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

March 04, 2021

Honourable Bernadette Jordan Minister of Fisheries, Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard 200 Kent Street Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0E6

Re: Nunavut Wildlife Management Board's decision on 2021 walrus sport hunt applications

Dear Minister Jordan:

On August 21, 2020, the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board (NWMB or Board) issued a call for walrus sport hunt applications for the 2021 season with a deadline for applications of November 1, 2020. The NWMB annually requests applications for walrus sport hunts in the Nunavut Settlement Area for approval by the Board, according to its Interim Policy for Walrus Sport Hunts (Interim Policy; attached) and forwards its decision to Fisheries and Oceans Canada before licences are issued.

In addition to the three walrus sport hunt applications for the 2021 season that were approved by NWMB during its December 2020 quarterly meeting and by the Minister on February 02, 2021, the NWMB reviewed a fourth request for six (6) walrus sport hunts from Luke Eetuk of Coral Harbour as shown in the table below.

Applicant	Community	Walrus Stock	Number of Sport Hunt Tags Requested
Luke Eetuk	Coral Harbour	Hudson Bay-Davis Strait	6

The Board carefully reviewed this additional application, and in accordance with Walrus Sport Hunt Interim Policy and made the following decisions:

MOVED that the as per the Walrus Sport Hunt Interim Policy, the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board approve Luke Eetuk's application for six (6) walrus sport hunt tags from the Hudson Bay-Davis Strait subject to the following conditions:

 That all struck, lost, and landed information is reported to Fisheries and Oceans Canada, Iqaluit office;

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- That the hunt be conducted in compliance with all safety and regulatory requirements established by Transport Canada and Fisheries and Oceans Canada:
- 3. That the assignment of each walrus to a sport hunter be made in writing;
- 4. That samples be collected and provided to Fisheries and Oceans Canada for inspection of any animal that is in suspicion of contamination or disease.

Reasons for the NWMB's Decision

The request from Luke Eetuk for six (6) sport hunt tags brings the number of sport hunt tags requested for the Hudson Bay-Davis Strait Atlantic walrus stock in 2021 to 27. Outfitters from the communities of Coral Harbour are subject to the community quota of 60 walrus (*Marine Mammal Regulations*, Section 26).

The average reported harvests near Coral Harbour based on available data over the past five years for sport and subsistence harvesting are 9 and 23 walrus per year¹, respectively, resulting in an estimated average annual removal of 42 walrus per year, if a struck and lost rate of 30% is applied². The Coral Harbour Hunters and Trappers Organization has provided a of support for the walrus sport hunts requested by Luke Eetuk.

There is no evidence that the proposed sport harvests from Coral Harbour would pose a conservation concern for the Hudson Bay-Davis Strait walrus stock. The request from outfitters from Coral Harbour for 23 sport hunts for 2021, and an average annual harvest of 23 walrus over the past five years in subsistence hunts fall below the community harvest limit of 60 walrus.

All hunting plans submitted satisfied the interim policy's conditions regarding humane harvesting, and hunter and public safety.

Conclusion

The NWMB, hereby forwards its decisions to you for your consideration pursuant to the relevant terms of the *Nunavut Agreement Section 5.3.17*. Should you accept the decisions of the NWMB with regard to the 2021 walrus sport hunts, the Board anticipates that implementation of the decisions by your department will include appropriate notification to the applicant.

¹ Based on five years of available data for sport and subsistence harvesting.

² A struck and lost rate of 30% is applied by the North Atlantic Marine Mammal Commission if there is no specific information available on struck and lost rates.



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Should you or your officials have any questions or concerns about the contents of this letter, please do not hesitate to contact the NWMB.

Sincerely,

Daniel Shewchuk

Chairperson

Nunavut Wildlife Management Board

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Attachments (1): Walrus Sport Hunt Interim Policy



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Walrus Sport Hunt Interim Policy

In deciding the number of sport hunts to approve for a particular community, it is recommended that the NWMB's policy be to ensure, to the extent reasonably possible, that sport hunting in the community develops in such a manner that the following four conditions are met:

- (i) no conservation concern arises;
- (ii) hunter and public safety are maintained;
- (iii) humane harvesting takes place, and the whole animal is used; and
- (iv) the developing industry is healthy and will continue to deliver a quality product, thus serving and promoting the long-term economic, social, and cultural interests of Inuit harvesters (See *Nunavut Agreement* Sub-section 5.1.3(b)(iii))

Accordingly, until the Walrus Working Group offers a more detailed analysis and recommendations, it is recommended that the NWMB apply the following three criteria in deciding upon the number of sport hunts for a community:

- 1. In a community that is not subject to a quota (beyond the individual limit of four), attempt to ensure that the combination of community and sport hunts does not exceed the average total harvest for the previous five years (condition i);
- 2. Ensure that a hunt plan is in place that meets the safety, humane, and other requirements necessary under the *Nunavut Agreement*, the *Fisheries Act* and the Regulations (conditions ii and iii); and
- 3. Ensure that the community or enterprise starts with a relatively small and closely monitored number of hunts (the "pilot" stage), before permitting an expanded sport hunting effort (condition iv).

In addition, the NWMB may wish to consider what percentage of the overall quota or average harvest for the last five years should be allocated to sport hunts.

Ottawa, Canada K1A 0E6

April 28, 2021

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

Dear Mr. Shewchuk:

I want to acknowledge and thank you for the Board's letter received on March 4, 2021 conveying the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board's (NWMB) decision regarding the additional walrus sport hunts for 2021. Pursuant to section 5.3.18 of the *Nunavut Agreement*, I provide the following written reply.

This letter is to confirm that I accept the NWMB's decision to approve six walrus sport hunts for Luke Eetuk of Coral Harbour for the 2021 season, subject to the conditions set out in the NWMB's letter of March 4, 2021.

It is important to note that timely and accurate harvest reporting is required under the *Fisheries Act*, the Marine Mammal Regulations, the *Nunavut Agreement*, and as condition of the licence for the sport hunt. I strongly encourage co-management organisations to emphasise the importance of harvest reporting and monitoring and providing the information to the Department.

Department officials in Iqaluit will notify the successful applicants. Once the Department's Iqaluit office has received all of the required information to complete a licence for the sport hunt, departmental officials will issue the licence.

I look forward to continued collaboration with the NWMB and its technical staff on walrus co-management issues.

Yours sincerely,

The Honourable Bernadette Jordan, P.C., M.P.
Minister of Fisheries, Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard

