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 Nunavunmi Anngutighatigut Aulapkaijitkut Katimajiat
 Nunavut Wildlife Management Board

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

April 3, 2020

Honourable Joe Savikataaq
 Minister of Environment
 Government of Nunavut

Dear Minister Savikataaq:

Re: NWMB Decision Regarding the Proposal to Approve the Baffin Island Caribou Management Plan

NWMB Decision

At the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board’s (NWMB or Board) Regular Meeting in Iqaluit on March 11, 2020 (RM001-2020), your department asked the NWMB to approve the *Baffin Island Caribou Management Plan* (Management Plan). The goal of the Management Plan is to serve as an adaptive guide to harvesting and monitoring of the Baffin Island caribou population.

At the NWMB’s In-Camera Meeting in Iqaluit on March 12, 2020 (IC001-2020), the Board considered your proposal, along with records of government consultations with affected communities in the Qikiqtaaluk Region and an oral submission by the Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board, and made the following decision:

RESOLVED, pursuant to the Board’s discretionary authority under Section 5.2.34(d)(i) of the Nunavut Agreement, that the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board not exercise its decision-making function regarding the Baffin Island Caribou Management Plan.

Reasons for the NWMB’s Decision

The proposed Management Plan includes monitoring and research plans, but lacks details about other management objectives and actions that are vital to the recovery of Baffin Island caribou. In March 2016 and September 2019, the NWMB wrote to the Government of Nunavut to request that the Management Plan be revised to include more specific management actions.

As the Board understands the Government of Nunavut is of the view that a Management Plan with specific management actions and objectives (such as habitat management, communications and Inuit involvement, and the use of Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit) is unachievable because of disagreements with the Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board and the Qikiqtaaluk Hunters and Trappers Organizations. The Government of Nunavut also



argues that the structure of the *Nunavut Agreement* decision-making process prohibits the development of a more detailed management plan.

The NWMB is not convinced by the Government of Nunavut's position. Other plans developed by the Government of Nunavut and approved by the NWMB (e.g., the *Grizzly Bear Co-Management Plan* and the *Polar Bear Co-management Plan*) clearly outlined management objectives and actions. Based on the Board's assessment that the proposed Management Plan lacks details on specific management actions that would lead to the recovery of Baffin Island caribou, the Board has decided not to exercise its discretionary function regarding the approval of plans for management of wildlife.

Other Considerations

Government of Nunavut staff carried out in-person consultations with Qikiqtaaluk communities in 2019. During these consultations, Government of Nunavut staff presented results from the 2015–2018 Baffin Island caribou composition surveys and the caribou monitoring projects in the Kivalliq Region. Based on the NWMB's record of these meetings, there was not much discussion about the Management Plan, and most communities suggested they wanted to provide written input at a later date.

The NWMB is aware that the Government of Nunavut requested written feedback and postponed the deadline for written comments multiple times to accommodate the Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board, who stated that they needed more time to review and comment on the Management Plan. The QWB did not provide any written comments despite your department's accommodation with multiple extended deadlines.

In an attempt to encourage co-management collaboration in the development of the Management Plan, the NWMB sent a letter to the Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board on September 18, 2019, to explicitly request that they provide written comments about the Management Plan to the Government of Nunavut by December 13, 2019. On March 6, 2020—more than five months after the NWMB's request—the Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board wrote to the NWMB to say that they regarded the community and regional consultations as inadequate and that the Hunters and Trappers Organizations had not been well informed on the Management Plan. Additionally, the Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board stated they had made attempts to inform Hunters and Trappers Organizations on the management plan and solicit feedback without success.

Given the important socio-cultural value of Baffin Island caribou to Inuit of the Qikiqtaaluk Region, it is unfortunate that no written feedback was provided to your department. The NWMB expects a more collaborative approach amongst co-management partners on the development of plans on such a culturally significant population. This made it difficult for the Board to make a decision on the Management Plan without input from Inuit that stand to be most directly affected.



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 Building *Nunavut* Together
Nunavut liuqatigiingniq
 Bâtir le *Nunavut* ensemble

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 Minister of Environment
 Ministaat Avatiliqiyitkut
 Ministre de l'Environnement

April 29, 2020

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

Re: NWMB Decision Regarding the Proposal to Approve the Baffin Island Caribou Management Plan

Dear Mr. Shewchuk,

Thank you for your letter dated April 3, 2020, regarding the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board's (NWMB) resolution to not make a decision on the Baffin Island Caribou Management Plan.

To reiterate the resolution of the NWMB:

RESOLVED, pursuant to the Board's discretionary authority under Section 5.2.34(d)(i) of the Nunavut Agreement, that the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board not exercise its decision-making function regarding the Baffin Island Caribou Management Plan.

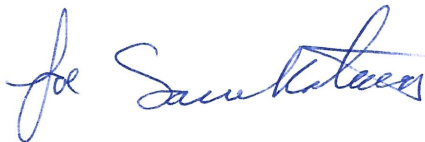
Since the Baffin Island Caribou Management Plan was drafted in 2014, the Government of Nunavut Department of Environment (DOE) has undertaken several rounds of face-to-face consultations with co-management partners and has sent numerous requests for comments on the draft plan. As noted in your letter, the DOE has accommodated multiple requests for extensions to deadlines for commenting, and to-date has not received any comments. Time was provided during face-to-face meetings for co-management partners to provide input and identify concerns with the current draft management plan. However, no Hunters and Trappers Organization (HTO) nor co-management partner identified concerns during the meetings. HTOs identified the desire to provide comments in writing after the consultation, but none of them did. The reason cited at the last NWMB meeting for this lack of engagement and input from co-management partners has been the capacity of the QWB and HTOs. However, it is surprising that in the multiple years we have been working on this, no comments on the document were provided, not even by the QWB.

We have, I believe, taken all reasonable steps to solicit input into the plan, and invested considerable time and resources into getting it completed, but with no comments having been provided, we have course have been unable to incorporate comments. I recognize the concern that HTO's and the QWB have not provided input into the plan. However, while I recognize the capacity issues, DOE is not able to continue investing resources into further discussions and consultations on the plan. Given the circumstances, DOE intends to utilize the plan as a guidance document until such time as it becomes clear that we will be able to engage in the co-development of a management plan with key co-management partners.

With the Total Allowable Harvest and non-quota limitations established, I feel we have in place the most important tools to support the recovery of Baffin Island Caribou. With the continued cooperation of harvesters, I am hopeful that we will see the recovery of this important population.

We are looking forward to engaging with you on outlining the draft policy on the potential minimum requirements for management plans, and sustainable management of Baffin Island caribou going forward.

Sincerely,



Hon. Joe Savikataaq
Minister of Environment

Cc: Jimmy Noble Jr., Deputy Minister of Environment
Steve Pinksen, Assistant Deputy Minister of Environment
Drikus Gissing, Director of Wildlife Research