit – and possibly even the letter – of the *Nunavut Agreement*;
2. In order for the hearing to be fair and valid, the NWMB would have to fund travel and accommodation costs for attendance at the hearing by representatives of all thirteen Hunters and Trappers Organizations from the Qikiqtaaluk Region; and
3. In such circumstances, QWB must stand up for the basic principles of co-management and the spirit of the *Nunavut Agreement*.

In the NWMB's view, QWB has based its decision on an unfortunate misunderstanding of the facts. I am very much hoping that the explanation below will convince you to reconvene a meeting of your Executive Committee to reconsider OWB's May 26th decision.

2. The NWMB has no legal obligation to fund travel and accommodation costs for parties attending an NWMB hearing

I want to assure you that the Board is under no legal obligation – whether from the *Nunavut Agreement*, other federal or territorial laws, the law made by judges (case law), or any contractual agreement – to fund travel and accommodation costs for parties attending an NWMB hearing. As a result, the NWMB has never received any type of intervenor or participant funding from the federal government.¹

¹ The NWMB is required by Section 5.7.13 of the *Nunavut Agreement* to provide “adequate funding” for the operation of HTOs and RWOs. However, the reference to “adequate funding” necessarily refers to RWO and HTO funding levels determined by the parties to the *Nunavut Agreement* (or, where those parties cannot reach agreement, by Canada) through

Nevertheless, the Board – following the basic principles of co-management and the spirit of the *Nunavut Agreement* – has consistently attempted to maintain a close working partnership with the Regional Wildlife Organizations (RWOs) and Hunters and Trappers Organizations (HTOs), including with respect to their participation at NWMB hearings.

Indeed, the Board has gone out of its way on a number of occasions over the years to secure funding from its own annual operating budget – funding designated for carrying out NWMB legal responsibilities under Article 5 of the *Nunavut Agreement*, but re-profiled in order to provide financial assistance to RWOs and HTOs. The provision of such funding is not an NWMB obligation; rather, it is a necessarily occasional, voluntary donation intended to ensure stronger RWO and HTO participation in the Nunavut wildlife management system.

By way of example, between 2008 and 2013, the NWMB held a total of one in-person pre-hearing conference and seven public hearings, all of which affected more than one Nunavut Region:

1. For four of the hearings, the Board did not offer any financial assistance to RWOs or HTOs for hearing attendance.² No HTO or RWO complained of being treated unfairly.
2. For the other three hearings, the NWMB provided modest financial assistance for hearing attendance.³ No HTO or RWO complained of being treated unfairly.
3. With respect to the single pre-hearing conference, the Board provided modest financial assistance for attendance.⁴ Once again, no HTO or RWO complained of being treated unfairly.

As a result of its consistent experience of no complaints during those six years, the NWMB reasonably understood that QWB had no concerns regarding this occasional, voluntary NWMB practice.

Over the years, the Board has taken additional important steps to help ensure RWO and HTO independence and participation at NWMB public hearings. For instance, the Board advised the Nunavut Implementation Panel - in its December 14th 2012 *Funding Proposal and Workplan for the Period from July 9th 2013 to July 8th 2023* – that the *Nunavut Agreement* parties must ensure adequate funding for RWOs and HTOs to participate at NWMB public hearings.⁵

Since the protection of Qikiqtani Inuit harvesting rights and Nunavut wildlife are necessarily essential QWB wildlife management responsibilities, the NWMB presumes that QWB made a similar recommendation in its own

implementation funding negotiations for each 10-year implementation planning period. The current planning period covers 2013 to 2023.

² No financial assistance: The March 6th 2008 Bowhead Whale total allowable harvest public hearing, the September 10th 2008 public hearing to list Grizzly Bear as a species of special concern, the February 10th 2009 Bowhead Whale total allowable harvest public hearing, and the April 13th 2010 public hearing to list Polar Bear as a species of special concern.

³ Modest financial assistance: The September 11th and 12th 2012 public hearing to establish basic needs levels for beluga, narwhal and walrus (12 delegates in total, shared between QWB, the Kivalliq Wildlife Board (KWB) and the Kitikmeot Regional Wildlife Board (KRWB)); the July 24th to 26th 2012 public hearing concerning the *Integrated Fisheries Management Plan for Narwhal*, including accompanying harvesting limitations (12 delegates in total, shared equally between QWB and KWB); and the September 10th and 11th 2013 Foxe Basin Polar Bear total allowable harvest public hearing (8 delegates in total, shared equally between QWB and KWB).

⁴ Modest financial assistance: The December 10th 2009 pre-hearing conference to list Polar Bear as a species of special concern (6 delegates in total: 2 for QWB, 2 for KWB and 2 for KRWB).

⁵ “...Informed RWO and HTO input into the hearing process – through the development of written and/or oral submissions, and attendance at the hearing – is crucial for informed and fair NWMB decision-making (NLCA S.5.1.2(h), 5.1.3(b)(ii), (iii) and (v), 5.2.26, 5.2.28, 5.2.34(f), 5.7.3(a) and (d), and 5.7.6(a) and (d)).”

2013 to 2023 funding proposal and workplan regarding its funding needs for the current implementation planning period. The Board also presumes that the relatively significant budget increases achieved by the RWOs and HTOs for 2013 to 2023 include a reasonable level of funding for participation at NWMB hearings.

3. The NWMB's legal obligation is to hold procedurally fair public hearings

Among the most important of the Board's wildlife management responsibilities is the holding of procedurally fair public hearings. Procedural fairness includes three crucial elements: proper notice of the hearing, adequate disclosure of the relevant issues and facts, and the provision of a reasonable opportunity for affected harvesters to make their views known (via written submissions and/or the right to attend the hearing as a party). The NWMB has met all of those legal responsibilities with respect to this particular public hearing.

In fact, the Board has taken even more care than usual with the procedures it has followed in preparing for this highly important hearing:

1. The NWMB started with a written hearing in the fall of 2015, to which it properly applied the three crucial elements of procedural fairness;
2. In the course of that hearing, the NWMB decided that the draft *Nunavut Polar Bear Co-Management Plan* required further development; the Board therefore adjourned the hearing to permit the Department of Environment to carefully review the submissions received, and to consider revisions to the original Plan based upon its review;
3. The Department subsequently undertook and completed a number of revisions, and then conducted further consultations with relevant Inuit organizations during October and November of 2016; the result of that process is the revised draft Plan, submitted to the NWMB on February 2nd 2017; the Board then held two pre-hearing teleconferences with the hearing parties (February 15th and March 30th);
4. At the initial teleconference, all parties – including QWB - indicated that they would support whatever hearing format (written or in-person) the Board decided upon; after careful consideration, the NWMB decided that an in-person public hearing was warranted; and
5. During the second teleconference, the parties discussed concerns over the dates and location of the hearing, the length of the hearing, the number of party representatives for whom the NWMB would pay travel and accommodation costs, the proposed agenda, and the timelines for oral submissions and resulting questions and answers; at the end of the teleconference, the Board was careful to ask all of the participants if they had remaining concerns. No concerns or disagreements were expressed by any of the participants, including the QWB representatives.

Within just one week - on April 7th - the NWMB issued a summary of the discussions at the pre-hearing teleconference, the final version of the hearing agenda, and a formal hearing invitation letter to the parties. All three documents reflected the consensus reached at the March 30th teleconference.

During the following seven weeks, the Board received no questions, concerns or replies to the three April 7th documents. At the end of the work day on Friday, May 26th – approximately one week before the hearing is to commence – QWB unexpectedly delivered its withdrawal letter to the NWMB.

4. Conclusion

The NWMB's legal obligation is to provide a reasonable opportunity for affected harvesters and their representative organizations to respond to the *Proposal for Decision* that has been presented to the Board for approval. The NWMB is confident that it has met that legal obligation; in fact, the Board believes it has satisfied a very high standard in meeting all of its procedural fairness obligations to QWB and the other hearing parties. Accordingly, the NWMB met by teleconference on May 29th, and unanimously decided to proceed with the hearing as scheduled.

James, it goes without saying that QWB is entitled to not attend the public hearing, and to withdraw its written submission. However, the NWMB believes that QWB's withdrawal from this very important wildlife management process would be an unfortunate and unnecessary loss for all concerned – a loss that could be felt by Qikiqtani harvesters for many years to come. I therefore sincerely ask you, on behalf of the NWMB, to reverse the May 26th decision, and to have QWB once again play the thoughtful leadership role it has displayed at so many NWMB hearings over the years.

If you require further information or explanation, the NWMB's Executive Director and Legal Counsel would be happy to meet with you and/or your Executive Committee at a mutually convenient time prior to the commencement of the hearing.

Yours sincerely,



Dan Shewchuk
A/Chairperson of the
Nunavut Wildlife Management Board

c.c. Hon. Joe Savikataaq, Nunavut Minister of Environment;
Hon. Catherine McKenna, Minister of Environment and Climate Change Canada;
Aluki Kotierk, President of Nunavut Tunngavik Inc.;
Joe Ashevak, Chairperson of the Kitikmeot Regional Wildlife Board;
Stanley Adjuk, Chairperson of the Kivalliq Wildlife Board;
Chairpersons of the Nunavut Hunters and Trappers Organizations,
c/o the Executive Director, Annie Tattuinee, of the Nunavut Inuit Wildlife Secretariat;
Daniel Watson, Chief Executive Officer, Parks Canada Agency;
David Miller, President and CEO, World Wildlife Fund Canada;
Jobie Tukkiapik, President of Makivik Corporation;
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Caroline Ladanowski, Director, Wildlife Management and Regulatory Affairs Division, Canadian Wildlife Service, Environment and Climate Change Canada;
Jenna Boon, Nunavut Field Unit Superintendent, Parks Canada Agency; and
Paul Crowley, Vice-President Arctic, World Wildlife Fund Canada.

**Mr. D. Shewchuk
A/Chairperson
Nunavut Wildlife Management Board
PO Box 1379
Iqaluit, NU X0A 0H0**

Dear Mr. Shewchuk:

We do not recognize the proposed Hearing as being fair or valid under the spirit of the Nunavut Agreement.

Therefore, the QWB cannot participate in the public Hearing during June 6-8, 2017.

2. Through this letter, I notify the NWMB that the QWB rejects the revised Nunavut Polar Bear Co-Management Plan. It is unacceptable in its current form.

Further, the QWB officially withdraws its May 19 Written Submission regarding the revised Plan. We do this because we will be unable to discuss and explain fully our Submission, with the support and additional information that could be offered by all our HTOs if a full and fair Hearing was to be convened.

I regret that the QWB had to make these decisions, but we will not participate in the unfair treatment of the HTOs that we represent as the NWMB has asked us to do. We must stand up for basic principles of co-management, and the spirit of the Nunavut Agreement.

We trust that in future, the NWMB will enable the QWB and all its HTOs to represent their members fully, equally and in-person with respect to this Plan, which will be so important to the Inuit across Nunavut and in every community.

Sincerely,

Joshua Kango
Vice-Chairperson
Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board

cc. 13 Hunters and Trappers Organizations, Qikiqtaaluk region
James Eetoolook, Vice-President, Nunavut Tunngavik Inc.
Joe Ashevak, Chairperson, Kitikmeot Regional Wildlife Board
Stanley Adjuk, Chairperson, Kivalliq Wildlife Board
Drikkus Gissing, Director of Wildlife, Government of Nunavut

(June 5th 2017 – Iqaluit, Nunavut) The Nunavut Wildlife Management Board (NWMB) has decided to adjourn its scheduled June 6th to 8th 2017 public hearing concerning the draft *Nunavut Polar Bear Co-Management Plan* until at least the fall of 2017. The NWMB made this decision following the receipt of correspondence from the Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board (May 26th and June 2nd 2017) and the Kivalliq Wildlife Board (June 2nd 2017), which announced that they would not be attending the hearing. The primary reason provided by the two Regional Wildlife Organizations for their withdrawal from the hearing was the lack of sufficient funding provided by the NWMB to pay travel and accommodation costs for all Hunters and Trappers Organizations to attend the hearing.

The NWMB has no legal obligation to fund travel and accommodation costs for parties attending its hearings. As a consequence, there is no funding designated in the NWMB's annual operating budget to pay for intervenor or party attendance at NWMB hearings. Nevertheless, the NWMB, for this particular hearing, was able to re-profile funding from its budget to pay attendance costs for a total of eighteen (18) Regional Wildlife Organization and Hunters and Trappers Organization participants from all three Regions (Qikiqtaaluk, Kivalliq, and Kitikmeot).

While the NWMB regrets that this misunderstanding about its funding obligations has led to the adjournment of the hearing, it is ready to work with Nunavut's Regional Wildlife Organizations and Hunters and Trappers Organizations - as well as with the Government of Canada and Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated - to ensure that affected Inuit wildlife organizations are able to participate in NWMB hearings.

To receive more information regarding the adjournment of the public hearing, please contact the NWMB:

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



June 02, 2017

Mr. D. Shewchuck
A/Chairperson
Nunavut Wildlife Management Board
PO Box 1379
Iqaluit, NU X0A 0H0

Sent by e-mail to: tsaataa@nwmb.com

Dear Mr. Shewchuk:

This letter details Kivalliq Wildlife Board's response to the Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board's decision to withdraw from the public hearing on the revised Nunavut Polar Bear Co-Management Plan. The Kivalliq Wildlife Board (KWB) Executive met via teleconference on June 1, 2017 and decided that KWB will support QWB's decision to withdraw from the hearing and will also withdraw their participation from the hearing. Here, two major concerns are presented: (1) concern about equal and fair opportunity for all HTOs to participate in the hearing and (2) concern that recommendations are not taken seriously in the consultation process.

In agreement with the QWB Executive, the Kivalliq Wildlife Board also feels that all HTOs throughout Nunavut should be treated fairly and equally during NWMB hearings and have the same opportunity to participate in public hearings. In the case of in-person hearings, this means that all HTOs potentially affected by the subject matter of the hearing should have equal opportunity to attend the hearing. With this revised Nunavut Polar Bear Co-Management Plan hearing, we do not feel that representatives of affected harvesters from every community do have reasonable opportunity to make their views known.

When NWMB is providing financial assistance to RWOs and/or HTOs to attend the hearings, it should be made explicitly clear how much funding will be provided to each RWO and HTO so that if the RWOs and HTOs need to supplement the funding, this can be planned and arranged. Ideally, the financial assistance that NWMB provides should be shared equally between all HTOs and the HTO expenses incurred to participate in meetings should be equivalent from HTO to HTO.



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Kivalliq Wildlife Board | Box 219 Rankin Inlet, NU | X0C 0G0 | t. 867-645-4860 | f. 867-645-4861 | www.niws.ca
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Drikkus Gissing, Director of Wildlife, Government of Nunavut

We do not recognize the proposed Hearing as being fair or valid under the spirit of the Nunavut Agreement.

Therefore, the QWB cannot participate in the public Hearing during June 6-8, 2017.

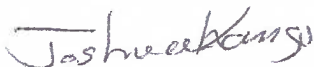
2. Through this letter, I notify the NWMB that the QWB rejects the revised Nunavut Polar Bear Co-Management Plan. It is unacceptable in its current form.

Further, the QWB officially withdraws its May 19 Written Submission regarding the revised Plan. We do this because we will be unable to discuss and explain fully our Submission, with the support and additional information that could be offered by all our HTOs if a full and fair Hearing was to be convened.

I regret that the QWB had to make these decisions, but we will not participate in the unfair treatment of the HTOs that we represent as the NWMB has asked us to do. We must stand up for basic principles of co-management, and the spirit of the Nunavut Agreement.

We trust that in future, the NWMB will enable the QWB and all its HTOs to represent their members fully, equally and in-person with respect to this Plan, which will be so important to the Inuit across Nunavut and in every community.

Sincerely,



Joshua Kango
Vice-Chairperson
Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board

cc. 13 Hunters and Trappers Organizations, Qikiqtaaluk region
James Eetoolook, Vice-President, Nunavut Tunngavik Inc.
Joe Ashevak, Chairperson, Kitikmeot Regional Wildlife Board
Stanley Adjuk, Chairperson, Kivalliq Wildlife Board
Drikkus Gissing, Director of Wildlife, Government of Nunavut

May 30th 2017

Dear James:

Re: Withdrawal of the Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board from the Public Hearing of the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board concerning the revised *Nunavut Polar Bear Co-Management Plan*

The Nunavut Wildlife Management Board (NWMB or Board) was dismayed by the May 26th letter from Vice-Chairperson Joshua Kango, informing the NWMB that the Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board (QWB) Executive Committee has decided to withdraw from the June 6th to 8th 2017 public hearing concerning the revised *Nunavut Polar Bear Co-Management Plan*.

In summary, the reasons provided for the withdrawal are the following:

1. The NWMB's April 13th offer to fund travel and accommodation costs for attendance by six Qikiqtani representatives at the hearing violates the spirit – and possibly even the letter – of the *Nunavut Agreement*;
2. In order for the hearing to be fair and valid, the NWMB would have to fund travel and accommodation costs for attendance at the hearing by representatives of all thirteen Hunters and Trappers Organizations from the Qikiqtaaluk Region; and
3. In such circumstances, QWB must stand up for the basic principles of co-management and the spirit of the *Nunavut Agreement*.

In the NWMB's view, QWB has based its decision on an unfortunate misunderstanding of the facts. I am very much hoping that the explanation below will convince you to reconvene a meeting of your Executive Committee to reconsider QWB's May 26th decision.

2. The NWMB has no legal obligation to fund travel and accommodation costs for parties attending an NWMB hearing

I want to assure you that the Board is under no legal obligation – whether from the *Nunavut Agreement*, other federal or territorial laws, the law made by judges (case law), or any contractual agreement – to fund travel and accommodation costs for parties attending an NWMB hearing. As a result, the NWMB has never received any type of intervenor or participant funding from the federal government.¹

¹ The NWMB is required by Section 5.7.13 of the *Nunavut Agreement* to provide “adequate funding” for the operation of HTOs and RWOs. However, the reference to “adequate funding” necessarily refers to RWO and HTO funding levels determined by the parties to the *Nunavut Agreement* (or, where those parties cannot reach agreement, by Canada) through

Nevertheless, the Board – following the basic principles of co-management and the spirit of the *Nunavut Agreement* – has consistently attempted to maintain a close working partnership with the Regional Wildlife Organizations (RWOs) and Hunters and Trappers Organizations (HTOs), including with respect to their participation at NWMB hearings.

Indeed, the Board has gone out of its way on a number of occasions over the years to secure funding from its own annual operating budget – funding designated for carrying out NWMB legal responsibilities under Article 5 of the *Nunavut Agreement*, but re-profiled in order to provide financial assistance to RWOs and HTOs. The provision of such funding is not an NWMB obligation; rather, it is a necessarily occasional, voluntary donation intended to ensure stronger RWO and HTO participation in the Nunavut wildlife management system.

By way of example, between 2008 and 2013, the NWMB held a total of one in-person pre-hearing conference and seven public hearings, all of which affected more than one Nunavut Region:

1. For four of the hearings, the Board did not offer any financial assistance to RWOs or HTOs for hearing attendance.² No HTO or RWO complained of being treated unfairly.
2. For the other three hearings, the NWMB provided modest financial assistance for hearing attendance.³ No HTO or RWO complained of being treated unfairly.
3. With respect to the single pre-hearing conference, the Board provided modest financial assistance for attendance.⁴ Once again, no HTO or RWO complained of being treated unfairly.

As a result of its consistent experience of no complaints during those six years, the NWMB reasonably understood that QWB had no concerns regarding this occasional, voluntary NWMB practice.

Over the years, the Board has taken additional important steps to help ensure RWO and HTO independence and participation at NWMB public hearings. For instance, the Board advised the Nunavut Implementation Panel - in its December 14th 2012 *Funding Proposal and Workplan for the Period from July 9th 2013 to July 8th 2023* – that the *Nunavut Agreement* parties must ensure adequate funding for RWOs and HTOs to participate at NWMB public hearings.⁵

Since the protection of Qikiqtani Inuit harvesting rights and Nunavut wildlife are necessarily essential QWB wildlife management responsibilities, the NWMB presumes that QWB made a similar recommendation in its own

implementation funding negotiations for each 10-year implementation planning period. The current planning period covers 2013 to 2023.

² **No financial assistance:** The March 6th 2008 Bowhead Whale total allowable harvest public hearing, the September 10th 2008 public hearing to list Grizzly Bear as a species of special concern, the February 10th 2009 Bowhead Whale total allowable harvest public hearing, and the April 13th 2010 public hearing to list Polar Bear as a species of special concern.

³ **Modest financial assistance:** The September 11th and 12th 2012 public hearing to establish basic needs levels for beluga, narwhal and walrus (12 delegates in total, shared between QWB, the Kivalliq Wildlife Board (KWB) and the Kitikmeot Regional Wildlife Board (KRWB)); the July 24th to 26th 2012 public hearing concerning the *Integrated Fisheries Management Plan for Narwhal*, including accompanying harvesting limitations (12 delegates in total, shared equally between QWB and KWB); and the September 10th and 11th 2013 Foxe Basin Polar Bear total allowable harvest public hearing (8 delegates in total, shared equally between QWB and KWB).

⁴ **Modest financial assistance:** The December 10th 2009 pre-hearing conference to list Polar Bear as a species of special concern (6 delegates in total: 2 for QWB, 2 for KWB and 2 for KRWB).

⁵ “...Informed RWO and HTO input into the hearing process – through the development of written and/or oral submissions, and attendance at the hearing – is crucial for informed and fair NWMB decision-making (NLCA S.5.1.2(h), 5.1.3(b)(ii), (iii) and (v), 5.2.26, 5.2.28, 5.2.34(f), 5.7.3(a) and (d), and 5.7.6(a) and (d)).”

2013 to 2023 funding proposal and workplan regarding its funding needs for the current implementation planning period. The Board also presumes that the relatively significant budget increases achieved by the RWOs and HTOs for 2013 to 2023 include a reasonable level of funding for participation at NWMB hearings.

3. The NWMB's legal obligation is to hold procedurally fair public hearings

Among the most important of the Board's wildlife management responsibilities is the holding of procedurally fair public hearings. Procedural fairness includes three crucial elements: proper notice of the hearing, adequate disclosure of the relevant issues and facts, and the provision of a reasonable opportunity for affected harvesters to make their views known (via written submissions and/or the right to attend the hearing as a party). The NWMB has met all of those legal responsibilities with respect to this particular public hearing.

In fact, the Board has taken even more care than usual with the procedures it has followed in preparing for this highly important hearing:

1. The NWMB started with a written hearing in the fall of 2015, to which it properly applied the three crucial elements of procedural fairness;
2. In the course of that hearing, the NWMB decided that the draft *Nunavut Polar Bear Co-Management Plan* required further development; the Board therefore adjourned the hearing to permit the Department of Environment to carefully review the submissions received, and to consider revisions to the original Plan based upon its review;
3. The Department subsequently undertook and completed a number of revisions, and then conducted further consultations with relevant Inuit organizations during October and November of 2016; the result of that process is the revised draft Plan, submitted to the NWMB on February 2nd 2017; the Board then held two pre-hearing teleconferences with the hearing parties (February 15th and March 30th);
4. At the initial teleconference, all parties – including QWB - indicated that they would support whatever hearing format (written or in-person) the Board decided upon; after careful consideration, the NWMB decided that an in-person public hearing was warranted; and
5. During the second teleconference, the parties discussed concerns over the dates and location of the hearing, the length of the hearing, the number of party representatives for whom the NWMB would pay travel and accommodation costs, the proposed agenda, and the timelines for oral submissions and resulting questions and answers; at the end of the teleconference, the Board was careful to ask all of the participants if they had remaining concerns. No concerns or disagreements were expressed by any of the participants, including the QWB representatives.

Within just one week - on April 7th - the NWMB issued a summary of the discussions at the pre-hearing teleconference, the final version of the hearing agenda, and a formal hearing invitation letter to the parties. All three documents reflected the consensus reached at the March 30th teleconference.

During the following seven weeks, the Board received no questions, concerns or replies to the three April 7th documents. At the end of the work day on Friday, May 26th – approximately one week before the hearing is to commence – QWB unexpectedly delivered its withdrawal letter to the NWMB.

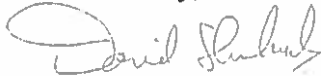
4. Conclusion

The NWMB's legal obligation is to provide a reasonable opportunity for affected harvesters and their representative organizations to respond to the *Proposal for Decision* that has been presented to the Board for approval. The NWMB is confident that it has met that legal obligation; in fact, the Board believes it has satisfied a very high standard in meeting all of its procedural fairness obligations to QWB and the other hearing parties. Accordingly, the NWMB met by teleconference on May 29th, and unanimously decided to proceed with the hearing as scheduled.

James, it goes without saying that QWB is entitled to not attend the public hearing, and to withdraw its written submission. However, the NWMB believes that QWB's withdrawal from this very important wildlife management process would be an unfortunate and unnecessary loss for all concerned – a loss that could be felt by Qikiqtani harvesters for many years to come. I therefore sincerely ask you, on behalf of the NWMB, to reverse the May 26th decision, and to have QWB once again play the thoughtful leadership role it has displayed at so many NWMB hearings over the years.

If you require further information or explanation, the NWMB's Executive Director and Legal Counsel would be happy to meet with you and/or your Executive Committee at a mutually convenient time prior to the commencement of the hearing.

Yours sincerely,



Dan Shewchuk
A/Chairperson of the
Nunavut Wildlife Management Board

c.c. Hon. Joe Savikataaq, Nunavut Minister of Environment;
Hon. Catherine McKenna, Minister of Environment and Climate Change Canada;
Aluki Kotierk, President of Nunavut Tunngavik Inc.;
Joe Ashevak, Chairperson of the Kitikmeot Regional Wildlife Board;
Stanley Adjuk, Chairperson of the Kivalliq Wildlife Board;
Chairpersons of the Nunavut Hunters and Trappers Organizations,
c/o the Executive Director, Annie Tattuinee, of the Nunavut Inuit Wildlife Secretariat;
Daniel Watson, Chief Executive Officer, Parks Canada Agency;
David Miller, President and CEO, World Wildlife Fund Canada;
Jobie Tukkiapik, President of Makivik Corporation;
Drikus Gissing, Director of Wildlife, Nunavut Department of Environment;
Paul Irngaut, Director of Wildlife, Nunavut Tunngavik Inc.;
Jason Mikki, Executive Director, Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board;
Ema Qaggutaq, Regional Coordinator, Kitikmeot Regional Wildlife Board;
Qovik Netser, Regional Coordinator, Kivalliq Wildlife Board;
Adamie Delisle Alaku, Executive Vice President, Makivik Corporation;
Lisa Pirie, Acting Head of Eastern Arctic, Canadian Wildlife Service, Environment and Climate Change Canada;
Caroline Ladanowski, Director, Wildlife Management and Regulatory Affairs Division, Canadian Wildlife Service, Environment and Climate Change Canada;
Jenna Boon, Nunavut Field Unit Superintendent, Parks Canada Agency; and
Paul Crowley, Vice-President Arctic, World Wildlife Fund Canada.



June 1, 2017

Mr. D. Shewchuk
A/Chairperson
Nunavut Wildlife Management Board
PO Box 1379
Iqaluit, NU X0A 0H0

Sent by e-mail to: tsataa@nwmb.com

Dear Mr. Shewchuk:

On behalf of the QWB, I am replying to your response to Mr. Kango's letter of May 26, 2017 regarding the polar bear plan hearing.

Regarding the March 30 teleconference about concerns that QWB may have (section 3, point 5), our teleconference participants could not have replied at that time. As with any Board, our staff and individual delegates cannot speak on behalf of the Board until the Executive has discussed the questions and established a position.

Further, it is not true that the QWB did not inform the NWMB about our concerns for 7 weeks.

The QWB's concerns about NWMB's proposed Hearing process were presented in person to your Executive Director during the QWB HTO Manager's Workshop of April 25-26, 2017 in Iqaluit, a full month before Mr. Kango's letter.

In our view, NWMB had enough time to discuss QWB's concerns internally, and then engage the QWB in positive discussions. The NWMB did not engage us to build a consensus.

During the April Workshop, your Executive Director (ED) heard from QWB staff about our concerns. Additionally, Paul Irngaut, Director of Wildlife, Nunavut Tunngavik Inc., spoke against the NWMB's allocation of only 6 delegates to Qikiqtaaluk. He clearly requested that this position be changed by NWMB. The NWMB ED replied that QWB could send as many as it wants, if we fund their travel. In response, QWB staff raised the issue of time allocated for each HTO to speak during the Hearing. If QWB found funding to send more delegates, would each HTO across Nunavut be given an equal amount of time to speak at the Hearing?

NWMB's ED essentially replied, No. The agenda had already been set, and he was unwilling to consider changes. He stated that each region would get the same amount of time, regardless

of how many delegates they send. Therefore, NWMB would not allow each of Qikiqtaaluk's 13 HTO representatives to fairly and reasonably make their views known on par with other HTOs.

Annie Tattuinee, Executive Director, Nunavut Inuit Wildlife Secretariat, also supported QWB's position, and spoke about the meaning of fairness and representation as per the spirit of the Agreement

Over the next month, the QWB became dismayed that the NWMB's did not engage us in a timely manner.

The NWMB apparently wants to hear from 12 delegates from 12 communities that have a basic TAH allocation of about 178 polar bears, but from only 6 of 13 communities with a TAH of about 312 bears. Those other 12 delegates will be funded by NWMB, and will be given twice as much time to speak. The QWB cannot accept that as fair. We do not accept that the NWMB has met its own stated criteria for "provision of a reasonable opportunity for affected harvesters to make their views known" in a procedurally fair hearing.

Very few of our HTOs have any funding for travel, and none specifically for attending NWMB Hearings. Similarly, the QWB does not have funding allocated for sending HTO delegates to NWMB Hearings.

In a teleconference today for all members of the QWB, our Board again decided not to participate in the NWMB hearing planned for next week. We gave the reasons for withdrawing from the public hearing in Mr. Kango's letter. We believe that the NWMB attempted to inaccurately reframe our reasons in its written response of May 30, 2017. Mr. Kango's letter stands on its own.

The QWB is willing to discuss a fair in-person public hearing process. If the NWMB becomes interested in reaching a true consensus, I suggest that the current Hearing process be postponed.

Sincerely,



Jason Mikki
Executive Director

cc. James Qillaq, Chairperson, QWB
Chairpersons, 13 Qikiqtaaluk HTOs
Chairpersons, Kivalliq and Kitikmeot RWOs
Paul Irngaut, NTI
Annie Tattuinee, NIWS