

**SUBMISSION TO THE**  
**NUNAVUT WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT BOARD**  
**FOR**

**Information:**

**Decision: X**

**Issue:** Sport hunting walrus with bow and arrow

**Background:**

Requests to use bow and arrows during the walrus sport hunt are not new to the walrus fishery. This issue has been brought to the Board's attention previously; in 2004, the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board decided to not allow the use of bows or cross bows in the walrus sport hunt (Resolution 04-096).

In recent years there has been renewed interest in using bow and arrows during the walrus sport hunt. Fisheries and Oceans Canada has received requests from both hunters and outfitters. In all instances the requests have been denied.

The Marine Mammal Regulations state the following:

- Section 25. No person shall fish for walrus with a firearm unless the person uses
- A) a rifle and bullets that are not full metal-jacketed that produce a muzzle energy of not less than 1,500 foot pounds; or
  - B) a shotgun and rifled slugs that produce a muzzle energy of not less than 1,500 foot pounds.

Fisheries and Oceans Canada has identified some concerns with using a bow and arrow during this type of hunting.

**Concerns:**

- Increased struck and lost rates because a walrus can switch to anaerobic respiration (without oxygen) for a short time period, giving the walrus an opportunity to flee and enter the water where it is likely to drown and less likely to be retrieved
- There is the potential for an arrow to penetrate through the animal increasing the risk of injuring more than one walrus with one shot
- A bullet to the head or neck area often results in a quick death of the animal, the subsequent shock to the brain also aids in quick death. With an arrow, there is no "shock" to the brain so a heart or lung shot is more likely to be used. This would lead bleeding and/or suffocating as the means to death which contravenes the Marine Mammal Regulation (MMR s.8) where "No person shall attempt to kill a marine mammal except in a manner that is designed to kill it quickly."

**Recommendations:**

Aside from the Marine Mammal Regulations, Fisheries and Oceans Canada would like the support of the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board on this decision to ensure that the walrus sport hunts are conducted in a way that supports responsible hunting methods. Fisheries and Oceans Canada recommends the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board permanently re-instate its 2004 decision to not allow the use of bows or cross bows in the walrus sport hunt and add the decision as a licence condition starting in the 2012 hunting season.

**Prepared by:** Fisheries Management and Science  
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Fisheries and Oceans Canada

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