# Public Consultation Workbook

For the draft Integrated Fishery Management Plan for Atlantic Walrus (*Odobenus rosmarus*) in the Nunavut Settlement Area

### **Public Consultation Workbook**

Draft Integrated Fishery Management Plan for Atlantic Walrus (*Odobenus rosmarus*) in the Nunavut Settlement Area



This workbook contains a summary of the draft Integrated Fishery Management Plan for Atlantic walrus in the Nunavut Settlement Area (Management Plan). The full version is available from your local Hunter and Trapper Organization (HTO) office or from the Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) representative listed below.

We welcome your comments on the draft Management Plan, and any other comments you may have about the management of Atlantic walrus.

Please record your comments and return them to Fisheries & Oceans Canada by **July 15, 2014 at the latest** using one of these three options:

- a) Email: WalrusConsultations2014@dfo-mpo.gc.ca
- b) Fax: Allison McPhee, DFO Central and Arctic Region: (204) 983-3073
- c) Regular Mail:

Attention: Allison McPhee
Fisheries & Oceans Canada,
Central & Arctic Region
501 University Crescent,
Winnipeg, MB R3T 2N6

Thank you for your interest!

### What is an Integrated Fishery Management Plan (IFMP, or Management Plan)?

A Management Plan for any stock or group of stocks provides information that is important for the management of a fishery. It contains a description of what we know - scientific and local knowledge-about the fishery. It describes the most important management objectives and management measures that are needed or agreed to. The intention of putting the information about a fishery in this one document is to have a common understanding of the "basic rules" for the sustainable management of a particular fishery.

A Management Plan is implemented in a manner consistent with obligations identified in settled Land Claims Agreements. In the event that a Management Plan provision is inconsistent with obligations under a Land Claims Agreement, the provisions of the Agreement will prevail to the extent of the inconsistency.

Within the Nunavut Settlement Area (NSA), Management Plans are developed *collaboratively* by an advisory committee composed of representatives from DFO and co-management organizations with fisheries management responsibilities. The advisory committee recommends management objectives and management measures for a given fishery. The advisory committee also considers feedback received during public consultation with resource users and other stakeholders.

A Management Plan is not legally binding. A Management Plan can be modified as needed and does not prevent the DFO Minister's powers granted in the Fisheries Act.

### Why is DFO consulting with Nunavut communities and the public?

DFO is providing an opportunity for the public to provide their views and comments on the draft Atlantic Walrus Integrated Fisheries Management Plan in the NSA, and the proposed changes to the walrus management regime. Public consultations will have both an in-person and a written component.

- Changes to the current walrus management regime are being proposed for five walrus stocks where there is new science advice. In-person consultations are planned for May 28-June 4, 2014 with the communities that harvest walrus from these stocks.
- There are no changes currently being proposed to the walrus management regime for the South and East Hudson Bay or the Hudson Bay-Davis Strait stocks, as there is no recent science advice. Therefore, a written consultation process is underway for the remaining walrus harvesting communities in Nunavut, along with other interested stakeholders and the general public.

## Summary of the draft Integrated Fishery Management Plan for Atlantic walrus (*Odobenus rosmarus rosmarus*) in the Nunavut Settlement Area

### 1 Overview

The following is a summary of what is contained in the draft Integrated Fisheries Management Plan (Management Plan) for Atlantic walrus (*Odobenus rosmarus*) stocks in the Nunavut Settlement Area (NSA).

This Management Plan was developed and will be implemented by the Government of Canada and comanagement organizations through an adaptive co-management process. Working Groups comprised of Hunter and Trapper Organizations (HTO), Regional Wildlife Organizations (RWO), Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated (NTI), the Nunavut Wildlife management Board (NWMB) and the Department of Fisheries & Oceans (DFO) were formed to develop the Management Plan.

This Plan reflects the conservation principles described in the Nunavut Land Claims Agreements, namely:

- (a) the maintenance of the natural balance of ecological systems within the Nunavut Settlement Area,
- (b) the protection of wildlife habitat,
- (c) the maintenance of vital, healthy, wildlife populations capable of sustaining harvesting needs,
- (d) the restoration and revitalization of depleted populations of wildlife and wildlife habitat.

This Management Plan is to be approved by the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans and the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board (pursuant to NLCA 5.2.34).

### 1.1 History

Walrus have been harvested by Arctic indigenous peoples for thousands of years, providing valuable products such as blubber, bones, tusks and meat. The commercial harvesting of walrus in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries resulted in a rapid decrease of walrus across their Arctic ranges, including the extirpation of the Northwest Atlantic population. By 1928, commercial harvesting of walrus was banned in Canada by the Walrus Protection Regulations.

Walrus are a key species in the Arctic marine food web, are of high economic, social and cultural importance for Inuit, and are iconic to Canadians since they are so easily identified with the Arctic environment.

### **1.2** Type of Fishery and Participants

Atlantic walrus are primarily harvested by Inuit, and are valuable as a traditional source of food and other products. The hunt provides an opportunity to maintain cultural traditions and for experienced hunters to pass on their skills and knowledge to younger generations. Walrus products provide a secondary source of income for hunters as the ivory is either sold raw, or carved into fine art pieces such as jewelry or sculptures. Some communities engage in a small-scale sport hunt conducted by non-Inuit hunters.

### 1.3 Governance

The walrus fishery in the NSA is co-managed by DFO, the NWMB, RWOs and HTOs, in accordance with the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement (NLCA or Agreement), and the *Fisheries Act* and its regulations. The regulatory provisions that were in place upon ratification of the Agreement in 1993 have continued to be the basis for the regulation and management of the walrus fishery in Nunavut.

Specific provisions in the *Marine Mammal Regulations* (MMR) include, among others, requirements for hunters to hunt a walrus in a manner that is designed to kill it quickly, to make reasonable efforts to retrieve a killed or wounded walrus without delay and to have all necessary equipment on hand to retrieve it. Abandoning, discarding or wasting edible parts of walrus is prohibited. Inuit may harvest up to four (4) walrus in a year (MMR 6(1) (c)) unless there is a community quota. Annual quotas have been set for the communities of Coral Harbour (60), Sanikiluaq (10), Arctic Bay (10) and Clyde River (20). A Fishery Officer will notify the HTOs when the quota has been reached.

Marine Mammal Fishing Licences are issued for walrus sport hunts (MMR s.4) provided there is support from the local HTO and annual approval from the NWMB based on its Interim NWMB Sport Hunt Policy. Individuals hunting under the authority of a licence must travel with local guides approved by the HTO.

### 2 Stock Assessment, Science and Traditional Knowledge

The walrus is Canada's largest member of the seal family. It is a large animal with limbs that have developed into flippers, upper canine teeth that develop into long tusks (ivory) at about 2 years of age and a moustache made of quill-like whiskers. Walrus can live to 40 years of age, and are considered to be long-lived animals. As walrus have a delayed sexual maturation, fairly low reproductive rates and specialized habitat requirements, they are vulnerable to over-hunting and sensitive to environmental changes (COSEWIC 2006).

Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) of walrus throughout Canada's Arctic is extensive. Each community has hunters and elders that have knowledge in areas of distribution, seasonality, migration, birthing areas and haulout sites. Inuit have observed changes with respect to impacts from climate change, past and present disturbances and development/exploration. TEK is used with scientific data and observation to contribute to management decisions, as well as to identify information gaps, areas of uncertainty, and to set research priorities.

### Management Units:

There are seven stocks of walrus in Canada (Figure 1). These divisions are based in scientific information and traditional knowledge. It is proposed to manage the seven Atlantic walrus stocks based on the Management Units identified in Figure 2 and listed below:

- AW-01: Baffin Bay stock (shared with Greenland);
- AW-02: West Jones Sound stock;
- AW-03: Penny Strait-Lancaster Sound stock;
- AW-04: (northern and central Foxe Basin stocks);
- AW-05: Hudson Bay- Davis Strait stock (shared with Nunavik and Greenland);
- AW-06: South and East Hudson Bay stock (shared with Nunavik).

We encourage you to provide your views and/or comments on the proposed Management Units and their boundaries.

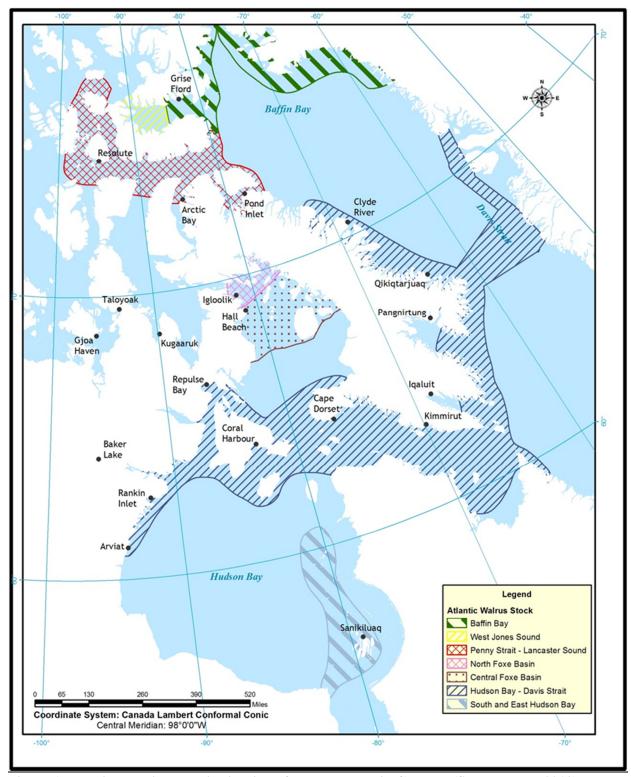


Figure 1: Map illustrating the distribution of walrus stocks in Canada. (Stewart et al. 2013)

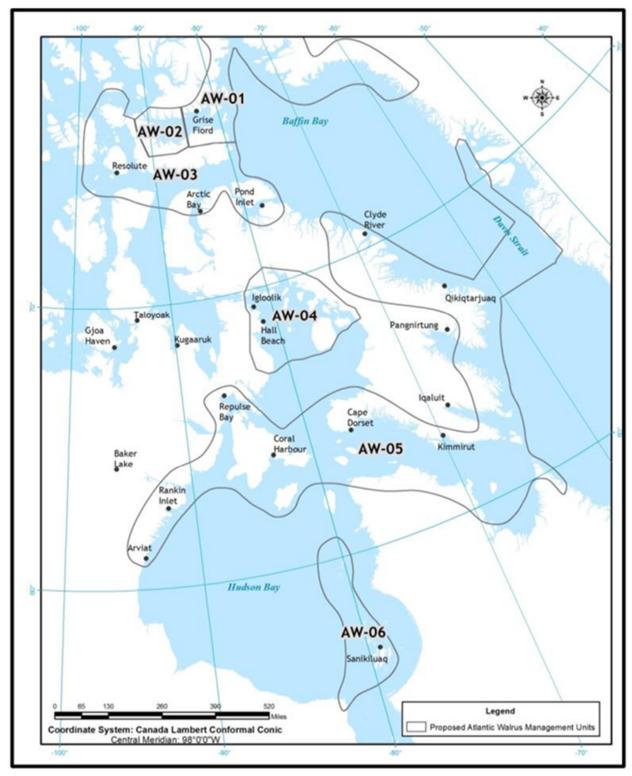


Figure 2: Proposed Management Units, for discussion at community consultations.

### Sustainable Harvest Levels:

DFO Science has adopted the Potential Biological Removal (PBR) method to provide sustainable harvest advice for data-poor stocks or populations. Estimates of PBR were calculated for walrus stocks in the NSA based on abundance estimates<sup>1</sup>. PBR represents the total number of animals that can be removed from all human sources without depleting the stock or population. This would include the total number of walrus that can be removed from direct harvest, those animals struck but lost, as well as walrus removed from other human sources, such as ship strikes or net entanglements.

The NWMB has the sole authority to establish, modify or remove levels of total allowable harvest (TAH) in the NSA. In establishing TAH, the NWMB will consider the best available information (Traditional Ecological Knowledge, Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit, and Science). DFO's sustainable harvest level recommendations are provided as Total Allowable Landed Catch (TALC) values, where known human-caused removals (e.g. struck and lost, ship strikes, net entanglements) are removed from the PBR estimate. To date, most human-caused walrus mortalities result from hunt landings and hunt losses, although this may change with increased northern development. Struck and lost rates are incomplete for Atlantic walrus stocks, but have been estimated to range from 15-32%.

DFO's sustainable harvest advice for each proposed management unit is presented as Total Allowable Landed Catch (TALC) recommendations (Table 1). Losses are not reported for any walrus stock in Canada and therefore a range of struck and lost rates based on a low, moderate and high level of risk have been applied for discussion and consultation purposes (Born et. al 1997, DFO 2002, DFO 2012, NAMMCO 2006, Stewart 2008):

• High risk: 15% struck and lost rate;

• Moderate risk: 23% struck and lost:

• Low risk: 30% struck and lost rate.

Please provide your views on the TALC levels identified in table 1 <u>on the next page</u>, including the struck and lost rates.

### 3 Social, Cultural and Economic Importance of the Fishery

For centuries, walrus have been used by Inuit as a traditional food source and for supplying important materials for day to day living. Walrus meat is more commonly used for dog food but it is also eaten in raw, cooked or fermented (*igunak*) forms by Inuit.

Historically, walrus products provided materials for numerous necessities required for arctic living such as walrus bones used for carvings, tent poles, and walking sticks, tusks/ ivory used to construct harpoons, toggles, handles, and handicrafts, sinews used for sewing thread, and skin for tents and ropes.

The walrus sport hunt in some communities can provide a major source of cash income through the hiring of local guides and sport hunters purchasing various goods and services (food, crafts, and

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> http://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/csas-sccs/Publications/SAR-AS/2013/2013\_034-eng.html

accommodations). Sport hunters are permitted to keep the tusks, baculum and head of the walrus, but the meat remains within the community for community use.

Table 1. Total Allowable Landed Catch (TALC) estimates for select Atlantic walrus stocks in the Nunavut Settlement Area.

Population	Stock(s)	Management Unit	Survey year	Abundance estimate highest adjusted	PBR/ TAR highest adjusted	TALC Range of struck and lost rates		
						15%	23%	30%
	Baffin Bay	AW-01	2009	1,251	11	9	8	8
High	West Jones Sound	AW-02	2008	503	8 (17)	7 (14) <sup>1</sup>	6 (13) <sup>1</sup>	6 (12) <sup>1</sup>
Arctic	Penny Strait- Lancaster Sound	AW-03	2009	727	12 (24) <sup>1</sup>	10 (20) <sup>1</sup>	9 (18) <sup>1</sup>	8 (16) <sup>1</sup>
Central Arctic	Northern Foxe Basin Central Foxe Basin	AW-04	2011	10, 379 (13, 452)	135 (166) <sup>2</sup>	115 (141) <sup>2</sup>	104 (128) <sup>2</sup>	95 (116) <sup>2</sup>
	Hudson Bay- Davis Strait	AW-05	-	-	-	-	-	-
Unknown	South and East Hudson Bay	AW-06	-	-	-	-	-	-

<sup>[1]</sup> Using a Recovery Factor of 1.0 in the PBR calculation.

### 4 Management Issues

### 4.1 Fisheries Issues

During the development of the Management Plan, the Walrus Working Group and communities involved in the in-person consultations identified a number of management issues that should be addressed in order to be able to demonstrate a sustainable walrus fishery. These management issues are described below.

### **Abundance Estimates**

Recent estimates are available for four of the six walrus stocks or stock units. Abundance estimates are still required for the Hudson Bay-Davis Strait stock and the South and East Hudson Bay stock.

### **Sustainable Harvest Levels**

There is growing national and international pressure to demonstrate that walrus are being harvested at sustainable levels. Establishing sustainable harvest levels is an important step.

<sup>[2]</sup> Assuming the tagging data from a single haul-out was representative of other haul-outs in Foxe Basin.

### **Struck and Lost Rates**

Accurate struck and lost rates are important for understanding the impacts of hunting and to maximize sustainable harvest levels. Struck and lost rates vary or are incomplete in the NSA. Because there is uncertainty on struck and lost, there has to be extra precaution given during the establishment of sustainable harvest levels.

### **Hunter Training/ Reducing Loss Rates**

Training for harvesters and youth has been identified as an important component for the sustainable management of the walrus fishery. HTOs may develop plans or best management practices that set out practical measures for community hunters to reduce the number of struck and lost walrus while harvesting.

### **Monitoring and Reporting**

Once a TAH/BNL is established for walrus, a method to control removals will be required to ensure walrus harvesting remains within regulated harvest levels.

Timely, accurate reporting of walrus harvesting is essential. Without complete and accurate estimates of local harvesting activity, co-managers must exercise caution when recommending harvest limits so that vital, healthy walrus populations/stocks that are capable of sustaining harvesting needs of Inuit can be maintained.

### **Sport Hunt**

There is a need for HTOs to develop by-laws or guidelines for communities that pursue sport hunt opportunities that would identify the community rules or best management practices for the sport hunt.

### **Ship Traffic/Development/Tourism**

There are a number of potential impacts and threats to walrus and walrus habitat resulting from increased development and shipping activities. These could include increased oil spills, ship strikes, disruption of migration, avoidance of ecologically or biologically important areas (birthing, mating or feeding areas), noise disturbance and the introduction of alien or invasive species through activities such as ballast water exchange. Tourism is increasing in the Arctic and concern with increased disturbance to important walrus areas (e.g. haul-outs) has been expressed.

### 4.2 Oceans and Habitat Considerations

Ecologically and Biologically Significant Areas (EBSAs) in the Eastern Arctic were identified in 2011 by DFO. Experts from Canadian federal departments, academics, Inuit organizations and various environmental non-government organizations having expertise in a number of different areas were involved. EBSAs are intended to identify areas that have high ecological or biological significance and are useful in assisting with management decisions.

### 4.3 National and International Issues

### **Food Safety**

Outbreaks of trichinosis have been reported in Nunavut over the years, most commonly from consuming meat that has been infected with a worm called *Trichinella nativa*, which lives inside the bodies of walrus and some other birds and mammals. The Government of Nunavut's department of health has responsibilities around food safety within the Nunavut Settlement Area and have established programs to test walrus meat for the parasite that causes the disease. Harvesters are asked to contact their HTO or a

Government of Nunavut Environmental Health Officer for additional information on the Nunavut Trichinosis Prevention Program.

### **COSEWIC and SARA**

COSEWIC (Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada) is a committee of experts that assesses and designates wildlife species that may be in some danger of disappearing from Canada. COSEWIC uses a process based on science, Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge and community knowledge to assess the risk of extinction for wildlife species. Wildlife species that have been designated at risk by COSEWIC may then qualify for legal protection and recovery or management under the Species at Risk Act (SARA). Atlantic walrus is currently being reassessed by COSEWIC. Results are likely to be released in April 2015.

### CITES

The Atlantic walrus is listed on Appendix III of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES). As such, anyone wishing to export walrus parts or derivatives from Canada must obtain an export permit from the Canadian CITES administration. A non-detriment finding is not required for species on Appendix III of CITES.

### **Shared Stocks: Nunavut**

Harvesting of the Hudson Bay-Davis Strait and South and East Hudson Bay stocks occurs in both the Nunavut Settlement Area and Nunavik Marine Region. There are no population abundance estimates for these two stocks, so the existing regulatory regime and quotas identified in the *Fisheries Act* and the Marine Mammal Regulations, and provisions in the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement and the Nunavik Inuit Land Claims Agreement continue to apply.

### **Shared Stocks: Greenland**

Some stocks of Atlantic walrus inhabit both Canadian and Greenland waters, and are subject to harvesting in each jurisdiction. It will become important to address any inter-jurisdictional sharing issues.

### 5 Objectives

The Walrus Working Group identified a number of long and short-term objectives to address the management issues identified in section 4.1. For a complete list of the short and long-term objectives, please refer to section 5 of the draft Management Plan.

### 6 Access and Allocation

### **6.1** Harvest Levels and Allocation

Current regulatory quotas are identified in the Marine Mammal Regulations. The NWMB is in the process of establishing TAH and BNL for each stock or population of walrus.

- I. <u>For Management Units or areas within the NSA without an established TAH:</u> Current regulatory quotas identified in the Marine Mammal Regulations apply.
- II. For Management Units or areas within the NSA with an established TAH:

  There is an agreement by the NWMB and the Minister of DFO that where a TAH is established for a walrus stock or population, the Basic Needs Level (BNL) will equal the TAH. Therefore, for those stocks of walrus where a TAH has been established, the RWOs and HTOs will be

responsible for allocating and regulating the harvest level among their members as set out in the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement.

### Walrus Harvest Tag:

Monitoring of harvest levels is very important to make good management decisions, to maximize harvests and to ensure sustainable harvest levels are not exceeded. For those stocks subject to a TAH/BNL, a Walrus Harvest Tag system is being proposed to assist with the allocation, monitoring, and reporting of walrus harvests and the collection of important walrus harvesting information.

- The Walrus Harvest Tag would not be a licence to hunt and would be issued without fee or administrative charge.
- A Walrus Harvest Tag would be proof of allocation to a share of one walrus from the walrus TAH for a particular management unit.
- The proposed Walrus Harvest Tag will help with the collection and reporting of important hunt specific information, such as: the date and location of the hunt, information about struck and lost, and sex and age data.
- Implementing a Walrus Harvest Tag system would assist RWOs and HTOs in the allocation and enforcement of community basic needs levels among members.

A Walrus Harvest Tag system is being proposed for stocks subject to a TAH/BNL.

### 7 Management Measures for the Duration of the Plan

A number of management measures have been in place for this fishery for some time, and these are listed in the Management Plan. The following changes are being proposed to address gaps in the management of this fishery.

Management Measures	
Harvest Levels	<ul> <li>Establish TAH levels for four (4) of the six (6) Management Units.</li> <li>Harvesting cannot exceed the sum of the community harvest limits or the TAH.</li> </ul>
Walrus Harvest Tag	<ul> <li>Where a TAH has been set for a stock or population, establish a Walrus Harvest Tag system to improve the management, allocation, reporting and monitoring of walrus harvest levels.</li> </ul>
Harvest Reporting	<ul> <li>HTOs notify RWO and DFO when Community Harvest Limit is reached;</li> <li>RWOs notify DFO when the Sum of the Community Harvest Limits is reached in each Management Unit;</li> <li>HTOs to provide DFO with a completed summary of Walrus Harvest Tag returns from their members (monthly and at end of each hunt season);</li> <li>Reporting of all other walrus is required (NLCA s.5.7.43), such as walrus caught in fishing nets or those struck by ships.</li> </ul>
OTHERS?	<ul> <li>HTOs develop Community Hunting Plans and rules to regulate walrus harvesting practices and techniques among their members (sport hunt, struck and lost, youth training).</li> </ul>

### 8 Shared Stewardship Arrangements

The Atlantic walrus Management Plan was initiated by the Foxe Basin Walrus Working Group in 2007 and the High Arctic-Baffin Bay Walrus Working Group in 2009. Participation on the Working Groups includes representatives from each of the HTOs, the Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board (co-chair), NTI and DFO (co-chair). Staff from the NWMB has attended Working Group meetings when possible. The Working Groups invite subject-matter experts to provide additional information in the development of the Management Plan as required. This has included representatives from the mining industry and community elders.

### 9 Compliance Plan

### 9.1 Compliance Strategy

Conservation and Protection collaborates with internal and external partners to identify and prioritize compliance issues and works with resource managers to address them.

Fishery Officers focus efforts on:

- Atlantic walrus conservation
- compliance with legislation, including sport hunt licence conditions
- tusk traceability / illegal trade of ivory tusks
- licence inspections

Operational Activities include:

- Monitoring of Atlantic walrus sport hunts
- Education of user groups and stakeholders
- Inspections of Atlantic walrus products from harvest to export
- Cross reference of harvest data with trade data
- Liaison with Nunavut Conservation Officers and other territorial or provincial law enforcement agencies.

### 10 Performance Review

This Atlantic walrus IFMP was developed through an extensive consultative process including the NWMB, NTI, RWOs, HTOs, walrus hunters and community members. Recommendations to improve management of the walrus fishery will be developed to meet the long term objectives of maintaining a sustainable Walrus fishery.

### 11 References:

- Born, E.W., Dietz, R., Heide-Jorgensen, M. P., and Knutsen, L. O. 1997. Historical and present distribution, abundance, and exploitation of Atlantic walruses (Odobenus rosmarus rosmarus) in eastern Greenland. Meddelelser om Gronland, Bioscience 46: 1-73 p.
- DFO. 2002. Atlantic walrus. DFO Science Stock Status Report E5-17,18, 19, 20 (2002).
- NAMMCO. 2006. Scientific Committee Working Group on the status of walruses in the North Atlantic and adjacent seas, Final Report. Copenhagen, 11-14 January 2005. 27 p.
- Stewart, R.E.A. 2008. Can we calculate total allowable harvests for walrus using Potential Biological Removal? DFO Can Sci. Advis. Secr. Res. Doc. 2008/025.

**DFO. 2012.** Proceedings of the Pre-COSEWIC Peer Review Meeting for Atlantic walrus (Odobenus rosmarus rosmarus). February 28 to March 1,2012. CSAS Proceedings series 2012/041.

Stewart, R.E.A., Hamilton, J.W., and Dunn, J.B. 2013. Results of Foxe Basin walrus (Odobenus rosmarus rosmarus) surveys: 2010-2011. DFO Can. Sci. Advis. Sec. Res. Doc. 2013/017. iv + 12 p. (Erratum: February 2014)

# TO PROVIDE COMMENTS ABOUT THIS DOCUMENT, THE DRAFT INTEGRATED FISHERY MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR ATLANTIC WALRUS, OR ABOUT THE MANAGEMENT OF ATLANTIC WALRUS IN CANADA IN GENERAL...

Please record your comments and return them to Fisheries & Oceans Canada by **July 15, 2014** at the latest using one of these three options:

- a) Email: WalrusConsultations2014@dfo-mpo.gc.ca
- b) Fax: Allison McPhee, DFO Central and Arctic Region: (204) 983-3073
- c) Regular Mail:

Walrus Consultations 2014 Attention: Allison McPhee Fisheries & Oceans Canada, Central & Arctic Region 501 University Crescent, Winnipeg, MB R3T 2N6

Thank you for your interest!

# Please share your views about the proposed IFMP for Atlantic walrus. You can send us comments by email, letter, fax or you can answer these questions and send them to us:

Vhat best describes your	relationship to	walrus?		
a. Hunter	Yes	No		
b. Elder	Yes	No		
c. Youth	Yes	No		
d. HTO Member	Yes	No		
e. Other (please desc				
Which of the walrus IFMP	Consultation D	Oocuments did	you read?	
a. The summary of the I	FMP		Yes	No
b. The complete draft IF			Yes	No
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Do you have any comments about the proposed IFMP for Atlantic Walrus or informat about walrus that occur near your community? If so, please record them below (attaadditional pages if needed).

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