



JUN 12 2013

Mr. Manasie Audlakiak  
A/Chairperson  
Nunavut Wildlife Management Board  
P.O. Box 1379  
Iqaluit, NU  
X0A 0H0

Dear Mr. Audlakiak:

Thank you for your correspondence of February 12, 2013 on the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board decision, which included two conditions that the Board indicated are an integral part to the decision, with respect to the establishment of basic needs levels for beluga, narwhal and walrus in the Nunavut Settlement Area.

I also wish to thank the Board for granting the extension requested by my Department for preparing this response to your decision. This extension permitted our respective organizations to commence discussions on developing a protocol to implement, in a practical way, some aspects of the conditions stipulated in the Board's decision.

This letter confirms that I accept the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board decision to "...establish the basic needs levels (BNLs) for beluga, narwhal and walrus in the Nunavut Settlement Area (NSA) to be equal to the levels of total allowable harvest established or modified by the NWMB..." This will cause the Basic Needs Levels for beluga, narwhal and walrus to fluctuate with changes to the level of the Total Allowable Harvest made in accordance with Article 5 of the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement.

I will now address the conditions stipulated in the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board decision. The first is an existing requirement of the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board under Article 40 of the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement. While the condition specifically refers to Nunavik Inuit, there is the potential that other Inuit or aboriginal groups may demonstrate traditional use of these marine mammal resources within the Nunavut Settlement Area. In such an eventuality, the requirements of the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement must be considered for those harvesters.

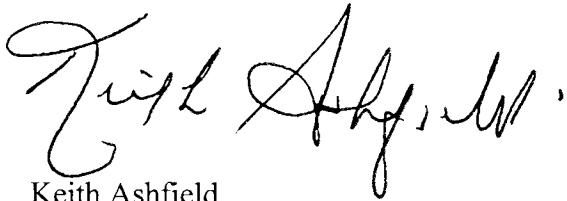
With respect to the second condition, my Department recognizes the powers, duties and functions of the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board as set out under the provisions of the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement. It is my understanding that there has been good progress to date between our respective organizations in developing an operational protocol to accommodate this contingency if necessary. However, finalization of the protocol requires further discussions amongst our staff and also other stakeholders in the management of these marine mammal fisheries in the Nunavut Settlement Area. The Department remains committed to working with the co-management organizations on this initiative.

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We also look forward to working together on ensuring that appropriate management measures for beluga and walrus are in place and reflected in regulation for the conservation of all stocks and populations of beluga and walrus. This requirement will enable Canada to continue demonstrating that harvests of these marine mammal species are sustainable in support of our domestic and international obligations for the responsible management of Canadian fisheries.

In closing, I congratulate the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board and staff in successfully dealing with this requirement under Article 5 of the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement. The Department looks forward to our continuing collaboration as we implement this decision for beluga, narwhal and walrus within the Nunavut Settlement Area.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Keith Ashfield". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial "K".

Keith Ashfield