

SUBMISSION TO THE

NUNAVUT WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT BOARD



FOR

Information: X

Decision:

Issue: DFO Community Consultations on Narwhal

Background

On February 4th, 2011 at a meeting of the Co-management partners (NWMB, DFO, NTI and the GN) to develop a co-operative way forward for the management and establishment of Total Allowable Harvest (TAH) levels for Nunavut narwhal, DFO announced plans for community consultations. At the Regular Meeting of the NWMB on March 23rd, 2011, Wildlife staff briefed the Board on DFO's narwhal community consultation plan, which included meetings with HTOs, RWOs, communities, and other co-management partners in six communities throughout the three regions of Nunavut (representing the five Baffin Bay population summering stocks, and the Northern Hudson Bay population). The consultations were proposed for the week of April 27th to May 5th, and were to include representatives from twenty-two (22) Nunavut communities that harvest narwhal in the NSA. The primary purpose of the consultations was to share information and seek Inuit views on narwhal management in 2011 and future years, focusing on:

- The development of a collective understanding of narwhal populations, using both Inuit and scientific information. DFO Science advice on narwhal was to be discussed, including discussion of the summering stocks population model.
- The management recommendations associated with the two approaches (summering stocks and populations), recognizing the need for co-managers to work together to 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.

DFO proposed that the Co-management organizations form a working group prior to the consultations to explore management considerations based on both summering stocks and populations, the purpose of which would be to discuss management recommendations, including non-quota limitations (NQLs), for community consideration during the consultations. DFO later stated they did not have sufficient time to participate in the working group prior to the consultations; however both the NWMB and NTI felt they would not be prepared for meaningful consultations with Inuit without discussing management implications prior to the consultations. DFO's proposed compromise was to remove discussions on the management of narwhal from the spring community consultation tour and focus on the scientific information available with respect to narwhal populations and summering stocks, as well as DFO's responsibilities with respect to CITES. DFO would then commit to a two-day workshop to discuss narwhal

management with Co-management partners in the summer 2011, with a follow-up round of community consultations to discuss narwhal management in the fall 2011.

Final Plans for the Community Consultation Tour

The dates of the narwhal community consultation tour were delayed twice; initially planned for April 27th to May 5th, they were delayed until the week of May 16th, and then further delayed until May 25th. Following notification from both the Kivalliq and the Kitikmeot Regional Wildlife Boards that their members would not be participating in the consultations primarily because DFO was not planning on visiting every community, the tour was re-organized to include meetings in seven communities within the Baffin Region. The community consultation tour included proposed visits to Clyde River, Pond Inlet, Arctic Bay, Resolute, Grise Fiord, Igloolik, and Qikiqtarjuaq. On May 19th the Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board also provided notification that they would also not be participating in the planned consultations in part due to the fact that meetings would not be taking place in every community affected by proposed changes to narwhal management. DFO is covering the consultation costs of standard honoraria, airfare and accommodation for two HTO representatives from each of the communities, as well as the costs of meeting logistics in each of the seven host communities.

The narwhal community consultations were to include discussions on:

- DFO Science advice about narwhal, including discussion of summering stocks;
- The process related to DFO's responsibilities under CITES with respect to issuing export permits for narwhal tusks and other narwhal products, including the scientific basis supporting the CITES non-detriment finding (NDF).

Results of the Consultation Tour

The consultation tour was conducted from May 25th to June 1st (Clyde River-May 25th; Pond Inlet-May 26th; Arctic Bay-May 27th; Resolute Bay-May 28th; Igloolik-May 30th; Qikiqtarjuaq-May 31st). The Director of Wildlife Management participated on the consultation tour and indicated in opening remarks that the NWMB was participating on the tour as an observer with the understanding that the purpose of the consultation tour was to present recent scientific results and the CITES process with the expectation that further consultations would procedure to discuss management considerations in another forum.

In general, the following comments were consistent across a majority of communities based on the interpretation from the NWMB's Director of Wildlife Management:

- Some agreement regarding the summering stocks of narwhal based on the DFO science presentation;
- The importance of being able to export narwhal by-products;
- The importance of increasing communication among co-management partners and a desire to work together on issues;
- Current frustrations with the time and process requirements to consider quota increases or the establishment of Total Allowable Harvests.

Next Steps

The following are the next steps in the process for proceeding with narwhal management issues:

- DFO will develop and provide to all communities and co-management partners a “Consultation Report” summarizing the consultation tour;
- DFO has scheduled a peer-review CITES meeting in mid-July to discuss the 2011 Non-detriment finding (NDF) for narwhal. DFO has indicated that they will invite representatives from the NWMB, NTI, the GN, and the Regional Wildlife Organizations;
- DFO is currently planning to hold a workshop in mid-July to discuss narwhal management. NWMB staff have been informed that an agenda will be circulated for comment in the near future;
- DFO is currently considering late summer / early fall consultations to discuss narwhal management with communities;
- NWMB staff will issue the invitation for the pre-hearing conference on S 5.6.25 of the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement, as soon as reasonably possible (*Note: the invitation has been delayed from being issued as there have been discussions about coordinating the proposed July management workshop with the pre-hearing conference*).

NWMB staff will inform the Board of any further developments.

Consulted: Lesley Farrow, Wildlife Management Biologist, NWMB

Prepared By: Adam Schneidmiller, Director of Wildlife Management

Date: June 8th, 2011