

Atlantic Walrus Draft Integrated Fisheries Management Plan
DRAFT Consultation Summary- Foxe Basin stocks (Proposed Management Unit AW-04)

Consultations in Foxe Basin on the draft Management Plan took place on May 29-30, 2014 in the communities Igloolik and Hall Beach. Two meetings were held in each community; one with the HTO Board, and the other open to the public. The purpose of the consultations was to determine support for the draft management plan in general terms, to obtain specific local knowledge to help in the refining of the draft management plan to include HTO and community input and concerns. These specifics included potential management unit boundaries, sustainable harvest levels for the establishment of a TAH, harvest reporting and monitoring procedures, and the use of walrus harvest tags.

All meetings lasted over two hours and were well attended. In general terms, there appears to be support for a management plan for walrus, but there was no support for establishing a TAH based on Total Allowable Landed Catch (TALC) recommendations from recent DFO science advice. The participants expressed a great deal of interest in further involvement and will work with their local HTO Walrus Working Group member, their Regional Wildlife Organization and Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated during this process.

Igloolik, May 29, 2014

HTO Meeting- afternoon; Public meeting- evening

Walrus Working Group representatives: Joshua Kango (QWB; co-chair); Allison McPhee (DFO; co-chair); Paul Irngaut (NTI); Danica Crystal (NWMB); Richard Moore (DFO, Iqaluit); Lianne Postma (DFO, Science).

At both meetings, PowerPoint presentations were given (attached) that introduces the management plan, the history of the initiative, the purpose of the plan and an overview of the content. This was followed by discussion and feedback.

Specific discussions took place around the following issues:

1. Support for a Walrus Management Plan?

- Discussed the growing national and international attention being given to how Canada manages the walrus fishery and some pressures (e.g. CITES and possible request to up-list walrus, COSEWIC).
- Need to further harmonize walrus management with the NLCA (section 5.6.25 and increased role for HTOs/RWOs in walrus management).
- General agreement that a management plan is a good idea.

2. DFO Science advice:

- Concerns that the survey coverage was not complete and that not all animals were counted. Do not agree with the population abundance estimates.
- The Total Allowable Removal estimates are too low.
- There should be more local involvement in the surveys.
- Surveys need to be completed in all seasons before a TAH is established.
- Walrus population size is stable and healthy.

3. Sustainable Harvest Level Recommendations/ TAH:

- The community does not support the Total Allowable Landed Catch (TALC) recommended by DFO. The numbers presented are too low. This will cause hunters to harvest quicker every year (with more wastage), it will cause fighting between communities that harvest from the same Management Unit, hunters won't accurately report their harvests and they won't report struck and lost.
- The numbers presented will not provide for the current local demand.
- The current quota of 4 walrus/ Inuk/ year should remain.
- If a TAH is established, it should be based on how many walrus are needed by the community and set by the community.
- The TALC is too low to support the growing inter-settlement trade in walrus meat.
- Concerned that if a low TAH is established, it will stay at that level even if there is new information to support a higher TAH.
- Some concerns were raised about the amount of walrus meat that is currently wasted. It was suggested that some hunters are harvesting more for the ivory than the meat.

4. Are the proposed Management Unit boundaries correct?

- The boundary for AW-04 should be further south.
- There was no consensus on where exactly the boundary line should be. Need to ensure TEK is included.

5. What is an appropriate Struck and Lost Rate to use?

- Community has the most experienced walrus hunters and therefore the struck and lost rates are very low.
- More struck and lost by ship traffic.
- Need to improve training to reduce s/l and teach the younger generation.

6. Harvest Reporting and the proposed Walrus Harvest Tag
 - Agreement that having accurate reporting is important.
 - No agreement or disagreement with using a Walrus Harvest Tag (not a licence) to assist with the allocation, monitoring and reporting of harvests if a TAH is established. No other options/ideas were suggested.
7. Harvest Allocation and monitoring
 - There were no concerns raised with the allocation of the TAH/BNL within a Management Unit (following the NLCA);
 - There were no concerns raised with the walrus fishery being closed once the TAH/harvest level is reached;
 - No concerns were raised with developing Information Booklets for hunters.
8. Other issues
 - Community monitoring would be problematic as reporting on other hunters is not encouraged.
 - Should use community hunt rules.
 - Rules for tourism, ship traffic and exploration need to be put in place.
 - It is important to include IQ and traditional knowledge in all aspects of management and decision-making.
 - Further consideration needs to be given to how the TAH could be carried over between years if the harvest level is not reached in one year.

Hall Beach, May 30, 2014

HTO Meeting- afternoon; Public meeting- evening

Walrus Working Group representatives: Joshua Kango (QWB; co-chair); Allison McPhee (DFO; co-chair); Paul Irngaut (NTI); Danica Crystal (NWMB); Richard Moore (DFO, Iqaluit); Lianne Postma (DFO, Science).

At both meetings, PowerPoint presentations were given (attached) that introduces the management plan, the history of the initiative, the purpose of the plan and an overview of the content. This was followed by discussion and feedback.

Specific discussions took place around the following issues:

1. Support for a Walrus Management Plan?

- Discussed the growing national and international attention being given to how Canada manages the walrus fishery and some pressures (e.g. CITES and possible request to up-list walrus, COSEWIC).
- Need to further harmonize walrus management with the NLCA (section 5.6.25 and increased role for HTOs/RWOs in walrus management).
- Agreement that a management plan is a good idea.
- The Management Plan needs to include the most current and up-to-date information.

2. DFO Science advice:

- The survey coverage was not complete and not all animals were counted. Do not agree with the population abundance estimates.
- The Total Allowable Removal estimates are too low.
- There should be more local involvement in the surveys.
- Surveys need to be completed in all seasons and over a number of years before a TAH is established. Surveys are not recent enough.
- Walrus population size is stable and healthy.
- Studies on other habitat interactions and migrations between stocks should be completed.

3. Sustainable Harvest Level Recommendations/ TAH:

- The community does not support the Total Allowable Landed Catch (TALC) recommended by DFO. The numbers presented are too low. This will encourage hunters to not report, or falsely report. It will also cause fighting between communities that harvest from the same Management Unit.
- The numbers presented will not provide for the current local demand.
- The current quota of 4 walrus/Inuk/year should remain.
- If a TAH is established, it should be based on how many walrus are needed by the community and set by the community.
- The sport hunt allocation should be a separate allocation.
- The TALC is too low to support the growing inter-settlement trade in walrus meat.
- Concerned that if a TAH is established too low, it will stay at that level even if there is new information to support a higher TAH.
- Suggested that a TAH allocation for Hall Beach of 75-100 could be a reasonable number.
- The enforcement of the TAH will be important.

4. Are the proposed Management Unit boundaries correct?
 - The boundary for AW-04 should be further south.
 - There was no consensus on where exactly the boundary line should be. Need to ensure TEK is included.
5. What is an appropriate Struck and Lost Rate to use?
 - Experienced walrus hunters in Hall Beach and therefore the struck and lost rates are very low.
 - The struck and lost rate should be set after a TAH is established.
 - Need to improve training to reduce s/l and teach the younger generation.
6. Harvest Reporting and the proposed Walrus Harvest Tag
 - Agreement that having accurate reporting is important.
 - No agreement or disagreement with using a Walrus Harvest Tag (not a licence) to assist with the allocation, monitoring and reporting of harvests if a TAH is established. No other options were suggested. A tagging system works for other species and it could work for walrus.
7. Harvest Allocation and monitoring
 - There were no concerns raised with the allocation of the TAH/BNL within a Management Unit and/or between HTOs (following the NLCA);
 - There were no concerns raised with the walrus fishery being closed once the TAH/harvest level is reached;
 - No concerns were raised with developing Information Booklets for hunters.
8. Other issues
 - It is important to include IQ and traditional knowledge in all aspects of management and decision-making.
 - Inuit and local communities need more involvement in the surveys: the design, conducting the survey, reviewing results, analyzing the results, and making decisions based on those results.