

SUBMISSION TO THE NUNAVUT WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT BOARD

FOR

Information:

Decision: X

Issue: A decision is needed to approve/not approve the Blue Whale (*Balaenoptera musculus*) (Northwest Atlantic population) Action Plan.

Background:

The Blue Whale (Northwest Atlantic population) was assessed by the Committee of the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC) as an Endangered species in 2002 and added to the List of Wildlife Species at Risk List in 2005. The NWMB was notified of the COSEWIC assessment and asked to make a decision on listing in 2004. The NWMB was also asked about and approved a Recovery Strategy in 2007 which was made official in 2010. As an Endangered species, the requirement under the *Species at Risk Act* calls for the creation of an Action Plan within five years of listing.

Article 5.2.34 (d) (i) of the Nunavut Agreement states that the NWMB shall, at its discretion, approve plans for management, classification, protection, restocking or propagation, cultivation or husbandry of particular wildlife, including endangered species. Details of how to achieve approval of management plans, recovery strategies and action plans are not addressed under the 2008 "*A memorandum of understanding to harmonize the designation of rare, threatened and endangered species under the Nunavut Lands Claim Agreement and the listing of wildlife species under the Species at Risk Act*".

The Blue Whale (Northwest Atlantic population) Action Plan (Executive Summary attached and translated into Inuktitut) outlines what needs to be done to begin or further support the strategic direction set out in the Recovery Strategy. As the Blue Whale is a rare visitor to Nunavut waters, no work has been carried out in this area and none is planned. The Action Plan outlines what needs to be done in areas most frequented by Blue Whale. As part of the process in creating an Action Plan, the NWMB is requested to review this final document, provide any comments, and state whether they approve of this action plan.

This document was originally brought to the Board in March 2016, at which time the Board requested that review not occur until the document was considered final. The document is now considered final.

The final action plan (marked as proposed until the Board makes a decision) provides the general and detailed information that supports the recovery of the Blue Whale (Northwest Atlantic population). The action plan describes the specific measures that will provide the best ways to increase knowledge, reduce threats and monitor the species.

Recommendations:

The NWMB review the updated action plan for Blue Whale (Northwest Atlantic population), provide any comments to DFO and it's decision.

Prepared by:

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Date:

02 August 2019