



OCT 10 2018

Mr. Dan Shewchuk
Chairperson of the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board
1106 Ikaluktuutiak Road, Allavvik Building, 3rd Floor
P.O. Box 1379
Iqaluit NU X0A 0H0

Dear Mr. Shewchuk:

I am writing in response to the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board's notice of July 20, 2018 inviting interested organizations or persons to file written submissions and supporting documentation concerning the *Proposal for NWMB Decision to consider the revised Nunavut Polar Bear Co-Management Plan*. Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC) previously submitted written comments regarding the Proposal on May 18, 2017, for the adjourned in-person public hearing of June 2017. ECCC's submission included both a letter from my predecessor, Robert McLean, Director General, Assessment and Regulatory Affairs, Canadian Wildlife Service, and an enclosure that included detailed comments developed by Departmental staff. ECCC requests that our original submissions be retained and entered into the record for the rescheduled in-person hearing of November 13-16, 2018. These comments have been aggregated and are included in a single enclosure [see: ECCC submission November 2018 – Enclosure]

In addition to confirming ECCC's original submissions, I would like to take this opportunity to publically acknowledge the grief and frustration felt by many people in Nunavut following the recent deaths of two Inuit men from polar bear mauling incidents near Arviat and Nauyasat. Incidents like these remind us that protecting human safety should and must be of paramount concern. I am aware that the Government of Nunavut administers a very important Wildlife Deterrence Program to reduce the risk to human life by wildlife, reduce destruction of property by wildlife, and reduce the number of defence kills. I have instructed ECCC staff under my direction, to make every effort to work collaboratively with the Government of Nunavut to strengthen and enhance existing programs and to listen to community members, hamlets, Hunters and Trappers Organizations, and conservation officers about their concerns. While the *Nunavut Polar Bear Co-Management Plan* addresses wildlife deterrence, it may be helpful to further elaborate on sections of the Proposal that pertain to mitigation strategies. In particular, it is the view of ECCC that plans developed with community-level participation to address public safety concerns that promote the use of non-lethal polar bear deterrents, such as bear guards, auditory/pyrotechnic deterrents, and fortification of food caches stand best chance of protecting human safety and conserving healthy polar bear subpopulations.

Two ECCC departmental representatives (Dr. Samuel Iverson and Lauren Schmuck) will be present at the public hearing on November 16 to present ECCC's submission and answer any questions that arise.

Sincerely,



Julie Spallin
Director General, Assessment and Regulatory Affairs
Canadian Wildlife Service

Enclosures:

- ECCC submission November 2018 – Enclosure