

COURTESY TRANSLATION

Dear Mr. Audlakiak,

The Québec Ministère du Développement durable, de l'Environnement, de la Faune et des Parcs wishes to follow up on the letter that was addressed by the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board concerning the total allowable harvest (TAH) for the Foxe Basin polar bear sub-population. We appreciate your consideration of our point of view, as well as the one of different stakeholders involved in the management process of this subpopulation.

Polar bear is part of the traditions and culture of the Nunavik Inuit who have harvested it for subsistence for many generations. Also, given the high value of the fur, this species is a major source of income for communities that harvest it. Among the three sub-populations of polar bears who frequent Nunavik, the Foxe Basin is one that is subjected of the lowest harvest level. In fact, only four Nunavik communities harvest this sub-population: Puvirnituq, Ivujivik, Salluit and Akulivik.

The data collected by the Government of Quebec since 1986 indicate a level of annual harvest varying between 1 and 17 bears for this sub-population. Based on this historical variability, and following discussions with our partners, we believe that the TAH, provided it is sustainable, should include a minimum of 10 bears taken by the Nunavik Inuit communities. Moreover, in accordance with the traditions of these communities, a proportion of 10% of the TAH level for this sub-population should be allocated to them, in this case 10 bears out of a 106.

The Ministry wishes to continue its collaboration with the different stakeholders involved in the current and future interjurisdictional management and conservation processes related to polar bear sub-populations, including Foxe Basin. In this regard, we consider that particular efforts should continue to be made in order to reach a reliable harvest and biological monitoring system for the polar bears sub-populations. For these reasons, the Ministry considers advantageous to maintain, or even increase its involvement with the Inuit representatives so that the available information is shared and also to establish common goals related to the management and the conservation of the species.

Best regards,

ORIGINAL SIGNED BY

YVES-FRANÇOIS BLANCHET