

**SUBMISSION TO THE
NUNAVUT WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT BOARD**

FOR

Information: X

Decision:

Issue: Type of Hearing Required to Establish a Management Unit Boundary and a Total Allowable Harvest for the Foxe Basin Atlantic Walrus Stock

Background:

Co-management organizations in Nunavut, through established Walrus Working Groups, have been developing an Integrated Fisheries Management Plan (IFMP) for Atlantic walrus in the Nunavut Settlement Area (NSA). The purpose of the IFMP is to identify the main objectives and requirements for the Atlantic walrus fishery in the NSA, as well as the management measures that will be used to achieve these objectives. For some stocks where there is science advice, new harvest levels will be recommended as well as non-quota limitations. Recognizing the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board's (NWMB) authority under the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement (NLCA), these requests for decision will be submitted to the NWMB. At the November 2013 Walrus Working Group meeting, the goal of having a final IFMP in place by January 2016 was established (see Appendix 1).

In November 2013, the Department of Fisheries & Oceans Canada (DFO) published the Scientific Advisory Report, "Estimates of Abundance and Total Allowable Removals for Atlantic Walrus in the Canadian Arctic" (SAR 2013/034¹), which included estimates of abundance and Total Allowable Removals for four (4) of the six (6) walrus stocks in the eastern Canadian Arctic. Based on the recent science advice and the reported landed catch data, there may be concerns with the sustainability of current harvest levels for the proposed Foxe Basin management unit. The NWMB considered the scientific information in making its 2014 Walrus Sport Hunt decisions, but determined that as a proposal for decision to establish new harvest levels had not been submitted, the existing regulatory quotas were in effect and all 2014 walrus sport hunt applications were approved².

In her letter accepting the NWMB's decision, the Minister of DFO advised the NWMB that given the concerns identified in the Science Advisory Report, the Department would be providing the NWMB with a proposal for decision to establish a Total Allowable Harvest level for the proposed Foxe Basin management unit in advance of the 2015 walrus sport hunt season to provide for the conservation of walrus in the Foxe Basin management unit³.

¹ http://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/csas-sccs/Publications/SAR-AS/2013/2013_034-eng.html

² February 17, 2014, NWMB letter to the Minister of DFO: Re: the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board's decisions on walrus sport hunt applications for 2014.

³ April 16, 2014, Minister of DFO's letter to the NWMB on the 2014 walrus sport hunt.

Therefore, the timeline for developing the proposed walrus management system in the Nunavut Settlement Area has been modified as follows:

- July 1, 2014, submit to the NWMB a *Proposal for Decision* to: (1) establish a Management Unit for the Foxe Basin stocks of Atlantic walrus; and (2) establish a Total Allowable Harvest for the Foxe Basin Management Unit.

The remaining decisions will be submitted to the NWMB as identified in the revised process timeline included in Appendix 2.

The Walrus Working Group has been advised of the revisions to the process and timeline. This will be discussed with the communities and Hunters & Trappers Organizations during the community consultations taking place May 28-June 4, 2014 to review and discuss the draft Atlantic Walrus IFMP and the proposed new management measures.

It is requested that the NWMB provide DFO with an indication of the type of hearing that would be required to establish a Management Unit Boundary and a Total Allowable Harvest for the Foxe Basin Atlantic Walrus Stock (e.g. written, electronic or in-person), and if possible, an indication of when that hearing could be held.

Submitted by:

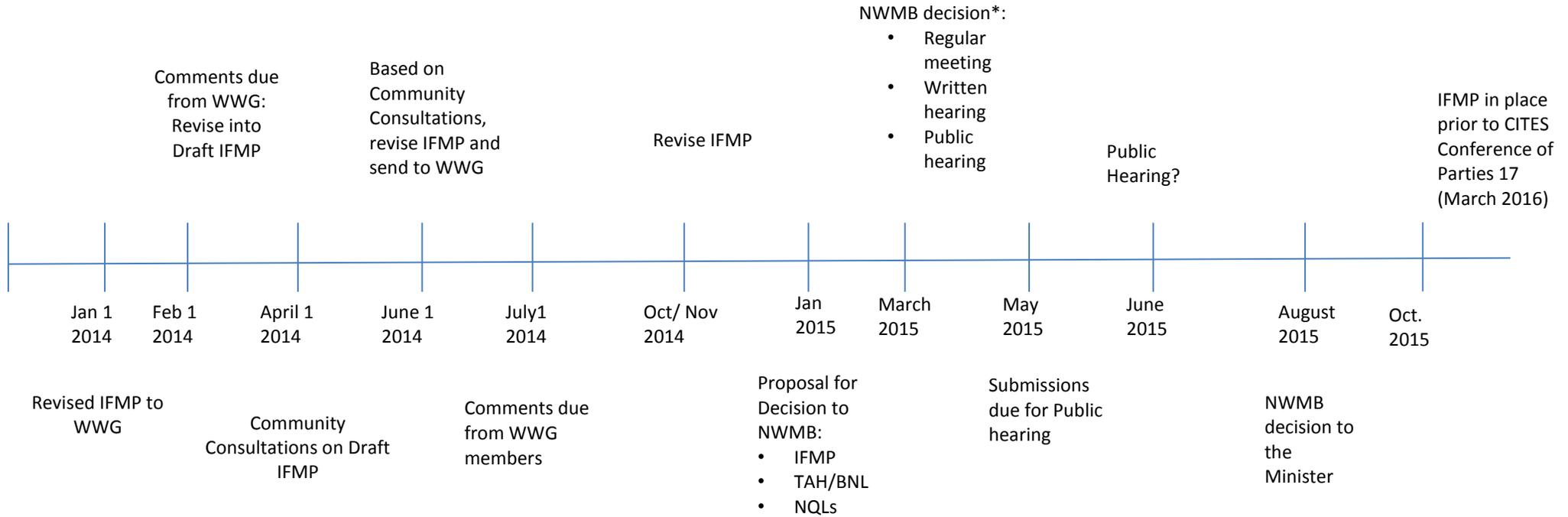
Resource Management
Central and Arctic Region
Fisheries and Oceans Canada

Date: May 05, 2014

Attachments:

- 1) Appendix 1: November 2013 Timeline
- 2) Appendix 2: Draft Revised Timeline: Key Goals/Benchmarks for Developing the Proposed Walrus Management System in the Nunavut Settlement Area

APPENDIX 1- Draft Timeline- November 2013

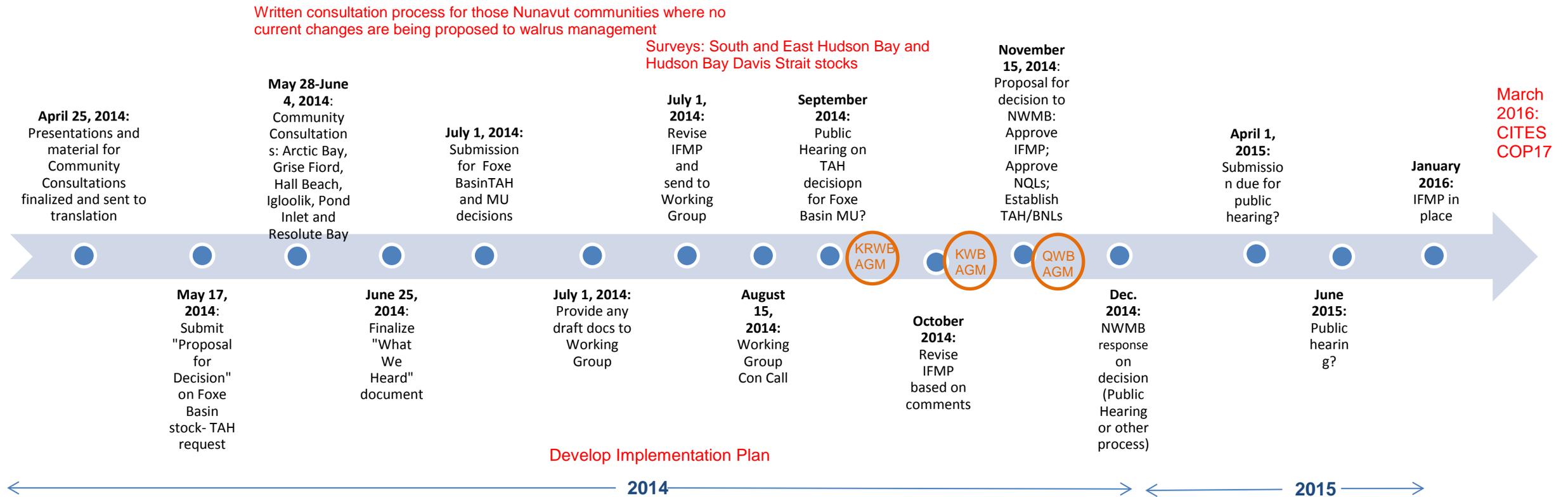


WWG=Walrus Working Group

* For discussion purposes, the rest of the proposed timeline will be based on the NWMB deciding to conduct a public hearing

APPENDIX 2:

Draft Revised Timeline: Key Goals/Benchmarks for Developing the Proposed Walrus Management System in the Nunavut Settlement Area



* This timeline is provided as a guide to identify the steps and processes involved in developing the walrus IFMP. The dates provided represent a best-case scenario and are largely dependent on process timelines identified in the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement or the NWMB Governance Document