

SUBMISSION TO THE

NUNAVUT WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT BOARD



FOR

Information: _____

Decision: X

Issue: Update on Narwhal Management and DFO Consultations

Background: On January 11th, 2011 NWMB staff (RK, LF) met with DFO, NTI and GN Fisheries and Sealing to discuss future narwhal management in Nunavut. Pierre Richard with DFO Science provided the science rational behind DFO's recommendation to manage narwhal based on summering stocks. NTI expressed concern that to date there has been a lack of meaningful community consultations with regards to DFO's recommendation to manage narwhal based on summering stocks. NWMB staff stated that the Board will not consider the decision on the management system for narwhal until DFO has provided recommendations on the management of narwhal based on both summering stocks and populations, including recommended non-quota limitations (NQLs), formally requested by the NWMB in a January 19th, 2011 letter to the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans. The Co-management partners committed to meet in early February to discuss a co-operative way forward on this issue.

On February 4th, 2011 NWMB staff (RK, LF and AS) met with DFO, NTI and GN Fisheries and Sealing to develop a co-operative way forward for the management and establishment of Total Allowable Harvest (TAH) levels for narwhal in Nunavut. All parties were in agreement that there is a need for community consultations on how to manage narwhal in 2011 and into the future. It was also recognized that there is a parallel process that has to take place with the establishment of narwhal TAH levels – the decision on the basic needs level (BNL) for narwhal, as per NLCA S 5.6.25.

DFO proposed that the Co-management organizations form a working group in the near future to explore management considerations with regards to narwhal management based on both summering stocks and populations. The purpose of this working group would be to discuss management recommendations, including recommended non-quota limitations (NQLs), for community consideration during proposed consultations. The meeting of this working group has been proposed by NWMB staff to take place during the week of March 28th – 31st. Both the NWMB and NTI agreed that participation in the DFO consultations is conditional on this working group meeting prior to the community consultations; without this, the NWMB and NTI will not be prepared for meaningful consultations with Inuit.

Department of Fisheries and Oceans Proposed Narwhal Consultations

On February 11th, 2011 Bob Lambe, DFO Regional Director General of the Central & Arctic Region provided the NWMB and NTI with a draft plan for DFO community consultations. The draft plan reports that DFO is planning to conduct consultations with HTOs, RWOs, communities, and other co-management partners that share responsibility for narwhal. The primary purpose of these consultations will be to share information and seek Inuit views on narwhal management in 2011 and future years, focusing on three main areas:

- The development of a collective understanding of narwhal populations, using both Inuit and scientific information. DFO Science advice on narwhal will be discussed, including the recent recommendation to manage narwhals based on summering stocks.

- The management recommendations associated with the two approaches (summering stocks and population level), recognizing the need for co-managers to work together to more fully develop management recommendations under the summering stock approach.
- The process related to DFO's responsibilities under CITES with respect to issuing export permits for narwhal tusks and other narwhal products.

Participating community HTOs, RWOs, Elders and other residents will be encouraged to provide local and traditional information for consideration on how co-managers should manage narwhal. The information gathered during these consultations will be incorporated into information DFO will provide to the NWMB for consideration on which management approach to take (i.e. populations or summering stocks).

The proposal for community consultations includes six central meetings (Repulse Bay, Kugaaruk, Resolute Bay, Arctic Bay, Pond Inlet, and Qikiqtarjuaq) from April 27th to May 5th, 2011, and will include representatives from 22 Nunavut communities that currently harvest narwhal in the NSA. DFO will cover the travel and honorarium costs for the RWO and HTO delegates, and meeting logistics in each of the six host communities. DFO also strongly encourages representatives from NTI and the NWMB to participate, in order to ensure all organizations are represented in the discussions.

Nunavut Tunngavik Inc. Consultation Plan Review

NTI reviewed the DFO consultation plan to determine if the level of community consultation, as planned, is adequate to address the consultation needs of narwhal management in Nunavut; on March 2nd, 2011 they provide a response.

NTI staff contacted a number of RWOs and HTOs for comments on both the narwhal issues and the planned consultations. The following comments were made by HTOs:

- HTOs are only aware of DFO identifying two populations of narwhal, and are not aware of the science advice to consider TAH levels for narwhal based on summering stocks;
- HTOs request that DFO consult with each community that harvests narwhal;
- The recent restriction on trade in narwhal tusks was unexpected by HTOs, who have been harvesting narwhal under a quota system – they are not clear what has changed.

In addition to the comments from HTOs, NTI has recommended that:

- The current consultation plan to meet in only six communities for one day is not considered to be adequate consultations by the affected HTOs and RWOs;
- Meetings take place in every community affected by the proposed changes to narwhal management in Nunavut;
- All relevant information pertaining to the management of narwhals and to the trade in narwhal parts be provided to the HTOs and RWOs in translated documents prior to the community meetings; and
- Sufficient time be provided following the consultations for Inuit, HTOs and RWOs to prepare a response to the management options and trade considerations presented;

Recommendations: NWMB staff recommends that wildlife staff participate in the planned community consultations as observers in order to interact with HTO and community members, and to hear directly their views and concerns on the future management of narwhal in Nunavut. This participation should be conditional on DFO, NTI, and NWMB staff meeting prior to the community consultations to discuss management recommendations with regards to NQLs for the proposed management systems (proposed for the week of March 28th – 31st), or DFO providing the requested information on DFO's management recommendations requested in two

separate letters to DFO on January 19th, 2011 and March 4th, 2011. NWMB staff are of the opinion that without an opportunity to discuss or review DFO recommendations, the NWMB will not be in a position to participate in meaningful consultations with Inuit.

Draft Resolution: *“RESOLVED that the NWMB approve the participation of NWMB wildlife staff in community consultations on narwhal management, conditional on DFO agreeing to a two-day working group meeting with NWMB and NTI staff to discuss management recommendations, or providing a report with DFO’s recommendations, prior to the consultations.”*

Consultations: Robert Kidd, Director of Wildlife; Adam Schneidmiller, Wildlife Management Biologist

Prepared By: Lesley Farrow, Wildlife Management Biologist

Date: March 4th, 2011