



DATE: 12/2/2017

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

On April 27th, the NWMB received a request from the Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board (QWB) for an extension until May 9th 2011.

Through this letter, the NWMB is extending the deadline for your department or organization to provide written submissions and supporting documentation in response to the GN-DoE Proposal, or otherwise regarding conservation concerns with the level of Total Allowable Harvest for the Davis Strait Polar bear Subpopulation. All written materials must be filed with the NWMB – in English and Inuktitut – **by no later than 5:00 p.m. (Eastern Standard Time) on May 9th 2011.** 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.

Materials may be filed with the Board in person, by courier or by mail. They should be clearly marked as pertaining to the NWMB Public Hearing on the Davis Strait Polar Bear Subpopulation. 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 5:00 p.m. (Eastern Standard Time) on May 9th 2011** – 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, the more weight they will be given by the NWMB in the *Nunavut Land Claims Agreement* decision-making process.

If you require further information, please do not hesitate to visit the NWMB's public hearing site (<http://www.nwmb.com/english/meetings/march2011.php>) or to contact the Board directly.

Yours sincerely,



Mikidjuk Akavak,
Chairperson of the
Nunavut Wildlife Management Board

Attachments (1)

c.c. Gabriel Nirlungayuk, Director of Wildlife, Nunavut Tunngavik Inc.;
Bert Dean, Senior Policy Advisor, Nunavut Tunngavik Inc.;
Jason Mikki, Qikiqtaaluk Regional Coordinator, Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board;
Simon Awa, Deputy Minister, Nunavut Department of Environment;
Basile van Havre, Director-Population Conservation and Management, Canadian

Wildlife Service, Environment Canada

Rachel Vallender, Scientific Advisor, Canadian Wildlife Service, Environment Canada;

Siu-Ling Han, Head of Eastern Arctic, Environment Canada, Canadian Wildlife Service;

Mark O'Connor, Director of Wildlife, Nunavik Marine Region Wildlife Board;

Rebecca Willcott, Director of Renewable Resources, Nunatsiavut Government;

John Blake, Director-Wildlife Division, Government of Newfoundland & Labrador

Rehaume Courtois, Chef du service de la biodiversité et des maladies de la faune, Government du Québec;

Jamie Snook, Executive Director, Torngat Secretariat; and

Stas Oplinski, Science and Policy Advisor, Makivik Corporation.

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 Tammaqtailinahuarinirrit anngutighat atughugit Inuit qaujimajatuqangillu ilihimanillu ilitquhiannin
 Conserving wildlife through the application of Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit and scientific knowledge

Honourable Peter Kent
Minister of the Environment
Government of Canada

Honourable Dan Shewchuk
Minister of Environment
Government of Nunavut

Honourable Ross Wideman
Minister of Environment
Newfoundland & Labrador

Nathalie Normandeau
Ministère des Ressources
naturelles et de la Faune
Government du Québec

Cathy Towtongie
President of Nunavut
Tunngavik Incorporated

Pita Aatami
President of Makivik
Corporation

Joshua Kango
Vice-Chairperson of the
Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board

Johnny Oovaut
Chairperson of the
Nunavik Marine Regional
Wildlife Board

Bruce Roberts
Chairperson of the Torngat
Wildlife and Plants
Co-management Board

Chairpersons of Nunavut's
Hunters and Trappers
Organizations
c/o Richard Connelly
Executive Director of the
Nunavut Inuit Wildlife
Secretariat

Nick Lunn, Chairperson
Federal-Provincial-
Territorial Polar Bear
Technical Committee

Drikus Gissing, Chairperson
Federal-Provincial-
Territorial Polar Bear
Administrative Committee

Gerald Butts
President and Chief Executive Officer
World Wildlife Fund

Re: Public hearing of the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board to consider proposed modifications to the current Total Allowable Harvest for the Davis Strait Polar Bear Subpopulation

Dear Colleagues:

The Nunavut Wildlife Management Board (NWMB or Board) has scheduled a public hearing to consider proposed modifications to the current Total Allowable Harvest (TAH) for the Davis Strait Polar Bear Subpopulation in the Nunavut Settlement Area.

A "Total Allowable Harvest" is the overall amount of a stock or population of wildlife that the NWMB decides can be lawfully harvested in accordance with the terms of the *Nunavut Land Claims Agreement*.

The hearing will take place from May 16th to 17th in Iqaluit, Nunavut. The hearing will be conducted each day from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. and from 1:30 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. The NWMB may also hold one or more evening sessions from 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

Attached to this letter is a copy of the Government of Nunavut's Department of Environment- (GN-DoE) *Proposal for NWMB Decision* (GN-DoE Proposal) seeking a decision to consider modifications to the current Total Allowable Harvest for the Davis Strait Polar Bear Subpopulation. Also attached are the *Rules for the NWMB's Public Hearing to consider proposed modifications to the current level of Total Allowable Harvest for the Davis Strait Polar Bear Subpopulation*. The GN-DoE Proposal, the hearing rules, and a number of additional documents comprising the best available information to date are available for download (<http://www.nwmb.com/english/meetings/march2011.php>), or by contacting the NWMB at the following coordinates:

NUNAVUT WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT BOARD

Parnaivik Building
P.O. Box 1379, Iqaluit, NU, X0A 0H0
Phone: (867) 975-7300
Fax: (867) 975-7320
E-Mail: receptionist@nwmb.com

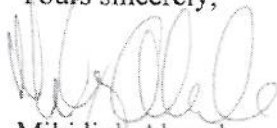
Through this letter, the NWMB is extending an invitation to your department or organization to provide written submissions and supporting documentation in response to the GN-DoE Proposal, or otherwise regarding conservation concerns with the level of Total Allowable Harvest for the Davis Strait Polar bear Subpopulation. All written materials must be filed with the NWMB – in English and Inuktitut – **by no later than 5:00 p.m. (Eastern Standard Time) on May 2nd 2011**. 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.

Materials may be filed with the Board in person, by courier or by mail. They should be clearly marked as pertaining to the NWMB Public Hearing on the Davis Strait Polar Bear Subpopulation. 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 5:00 p.m. (Eastern Stand Time) on May 2nd 2011 – 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, the more weight they will be given by the NWMB in the *Nunavut Land Claims Agreement* decision-making process.

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

Yours sincerely,



Mikidjuk Akavak,
Chairperson of the
Nunavut Wildlife Management Board

Attachments (2)

c.c. Gabriel Nirlungayuk, Director of Wildlife, Nunavut Tunngavik Inc.;
Bert Dean, Senior Policy Advisor, Nunavut Tunngavik Inc.;
Jason Mikki, Qikiqtaaluk Regional Coordinator, Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board;
Simon Awa, Deputy Minister, Nunavut Department of Environment;
Basile van Havre, Director-Population Conservation and Management, Canadian Wildlife Service, Environment Canada
Rachel Vallender, Scientific Advisor, Canadian Wildlife Service, Environment Canada;
Siu-Ling Han, Head of Eastern Arctic, Environment Canada, Canadian Wildlife Service;
Mark O'Connor, Director of Wildlife, Nunavik Marine Region Wildlife Board;
Rebecca Willcott, Director of Renewable Resources, Nunatsiavut Government;
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Rehaume Courtois, Chef du service de la biodiversité et des maladies de la faune, Government du Québec;
Jamie Snook, Executive Director, Torngat Secretariat; and
Stas Oplinski, Science and Policy Advisor, Makivik Corporation.



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Minister of Environment
Minista Avatiliitjutinut
Ministre de l'Environnement

MAR 3 2011

Mikidjuk Akavak
Chairperson
Nunavut Wildlife Management Board
PO Box 1379
IQUALUIT NU X0A 0H0

Re: Request for a decision of the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board for the Davis Strait Polar Bear Total Allowable Harvest

Dear Mr. Akavak;

Attached please find a request for a decision of the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board for the management of the Davis Strait (DS) polar bear population.

This request for a decision of the NWMB is being submitted as a Ministerial Management Initiative as per Article 5.3.25 of the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement (NLCA). The next harvest season of the DS will start July 1 2011, and therefore I request that the NWMB deal with this matter expediently and make a decision on this request by June 1, 2011.

In the attached request for decision, the Department respectfully recommends to the NWMB a total harvest increase of 15 bears annually from DS, to be allocated amongst Canadian jurisdictions harvesting from this population. With respect to the allocation of harvest, we support the Nunatsiavut request for a quota increase of 6 and that the remaining 9 bears be allocated to the 3 Nunavut communities. I of course recognize that the NWMB is in no way bound or obligated to decide upon this option, and will make the decision it deems appropriate.

If your staff has any question about this request or require additional information, they should contact Drikus Gissing, Director, Wildlife Management Division.

I look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

Daniel Shewchuk
Minister of Environment

Cc. Drikus Gissing, Director, Wildlife Management Division



SUBMISSION TO THE
NUNAVUT WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT BOARD
FOR
Information:

Decision: X

Issue: Davis Strait Polar Bear Total Allowable Harvest and Domestic Inter-jurisdictional Management.

Background:

Within Canada, the Davis Strait (DS) Polar Bear Population is shared by Nunavut, Quebec and Labrador. This population may also be opportunistically harvested by residents of Greenland, although historical harvest levels are believed to be very low at about 2 bears per year.

The population was first inventoried in the 1970s (1974-79) by a mark-capture study conducted during the spring-time. This study did not cover the entire area which is now defined as "Davis Strait" and likely underestimated the population size at approximately 900.

Based on the population estimate derived from the 1970s study, jurisdictions around DS attempted to managed harvesting around a combined maximum of 57 bears annually; informally acknowledging harvest levels in each jurisdiction as follows: Nunavut 34 Quebec 15, Nunatsiavit 6, and Greenland 2.

In 1992 and 1993 surveys found larger densities of bears as well as older bears. Satellite tracking information in 1991-94 also indicated large numbers of bears offshore in pack ice. These indicators suggested a healthy population that was sustaining itself, which was consistent with Traditional Knowledge and hunter observations. Population modeling indicated that the population needed to be at least 1400 to sustain a harvest of 57 animals, and in 1995 the population estimate was increased to 1400.

During the MOU consultations in 2005, Inuit indicated that the DS population had increased and, based on Inuit Knowledge, the NWMB and GN supported an increase in the Nunavut TAH from 34 to 46. This raised the total combined harvest from 55 to 65.

The population was identified as the highest priority for research, and the GN initiated a population inventory mark-recapture study (2005-2007). The results indicated that the population significantly increased from the previous estimate of 1400. Specifically, the results indicated that, as of October 2007, the population estimate was 2158 bears with a 95% confidence interval of 1978 – 2338.

Population growth rate before accounting for harvest was estimated at 3%. The current total combined harvest from DS of approximately 67¹ bears annually represents about 3.1% of the 2007 population estimate. At this level of harvest, the population would remain stable if it is assumed that productivity (i.e., reproduction and survival) remains unchanged in future². However, findings from the study suggest that DS is currently experiencing a decline in productivity that is predicted to result in a population decline in future³. This reduced productivity may, in part, be attributable to the effects of high bear densities⁴ which came about during a period of population growth from the 1970s to the present. In addition, an observed long-term negative trend in sea-ice (i.e., longer open water periods) has raised concerns that polar bear habitat and access to prey (i.e., seals) are undergoing long-term declines that will affect the status of this population.

Inuit have identified that large numbers of bears create public safety concerns, especially for people going out on the land, and that the bears are having negative impacts on other wildlife by killing large numbers of baby seals and eating bird eggs in bird colonies.

Current Status

Canadian jurisdictions around DS have taken a coordinated approach in responding to the findings of the recent population study. A User-to-User workshop was held in Kuujuaq, Quebec from 13 to 16 September, 2010. The purpose of the workshop was to review study results alongside local knowledge/IQ and to discuss future harvest management. In brief, the outcome of the workshop was as follows:

- The Nunatsiavut Government requested that their TAH be increased from 6 to 12 bears. All parties present at the workshop supported this request recognizing the relatively small size of Nunatsiavut's existing quota relative to the proportion of DS bears using land and sea-ice in, or adjacent to, this jurisdiction.
- The Newfoundland Government indicated they did not support an increase in harvesting levels in DS; instead, they want to see the existing allowable harvest reallocated amongst jurisdictions such that a portion of Nunavut's TAH is reallocated to NL.
- Under the James Bay Agreement, Quebec has a guaranteed minimum harvest of up to 60 bears from the DS, Foxe Basin and Southern Hudson

¹ Based on 5-year average

² Given observed trends in sea-ice and the condition and reproductive performance of bears in DS, this assumption is unlikely to remain valid for an extended period.

³ Body condition and size is also declining

⁴ Densities of bears in DS are amongst the highest recorded in a polar bear population.

Bay sub-populations combined. There is no specified or regulated harvest for DS by Quebec. Consequently, it was determined that there is presently no means to reallocate harvesting between Quebec and other jurisdictions.

- A motion was passed by user groups represented at the workshop to eliminate the TAH in Nunavut completely for a set period of time, and permit unlimited harvesting.

Recommendations:

Having evaluated the scientific evidence and available traditional knowledge as well as taking into account the outcome of the Kujuaq workshop, the GN recommends a management objective for DS of a modest population reduction in the medium term (5-10 years). Recognizing the current status of the population and the potential for future decline, the primary cause of which is unrelated to harvest (but to which harvest will contribute), this management objective also takes into account;

- (a) concerns over public safety resulting from high bear numbers; and
- (b) the need to ensure on-going hunting opportunities for communities.

A modest increase in annual harvest levels will contribute to achieving this objective and may address concerns about public safety and the impacts of bear over-abundance on other wildlife. This conservative approach also takes into account uncertainty about future changes in productivity of DS resulting from things such as climate change.

The Department of Environment (DOE) recommends to the NWMB a total harvest increase of 15 bears from DS. As per discussions at the Kujuaq workshop, DOE recommends that 9 of these 15 bears be allocated to the 3 Nunavut communities, and that the remaining 6 be made available to Nunatsiavut, in response to their request for an increase of 6 bears.

If the total combined harvest is increased by 15 bears from 67 to 82 annually, it is projected that the DS population would decline to approximately 1900 bears in 10 years, if productivity remains constant. Recognizing the significant uncertainty surrounding this prediction⁵, the proposed increase in harvest must be accompanied by a commitment for more frequent monitoring. DOE, therefore recommends that a follow-up study, which cost effectively capitalizes on the high proportion of marked bears still present in DS, be conducted 7 years after the increase to estimate population size and status and reassess harvest levels. If a study cannot be done after 7 years it is recommended that the TAH revert back

⁵ If demographic changes and environmental trends revealed during the recent population study continue, this projection probably underestimates rate of population decline.

to the 2010/11 levels in-order to manage risk of over harvest and exercise the precautionary principle.

In February 2011 DOE conducted consultations with the three DS communities, providing them with the updated population estimate and the recommended TAH increase of 15. There was no opposition to the recommendation, nor was their outright support, and the HTO's did not suggest any alternative recommendations or approaches. The HTO's were reminded that they can forward their own harvest recommendations to the NWMB and that the NWMB may choose to conduct a public hearing on the matter.

**RULES FOR THE NWMB'S PUBLIC HEARING
TO CONSIDER PROPOSED MODIFICATIONS TO THE CURRENT
LEVEL OF TOTAL ALLOWABLE HARVEST FOR THE DAVIS
STRAIT POLAR BEAR SUBPOPULATION**

April 1st 2011

THE PURPOSE of this NWMB hearing is to publicly consider proposed modifications to the current level of Total Allowable Harvest for the Davis Strait Polar Bear Subpopulation in the Nunavut Settlement Area

The Government of Nunavut's Department of the Environment has filed – in Inuktitut and English - a *Proposal for NWMB Decision* (GN-DoE Proposal) with the NWMB, seeking a decision to consider modifications to the current Total Allowable Harvest for the Davis Strait Polar Bear Subpopulation. The GN-DoE 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), or by contacting the NWMB directly (Tel: 867-975-7300; E-mail: receptionist@nwmb.com).

RULES:

1. The hearing shall be open to the public, with notice provided to the public at least 30 days prior to the commencement of the hearing. Part of the hearing may be conducted in camera, where the NWMB considers that confidential or sensitive matters may be disclosed or discussed.
2. Any interested person or body may file with the NWMB a written submission and supporting documentation¹ in response to the GN-DoE Proposal, or otherwise regarding concerns with the proposed modifications to the current Total Allowable Harvest for the Davis Strait Polar Bear Subpopulation– duly translated into Inuktitut or English as the case may be – by no later than 5:00 p.m. on May 2nd 2011.
3. Unless persuasive written and translated reasons are provided to the NWMB for late filing, the NWMB will not consider materials for this hearing that are not filed on time.
4. The requirement for translation of written submissions and supporting documentation filed with the NWMB does not apply to individual members of the public.

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 argument in support of that person's or organization's submission.

5. For all others who file supporting documentation with the NWMB, the requirement for translation does not apply to such documents over 10 pages in length, as long as each supporting document that is not translated is accompanied by a concise, translated summary.
6. The NWMB 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 Nunavut, any Hunters and Trappers Organization or Regional Wildlife Organization and any Inuk shall be accorded the status of party at the hearing.
10. Any other person or body wishing to be named as a party by the NWMB shall make an appropriate request in writing to the NWMB.
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 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.