



## NUNAVUT WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT BOARD

Agenda: RM002-2020

June 10, 2020

Zoom Virtual Meeting Platform



	No:	Item:	Tab:	Presenter:	Time
9:00 AM – 9:05 AM	1	Open Meeting		Chairperson	5 minutes
9:05 AM - 9:10 AM	2	Declaration of Conflict of Interest		Chairperson	5 minutes
9:10 AM - 9:15 AM	3	Agenda: Review and Approval	1	Chairperson	5 minutes
		<b>Department of Environment - GN (GN-DOE)</b>			
9:15 AM - 10:00 AM	4	Nunavut Polar Bear Credit Calculation System [Decision]	2	GN-DOE	45 minutes
10:00 AM - 10:15 AM		<b>BREAK</b>			15 minutes
		<b>Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board (QWB)</b>			
10:15 AM - 10:45 AM	5	Credit reset for the Southern Hudson Bay polar bear subpopulation [Decision]	3	QWB	30 minutes
10:45 AM - 11:15 AM	6	Accumulation and use of polar bear credits [Decision]	4	QWB	30 minutes
11:15 AM - 11:45 AM	7	Request to Increase Baffin Island Caribou Total Allowable Harvest and to change the Non-quota Limitation [Decision]	5	QWB	30 minutes
11:45 AM - 1:15 PM		<b>LUNCH</b>			1 hr 30 minutes
1:15 PM - 1:45 PM	8	Request to amend the summer-stock harvest management system for Baffin Island Narwhal [Decision]	6	QWB	30 minutes

		<b>Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO)</b>			
<i>1:45 PM - 2:15 PM</i>	9	Seasonal bridging of Nunavut and Nunavik allocations in the Northern Shrimp Fishery in the Western Assessment Zones and the Davis Strait Management Units [Decision and Recommendation]	7	DFO	30 minutes
		<b>Arctic Fishery Alliance</b>			
<i>2:15 PM - 3:00 PM</i>	10	Arctic Fishery Alliance Request to delay a Full Call for Multiple-Year Quota Application for the 2020 Season [Decision]	8	AFA	45 minutes
	11	Adjournment		Chairperson	





**SUBMISSION TO THE**

**NUNAVUT WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT BOARD**

**FOR**

**Information:**

**Decision: X**

**Issue:** Administration of the Polar Bear Harvest at an up to 1:1 female to male sex ratio, along with an adjusted Credit Calculation and Credit Request system.

**Background:**

- The Department of Environment (DOE) participated in the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board (NWMB) public hearing for the Nunavut Polar Bear Co-Management Plan in Iqaluit from November 13-16, 2018.
- The specific components of polar bear management that were criticized the most were the current practice, for all but one subpopulation, of a 2:1 harvest sex ratio (two males harvested for every female) and the flexible quota system, which was perceived to be complicated and overly punitive in response to overharvest situations.
- DOE recommended that for all polar bear subpopulations in Nunavut, a harvest sex ratio of up to 50% females should be adopted and communities could use up to 50% of their annual allocation to harvest female bears. Along with this recommendation came a simplified administrative and credit calculation system.
- The NWMB decided to approve the recommended harvest sex ratio of up to 50% female bears and the Minister of Environment accepted that decision in August 2019.
- The NWMB made an interim decision to approve the Administrative system in September 2019 and requested that the DOE consult with co-management partners to obtain feedback and re-submit to the Board once feedback was incorporated into the document.

**Current Status:**

- Through external and internal feedback it became clear there was confusion around the exchange and request process for credits.



- In response to this feedback, up-dates were made to the administrative system so that the process could be made clearer.
- Updates were made to the section on credit use and accumulation (Section 5) to ensure harvesters are able to utilize available credits sooner, such as the following harvest season, should they reach a specific level of accumulated credits. This change helps to prevent potential conservation concerns due to high accumulation of credits over many years and attempts to use a large number of credits in one harvest season to avoid losing them when a new Total Allowable Harvest is set.
- Clarification was added to identify when a credit request would go to the NWMB for decision due to a potential conservation concern.
- Additional clarification was added to address the situation where a mother with offspring is killed, but the offspring (cubs-of-the-year, yearlings, juveniles) run away (Section 4.5.2.2).
- The updates to the credit request sections will permit more hunting opportunities for communities that have managed and monitored their harvest well.

### **Consultations:**

In October 2019, the DOE provided a letter, the interim Harvest Administration and Credit Calculation document, and a summarized, plain language document on the changes to the Administration of the Harvest and Credit Calculation system to Nunavut Tunngavik Inc., and all the Regional Wildlife Organizations (to then be shared with their respective Hunters and Trappers Organizations). The DOE requested that the co-management partners have their technical staff review the documents and provide any comments and feedback to the DOE by January 2020. Based on internal and external feedback, the DOE made relevant changes to the submitted document to improve the administrative process and provide clarity.

### **Recommendations:**

1. DOE recommends that the NWMB approve the revised Administration and Credit Calculation system so it can be implemented effectively for the 2020/2021 harvest season.

## **Administration of Nunavut Polar Bear Up to 1:1 Harvest System: The Credit Calculation System**

### **1. Rationale**

During the public hearing process regarding the implementation of Nunavut's Polar Bear Co-Management Plan by the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board, many comments by Inuit organizations were brought forward that favoured a new harvest approach. For years, communities have expressed a desire to adopt a harvest regimen that does not penalize communities as sharply as the flexible quota system when females are overharvested, and that allows harvesting at an equal sex ratio. In response, the **up to one male for every one female harvest option (or 1:1)** was discussed and recommended by the Department of Environment. On August 26, 2019, the Minister of Environment accepted a decision from the NWMB to change the harvest sex ratio of polar bears in Nunavut to allow **up to one female bear to be harvested for every male bear (1:1)**.

Each polar bear subpopulation within Nunavut has a set Total Allowable Harvest (TAH), which is divided among the communities that harvest from the subpopulation, by the appropriate Regional Wildlife Organization(s), as a base allocation. Each harvest season, communities are assigned a harvest quota based on the TAH allocation and any overharvests from previous seasons. Overharvests in one season result in a reduced community quota the following season unless the community has accumulated sufficient credits to compensate for the overharvest. When a community harvests below their harvest quota they can accumulate sex-specific credits to be used in future harvest seasons or shared with other communities.

The updated harvest sex ratio, allowing up to one female bear harvested for every male bear harvested (1:1 sex ratio) does not constrain communities to adhere to the exact 1:1 sex ratio. Rather, it refers to the maximum proportion of female polar bears in the harvest that is allowed under this system. Specifically, a harvest sex ratio of up to 50% females, per community per harvest season, is allowed without entering into an overharvest situation. Males can be harvested up to the limit of the annual recommended quota. Recommended quota allocations can never exceed a 50% female proportion, even when a reduction in quotas occur.

### **2. Overharvest Situation**

2.1. An overharvest situation occurs when:

2.1.1. The female proportion in the annual harvest is greater than 50% of the recommended quota,

- 2.1.2. The male proportion in the annual harvest is in excess of the total recommended quota, or
- 2.1.3 A combination of the male and female harvest exceeds the total recommended quota.

### **3. Implementation**

- 3.1. The implementation of the up to 1:1 harvest system begins with the 2019/2020 harvest season (July 1, 2019). The existing total community annual base allocation (TAH) will be divided by two, in order to determine the up to 1:1 sex ratio for each community, representing the 1:1 base allocation for each community for 2019/2020. This process increases the allowable female proportion of the harvest but does not constrain communities to harvest exactly a 1:1 male to female ratio. The annual base allocation will only change when there is a new subpopulation estimate and/or a new determination of the TAH.
- 3.2. If the base allocation is an odd number, then the TAH will always have one more male than females in order to implement a protective measure for females.
  - 3.2.1. For communities with a TAH of 1, the sex of the allocated tag will alternate annually.
- 3.3. Annual recommended quotas are calculated using the previous harvest year's data.
- 3.4. Recommended quotas will be calculated based on the sections below.

### **4. Mortality Accounting**

- 4.1. All human-caused mortality to polar bears will count towards the annual recommended quota of the nearest community, except Section 4.3.
- 4.2. A naturally abandoned cub or any bear found dead will be recorded as a natural death and not counted against the TAH.
- 4.3. Any bear that is found near death caused by starvation or injury, provided that the injury is not a result of human activity such as hunting or trapping, can be killed as a humane action where the Conservation Officer (CO) will certify that the bear was near death. After certification by the CO, the humane kill (euthanization) will not be counted against the TAH.
- 4.4. If a Nunavut Inuit kills a bear, the tag will come from that person's home community if that community has a TAH in the population from which

the bear was harvested. Otherwise, the closest community to the harvest location must provide the tag.

- 4.5. Harvesting of a family group or members of a family group is illegal in Nunavut; however, there are circumstances where a family group or members of a family group may be destroyed in Defence of Life and Property Kill (DLPK) circumstances.

- 4.5.1. When a female with cubs-of-the-year (COYs), yearlings, or juveniles (2-year old offspring) are **killed**, then

- 4.5.1.1. For TAH determination purposes, the COYS and yearlings are counted as males and only ½ tag each.

- 4.5.1.2. The juveniles (2-year old offspring) are counted as whole tags of whatever sex they are.

- 4.5.2. If the mother is killed but the COYS, yearlings and juveniles **run away** after the female is killed, then

- 4.5.2.1. The COYS and yearlings are counted as ½ tag and all male.

- 4.5.2.2. The juveniles (2-year olds) that run away are considered as surviving animals. If juveniles are pursued and killed they are counted as full tags (see section 4.5.1.2)

- 4.6. In a case where a community overharvests by 1 COY or yearling, credits will be used to cover the harvest. In the event there are not enough credits to cover the overharvest of 0.5 male, the TAH will not be reduced by 0.5 tag at that time, and a record is kept with the Polar Bear Harvest Lab of these fractional reductions. The deduction will occur when there is another COY or yearling harvested to equal a full male bear reduction or if the following year's harvest results in credit accumulation, the 0.5 credit deduction will be taken from the accumulated credits.

## 5. Credits

- 5.1. Available credits may be used to address all types of kills, including accidental, illegal, and DLPKs.
- 5.2. If a community is in an overharvest situation, all available community credits will be applied automatically by the Polar Bear Harvest

Laboratory in order to maximize the community's harvest opportunities the following year.

- 5.3. Credits are specific to a given subpopulation and cannot be used for other subpopulations.
- 5.4. Subpopulation credits accumulate until a new TAH is determined. This may include a subpopulation inventory that has been conducted and a final abundance estimate result is produced. In some circumstances, a completed and finalized harvest risk analysis may also be conducted, or the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board recommends a change in TAH for other management purposes. Under these circumstances, all credits are set back to zero.
- 5.5. Credits are automatically dispersed the following harvest season as tags when communities have accumulated more than 10 credits for either males or females to ensure hunting opportunities are maximized, ensure credits have a maximum chance of being utilized before any new TAH is set, and ensure credits do not accumulate to levels that would potentially represent a conservation concern if used at once.
  - 5.5.1. If automatic disbursement exceeds 25% of the subpopulation TAH, then credits will be disbursed up to 25% of the community TAH.
- 5.6. Credits are accumulated as described in the following sections after the new TAH is implemented, and during any harvest season:
  - 5.6.1 Credits can accumulate for males and females.
  - 5.6.2 Credits accumulate for unused portions of the recommended quota or TAH.
  - 5.6.3 In the case where a community has a recommended quota of zero, and a total harvest of zero, the community's full quota will be restored the following year. No positive credits accumulate when a community's TAH, or recommended quota, is met or exceeded by the harvest of bears, irrespective of the sex composition of the community's total harvest.
  - 5.6.4 No positive credits accumulate when the female proportion of the harvest exceeds 50% of the recommended quota.
  - 5.6.5 Female positive credits can accumulate up to 50% of the total proportion of the TAH or the recommended quota, whichever is less.

- 5.7 Negative credits are possible and represent the number of bears that have been removed from the subpopulation in excess of a community's recommended quota or TAH, whichever is more in excess.

### **Credit exchange and request processes:**

- 5.8 Credits can be exchanged between communities within the same subpopulation.
- 5.8.1 Communities that harvest from the same subpopulation can exchange credits, where needed, in order to restore their full recommended quota rather than facing a reduction when no community credits are available to cover an overharvest. The existing process for credit exchange between communities will be maintained (Figure 1).
- 5.8.2 Requests by communities to use credits to increase their annual recommended quota shall be made according to the process outlined in Figure 2. Credit requests are made to, and approved by, the responsible RWO. The GN will verify and confirm the number of available credits and indicate if the level of credits requested represents a conservation concern.
- 5.8.2.1 Requests for credits that are greater than 25% of the subpopulation TAH in a given harvest year will automatically be sent to the NWMB for review and decision, given the increased potential for a conservation concern.

## **6. Recommended Quota Adjustments**

- 6.1. Reductions caused by an overharvest occur where no credits are available to cover the overharvest.
- 6.2. In order to protect communities from years of reduced or no harvest opportunities, resulting from persistent overharvest, the 1:1 system adapts to allow restoration of the full TAH. The recommended quota will be set to zero in situations in which no credits are available and a quota reduction cannot restore the TAH.
- 6.3. Depending on the number of negative credits, there may be continued reductions in the recommended quota in order to restore credits to zero and reinstate the full TAH.

**Reductions in the recommended quota and credit administration occur as follows:**

**6.4. Adjustments in Cases of Female Overharvest:**

6.4.1. When a community harvests greater than 50% females of the recommended quota, a reduction of next year's recommended quota will occur if there are not sufficient female credits to cover the overharvest. The following year's quota will be reduced by the number of females that were overharvested and not covered by credits. The reduction will affect the female proportion of next year's quota. If there is no female allocation available to reduce and no credits available, the reduction will be applied to the overall quota.

**6.5. Adjustments in Cases of Male Overharvest:**

6.5.1. When the harvest exceeds the total recommended quota or the TAH, and the female proportion of the harvest is less than 50%, then an overharvest of males occurred. Where application of credits does not cover this overharvest, a reduction equalling the number of overharvested males will be applied to the next year's recommended quota.

**6.6. Adjustments in Cases of Combination Male and Female Overharvest:**

6.6.1. When females are harvested in excess of 50% of the recommended quota and the sum of the total harvest (males and females together) exceeds the recommended quota, a reduction in next year's recommended quota will occur for each sex based on the number of bears overharvested.

**7. Floating Tags**

"Floating tags" are additional tags allocated by RWOs. These floating tags can be administered up to a 1:1 sex ratio, at the discretion of the RWO. Once allocated by the RWO, they are added to the total annual base allocation for the recipient community for that year.

7.1. Unused floating tags are accumulated as credits in the sex they were allocated.

7.2. The floating tags, when allocated by the RWO, should not create a situation where the female proportion exceeds 50%.





## Polar Bear Credit Exchange Process

Polar Bear Laboratory, Department of Environment, Version 1.0 2020

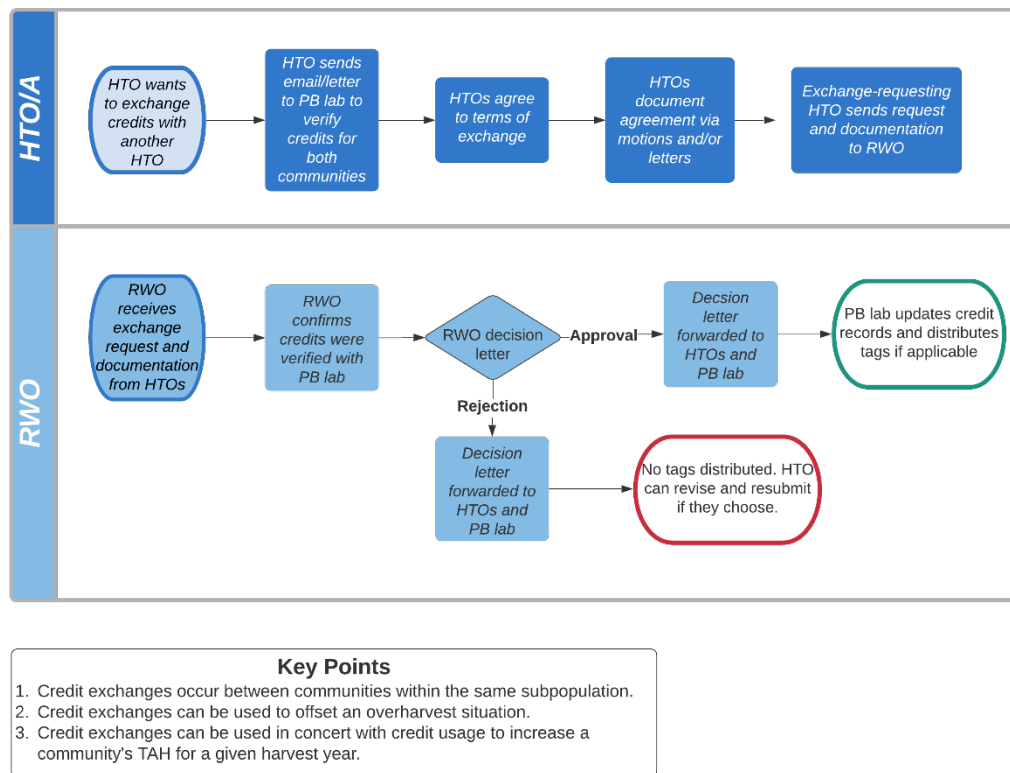


Figure 1. Flow chart detailing the credit exchange process.

Polar Bear Laboratory, Department of Environment, Version 1.0 2020



- \* A conservation concern exists when the use of requested credits represents a substantial increase in the number of bears being harvested in a given year, or a substantial increase in number of females being harvested in a given year. There is no set number that would represent a conservation concern because this depends on the subpopulation status, the current TAH and the abundance estimate upon which the TAH is based, and the historic level of actual harvest for the subpopulation, among other things.

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(867) 975-7790  
 (867) 975-8809  
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# Administration of Nunavut Polar Bear 1:1 Harvest System: The Flexible Quota System

## 1. Rationale

During the public hearing process regarding the implementation of Nunavut's Polar Bear Co-Management Plan by the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board, many comments by Inuit organizations were brought forward that favoured a new harvest approach. For years, communities have expressed a desire to adopt a harvest regimen that does not penalize communities as sharply as the flexible quota system when females are overharvested, and that allows harvesting at an equal sex ratio. In response, the **one male for every one female harvest option (or 1:1)** was discussed and recommended by the Department of Environment. On August 26, 2019, the Minister of Environment accepted a decision from the NWMB to change the harvest sex ratio of polar bears in Nunavut to allow up to one female bear to be harvested for every male bear (1:1).

Each polar bear subpopulation within Nunavut has a set Total Allowable Harvest (TAH), which is divided among the communities that harvest from the subpopulation, by the appropriate Regional Wildlife Organization(s), as a base allocation. Each harvest season, communities are assigned a harvest quota based on the TAH allocation and any overharvests from previous seasons. Overharvests in one season result in a reduced community quota the following season, unless the community has accumulated sufficient credits to compensate for the overharvest. When a community harvests below their harvest quota they can accumulate sex specific credits to be used in future harvest seasons or shared with other communities.

The updated harvest sex ratio, allowing one female bear harvested for every male bear harvested (1:1 sex ratio) does not constrain communities to adhere to the exact 1:1 sex ratio. Rather, it refers to the maximum proportion of female polar bears in the harvest that is allowed under this system. Specifically, a harvest sex ratio of up to 50% females, per community per harvest season, is allowed without entering into an overharvest situation. Males can be harvested up to the limit of the annual recommended quota. Recommended quota allocations can never exceed a 50% female proportion, even when a reduction in quotas occur.

## 2. Overharvest Situation

2.1. An overharvest situation occurs when:

- 2.1.1. The female proportion in the annual harvest is greater than 50% of the recommended quota,
- 2.1.2. The male proportion in the annual harvest is in excess of the total recommended quota, or

2.1.3 A combination of the male and female harvest exceeds the total recommended quota.

2.2. An overharvest (males and females combined) over the TAH, or when the number of females taken is over 50%, results in a reduction of the quota the following year either by the number of bears over the TAH or by the number of females that exceed 50% of the recommended quota, whichever is more.

### **3. Implementation**

3.1. The implementation of the 1:1 harvest system begins with the 2019/2020 harvest season (July 1, 2019). The existing total community annual base allocation (TAH) will be divided by two, in order to determine the 1:1 sex ratio for each community, representing the 1:1 base allocation for each community for 2019/2020. This process increases the allowable female proportion of the harvest. The annual base allocation will only change when there is a new subpopulation estimate and/or a new determination of the TAH.

3.2. If the base allocation is an odd number then the TAH will always have one more male than females in order to implement a protective measure for females.

3.3. Annual recommended quotas are calculated using the previous year's harvest data.

3.4. Recommended quotas will be calculated based on the sections below.

### **4. Mortality Accounting**

4.1. All human-caused mortality to polar bears will count towards the annual recommended quota of the nearest community, except Section 4.3.

4.2. A naturally abandoned cub will be counted as a natural death and not counted against the TAH.

4.3. Any bear that is found near death caused by starvation or injury, provided that the injury is not a result of human activity such as hunting or trapping, can be killed as a humane action where the Conservation Officer (CO) will certify that the bear was near death. After certification by the CO, the humane kill (euthanization) will not be counted against the TAH.

4.4. If a Nunavut Inuit kills a bear, the tag will come from that person's home community if that community has a TAH in the population from which



the bear was harvested. Otherwise, closest community to the harvest location must provide the tag.

- 4.5. Harvesting of a family group or members of a family group is illegal in Nunavut; however, there are circumstances where a family group or members of a family group may be destroyed in Defence of Life and Property Kill (DLPK) circumstances.
  - 4.5.1. When a female with cubs-of the-year (COYs), yearlings, or juveniles (2-year old offspring) are killed, then
    - 4.5.1.1. For TAH determination purposes, the COYS and yearlings are counted as males and only  $\frac{1}{2}$  tag each.
    - 4.5.1.2. The juveniles (2-year old offspring) are counted as whole tags of whatever sex they are.
  - 4.5.2. If the mother is killed but the COYS, yearlings and juveniles run away after the female is killed, then
    - 4.5.2.1. The COYS and yearlings are counted as  $\frac{1}{2}$  tag and all male.
    - 4.5.2.2. The juveniles (2-year olds) are each counted as whole tags and the sex is counted as  $\frac{1}{2}$  male and  $\frac{1}{2}$  female.
- 4.6. In a case where a community overharvests by 1 COY or yearling, credits will be used to cover the harvest. In the event there are not enough credits to cover the overharvest of 0.5 male, the TAH will not be reduced by 0.5 tag at that time, and a record is kept with the Polar Bear Harvest Lab of these fractional reductions. The deduction will occur when there is another COY or yearling harvested to equal a full male bear reduction or if the following year's harvest results in credit accumulation, the 0.5 credit deduction will be taken from the accumulated credits.

## **5. Credits**

- 5.1. Available credits may be used to address all types of kills, including accidental, illegal, and DLPKs.
- 5.2. If a community is in an overharvest situation, all available community credits will be applied automatically by the Polar Bear Harvest Laboratory in order to maximize the community's harvest opportunities the following year.

- 5.3. Credits are specific to a given subpopulation and cannot be used for other subpopulations.
- 5.4. Subpopulation credits accumulate until a new TAH is determined. This may include a subpopulation inventory that has been conducted and a final abundance estimate result is produced. In some circumstances, a completed and finalized harvest risk analysis may also be conducted, or the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board recommends a change in TAH for other management purposes. Under these circumstances, all credits are set back to zero.

**Credits are accumulated as described in the following sections after the new TAH is implemented, and during any harvest season:**

- 5.5. Credits can accumulate for males and females.
- 5.6. Credits accumulate for unused portions of the recommended quota or TAH.
  - 5.6.1. In the case where a community has a recommended quota of zero, and a total harvest of zero, the community's full quota will be restored the following year. No positive credits accumulate when a community's TAH, or recommended quota, is met or exceeded by the harvest of bears, irrespective of the sex composition of the community's total harvest.
  - 5.6.2. No positive credits accumulate when the female proportion of the harvest exceeds 50% of the recommended quota.
  - 5.6.3. Female positive credits can accumulate up to 50% of the total proportion of the TAH or the recommended quota, whichever is less.
- 5.7. Negative credits are possible and represent the number of bears that have been removed from the subpopulation in excess of a community's recommended quota or TAH, whichever is more in excess.
- 5.8. Credits can be exchanged between communities within the same subpopulation.
  - 5.8.1. Communities that harvest from the same subpopulation can exchange credits, where needed, in order to restore their full recommended quota rather than facing a reduction when no community credits are available to cover an overharvest. The existing process for credit exchange between communities will be maintained.

- 5.8.2. Requests by communities to use credits to increase their annual recommended quota shall be made to, and approved by, the responsible RWO. The GN will verify and confirm the number of available credits.

## **6. Recommended Quota Adjustments**

- 6.1. Reductions caused by an overharvest occur where no credits are available to cover the overharvest.
- 6.2. In order to protect communities from years of reduced or no harvest opportunities, resulting from persistent overharvest, the 1:1 system adapts to allow restoration of the full TAH. The recommended quota will be set to zero in situations in which no credits are available and a quota reduction cannot restore the TAH.
- 6.3. Depending on the number of negative credits, there may be continued reductions in the recommended quota in order to restore credits to zero and reinstate the full TAH.

### **Reductions in the recommended quota and credit administration occur as follows:**

- 6.4. Adjustments in Cases of Female Overharvest:
- 6.4.1. When a community harvests greater than 50% females of the recommended quota, a reduction of next year's recommended quota will occur if there are not sufficient female credits to cover the overharvest. The following year's quota will be reduced by the number of females that were overharvested and not covered by credits. The reduction will affect the female proportion of next year's quota.
- 6.5. Adjustments in Cases of Male Overharvest:
- 6.5.1. When the harvest exceeds the total recommended quota or the TAH, and the female proportion of the harvest is less than 50%, then an overharvest of males occurred. Where application of credits does not cover this overharvest, a reduction equalling the number of overharvested males will be applied to the next year's recommended quota.
- 6.6. Adjustments in Cases of Combination Male and Female Overharvest:
- 6.6.1. When females are harvested in excess of 50% of the recommended quota and the sum of the total harvest (males and

females together) exceeds the recommended quota, a reduction in next year's recommended quota will occur for each gender based on the number of bears overharvested.

## **7. Floating Tags**

"Floating tags" are additional tags allocated by RWOs. These floating tags can be administered up to a 1:1 sex ratio, at the discretion of the RWO. Once allocated by the RWO, they are added to the total annual base allocation for the recipient community for that year.

- 7.1. Unused floating tags are accumulated as credits in the gender they were allocated.
- 7.2. The floating tags, when allocated by the RWO, should not create a situation where the female proportion exceeds 50%.

**SUBMISSION TO THE  
NUNAVUT WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT BOARD (NWMB)**

**Regular Meeting No. RM 002-2020**

**FOR**

**Information:** ☐

**Decision:** ☒

**Issue:**           ***No Reset of TAH for Southern Hudson Bay Polar Bear Sub-population, 2020***

**Background:**

Through a Board motion (attached), the HTO of Sanikiluaq has reported to the QWB that the Southern Hudson Bay polar bear sub-population has been increasing in recent years.

In March 2020 in Montreal during the Southern Hudson Bay Polar Bear User-to-User (U2U) meeting, all representatives of Sanikiluaq, Nunavik Inuit and James Bay Cree unanimously reported both historic and recent increases in both polar bear populations and public safety problems, based on Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit (IQ) and Cree knowledge.

No Inuit or Cree representatives at the U2U meeting agreed with the conclusions of technical reports on 2011/12 and 2016 survey results and harvest risk assessment. As well, no agreement was obtained at the U2U meeting to change the Total Allowable Harvest (TAH) for Southern Hudson Bay polar bears.

Also, during the U2U meeting, Dr. E. Regehr stated that the estimates from the 2011-12 and 2016 surveys were not statistically different. Therefore, science information indicated that the abundance of the sub-population was probably similar during both surveys.

Most community representatives at the U2U meeting requested that the next survey, planned for 2021 or 2022, should be better planned and conducted with greater input and participation of local Inuit and Cree experts.

**Recommendations:**

1. The Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board recommends that the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board does not reset the TAH for Southern Hudson Bay polar bears at least until after the results of the next survey become available in 2022, if warranted at that time.
2. The QWB requests that the NWMB ensure that any of Sanikiluaq's harvest credits that may be unused as of June 30, 2020 shall be carried forward for use in future years.

**Prepared by:** Michael Ferguson, Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board

**Date prepared:** May 4, 2020

**Motion # TWO**

**Motion 2020 – 0302A:**

Whereas, based on Inuit Qaujimjatuqanit, the population of Southern Hudson Bay polar bears has been increasing, I move that the Sanikiluaq HTO requests the support of the QWB that all that all Sanikiluaq's unused harvest credits for those bears, as of June 30, 2020 should be carried forward and made available during 2020 – 21.

Mover: CHARLIE TAKATAK

Second Puasi Ipaak

Opposed 0 Carried 8



**Summary of QWB-HTO-Government Discussions and Communications  
Regarding NWMB Briefing Notes for  
NWMB Regular Meeting No. RM 002-2020**

### **1. Advise GN to Follow Approved Procedures on Polar Bear Credit Tags**

1.1 During the QWB AGM in November 2019, QWB staff advised the delegates from the HTOs that, according to current policies approved by the NWMB, all accumulated polar bear credits are changed to zero whenever the TAH for their community's sub-population is reset, even if the TAH is increased. Most HTOs were not aware of this. Attention was drawn to three sub-populations in Qikiqtaaluk region: a) Southern Hudson Bay because a survey was completed and a new draft harvest risk assessment was being prepared, although no consultation had been done with the QWB or HTO at that time, b) Davis Strait because the field survey for that sub-population was in its final stages and a harvest risk assessment could be produced in a year or two, and c) Lancaster Sound because field work is expected to begin in 2020 or 2021.

As happened with Baffin Bay, the HTOs were advised that it is unlikely that either the GN or the NWMB will inform the QWB and HTOs when harvest credits are likely to be zeroed with sufficient notice for communities to utilize those credits before they are zeroed.

1.2 Reportedly, on January 14, 2020 the GN confirmed to the Sanikiluaq HTO that the community had 16.03 male and 14.97 female polar bear credits available. The QWB was not copied on this confirmation; however, QWB staff had found the same information in the GN's Summary of Polar Bear Harvest Credits after the 2018/2019 Season, dated October 11, 2019.

1.3. On March 3, 2020, the Sanikiluaq HTO sent their motion of March 2 (motion attached) to request that the QWB approve the community to utilize 16 male and 13 female polar bear credits. This was 1.97 female credits less than were available.

1.4. On March 16, 2020, the QWB Executive approved the Sanikiluaq HTO's request to utilize their 16 male and 13 female polar bear credits (motion attached). On

March 30, 2020, QWB staff sent this motion to the GN, along with approved credit transfers and requests from other communities, and requested that the GN promptly issue the requested and approved tags to Sanikiluaq (email attached).

1.5. On April 7, 2020, the GN Polar Bear Biologist I sent a letter to the QWB and HTO requesting that the community reduce their requested number of tags this year "... spreading the request for this amount of credits over 2-3 harvest years." (letter attached) This letter prompted multiple telephone conversations between the QWB staff and the HTO Manager over the ensuing days and weeks to ensure that QWB staff were properly reflecting the views of the HTO.

1.6 On April 7, 2020, QWB staff responded to the GN Polar Bear Biologist I making the following key points (see attached email.):

- a) The HTO and QWB had followed all steps required for issuance of the tags as duly requested and approved, and a role for the NWMB in the issuance of credit tags does not appear in the procedures approved by the NWMB.
- b) The use of the tags does not violate the principles of conservation as these were bears that could have been harvested in the past, according to previous NWMB- and GN-approved sustainable TAHs, as per the principles of conservation in the Nunavut Agreement.
- c) The following question was asked: "Is your (the Biologist I's) offer to allow the HTO to use the accumulated credits over the next three years binding on the Minister of the Environment and the NWMB?", given that the GN could otherwise request that the TAH be reset and any unused credits zeroed.

Note: This question was not answered by the GN.

- d) The GN did not recognize Sanikiluaq's restraint and voluntary harvest reductions for several years.
- e) Once again, the QWB requested that the GN to follow established procedures and promptly issue the 29 credit tags to Sanikiluaq as requested. Then, based on the trust that that may engender, the QWB and HTO will then cooperate with the GN and the NWMB and begin discussions on how to avoid zeroing unused credits for at least three years, in order to allow Sanikiluaq to use of credit tags over 2-3 years and perhaps longer.

Note: The GN did not respond to this offer to begin these discussions.

1.7 On April 13, 2020, the HTO Manager responded to the GN reiterating and resending the HTO original request to use the 16 male and 13 female polar bear credits, and the QWB's motion approving that request. In addition, the HTO Manager invited the GN to talk about extending the harvesting of these bears over the next 5 years at about 5 or 6 bears per year.

Note: To our knowledge, the GN did not respond to this invitation, even though the idea of spreading the harvest of these credits over time was raised by the GN.

The HTO Manager also emphasized the past efforts of the community to manage its harvest carefully. (email attached)

1.8 On April 17, 2020, the GN Polar Bear Biologist II sent an email listing 9 tag numbers based on credits, and a letter explaining that he was supporting only 9 of the 29 duly requested, confirmed and approved credit tags, and asking the



NWMB to decide about the use of the remaining 20 credits (email and letter attached).

- 1.9 On May 7, 2020, the QWB Executive Committee passed a motion approving the submission to NWMB of the briefing note for decision, sent to the NWMB on May 8, 2020. The motion was moved by Adamie Nuna, seconded by Philip Manik, Sr., and approved with all in favor. (The motion will be included in the meeting, minutes which have not been approved and printed at this time.)

## **2. No Reset of TAH for Southern Hudson Bay Polar Bear Sub-population, 2020**

- 2.1. On March 12, 2019 in correspondence with the Canadian Wildlife Service, the QWB applied to become a member of the Southern Hudson Bay Polar Bear Harvest Working Group. This membership would have facilitated communications and consultations between the Working Group, the GN and the QWB. The QWB could have ensured communications with the HTO, to foster community understanding of technical aspects of the assessment and to suggest information based on Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit that might be incorporated into the modelling. On March 29, 2019, the QWB was informed that the Advisory Committee overseeing the Working Group had rejected the QWB's application to join.
- 2.2. At the QWB AGM in November 2019, QWB staff informed the delegate representing the Sanikiluaq HTO that the GN may soon request the NWMB to reset the TAH for this sub-population based on a harvest risk assessment that was being done, but had not been released yet. Privately, Drikus Gissing of the GN informed M. Ferguson of QWB that he hoped that the TAH could be reset as of July 1, 2020, but this was not certain.
- 2.3. Subsequently, QWB and HTO staff discussed this issue on several occasions by telephone and email, in consultation with David Lee of NTI.
- 2.4. In November 2019, the GN submitted 3 documents to the NWMB for the NWMB's Regular Meeting held in December 2019. These documents had not been shared or discussed directly by the GN with either the QWB or the HTO. These documents included (not attached herein. The QWB obtained them from the NWMB web site, as they were not provided by the GN.):
  - a) Update on Southern Hudson Bay Polar Bear Subpopulation Harvest Risk Assessment and Consultation Plan.  
Note: This information briefing note included a recommendation to hold a joint Wildlife Management Board hearing, and the announcement that the GN intended to consult with the HTO following a User-to-User meeting to be held early in 2020.
  - b) Executive Summary: Harvest Risk Assessment for the Southern Hudson Bay Polar Bear Subpopulation, 07 June 2019.
  - c) Executive Summary: Re-Assessment of the Southern Hudson Bay Polar Bear Subpopulation, 11 September 2019.

To our knowledge, **no** community or regional consultation on these documents or their contents had yet been completed by the GN before presenting them to the NWMB.

- 2.5. On February 11, 2020, the GN made a consultation presentation on the survey and risk assessment models to the HTO in Sanikiluaq. James Qillaq attended on behalf of the QWB. Via telephone with QWB staff, the HTO Manager informed us that he understood the GN to say that the sub-population was declining and would continue to decline in future, and that the GN directed the HTO to chose one of the risk models that they had presented to the HTO. The HTO Manager said that the models were not understandable to him or the HTO Board as presented by the GN. Also, the HTO could not accept any of the GN's conclusions because the polar bear population is increasing according to Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit, not decreasing. The GN did not hold a public meeting on the issue in Sanikiluaq.
- 2.6. In preparation for the User-to-User Meeting in Montreal later in February, the HTO held both public and Board meetings to ensure that they understood the community's knowledge and views on the population's status and trends, and their understanding of possible future trends and harvesting. The HTO delegates at the User-to User Meeting in Montreal clearly expressed that information and views from Sanikiluaq to all community, government and management board representatives attending the User-to-User Meeting. This information and that learned by QWB and HTO delegates from other parties are briefly summarized in the briefing note submitted by the QWB to the NWMB on May 8, 2020.
- 2.7. On March 3, 2020, the HTO sent a March 2 motion (attached) to the QWB requesting support that their credits should be carried forward at least one more year because the Southern Hudson Bay polar bear population is increasing. Via telephone, QWB staff clarified the HTO's intent, which included no reset of the TAH and zeroing of credits until after a better survey is conducted with more planning input and active participation by all Inuit and Cree communities.
- 2.8. On March 26, 2020, the QWB Executive passed a motion of support, moved by Adamie Nuna, seconded by Jawlie Akavak, with all in favor, stating the following: The Executive of the Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board requests that the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board (NWMB) does not reset the TAH for Southern Hudson Bay polar bears at least until the results of the next survey become available; and that the NWMB ensure that any of Sanikiluaq's harvest credits that may be unused as of June 30, 2020 shall be carried forward for future use. It was agreed that this motion would be put in the form of a briefing note for decision to the NWMB at a subsequent Executive meeting.
- 2.9. On May 7, 20020, the QWB Executive Committee passed a motion moved by Adamie Nuna and seconded by Philip Manik, Sr., with all in favor, to approve the briefing note for decision for submission to NWMB. This briefing note was sent to the NWMB on May 8, 2020. (Motion will be included in the meeting minutes, which have not been approved and printed at this time.)

### **3. Baffin Island Caribou TAH Amendment, 2020**

- 3.1. During the GN's consultation tour in January 2019, all HTOs that traditionally harvest Baffin Island caribou expressed their concerns about the current TAH, Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit regarding increases in caribou abundance on Baffin Island, and concerns related to the male-only harvest. These issues were not specifically on the GN's agenda for the consultations, but these issues are so important to Inuit that they were voiced repeatedly.
- 3.2. During the QWB AGM in 2019, all HTO delegates from communities that harvest Baffin Island caribou again expressed concerns that the TAH should be increased in the presence of multiple GN delegates, and at other points during the AGM. The QWB Executive accepted the general direction from the AGM to continue to work to have the TAH increased as soon as possible, including increased harvesting of female caribou. The distribution of caribou is expanding in the hunting areas on almost all communities. No communities reported any decrease in the local abundance of caribou. Although caribou remain a long distance from Qikiqtarjuaq, this has been the normal situation for this community for several decades.

During the QWB AGM, the GN biologist was asked the following question: "Can the DOE support an increase of TAH in the communities that have more caribou?" The GN responded as follows: "The GN needs an abundance survey completed before that could happen. As of now, the whole island is managed as one unit. The predicted date of the abundance survey is in 2024." Contrary to clause 5.1.2(e) and others of the Nunavut Agreement, it appears that the GN will not willingly incorporate current Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit and values, and Inuit systems (e.g., on-going monitoring) to conserve and manage Baffin Island caribou.

- 3.3. The Baffin Island caribou TAH has been discussed many times throughout 2019 and 2020 during many QWB and HTO meetings and telephone calls.
- 3.4. Specifically, during the QWB Executive meeting of March 26, 2020, the Executive Director reviewed the history of the TAH for Baffin Island Caribou, noting that the QWB has been questioning the TAH since it was implemented in 2015. The Executive Director requested feedback and direction from the Executive regarding potential submission of another request to the NWMB for an increase in the TAH. After some discussion among the Executive and staff, the QWB Executive passed a motion, moved by Phillip Manik Sr. and seconded by Adamie Nuna with all in favor, giving their full support for development of a submission to the NWMB requesting that the TAH for Baffin Island caribou increase to between 325 and 375, of which 35 would be open to females.
- 3.5. On May 7, 2020, the QWB Executive Committee passed a motion moved by Philip Manik, Sr and seconded by Adamie Nuna, with all in favor, to approve the briefing note for decision for submission to NWMB. This briefing note was sent to

the NWMB on May 8, 2020. (Motion will be included in the meeting minutes, which have not been approved and printed at this time.)

#### **4. Amendment of Narwhal Summer Stock Management 2020**

- 4.1 The HTOs and the QWB have questioned summer-stock narwhal management along Baffin Island several times since 2017. They have questioned the lack of scientific data to support it. They have called for the amalgamation of the Admiralty and Eclipse areas. They have asked for the elimination of summer and migratory seasons in several areas. They have asked to harvest narwhals in the three different areas using tags from any of the 6 communities. These concerns have been expressed in writing and orally directly to DFO and through the NWMB. The QWB believes that the proposal should not be a surprise to either the NWMB or DFO.
- 4.2 QWB AGM 2019 resolution to eliminate seasonal harvest management for Arctic Bay, and to allow Pond Inlet and Arctic Bay to harvest narwhal in each other's areas (attached). This idea led to extensive discussion among the six HTO representatives at the narwhal survey meeting in Winnipeg in January 2020, and among the QWB and HTOs subsequently. These discussions lead to the current proposal, reflecting the position of the six HTOs and the QWB. Via email, written support has been received from Nativak HTO, Qikiqtarjuaq, Nangmautang HTO, Clyde river, Mittimatilik HTO, Pond Inlet,
- 4.3 During the meeting in Winnipeg, M. Ferguson pointed out that to demonstrate that summer stock management is valid, DFO should have evidence that individual or groups of narwhal show fidelity to specific summering areas over multiple years.

During the meeting, "C. Watt of DFO was asked if DFO had plans for a study to show whether or not narwhal may return to same summering area year after year. She replied that although DFO has many satellite tagging studies with the hopes of gathering data on whether narwhal return to the same summering area, tag retention time is typically shorter than one year, no other tag attachment technology exists for increasing tag retention time that she is aware of." (The above quotation is from an email reply sent by C. Watt to M Ferguson on May 12, 2020, with the specific intent to accurately reflect C. Watt's response in January 2020, with her knowledge.)

- 4.4 QWB Executive Committee Motion, May 7, 2020: Approval of submission to NWMB for briefing note for decision; Moved by Philip Manik, Sr. Seconded by Adamie Nuna. Approved all in favour.

**SUBMISSION TO THE  
NUNAVUT WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT BOARD (NWMB)**

**Regular Meeting No. RM 002-2020**

**FOR**

**Information:** ☐

**Decision:** ☒

**Issue:** ***Advise GN to Follow Approved Procedures to Promptly Issue Polar Bear Credit Tags***

**Background:**

On October 16, 2019, the Government of Nunavut (GN) sent a letter (with appendices) to the Chairperson of the QWB explaining that the GN had updated the polar bear harvest credit calculation system, and that the NWMB had approved the proposed system on an interim basis.

Appendix B of the October 16, 2019 letter explains the NWMB-approved interim process for communities to receive tags for their accumulated credits, as follows:

*5.8.2. Requests by communities to use credits to increase their annual recommended quota shall be made to, and approved by, the responsible RWO. The GN will verify and confirm the number of available credits.*

On March 2, 2020, the QWB received a motion from the Sanikiluaq HTO requesting the QWB's approval to use 13 female and 16 male credits for harvesting. The QWB had checked on the number of credits available to Sanikiluaq and confirmed that the community had enough credits.

In an extraordinary step, outside the scope of the NWMB-approved system for requesting and approving use of available credits, the GN has refused to issue all of the duly requested and approved credit tags.

On April 7, 2020, the QWB and HTO received a letter from the GN Polar Bear Lab stating that on January 14, 2020, they had confirmed with the HTO that Sanikiluaq had 16.03 male and 14.97 female polar bear credits available. In that same letter, the GN expressed a conservation concern and asked that the HTO spread this amount of credits over 2-3 harvest years.

In subsequent correspondence, the QWB and HTO made two requests:

1. That the GN follow the NWMB-approved process as specified in the GN's October 16, 2019 letter and promptly issue the duly requested, confirmed and approved credit tags, after which the HTO and QWB could begin discussions on the timing of the harvesting.
2. That the GN guarantee that the TAH would not be reset and the credits zeroed for at least 3-5 years.

The GN refused to agree to these requests from the QWB and the HTO.

Instead, on April 16, 2020, the GN's Polar Bear Biologist wrote a letter stating the following:

1. *"... the department can release the number of tags that would not constitute a conservation concern without the involvement of the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board."*

QWB Comment: According to Appendix B, 5.6, "Credits accumulate for unused portions of the recommended quota or TAH." The process for issuing the credit tags to Sanikiluaq

as described in Appendix B, 5.8.2 was based on past harvesting below the TAHs that were previously approved by the NWMB. The 5.8.2 process, specified by the GN itself, for issuing credit tags does not involve the NWMB. Further, the described process does not enable the GN to unilaterally and retroactively modify either past TAHs or processes that the NWMB has already approved. If the GN or other governments do have such authority, then the RWOs and HTOs will have great difficulty trusting co-management processes going forward.

2. The biologist sent only 9 (4 females, 5 males) of the 29 duly requested, confirmed and approved credit tags.
3. *“Our department has requested that the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board make a decision over the use of the remaining 20 credits (9 females, 11 males) at their earliest opportunity.”*

QWB Comment: As stated above, the process described in Appendix B 5.8.2 related to issuing credit tags, based on past harvesting below NWMB-approved TAHs, does not involve the NWMB.

There is nothing in the interim credit system approved by the NWMB that allows the GN to take these actions. In the situation of a conservation concern, Appendix A and Appendix B 5.4 of the October 16, 2019 letter describe the following potential actions:

*“If conservation concerns related to harvesting pressure on female bears arise, there may be a need to adjust the sex ratio to 2:1 at the subpopulation level. As such, the option to return to a 2:1 harvest sex ratio will be available, as and when TAH recommendations are submitted to the NWMB.”*

*“5.4. Subpopulation credits accumulate until a new TAH is determined. This may include a subpopulation inventory that has been conducted and a final abundance estimate result is produced. In some circumstances, a completed and finalized harvest risk analysis may also be conducted, or the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board recommends a change in TAH for other management purposes. Under these circumstances, all credits are set back to zero.”*

To the best knowledge of the QWB, as of the May 4, 2020, the GN had not formally made new TAH recommendations for the Southern Hudson Bay polar bear sub-population to the NWMB.

The actions described in the GN's Polar Bear Biologist's letter of April 16, 2020 are not allowed based on the current knowledge of the QWB.

### **Recommendations:**

The Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board recommends that the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board advises the GN to follow the interim procedures described in the GN's letter of October 16, 2019, including promptly confirming the number of available polar bear credits to either the RWO or the HTO as requested, and then promptly issuing all duly HTO-requested and RWO-approved credit tags that may be available. This should be done immediately for Sanikiluaq's request.

**Prepared by:** Michael Ferguson, Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board

**Date prepared:** May 4, 2020

**Motion # TWO**

**Motion 2020 – 0302A:**

Whereas, based on Inuit Qaujimjatuqanit, the population of Southern Hudson Bay polar bears has been increasing, I move that the Sanikiluaq HTO requests the support of the QWB that all that all Sanikiluaq's unused harvest credits for those bears, as of June 30, 2020 should be carried forward and made available during 2020 – 21.

Mover: CHARLIE TAKATAK

Second Puasi Ipaak

Opposed 0 Carried 8



**Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board  
Executive Committee  
Telephone Meeting**

**WHEREAS**, in Motion 2020-0302 - (attached), the HTO of Sanikiluaq has requested approval to use 13 female and 16 male polar bear credits by June 30, 2020 from the Southern Hudson Bay sub-population;

The Executive of the Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board approves the request of the Sanikiluaq HT0,

The QWB Executive requests that the Government of Nunavut issue to Sanikiluaq tags for 13 female and 16 male polar bears from the Southern Hudson Bay sub-population as soon as possible.

Seconded by: Simeonee Keenainak

**Motion passed:** ☒

Qiliqianhui Wildlife Board - P.O. Box 219 - Rankin Inlet, NU - X0C 0G0 Tel: 867.645.4860 Fax: 867.645.4861  
 1888 Qiliqianhui Wildlife Board - P.O. Box 219 - Rankin Inlet, NU - X0C 0G0 Tel: 867.645.4860 Fax: 867.645.4861



**Subject:** Tags for use of polar bear harvest credits by Sanikiluaq and Arctic Bay + credit transfer from Grise Fiord

**From:** Michael Ferguson <wildlifeadvisor@niws.ca>

**Date:** 2020-03-30, 1:14 p.m.

**To:** Jason Aliqatuqtuq <JAliqatuqtuq@GOV.NU.CA>

**CC:** Drikus Gissing <DGissing@gov.nu.ca>, Polar Bear Lab <PolarBearLab@gov.nu.ca>, Jonathan Pynn <JPynn@GOV.NU.CA>, Scott Johnson <SJohnson2@GOV.NU.CA>, Amaruq HTA Iqaluit <amaruq@baffinhto.ca>, Lucassie Arragutainaq <sani@baffinhto.ca>, "Ikajutit HTO, Arctic Bay" <ikajutit@baffinhto.ca>, "Iviq HTO, Grise Fiord" <iviq@baffinhto.ca>, Kolola Pitsiulak <kpitsiulak@niws.ca>, Jenni Bell <qwbac@niws.ca>, Denis Ndeloh <DNdeloh@nwmb.com>

Dear Jason,

I am writing on behalf of the QWB and the HTOs of Arctic Bay, Grise Fiord and Sanikiluaq to request that the Government of Nunavut 1) transfers credits from Grise Fiord to Arctic Bay, 2. issue tags for the use of the transferred polar bear harvest credits by Arctic Bay; and 3. issues tags for the use of polar bear harvest credits by Sanikiluaq, as soon as possible.

All supporting documents are attached, including two (2) QWB Executive motions approving the transfer and use of the credits for specific numbers of male and female credits and tags to be transferred and/or issued. All relevant letters, emails and motions from the three HTOs are also attached.

I trust that the attachments will be sufficient for the GN to proceed with the transfer of credits from Grise Fiord to Arctic Bay, and the issuing of the tags to Arctic Bay and Sanikiluaq. Can you please advise the QWB when the tags have been issued?

If you or others in the GN have any questions or comments regarding this matter, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Thank you so much,

Mike

Michael Ferguson, Ph.D.  
Senior Wildlife Advisor  
Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board  
3050 Huntingdon Court, Unit A  
Ottawa, ON K1T1R2  
Canada  
E-mail: [wildlifeadvisor@niws.ca](mailto:wildlifeadvisor@niws.ca)  
Phone: 1-613-407-1197

— Attachments: —

Signed QWB motions tags to Sanikiluaq and transfer of credits from Grise and tags to Arctic Bay.pdf	1.1 MB
Sanikiluaq motion 2020-0302 PBear credits.pdf	159 kB
Sanikiluaq motion 2020-0302 PBear credits - English and Inuktitut.pdf	52.0 kB

Arctic Bay request for credit transfer from Grise Fiord and use of tags for AB spring 2020 hunt 2020-02-26.pdf	751 kB
Grise Fiord approval to transfer credits to Arctic Bay 2020-02-27.pdf	959 kB
Letter Arctic Bay request for credit transfer from Grise Fiord and use of tags for AB spring 2020 hunt 2020-02-26-Word-Inuktitut-2.pdf	32.6 kB
Grise Fiord Approval to Transfer Credits to Arctic Bay 2020-02-27-Word-Inuktitut and English.pdf	34.6 kB

7 April 2020

James Qillaq  
Chairman  
Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board

**RE: REQUEST FROM SANIKILUAQ HTA TO UTILIZE 29 CREDITS (16 MALE, 13 FEMALE) FOR USE IN THE 2019/2020 POLAR BEAR HARVEST SEASON IN THE SOUTHERN HUDSON BAY SUBPOPULATION.**

Dear Mr. Qillaq,

Thank you for forwarding the letters and motion papers to the Polar Bear Harvest Lab, which we received on March 3, 2020. We are now fully aware that the Sanikiluaq HTA would like to utilize 29 polar bear credits (16 male and 13 female) for use during the 2019/2020 polar bear harvest season. The Polar Bear Lab received an email sent January 14<sup>th</sup>, 2020 from Sanikiluaq HTA to Polar Bear Biologist II, Markus Dyck requesting the number of credits available. The Polar Bear Lab responded to that request and provided available credits on January 14<sup>th</sup>, 2020 via email.

To reiterate, Sanikiluaq currently has 16.03 male and 14.97 female polar bear credits. Currently, the total allowable harvest (TAH) for Sanikiluaq is: 13 males and 12 females.

The Government of Nunavut (GN) supports the use of polar bear credits. The request to utilize an additional 13 female and 16 male credits for the current harvest year would represent more than double the annual TAH for Sanikiluaq. This requested harvest level represents a conservation concern for the Southern Hudson Bay (SH) subpopulation. The GN would recommend using a smaller number of credits for a single year to reduce the potential population-level effects on SH.

If the Sanikiluaq HTA would like to reconsider this request, my department will be available to discuss what level of request are less likely to represent a conservation concern, such as spreading the request for this amount of credits over 2-3 harvest years, rather than harvesting 29 extra bears in 1 season.

If the Sanikiluaq HTA and QWB would like to stay the request at 13 female and 16 male bears for the 2019-2020 harvest season, my department will submit this request regarding the use of 29 credits in one harvest season to the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board for decision.

If you require any additional information regarding this matter, please do not hesitate to contact myself (867 934 2184) or Markus Dyck (Polar Bear Biologist II: 867 934 2181).

Sincerely,

Jasmine Ware

Jasmine Ware – Polar Bear Biologist I

CC: Wildlife Advisor, Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board, Mike Ferguson  
Manager, Sanikiluaq HTA, Lucassie Arragutainaq  
Chairperson, Sanikiluaq HTA, Eli Qavvik  
Conservation Officer, Sanikiluaq, Daniel Qavvik  
Manager, Wildlife Research, Department of Environment, Kate England  
Director, Wildlife Research, Department of Environment, Drikus Gissing  
Polar Bear Biologist II, Department of Environment, M. Dyck  
Regional Wildlife Manager, Department of Environment, Jonathan Pynn  
Director of Wildlife, Nunavut Wildlife Management Board, Denis Ndeloh

**Subject:** Re: Sanikiluaq credit use request

**From:** Michael Ferguson <wildlifeadvisor@niws.ca>

**Date:** 2020-04-07, 6:54 p.m.

**To:** PolarBearLab <polarbearlab@gov.nu.ca>, "qwbac@niws.ca" <qwbac@niws.ca>

**CC:** Lucassie Arragutainaq <sani@baffinhto.ca>, "Gissing, Drikus" <DGissing@GOV.NU.CA>, "England, Kate" <KEngland@GOV.NU.CA>, "Qavvik, Daniel" <DQavvik@GOV.NU.CA>, "Dyck, Markus" <MDyck1@GOV.NU.CA>, "Pynn, Jonathan" <JPynn@GOV.NU.CA>, Denis Ndeloh <DNdeloh@nwmb.com>

Dear Jasmine,

This is unfortunate! It appears that the GN may be attempting to prevent Sanikiluaq from using the accumulated credits that the community has.

The use of these credits is sustainable according to the principles of conservation, and the polar bear TAH and credit system. The legitimate use of credits is NOT a conservation concern because the TAH legally established the sustainable harvest level for past years and the current year, and the credits were accumulated because the community harvested below the TAH. The unharvested bears were left in the population to reproduce and mature, and therefore the delay in harvesting those bears has been a net benefit to the population. These have been voluntary actions by the hunters of Sanikiluaq. As I understand it, delayed harvesting which benefits bear populations is one reason behind the credit system, which has been approved by both the NWMB and GN.

In November 2019, Drikus Gissing informed me orally that it is the intent of the GN to request that unused credits for Southern Hudson Bay sub-population to be zeroed and for the TAH to be reset, as of July 1, 2020.

Now, the GN informs us that legitimate use of accumulated credits according to the GN- and NWMB-approved procedures is being intentionally denied or stalled, until the GN asks the NWMB to verify, re-approve or change the current legitimate procedures for use of the polar bear credits. Such delays and denials were not mentioned at the NWMB's public hearings on polar bear management. GN's intentional denial to promptly issue tags for existing credits is not legitimate according to existing procedures as the QWB understands them.

Your suggestion, that Sanikiluaq's request could be spread over 2-3 harvest years, is not supported by either Drikus Gissing's statement to me in November or the GN's and other jurisdiction's recent presentations in Sanikiluaq and at the User-to-User meeting in Montreal, where they advocated for a reduced harvest of this sub-population. Is your offer to allow the HTO to use the accumulated credits over the next three years binding on the Minister of the Environment and the NWMB?

I also wish to point out that, normally, if tags are not used in a given year, they are returned to the GN and then added back as credits for future years, except when credits are zeroed if the TAH is reset. If it is truly the intention of the GN and the NWMB not to reset the Southern Hudson Bay TAH for at least 3 years (which would be contrary to all oral statements and formal presentations from the GN since November 2019), then the system could be allowed to function as normal. The 29 credit tags could be issued promptly as Sanikiluaq legitimately requested, and any unused tags could be returned to the

GN and re-credited for future use.

Sanikiluaq's request does follow the current legitimate procedures. Sanikiluaq have only a few months to use any of the credits that it has (on GN's papers), given the apparent likelihood that the GN will propose to rest the TAH and zeros the credit for this sub-population as of July 1, 2020.

Use of polar bear credits that Sanikiluaq has on record should NOT be referred to the NWMB for additional approval because that is not required, to my knowledge. These are bears that could have been harvested in previous years, but the community held back. Instead of the GN fully acknowledging, recognizing and supporting Sanikiluaq's restraint and voluntary harvest reductions for several years, it appears that the GN intends to penalize them for having done so. The QWB wishes to encourage that all parties foster a greater level of trust and cooperation in polar bear management, going forward.

On behalf of the HTO and the QWB, and with all due respect for the GN and DOE's efforts to conserve polar bears and to encourage their traditional use by Inuit, I again request that the GN follow established procedures and promptly issue the 29 credit tags to Sanikiluaq as requested. Based on the trust that that may engender, the QWB and HTO will then cooperate with the GN and the NWMB and begin discussions on how to avoid zeroing unused credits for at least three years, in order to allow Sanikiluaq to use of credit tags over 2-3 years and perhaps longer.

Sanikiluaq's past voluntary harvest reductions should be sufficient to encourage the trust so that the GN will accept this offer. In the opinion of the QWB, this is not a matter of conservation concern because the TAH was approved by the NWMB and the GN and the bears could have been taken legally and sustainably already.

Sincerely,

Mike

Michael Ferguson, Ph.D.  
Senior Wildlife Advisor  
Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board  
3050 Huntingdon Court, Unit A  
Ottawa, ON K1T1R2  
Canada  
E-mail: [wildlifeadvisor@niws.ca](mailto:wildlifeadvisor@niws.ca)  
Phone: 1-613-407-1197

On 2020-04-07 4:04 p.m., PolarBearLab wrote:

Hello James, Mike, and others,  
Please find attached the GN's letter in response to Sanikiluaq's credit use.

Please advise the Polar Bear lab if this request will remain at 29 or it will be changed. The attached letter outlines the available credits and the associated conservation concern with using 29 extra tags in a single season.

Thank you for your patience and we are looking forward to hearing from you.

Best,  
Jasmine

**Subject:** RE: Credit request for Sani HTA

**From:** Sanikiluaq HTA <sani@baffinhto.ca>

**Date:** 2020-04-13, 8:52 a.m.

**To:** "Dyck, Markus" <MDyck1@GOV.NU.CA>

**CC:** "Ware, Jasmine" <JWare@GOV.NU.CA>, "Smith, Caryn" <CSmith@GOV.NU.CA>, "England, Kate" <KEngland@GOV.NU.CA>, "Gissing, Drikus" <DGissing@GOV.NU.CA>, Kolola Pitsiulak <kpitsiulak@niws.ca>, Michael Ferguson <wildlifeadvisor@niws.ca>

Good morning, I am resending the motion by Sanikiluaq HTA and QWB on Sanikiluaq HTA polar bears credits, we can even talk about to extent the credits for over 5 years or 5 or 6 extra bears per year. Main reason is that we met with our hunters when credit system was in placed, with that understanding our hunters has been very careful harvesting to building up our credit so, any defence kill or other won't be taken off of our quota, but taken from our credits. The hunters has follow over the years.

Lucassie

---

**From:** Dyck, Markus <MDyck1@GOV.NU.CA>

**Sent:** April 8, 2020 2:09 PM

**To:** Sanikiluaq HTA <sani@baffinhto.ca>

**Cc:** Ware, Jasmine <JWare@GOV.NU.CA>; Smith, Caryn <CSmith@GOV.NU.CA>; England, Kate <KEngland@GOV.NU.CA>; Gissing, Drikus <DGissing@GOV.NU.CA>; Kolola Pitsiulak <kpitsiulak@niws.ca>

**Subject:** Re: Credit request for Sani HTA

Hi Lucassie -

Below you find the email that I sent some time ago about your credit request.

It was good to chat with you just now. As we discussed, if the Sani HTA would use and fill the entire credits (16 males and 13 females) there would be a conservation concern, not to mention that it could likely scrutinize the polar bear management system in Nunavut given the status of the southern Hudson Bay polar bears.

We really want to assist you in using credits, and we could likely also prevent a longer process of decision-making without the NWMB.

I have not heard back from you and the HTA how many tags they would think are suitable and are being used, but we could release probably 4 female tags and 5 male tags and send them your way in the interim. If there is an additional need for more tags we can still discuss that once we reach that time.

Would your board be fine with us sending you **9 tags for now from your credits (4 female and 5 male tags)**? These additional tags would not constitute a conservation concern and we can issue those immediately.

Please let us know how you would like to proceed. If you have any questions please let us know. I also trust that it is fine that we attempt to resolve this matter directly with you first, unless you insist that we go through the QWB wildlife consultant.

Thank you for your time  
markus



(just as background information:

1. the average female removal from SH over the past 5 years was 12 females per year.
2. The suggested SH female removal from the harvest risk assessment is 10 females with the middle of the road scenario, which was the most likely given sea ice changes)
3. The suggested removal of females under the optimistic scenario was 21, a scenario that is not very likely.
4. The abundance of the SH population declined between 2012 and 2016 from 943 to 780 bears and reproduction declined.)

---

**From:** Dyck, Markus

**Sent:** Tuesday, March 10, 2020 10:44 AM

**To:** Sanikiluaq HTA <[sani@baffinhto.ca](mailto:sani@baffinhto.ca)>

**Cc:** Ware, Jasmine <[JWare@GOV.NU.CA](mailto:JWare@GOV.NU.CA)>; Smith, Caryn <[CSmith@GOV.NU.CA](mailto:CSmith@GOV.NU.CA)>; England, Kate <[KEngland@GOV.NU.CA](mailto:KEngland@GOV.NU.CA)>

**Subject:** Credit request for Sani HTA

Good morning Lucassie –

Hope all is well in Sani. We have a question for you regarding the requested credits for the Southern Hudson Bay polar bear population. I wanted to email you first before I also contact the RWO about the total request which was 16 male and 13 female credits. That is a total of 29 extra bears above your regular TAH of 25.

We are currently reviewing your request but feel that there is a conservation concern if all of these credits are taken at one time. When there is a conservation concern, usually the NWMB has to make the decision.

Is there a number of credits that you think the HTA would be comfortable with in harvesting that is lower than the current request so the NWMB doesn't need to get involved? We ask that because the NWMB could take a bit of time and may delay access to the credits (I am just guessing that it may take a bit because usually the NWMB process is a bit time consuming). The current harvest levels are based on abundance estimates from 2012 and removing more females from this population as is allocated may have negative consequences on the subpopulation.

Can you please let us know if you would like to move ahead with the request as is, or what a revised credit request will be?

Looking forward to your response.....regards,

m



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**Markus Dyck**

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**Polar Bear Biologist II**  
**Uumayunik Kangiqhiuriyi II Nanuliqinirmut**  
**Biologiste de la faune II (ours polaires)**

**ᐱᑦᑕᑦᑲᑦᑲᑦ**  
**Department of Environment**  
**Avatiliqiyikkut**  
**Ministère de l'Environnement**

P.O. Box 209  
Igloolik  
Nunavut X0A 0L0  
ᑭ 867-934-2181  
ᑭ mdyck1@gov.nu.ca

C. P. 209  
Igloolik  
Nunavut X0A 0L0

— Attachments: —

Scan0111.pdf

716 kB

**Subject:** shipment of polar bear tags for applied polar bear credits

**From:** "Dyck, Markus" <MDyck1@GOV.NU.CA>

**Date:** 2020-04-17, 4:22 p.m.

**To:** Sanikiluaq HTA <sani@baffinhto.ca>

**CC:** Michael Ferguson <wildlifeadvisor@niws.ca>, "Pynn, Jonathan" <JPynn@GOV.NU.CA>, Denis Ndeloh <DNdeloh@nwmb.com>, "Aliqatuqtuq, Jason" <JAliqatuqtuq@GOV.NU.CA>, "Ware, Jasmine" <JWare@GOV.NU.CA>, "Gissing, Drikus" <DGissing@GOV.NU.CA>, "England, Kate" <KEngland@GOV.NU.CA>, "qwbac@niws.ca" <qwbac@niws.ca>

Dear Chairperson Qavvik, and Lucassie –

Please find attached letters where we provide information related to the request to use polar bear credits, and that 9 polar bear tags are on their way to Sanikiluaq for immediate use in this 2019/2020 harvest season.

The following tags have been shipped:

**20556**

**20557**

**20558**

**20559**

**20560**

**20561**

**20562**

**20563**

**20564**

If you have any further questions please let us at the polar bear lab know.

Have a good weekend.

Regards, m



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Markus Dyck

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Polar Bear Biologist II  
Uumayunik Kangiqhiuriyi II Nanuliqinirmut  
Biologiste de la faune II (ours polaires)

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Department of Environment  
Avatiliqiyikkut  
Ministère de l'Environnement

P.O. Box 209  
Igloolik  
Nunavut X0A 0L0  
ᐅ 867-934-2181  
ᐅ mdyck1@gov.nu.ca

C. P. 209  
Igloolik  
Nunavut X0A 0L0

— Attachments: —

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ENV2020Sanikiluaq\_ENG\_letter about9creditsfinal.pdf

450 kB

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ENV2020Sanikiluaq\_letter about9creditsfinal\_IU.pdf

383 kB

16 April 2020

Eli Qavvik  
Chairperson  
Sanikiluaq HTA  
Box 174  
Sanikiluaq NU X0A 0W0

**RE: REQUEST FROM SANIKILUAQ HTA TO UTILIZE 29 CREDITS (16 MALE, 13 FEMALE) FOR USE IN THE 2019/2020 POLAR BEAR HARVEST SEASON IN THE SOUTHERN HUDSON BAY SUBPOPULATION.**

Dear Chairperson Qavvik,

We have received your request and the Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board approval of your request to use 29 polar bear credits (13 females, 16 males) for the 2019/2020 polar bear harvest season. In a letter dated 7 April 2020 our department expressed a conservation concern if all credits would be used at one time. However, the department can release the number of tags that would not constitute a conservation concern without the involvement of the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board.

Our department has expressed these conservation concerns also in an email to your HTA on 8 April, and indicated that we fully support the use of 9 credits (4 females, 5 males) immediately. Thus, we are electronically enclosing with this letter 9 additional tags for immediate use in 2019/2020 harvest season. They will be physically mailed to Conservation Officer Daniel Qayvik.

Our department has requested that the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board make a decision over the use of the remaining 20 credits (9 females, 11 males) at their earliest opportunity. We will coordinate between your HTA manager, Lucassie Arragutainaq, and the Conservation Officer, Daniel Qavvik, that the transfer of the 9 credits is smooth and prompt.

If you have any questions pertaining to this matter please do not hesitate to contact us at your convenience.

Sincerely,

Markus Dyck – Polar Bear Biologist II

CC: Chairperson, Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board, James Qillaq  
Wildlife Advisor, Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board, Michael Ferguson  
Manager, Sanikiluaq HTA, Lucassie Arragutainaq  
Conservation Officer, Sanikiluaq, Daniel Qavvik  
Manager, Wildlife Research, Department of Environment, Kate England  
Polar Bear Biologist I, Department of Environment, Jasmine. Ware  
Regional Wildlife Manager, Department of Environment, Jonathan Pynn  
Director of Wildlife, Nunavut Wildlife Management Board, Denis Ndeloh  
Director of Wildlife Research, Department of Environment, Drikus Gissing  
Director of Wildlife Operations, Department of Environment, Jason Aliqatuqtuq



**Summary of QWB-HTO-Government Discussions and Communications  
Regarding NWMB Briefing Notes for  
NWMB Regular Meeting No. RM 002-2020**

### **1. Advise GN to Follow Approved Procedures on Polar Bear Credit Tags**

1.1 During the QWB AGM in November 2019, QWB staff advised the delegates from the HTOs that, according to current policies approved by the NWMB, all accumulated polar bear credits are changed to zero whenever the TAH for their community's sub-population is reset, even if the TAH is increased. Most HTOs were not aware of this. Attention was drawn to three sub-populations in Qikiqtaaluk region: a) Southern Hudson Bay because a survey was completed and a new draft harvest risk assessment was being prepared, although no consultation had been done with the QWB or HTO at that time, b) Davis Strait because the field survey for that sub-population was in its final stages and a harvest risk assessment could be produced in a year or two, and c) Lancaster Sound because field work is expected to begin in 2020 or 2021.

As happened with Baffin Bay, the HTOs were advised that it is unlikely that either the GN or the NWMB will inform the QWB and HTOs when harvest credits are likely to be zeroed with sufficient notice for communities to utilize those credits before they are zeroed.

1.2 Reportedly, on January 14, 2020 the GN confirmed to the Sanikiluaq HTO that the community had 16.03 male and 14.97 female polar bear credits available. The QWB was not copied on this confirmation; however, QWB staff had found the same information in the GN's Summary of Polar Bear Harvest Credits after the 2018/2019 Season, dated October 11, 2019.

1.3. On March 3, 2020, the Sanikiluaq HTO sent their motion of March 2 (motion attached) to request that the QWB approve the community to utilize 16 male and 13 female polar bear credits. This was 1.97 female credits less than were available.

1.4. On March 16, 2020, the QWB Executive approved the Sanikiluaq HTO's request to utilize their 16 male and 13 female polar bear credits (motion attached). On

March 30, 2020, QWB staff sent this motion to the GN, along with approved credit transfers and requests from other communities, and requested that the GN promptly issue the requested and approved tags to Sanikiluaq (email attached).

1.5. On April 7, 2020, the GN Polar Bear Biologist I sent a letter to the QWB and HTO requesting that the community reduce their requested number of tags this year "... spreading the request for this amount of credits over 2-3 harvest years." (letter attached) This letter prompted multiple telephone conversations between the QWB staff and the HTO Manager over the ensuing days and weeks to ensure that QWB staff were properly reflecting the views of the HTO.

1.6 On April 7, 2020, QWB staff responded to the GN Polar Bear Biologist I making the following key points (see attached email.):

- a) The HTO and QWB had followed all steps required for issuance of the tags as duly requested and approved, and a role for the NWMB in the issuance of credit tags does not appear in the procedures approved by the NWMB.
- b) The use of the tags does not violate the principles of conservation as these were bears that could have been harvested in the past, according to previous NWMB- and GN-approved sustainable TAHs, as per the principles of conservation in the Nunavut Agreement.
- c) The following question was asked: "Is your (the Biologist I's) offer to allow the HTO to use the accumulated credits over the next three years binding on the Minister of the Environment and the NWMB?", given that the GN could otherwise request that the TAH be reset and any unused credits zeroed.

Note: This question was not answered by the GN.

- d) The GN did not recognize Sanikiluaq's restraint and voluntary harvest reductions for several years.
- e) Once again, the QWB requested that the GN to follow established procedures and promptly issue the 29 credit tags to Sanikiluaq as requested. Then, based on the trust that that may engender, the QWB and HTO will then cooperate with the GN and the NWMB and begin discussions on how to avoid zeroing unused credits for at least three years, in order to allow Sanikiluaq to use of credit tags over 2-3 years and perhaps longer.

Note: The GN did not respond to this offer to begin these discussions.

1.7 On April 13, 2020, the HTO Manager responded to the GN reiterating and resending the HTO original request to use the 16 male and 13 female polar bear credits, and the QWB's motion approving that request. In addition, the HTO Manager invited the GN to talk about extending the harvesting of these bears over the next 5 years at about 5 or 6 bears per year.

Note: To our knowledge, the GN did not respond to this invitation, even though the idea of spreading the harvest of these credits over time was raised by the GN.

The HTO Manager also emphasized the past efforts of the community to manage its harvest carefully. (email attached)

1.8 On April 17, 2020, the GN Polar Bear Biologist II sent an email listing 9 tag numbers based on credits, and a letter explaining that he was supporting only 9 of the 29 duly requested, confirmed and approved credit tags, and asking the



NWMB to decide about the use of the remaining 20 credits (email and letter attached).

- 1.9 On May 7, 2020, the QWB Executive Committee passed a motion approving the submission to NWMB of the briefing note for decision, sent to the NWMB on May 8, 2020. The motion was moved by Adamie Nuna, seconded by Philip Manik, Sr., and approved with all in favor. (The motion will be included in the meeting, minutes which have not been approved and printed at this time.)

## **2. No Reset of TAH for Southern Hudson Bay Polar Bear Sub-population, 2020**

- 2.1. On March 12, 2019 in correspondence with the Canadian Wildlife Service, the QWB applied to become a member of the Southern Hudson Bay Polar Bear Harvest Working Group. This membership would have facilitated communications and consultations between the Working Group, the GN and the QWB. The QWB could have ensured communications with the HTO, to foster community understanding of technical aspects of the assessment and to suggest information based on Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit that might be incorporated into the modelling. On March 29, 2019, the QWB was informed that the Advisory Committee overseeing the Working Group had rejected the QWB's application to join.
- 2.2. At the QWB AGM in November 2019, QWB staff informed the delegate representing the Sanikiluaq HTO that the GN may soon request the NWMB to reset the TAH for this sub-population based on a harvest risk assessment that was being done, but had not been released yet. Privately, Drikus Gissing of the GN informed M. Ferguson of QWB that he hoped that the TAH could be reset as of July 1, 2020, but this was not certain.
- 2.3. Subsequently, QWB and HTO staff discussed this issue on several occasions by telephone and email, in consultation with David Lee of NTI.
- 2.4. In November 2019, the GN submitted 3 documents to the NWMB for the NWMB's Regular Meeting held in December 2019. These documents had not been shared or discussed directly by the GN with either the QWB or the HTO. These documents included (not attached herein. The QWB obtained them from the NWMB web site, as they were not provided by the GN.):
  - a) Update on Southern Hudson Bay Polar Bear Subpopulation Harvest Risk Assessment and Consultation Plan.  
Note: This information briefing note included a recommendation to hold a joint Wildlife Management Board hearing, and the announcement that the GN intended to consult with the HTO following a User-to-User meeting to be held early in 2020.
  - b) Executive Summary: Harvest Risk Assessment for the Southern Hudson Bay Polar Bear Subpopulation, 07 June 2019.
  - c) Executive Summary: Re-Assessment of the Southern Hudson Bay Polar Bear Subpopulation, 11 September 2019.

To our knowledge, **no** community or regional consultation on these documents or their contents had yet been completed by the GN before presenting them to the NWMB.

- 2.5. On February 11, 2020, the GN made a consultation presentation on the survey and risk assessment models to the HTO in Sanikiluaq. James Qillaq attended on behalf of the QWB. Via telephone with QWB staff, the HTO Manager informed us that he understood the GN to say that the sub-population was declining and would continue to decline in future, and that the GN directed the HTO to chose one of the risk models that they had presented to the HTO. The HTO Manager said that the models were not understandable to him or the HTO Board as presented by the GN. Also, the HTO could not accept any of the GN's conclusions because the polar bear population is increasing according to Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit, not decreasing. The GN did not hold a public meeting on the issue in Sanikiluaq.
- 2.6. In preparation for the User-to-User Meeting in Montreal later in February, the HTO held both public and Board meetings to ensure that they understood the community's knowledge and views on the population's status and trends, and their understanding of possible future trends and harvesting. The HTO delegates at the User-to User Meeting in Montreal clearly expressed that information and views from Sanikiluaq to all community, government and management board representatives attending the User-to-User Meeting. This information and that learned by QWB and HTO delegates from other parties are briefly summarized in the briefing note submitted by the QWB to the NWMB on May 8, 2020.
- 2.7. On March 3, 2020, the HTO sent a March 2 motion (attached) to the QWB requesting support that their credits should be carried forward at least one more year because the Southern Hudson Bay polar bear population is increasing. Via telephone, QWB staff clarified the HTO's intent, which included no reset of the TAH and zeroing of credits until after a better survey is conducted with more planning input and active participation by all Inuit and Cree communities.
- 2.8. On March 26, 2020, the QWB Executive passed a motion of support, moved by Adamie Nuna, seconded by Jawlie Akavak, with all in favor, stating the following: The Executive of the Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board requests that the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board (NWMB) does not reset the TAH for Southern Hudson Bay polar bears at least until the results of the next survey become available; and that the NWMB ensure that any of Sanikiluaq's harvest credits that may be unused as of June 30, 2020 shall be carried forward for future use. It was agreed that this motion would be put in the form of a briefing note for decision to the NWMB at a subsequent Executive meeting.
- 2.9. On May 7, 20020, the QWB Executive Committee passed a motion moved by Adamie Nuna and seconded by Philip Manik, Sr., with all in favor, to approve the briefing note for decision for submission to NWMB. This briefing note was sent to the NWMB on May 8, 2020. (Motion will be included in the meeting minutes, which have not been approved and printed at this time.)

### **3. Baffin Island Caribou TAH Amendment, 2020**

- 3.1. During the GN's consultation tour in January 2019, all HTOs that traditionally harvest Baffin Island caribou expressed their concerns about the current TAH, Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit regarding increases in caribou abundance on Baffin Island, and concerns related to the male-only harvest. These issues were not specifically on the GN's agenda for the consultations, but these issues are so important to Inuit that they were voiced repeatedly.
- 3.2. During the QWB AGM in 2019, all HTO delegates from communities that harvest Baffin Island caribou again expressed concerns that the TAH should be increased in the presence of multiple GN delegates, and at other points during the AGM. The QWB Executive accepted the general direction from the AGM to continue to work to have the TAH increased as soon as possible, including increased harvesting of female caribou. The distribution of caribou is expanding in the hunting areas on almost all communities. No communities reported any decrease in the local abundance of caribou. Although caribou remain a long distance from Qikiqtarjuaq, this has been the normal situation for this community for several decades.

During the QWB AGM, the GN biologist was asked the following question: "Can the DOE support an increase of TAH in the communities that have more caribou?" The GN responded as follows: "The GN needs an abundance survey completed before that could happen. As of now, the whole island is managed as one unit. The predicted date of the abundance survey is in 2024." Contrary to clause 5.1.2(e) and others of the Nunavut Agreement, it appears that the GN will not willingly incorporate current Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit and values, and Inuit systems (e.g., on-going monitoring) to conserve and manage Baffin Island caribou.

- 3.3. The Baffin Island caribou TAH has been discussed many times throughout 2019 and 2020 during many QWB and HTO meetings and telephone calls.
- 3.4. Specifically, during the QWB Executive meeting of March 26, 2020, the Executive Director reviewed the history of the TAH for Baffin Island Caribou, noting that the QWB has been questioning the TAH since it was implemented in 2015. The Executive Director requested feedback and direction from the Executive regarding potential submission of another request to the NWMB for an increase in the TAH. After some discussion among the Executive and staff, the QWB Executive passed a motion, moved by Phillip Manik Sr. and seconded by Adamie Nuna with all in favor, giving their full support for development of a submission to the NWMB requesting that the TAH for Baffin Island caribou increase to between 325 and 375, of which 35 would be open to females.
- 3.5. On May 7, 2020, the QWB Executive Committee passed a motion moved by Philip Manik, Sr and seconded by Adamie Nuna, with all in favor, to approve the briefing note for decision for submission to NWMB. This briefing note was sent to

the NWMB on May 8, 2020. (Motion will be included in the meeting minutes, which have not been approved and printed at this time.)

#### **4. Amendment of Narwhal Summer Stock Management 2020**

4.1 The HTOs and the QWB have questioned summer-stock narwhal management along Baffin Island several times since 2017. They have questioned the lack of scientific data to support it. They have called for the amalgamation of the Admiralty and Eclipse areas. They have asked for the elimination of summer and migratory seasons in several areas. They have asked to harvest narwhals in the three different areas using tags from any of the 6 communities. These concerns have been expressed in writing and orally directly to DFO and through the NWMB. The QWB believes that the proposal should not be a surprise to either the NWMB or DFO.

4.2 QWB AGM 2019 resolution to eliminate seasonal harvest management for Arctic Bay, and to allow Pond Inlet and Arctic Bay to harvest narwhal in each other's areas (attached). This idea led to extensive discussion among the six HTO representatives at the narwhal survey meeting in Winnipeg in January 2020, and among the QWB and HTOs subsequently. These discussions lead to the current proposal, reflecting the position of the six HTOs and the QWB. Via email, written support has been received from Nativak HTO, Qikiqtarjuaq, Nangmautang HTO, Clyde river, Mittimatilik HTO, Pond Inlet,

4.3 During the meeting in Winnipeg, M. Ferguson pointed out that to demonstrate that summer stock management is valid, DFO should have evidence that individual or groups of narwhal show fidelity to specific summering areas over multiple years.

During the meeting, "C. Watt of DFO was asked if DFO had plans for a study to show whether or not narwhal may return to same summering area year after year. She replied that although DFO has many satellite tagging studies with the hopes of gathering data on whether narwhal return to the same summering area, tag retention time is typically shorter than one year, no other tag attachment technology exists for increasing tag retention time that she is aware of." (The above quotation is from an email reply sent by C. Watt to M Ferguson on May 12, 2020, with the specific intent to accurately reflect C. Watt's response in January 2020, with her knowledge.)

4.4 QWB Executive Committee Motion, May 7, 2020: Approval of submission to NWMB for briefing note for decision; Moved by Philip Manik, Sr. Seconded by Adamie Nuna. Approved all in favour.

**SUBMISSION TO THE  
NUNAVUT WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT BOARD (NWMB)**

**Regular Meeting No. RM 002- 2020**

**FOR**

**Information:** ☐

**Decision:** ☒

**Issue:**           ***Amendment of the Total Allowable Harvest (TAH) for Baffin Island Caribou (BIC), 2020***

**Background:**

The 2014 survey of Baffin Island caribou was an unquestionable feat in its magnitude. However, the QWB and HTOs have repeatedly questioned the estimates produced from the survey. The QWB and HTOs have also requested revisions of the Total Allowable Harvest based on their intimate understanding of Baffin caribou through Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit. Given two very different conclusions about the status of the population from two different knowledge systems, is it equitable for one type of knowledge to dominate future decisions about harvesting this critical food and cultural resource of Inuit? Because of their ancestral knowledge and almost daily experiences with Baffin Island caribou, Inuit are well aware of the risks associated with harvesting, and it is the Inuit who should balance the risks between current harvesting and future population recovery, as Inuit and their ancestors on Baffin Island have done effectively for 1,000s of years. The QWB and the HTOs represent all Inuit who harvest these caribou in balancing the inherent risks.

In 2018, J. Ringrose provided information on the sex and age of caribou during GN surveys on some of Baffin Island during 2015-18. In spring 2017 and 2018, surveys were completed on northern, west central and southern Baffin Island. The overall results for these areas were similar in the two years. During spring, calves, sometimes called short yearlings, are almost 1 year old and are usually assumed to become recruited into the adult population. In spring 2017 and 2018, 16% and 17% of the classified caribou, respectively, were short yearlings on Baffin Island, excluding Prince Charles island.

Based largely on Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit, Ferguson et al (1998) estimated that the abundance of Baffin Island caribou increased at least 8% annually from about 1940 to 1993, after a previous cyclical decline. Inuit are seeing expanding distributions of caribou in areas where they had not seen caribou for several to 30 years. Lichen forage on many parts of the island is recovering well. With these changes observed by Inuit and 16-17% short yearlings among caribou during spring on Baffin Island, the QWB believes that it is reasonable to conclude that the population is increasing by at least 8% annually during the current phase of the population cycle.

Based on IQ, HTOs have consistently stated that the 2014 survey estimate was too low. Several important factors probably influenced the survey estimate, including but not limited to observer fatigue and loss of sight-image during a survey that lasted more than a month, probably leading to an underestimate. Observer fatigue could have been significant since the 4 crews flew 53,548 km on transect, plus additional ferrying distances. Individual observers may have surveyed for 2 or more days without seeing a caribou, making maintenance of a sight-image very difficult. The 2014 survey estimated 315 caribou on northern Baffin Island (CI: 159-622). Then during a sex-age classification in fall 2017, 316 caribou were counted on northern Baffin Island. It seems

highly unlikely that such a survey could have seen almost 100% of the caribou on northern Baffin Island.

In the opinion of the QWB, the above issues suggest that the estimate was a serious underestimation of the population in 2014. Therefore, going forward the QWB recommends that a more reasonable basis for estimating future TAHs would be: 1) the upper limit of the 2014 estimate's confidence interval, excluding Prince Charles Island (i.e., 4,350), and 2) a reasonable 8% annual rate of increase, unless the proportion of short yearlings declines in future.

In addition, since 2015 the harvest has been and remains focused on adult males. This concerns Inuit as it may impact the social interactions and environmental resiliency of Baffin Island caribou over the long term. Nevertheless, according to GN biologists, harvesting of primarily males should not impact the population's productivity.

Given all those factors, at an 8% rate of increase from approximately 4,350 caribou in 2014, the adult population is likely to be about 6,900 caribou in spring 2020, excluding Prince Charles Island. A harvest of up to 325 caribou would be about 4.7% of this population, less than the anticipated rate of increase. If up to 35 of them are females, it should leave at least 3,000 cows to produce calves for 2021.

#### **Consultation:**

On a continuing basis, the QWB, the HTOs and their predecessors have consulted with local Inuit about Baffin Island caribou since the organizations were first formed.

#### **Recommendation:**

The QWB recommends that the TAH for harvesting of caribou on Baffin Island beginning in July 2020 should be set at 325, with up to 35 of those being females. The 35 tags for females should also be available for the harvesting of males.

**Prepared by:** Michael Ferguson, Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board

**Date:** May 4, 2020



**Summary of QWB-HTO-Government Discussions and Communications  
Regarding NWMB Briefing Notes for  
NWMB Regular Meeting No. RM 002-2020**

### **1. Advise GN to Follow Approved Procedures on Polar Bear Credit Tags**

1.1 During the QWB AGM in November 2019, QWB staff advised the delegates from the HTOs that, according to current policies approved by the NWMB, all accumulated polar bear credits are changed to zero whenever the TAH for their community's sub-population is reset, even if the TAH is increased. Most HTOs were not aware of this. Attention was drawn to three sub-populations in Qikiqtaaluk region: a) Southern Hudson Bay because a survey was completed and a new draft harvest risk assessment was being prepared, although no consultation had been done with the QWB or HTO at that time, b) Davis Strait because the field survey for that sub-population was in its final stages and a harvest risk assessment could be produced in a year or two, and c) Lancaster Sound because field work is expected to begin in 2020 or 2021.

As happened with Baffin Bay, the HTOs were advised that it is unlikely that either the GN or the NWMB will inform the QWB and HTOs when harvest credits are likely to be zeroed with sufficient notice for communities to utilize those credits before they are zeroed.

1.2 Reportedly, on January 14, 2020 the GN confirmed to the Sanikiluaq HTO that the community had 16.03 male and 14.97 female polar bear credits available. The QWB was not copied on this confirmation; however, QWB staff had found the same information in the GN's Summary of Polar Bear Harvest Credits after the 2018/2019 Season, dated October 11, 2019.

1.3. On March 3, 2020, the Sanikiluaq HTO sent their motion of March 2 (motion attached) to request that the QWB approve the community to utilize 16 male and 13 female polar bear credits. This was 1.97 female credits less than were available.

1.4. On March 16, 2020, the QWB Executive approved the Sanikiluaq HTO's request to utilize their 16 male and 13 female polar bear credits (motion attached). On

March 30, 2020, QWB staff sent this motion to the GN, along with approved credit transfers and requests from other communities, and requested that the GN promptly issue the requested and approved tags to Sanikiluaq (email attached).

1.5. On April 7, 2020, the GN Polar Bear Biologist I sent a letter to the QWB and HTO requesting that the community reduce their requested number of tags this year "... spreading the request for this amount of credits over 2-3 harvest years." (letter attached) This letter prompted multiple telephone conversations between the QWB staff and the HTO Manager over the ensuing days and weeks to ensure that QWB staff were properly reflecting the views of the HTO.

1.6 On April 7, 2020, QWB staff responded to the GN Polar Bear Biologist I making the following key points (see attached email.):

- a) The HTO and QWB had followed all steps required for issuance of the tags as duly requested and approved, and a role for the NWMB in the issuance of credit tags does not appear in the procedures approved by the NWMB.
- b) The use of the tags does not violate the principles of conservation as these were bears that could have been harvested in the past, according to previous NWMB- and GN-approved sustainable TAHs, as per the principles of conservation in the Nunavut Agreement.
- c) The following question was asked: "Is your (the Biologist I's) offer to allow the HTO to use the accumulated credits over the next three years binding on the Minister of the Environment and the NWMB?", given that the GN could otherwise request that the TAH be reset and any unused credits zeroed.

Note: This question was not answered by the GN.

- d) The GN did not recognize Sanikiluaq's restraint and voluntary harvest reductions for several years.
- e) Once again, the QWB requested that the GN to follow established procedures and promptly issue the 29 credit tags to Sanikiluaq as requested. Then, based on the trust that that may engender, the QWB and HTO will then cooperate with the GN and the NWMB and begin discussions on how to avoid zeroing unused credits for at least three years, in order to allow Sanikiluaq to use of credit tags over 2-3 years and perhaps longer.

Note: The GN did not respond to this offer to begin these discussions.

1.7 On April 13, 2020, the HTO Manager responded to the GN reiterating and resending the HTO original request to use the 16 male and 13 female polar bear credits, and the QWB's motion approving that request. In addition, the HTO Manager invited the GN to talk about extending the harvesting of these bears over the next 5 years at about 5 or 6 bears per year.

Note: To our knowledge, the GN did not respond to this invitation, even though the idea of spreading the harvest of these credits over time was raised by the GN.

The HTO Manager also emphasized the past efforts of the community to manage its harvest carefully. (email attached)

1.8 On April 17, 2020, the GN Polar Bear Biologist II sent an email listing 9 tag numbers based on credits, and a letter explaining that he was supporting only 9 of the 29 duly requested, confirmed and approved credit tags, and asking the



NWMB to decide about the use of the remaining 20 credits (email and letter attached).

- 1.9 On May 7, 2020, the QWB Executive Committee passed a motion approving the submission to NWMB of the briefing note for decision, sent to the NWMB on May 8, 2020. The motion was moved by Adamie Nuna, seconded by Philip Manik, Sr., and approved with all in favor. (The motion will be included in the meeting, minutes which have not been approved and printed at this time.)

## **2. No Reset of TAH for Southern Hudson Bay Polar Bear Sub-population, 2020**

- 2.1. On March 12, 2019 in correspondence with the Canadian Wildlife Service, the QWB applied to become a member of the Southern Hudson Bay Polar Bear Harvest Working Group. This membership would have facilitated communications and consultations between the Working Group, the GN and the QWB. The QWB could have ensured communications with the HTO, to foster community understanding of technical aspects of the assessment and to suggest information based on Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit that might be incorporated into the modelling. On March 29, 2019, the QWB was informed that the Advisory Committee overseeing the Working Group had rejected the QWB's application to join.
- 2.2. At the QWB AGM in November 2019, QWB staff informed the delegate representing the Sanikiluaq HTO that the GN may soon request the NWMB to reset the TAH for this sub-population based on a harvest risk assessment that was being done, but had not been released yet. Privately, Drikus Gissing of the GN informed M. Ferguson of QWB that he hoped that the TAH could be reset as of July 1, 2020, but this was not certain.
- 2.3. Subsequently, QWB and HTO staff discussed this issue on several occasions by telephone and email, in consultation with David Lee of NTI.
- 2.4. In November 2019, the GN submitted 3 documents to the NWMB for the NWMB's Regular Meeting held in December 2019. These documents had not been shared or discussed directly by the GN with either the QWB or the HTO. These documents included (not attached herein. The QWB obtained them from the NWMB web site, as they were not provided by the GN.):
  - a) Update on Southern Hudson Bay Polar Bear Subpopulation Harvest Risk Assessment and Consultation Plan.  
Note: This information briefing note included a recommendation to hold a joint Wildlife Management Board hearing, and the announcement that the GN intended to consult with the HTO following a User-to-User meeting to be held early in 2020.
  - b) Executive Summary: Harvest Risk Assessment for the Southern Hudson Bay Polar Bear Subpopulation, 07 June 2019.
  - c) Executive Summary: Re-Assessment of the Southern Hudson Bay Polar Bear Subpopulation, 11 September 2019.

To our knowledge, **no** community or regional consultation on these documents or their contents had yet been completed by the GN before presenting them to the NWMB.

- 2.5. On February 11, 2020, the GN made a consultation presentation on the survey and risk assessment models to the HTO in Sanikiluaq. James Qillaq attended on behalf of the QWB. Via telephone with QWB staff, the HTO Manager informed us that he understood the GN to say that the sub-population was declining and would continue to decline in future, and that the GN directed the HTO to chose one of the risk models that they had presented to the HTO. The HTO Manager said that the models were not understandable to him or the HTO Board as presented by the GN. Also, the HTO could not accept any of the GN's conclusions because the polar bear population is increasing according to Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit, not decreasing. The GN did not hold a public meeting on the issue in Sanikiluaq.
- 2.6. In preparation for the User-to-User Meeting in Montreal later in February, the HTO held both public and Board meetings to ensure that they understood the community's knowledge and views on the population's status and trends, and their understanding of possible future trends and harvesting. The HTO delegates at the User-to User Meeting in Montreal clearly expressed that information and views from Sanikiluaq to all community, government and management board representatives attending the User-to-User Meeting. This information and that learned by QWB and HTO delegates from other parties are briefly summarized in the briefing note submitted by the QWB to the NWMB on May 8, 2020.
- 2.7. On March 3, 2020, the HTO sent a March 2 motion (attached) to the QWB requesting support that their credits should be carried forward at least one more year because the Southern Hudson Bay polar bear population is increasing. Via telephone, QWB staff clarified the HTO's intent, which included no reset of the TAH and zeroing of credits until after a better survey is conducted with more planning input and active participation by all Inuit and Cree communities.
- 2.8. On March 26, 2020, the QWB Executive passed a motion of support, moved by Adamie Nuna, seconded by Jawlie Akavak, with all in favor, stating the following: The Executive of the Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board requests that the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board (NWMB) does not reset the TAH for Southern Hudson Bay polar bears at least until the results of the next survey become available; and that the NWMB ensure that any of Sanikiluaq's harvest credits that may be unused as of June 30, 2020 shall be carried forward for future use. It was agreed that this motion would be put in the form of a briefing note for decision to the NWMB at a subsequent Executive meeting.
- 2.9. On May 7, 20020, the QWB Executive Committee passed a motion moved by Adamie Nuna and seconded by Philip Manik, Sr., with all in favor, to approve the briefing note for decision for submission to NWMB. This briefing note was sent to the NWMB on May 8, 2020. (Motion will be included in the meeting minutes, which have not been approved and printed at this time.)

### **3. Baffin Island Caribou TAH Amendment, 2020**

- 3.1. During the GN's consultation tour in January 2019, all HTOs that traditionally harvest Baffin Island caribou expressed their concerns about the current TAH, Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit regarding increases in caribou abundance on Baffin Island, and concerns related to the male-only harvest. These issues were not specifically on the GN's agenda for the consultations, but these issues are so important to Inuit that they were voiced repeatedly.
- 3.2. During the QWB AGM in 2019, all HTO delegates from communities that harvest Baffin Island caribou again expressed concerns that the TAH should be increased in the presence of multiple GN delegates, and at other points during the AGM. The QWB Executive accepted the general direction from the AGM to continue to work to have the TAH increased as soon as possible, including increased harvesting of female caribou. The distribution of caribou is expanding in the hunting areas on almost all communities. No communities reported any decrease in the local abundance of caribou. Although caribou remain a long distance from Qikiqtarjuaq, this has been the normal situation for this community for several decades.

During the QWB AGM, the GN biologist was asked the following question: "Can the DOE support an increase of TAH in the communities that have more caribou?" The GN responded as follows: "The GN needs an abundance survey completed before that could happen. As of now, the whole island is managed as one unit. The predicted date of the abundance survey is in 2024." Contrary to clause 5.1.2(e) and others of the Nunavut Agreement, it appears that the GN will not willingly incorporate current Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit and values, and Inuit systems (e.g., on-going monitoring) to conserve and manage Baffin Island caribou.

- 3.3. The Baffin Island caribou TAH has been discussed many times throughout 2019 and 2020 during many QWB and HTO meetings and telephone calls.
- 3.4. Specifically, during the QWB Executive meeting of March 26, 2020, the Executive Director reviewed the history of the TAH for Baffin Island Caribou, noting that the QWB has been questioning the TAH since it was implemented in 2015. The Executive Director requested feedback and direction from the Executive regarding potential submission of another request to the NWMB for an increase in the TAH. After some discussion among the Executive and staff, the QWB Executive passed a motion, moved by Phillip Manik Sr. and seconded by Adamie Nuna with all in favor, giving their full support for development of a submission to the NWMB requesting that the TAH for Baffin Island caribou increase to between 325 and 375, of which 35 would be open to females.
- 3.5. On May 7, 2020, the QWB Executive Committee passed a motion moved by Philip Manik, Sr and seconded by Adamie Nuna, with all in favor, to approve the briefing note for decision for submission to NWMB. This briefing note was sent to

the NWMB on May 8, 2020. (Motion will be included in the meeting minutes, which have not been approved and printed at this time.)

#### **4. Amendment of Narwhal Summer Stock Management 2020**

4.1 The HTOs and the QWB have questioned summer-stock narwhal management along Baffin Island several times since 2017. They have questioned the lack of scientific data to support it. They have called for the amalgamation of the Admiralty and Eclipse areas. They have asked for the elimination of summer and migratory seasons in several areas. They have asked to harvest narwhals in the three different areas using tags from any of the 6 communities. These concerns have been expressed in writing and orally directly to DFO and through the NWMB. The QWB believes that the proposal should not be a surprise to either the NWMB or DFO.

4.2 QWB AGM 2019 resolution to eliminate seasonal harvest management for Arctic Bay, and to allow Pond Inlet and Arctic Bay to harvest narwhal in each other's areas (attached). This idea led to extensive discussion among the six HTO representatives at the narwhal survey meeting in Winnipeg in January 2020, and among the QWB and HTOs subsequently. These discussions lead to the current proposal, reflecting the position of the six HTOs and the QWB. Via email, written support has been received from Nativak HTO, Qikiqtarjuaq, Nangmautang HTO, Clyde river, Mittimatilik HTO, Pond Inlet,

4.3 During the meeting in Winnipeg, M. Ferguson pointed out that to demonstrate that summer stock management is valid, DFO should have evidence that individual or groups of narwhal show fidelity to specific summering areas over multiple years.

During the meeting, "C. Watt of DFO was asked if DFO had plans for a study to show whether or not narwhal may return to same summering area year after year. She replied that although DFO has many satellite tagging studies with the hopes of gathering data on whether narwhal return to the same summering area, tag retention time is typically shorter than one year, no other tag attachment technology exists for increasing tag retention time that she is aware of." (The above quotation is from an email reply sent by C. Watt to M Ferguson on May 12, 2020, with the specific intent to accurately reflect C. Watt's response in January 2020, with her knowledge.)

4.4 QWB Executive Committee Motion, May 7, 2020: Approval of submission to NWMB for briefing note for decision; Moved by Philip Manik, Sr. Seconded by Adamie Nuna. Approved all in favour.

**SUBMISSION TO THE  
NUNAVUT WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT BOARD (NWMB)**

**Regular Meeting No. RM 002-2020**

**FOR**

**Information:** ☐

**Decision:** ☒

**Issue:**           ***Amendment of Narwhal Summer-Stock Harvest Management for Baffin Island, 2020***

**Background:**

DFO's 2013 Integrated Fisheries Management Plan (IFMP) for Narwhal in Nunavut stated that the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board (NWMB) would review "the narwhal management system based on summering stocks ... (following the 2017 harvesting season)".

In November 2019 at its AGM, the QWB passed a resolution stating that "the Ikajutit HTO should be allowed to have annual, not seasonal narwhal tags, and the Ikajutit and Mittimatalik HTOs should be allowed to harvest narwhal in both Admiralty Inlet and Eclipse Sound". Then, in January 2020 at a DFO narwhal survey workshop in Winnipeg, the Chairperson of the Mittimatalik HTO stated that "there are no summer stocks" in Admiralty Inlet, Eclipse Sound and eastern Baffin Island waters. All six HTOs agree that the current summer-stock management system is not supported by Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit, and unduly restricts harvesting by Inuit.

Since 2013, DFO has imposed summer-stock harvest management on the communities without adequate scientific evidence to justify it. Inuit know that narwhal move throughout the summer within and between these areas. At various times during summer, large numbers of narwhal gather and then disperse in multiple directions within hours or days. IQ knows of the many and highly variable movements of narwhal in this huge area in spring, summer and fall, and from year to year.

Inuit have observed dramatic changes in narwhal movements and distributions within and between all these areas for generations. With recent shipping traffic and the abundance of killer whales, changes in narwhal distributions appear to have increased in recent years.

In January 2020, DFO could not provide the needed evidence showing multi-year fidelity of narwhal to any one of these areas. DFO offered no clear methods or plans to obtain the required information (C. Watt, DFO, Winnipeg, pers. com.). On the other hand, DFO has collected telemetry data that verifies that some narwhal may move between these areas during a given summer.

In the opinion of the QWB, the current "summer-stock" narwhal management is not evidence based, and contradicts generations of IQ.

Further, the QWB and affected HTOs conclude that the current "summer-stock" management of narwhal in the Eastern Baffin Island, Eclipse Sound and Admiralty Inlet areas may violate

several clauses of the Nunavut Agreement , including but not limited to the following: 5.1.2 (e) and (h), 5.1.3 (a)(v) and (b) (iii) and (v), 5.3.3 (a), 5.6.50 and 5.7.6.

DFO has been asked to examine most of these issues for the past few years.

### **Recommendations:**

The QWB makes the following recommendations in order to promptly replace the current summer-stock harvest management of narwhal in the waters adjacent to northern and eastern Baffin Island:

- 1) Eliminate summer-stock management of narwhal for the communities of Arctic Bay, Pond Inlet, Clyde River, Qikiqtarjuaq, Pangnirtung and Iqaluit,
- 2) Amalgamate the current seasonal TAH allocations of the six communities into a single annual TAH to include both summering and migratory Baffin Bay narwhal that utilize these waters,
- 3) Enable the QWB to allocate the amalgamated TAH, and any future changes in the TAH, among the six communities, based on IQ and other information, as per clauses 5.1.2(e) and (h), and 5.7.6. of the Nunavut Agreement.
- 4) Establish a biennial forum for DFO to offer information and advice to the QWB for tag allocations and NQLs.
- 5) Continue to carry-forward unused allocated tags from one year to the next for each community.
- 6) Enable each HTO to temporarily transfer carry-forward or annual tags with any of the other six communities, with prior written QWB approval.
- 7) Allow individual hunters, using tags from their home community, to harvest narwhal in the areas of the other six communities, with prior written consent from the nearest HTO Board.

**Prepared by:** Michael Ferguson, Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board

**Date prepared:** May 4, 2020

PAPAGUAT DLKONAPAD ONGAK



Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board

**Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board  
Annual General Meeting  
November 16-18, 2019**

**WHEREAS** the Ikajutit (Arctic Bay) Hunters and Trappers Organization (HTO) have concerns the shipping traffic is affecting the seasonal movements of narwhal in Admiralty Inlet;

**WHEREAS** the Ikajutit HTO is concerned about seasonal narwhal tags;

**WHEREAS** the Ikajutit HTO and Mittimatalik (Pond Inlet) HTO would like to harvest narwhal in the hunting areas of each community;

**THEREFORE, be it resolved that**

"Ikajutit HTO should be allowed to have annual, not seasonal, narwhal tags and that the Ikajutit and Mittimatalik HTOs should be allowed to harvest their narwhal in both Admiralty Inlet and Eclipse Sound".

Moved: Jetaloo Kakee, Member

Seconded: Jawlie Akavak, Chair

In Favor ALL Against                      Abstained:                     

Passed X Defeated                     

Resolution # QWB Nov-19-007

Date: November 16, 2019

  
James Qillaq, Chairman

  
Phillip Manik, Vice-Chairman

Nangmantaq Hunters and Trappers Organization

Board of Directors

Clyde River, Nunavut

Date: May 11 / 20

WHEREAS, Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit (IQ) reveals that individual and groups of narwhal move between areas along northern and eastern Baffin Island during any given summer, and narwhal abundances and distributions vary greatly from year to year, week to week and day to day during summer among all areas near Baffin Island

WHEREAS, there is no available scientific information demonstrating narwhal fidelity over multiple years to any given specific seasonal areas near northern and eastern Baffin Island, and available scientific information suggests that narwhal may move from one area to another during a given summer, as known through IQ, and

WHEREAS DFO's 2013 fisheries plan for narwhal called for a review of narwhal management based on summering stocks after the 2017 harvest year.

THEREFORE, be it resolved that

The Nangmantaq HTO supports the Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board proposal to the NWMB:

- a) to eliminate summer-stock management of narwhal for the communities of Arctic Bay, Pond Inlet, Clyde River, Qikiqtarjuaq, Pangnirtung and Iqaluit,
- b) to amalgamate the current seasonal TAH allocations of the six communities into a single annual TAH to include both summering and migratory Baffin Bay narwhal that utilize these waters,
- c) to make the QWB responsible for allocating the amalgamated TAH, and any future changes in the TAH, among the six communities, based on IQ and other information, as per clause 5.7.6. of the Nunavut Agreement.
- d) to enable a forum for DFO to offer information and advice for tag allocations and NQLs to the QWB on a biennial basis,
- e) to continue to carry-forward unused allocated tags from one year to the next for each community.
- f) to enable each HTO to temporarily transfer carry-forward or annual tags with any of the other six communities, with QWB approval.
- g) to allow individual hunters, using tags from their home community, to harvest narwhal in the areas of the other six communities, with prior written consent from the nearest HTO Board.

Moved by: [Signature] Seconded by: [Signature]

In favour: 7 Against: 0 Motion passed carried

[Signature]  
HTO Chairperson





Iqajuit Hunters and Trappers Organization

Board of Directors

Arctic Bay, Nunavut

Date: May 14, 2020

WHEREAS, Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit (IQ) reveals that individual and groups of narwhal move between areas along northern and eastern Baffin Island during any given summer, and narwhal abundances and distributions vary greatly from year to year, week to week and day to day during summer among all areas near Baffin Island

WHEREAS, there is no available scientific information demonstrating narwhal fidelity over multiple years to any given specific seasonal areas near northern and eastern Baffin Island, and available scientific information suggests that narwhal may move from one area to another during a given summer, as known through IQ, and

WHEREAS DFO's 2013 fisheries plan for narwhal called for a review of narwhal management based on summering stocks after the 2017 harvest year.

THEREFORE, be it resolved that

The Iqajuit HTO supports the Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board proposal to the NWMB:

- a) to eliminate summer-stock management of narwhal for the communities of Arctic Bay, Pond Inlet, Clyde River, Qikiqtarjuaq, Pangnirtung and Iqaluit,
- b) to amalgamate the current seasonal TAH allocations of the six communities into a single annual TAH to include both summering and migratory Baffin Bay narwhal that utilize these waters,
- c) to make the QWB responsible for allocating the amalgamated TAH, and any future changes in the TAH, among the six communities, based on IQ and other information, as per clause 5.7.6. of the Nunavut Agreement.
- d) to enable a forum for DFO to offer information and advice for tag allocations and NQLs to the QWB on a biennial basis,
- e) to continue to carry-forward unused allocated tags from one year to the next for each community.
- f) to enable each HTO to temporarily transfer carry-forward or annual tags with any of the other six communities, with QWB approval.
- g) to allow individual hunters, using tags from their home community, to harvest narwhal in the areas of the other six communities, with prior written consent from the nearest HTO Board.

Moved by: Harmon K. Enaga Seconded by: Jonah Aqululuk

In favour: 5 Against: 0 Motion passed ✓

Qaujimajatuqangit  
HTO Chairperson

[illegible]

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 5  
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Qaunco 310



**Subject:** RE: URGENT HTO Input on Proposal to Eliminate Summer-Stock Management of Narwhal for Baffin Island - English and Inuktitut  
**From:** Nattivak HTA <nattivak@baffinhito.ca>  
**Date:** 2020-05-11, 2:18 p.m.  
**To:** Michael Ferguson <wildlifeadvisor@niws.ca>

Hi Michael,

First of all I apologize for the delay in sending in a written letter on behalf of the HTO Board of Directors  
We waited to hear back from couple of the members. The HTO Board are in support of the QWB's request to change it for one TAH Season

Thanks,  
Alison

-----Original Message-----

From: Michael Ferguson <[wildlifeadvisor@niws.ca](mailto:wildlifeadvisor@niws.ca)>  
Sent: April 29, 2020 1:13 PM  
To: Nattivak HTA <[nattivak@baffinhito.ca](mailto:nattivak@baffinhito.ca)>  
Subject: Re: URGENT HTO Input on Proposal to Eliminate Summer-Stock Management of Narwhal for Baffin Island - English and Inuktitut

Alison,

Yes, that is our intent. It was first proposed by the Arctic Bay and Pond Inlet HTOs. We want to check that Clyde River, Qikiqtarjuaq, Pangnirtung and Iqaluit agree.

Thanks for reaching out to your Board members. If they cannot hold a formal meeting and pass a motion, a letter showing general agreement or other suggestions would be great.

Mike

On 2020-04-29 11:54 a.m., Nattivak HTA wrote:

Hi Michael,

In my understanding will the QWB request to make changes from Summer Season & Migratory Season to turn it into one season?  
I'll make some calls to Board members.

Thanks,  
Alison

-----Original Message-----

From: Michael Ferguson <[wildlifeadvisor@niws.ca](mailto:wildlifeadvisor@niws.ca)>  
Sent: April 24, 2020 2:56 PM  
To: Ikajutit HTA <[ikajutit@baffinhito.ca](mailto:ikajutit@baffinhito.ca)>; Mittimatalik HTO <[pond@baffinhito.ca](mailto:pond@baffinhito.ca)>; Nangmautaq HTA <[clyde@baffinhito.ca](mailto:clyde@baffinhito.ca)>; Nattivak HTA <[nattivak@baffinhito.ca](mailto:nattivak@baffinhito.ca)>; Pangnirtung HTA <[pang@baffinhito.ca](mailto:pang@baffinhito.ca)>; Amaruq HTA <[amaruq@baffinhito.ca](mailto:amaruq@baffinhito.ca)>  
Cc: Eric Ootoovak <[eootoovak@baffinfisheries.ca](mailto:eootoovak@baffinfisheries.ca)>; Jimmy Sandy Akavak <[neas@qiniq.com](mailto:neas@qiniq.com)>; David Alexander <[ajnatapi@gmail.com](mailto:ajnatapi@gmail.com)>  
Subject: URGENT HTO Input on Proposal to Eliminate Summer-Stock Management of Narwhal for Baffin Island - English and Inuktitut

Dear HTO Chairpersons and Managers,  
Iqaluit, Pangnirtung, Qikiqtarjuaq, Clyde River, Pond Inlet and Arctic Bay,

By May 8, 2020, the QWB plans to submit a proposal to the NWMB to eliminate the current harvest management of narwhal based on summer stocks on northern and eastern Baffin Island. We hope to replace the current system to a single TAH shared among the 6 communities with no summer season, and with the QWB working with the HTOs to determine community allocations based largely on IQ and other information from Inuit.

More details are in the attached letter in Inuktitut and English.

We would like to receive letters or motions of support from the HTOs by May 4, 2020.

I hope you can deal with this quickly. Please contact me if you have any questions.

Thank you,

Mike

Michael Ferguson  
Senior Wildlife Advisor  
Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board  
3050 Huntingdon Court, Unit A  
Ottawa, ON K1T1R2  
Canada  
E-mail: [wildlifeadvisor@niws.ca](mailto:wildlifeadvisor@niws.ca)  
Phone: 1-613-407-1197





**Summary of QWB-HTO-Government Discussions and Communications  
Regarding NWMB Briefing Notes for  
NWMB Regular Meeting No. RM 002-2020**

### **1. Advise GN to Follow Approved Procedures on Polar Bear Credit Tags**

1.1 During the QWB AGM in November 2019, QWB staff advised the delegates from the HTOs that, according to current policies approved by the NWMB, all accumulated polar bear credits are changed to zero whenever the TAH for their community's sub-population is reset, even if the TAH is increased. Most HTOs were not aware of this. Attention was drawn to three sub-populations in Qikiqtaaluk region: a) Southern Hudson Bay because a survey was completed and a new draft harvest risk assessment was being prepared, although no consultation had been done with the QWB or HTO at that time, b) Davis Strait because the field survey for that sub-population was in its final stages and a harvest risk assessment could be produced in a year or two, and c) Lancaster Sound because field work is expected to begin in 2020 or 2021.

As happened with Baffin Bay, the HTOs were advised that it is unlikely that either the GN or the NWMB will inform the QWB and HTOs when harvest credits are likely to be zeroed with sufficient notice for communities to utilize those credits before they are zeroed.

1.2 Reportedly, on January 14, 2020 the GN confirmed to the Sanikiluaq HTO that the community had 16.03 male and 14.97 female polar bear credits available. The QWB was not copied on this confirmation; however, QWB staff had found the same information in the GN's Summary of Polar Bear Harvest Credits after the 2018/2019 Season, dated October 11, 2019.

1.3. On March 3, 2020, the Sanikiluaq HTO sent their motion of March 2 (motion attached) to request that the QWB approve the community to utilize 16 male and 13 female polar bear credits. This was 1.97 female credits less than were available.

1.4. On March 16, 2020, the QWB Executive approved the Sanikiluaq HTO's request to utilize their 16 male and 13 female polar bear credits (motion attached). On

March 30, 2020, QWB staff sent this motion to the GN, along with approved credit transfers and requests from other communities, and requested that the GN promptly issue the requested and approved tags to Sanikiluaq (email attached).

1.5. On April 7, 2020, the GN Polar Bear Biologist I sent a letter to the QWB and HTO requesting that the community reduce their requested number of tags this year "... spreading the request for this amount of credits over 2-3 harvest years." (letter attached) This letter prompted multiple telephone conversations between the QWB staff and the HTO Manager over the ensuing days and weeks to ensure that QWB staff were properly reflecting the views of the HTO.

1.6 On April 7, 2020, QWB staff responded to the GN Polar Bear Biologist I making the following key points (see attached email.):

- a) The HTO and QWB had followed all steps required for issuance of the tags as duly requested and approved, and a role for the NWMB in the issuance of credit tags does not appear in the procedures approved by the NWMB.
- b) The use of the tags does not violate the principles of conservation as these were bears that could have been harvested in the past, according to previous NWMB- and GN-approved sustainable TAHs, as per the principles of conservation in the Nunavut Agreement.
- c) The following question was asked: "Is your (the Biologist I's) offer to allow the HTO to use the accumulated credits over the next three years binding on the Minister of the Environment and the NWMB?", given that the GN could otherwise request that the TAH be reset and any unused credits zeroed.

Note: This question was not answered by the GN.

- d) The GN did not recognize Sanikiluaq's restraint and voluntary harvest reductions for several years.
- e) Once again, the QWB requested that the GN to follow established procedures and promptly issue the 29 credit tags to Sanikiluaq as requested. Then, based on the trust that that may engender, the QWB and HTO will then cooperate with the GN and the NWMB and begin discussions on how to avoid zeroing unused credits for at least three years, in order to allow Sanikiluaq to use of credit tags over 2-3 years and perhaps longer.

Note: The GN did not respond to this offer to begin these discussions.

1.7 On April 13, 2020, the HTO Manager responded to the GN reiterating and resending the HTO original request to use the 16 male and 13 female polar bear credits, and the QWB's motion approving that request. In addition, the HTO Manager invited the GN to talk about extending the harvesting of these bears over the next 5 years at about 5 or 6 bears per year.

Note: To our knowledge, the GN did not respond to this invitation, even though the idea of spreading the harvest of these credits over time was raised by the GN.

The HTO Manager also emphasized the past efforts of the community to manage its harvest carefully. (email attached)

1.8 On April 17, 2020, the GN Polar Bear Biologist II sent an email listing 9 tag numbers based on credits, and a letter explaining that he was supporting only 9 of the 29 duly requested, confirmed and approved credit tags, and asking the



NWMB to decide about the use of the remaining 20 credits (email and letter attached).

- 1.9 On May 7, 2020, the QWB Executive Committee passed a motion approving the submission to NWMB of the briefing note for decision, sent to the NWMB on May 8, 2020. The motion was moved by Adamie Nuna, seconded by Philip Manik, Sr., and approved with all in favor. (The motion will be included in the meeting, minutes which have not been approved and printed at this time.)

## **2. No Reset of TAH for Southern Hudson Bay Polar Bear Sub-population, 2020**

- 2.1. On March 12, 2019 in correspondence with the Canadian Wildlife Service, the QWB applied to become a member of the Southern Hudson Bay Polar Bear Harvest Working Group. This membership would have facilitated communications and consultations between the Working Group, the GN and the QWB. The QWB could have ensured communications with the HTO, to foster community understanding of technical aspects of the assessment and to suggest information based on Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit that might be incorporated into the modelling. On March 29, 2019, the QWB was informed that the Advisory Committee overseeing the Working Group had rejected the QWB's application to join.
- 2.2. At the QWB AGM in November 2019, QWB staff informed the delegate representing the Sanikiluaq HTO that the GN may soon request the NWMB to reset the TAH for this sub-population based on a harvest risk assessment that was being done, but had not been released yet. Privately, Drikus Gissing of the GN informed M. Ferguson of QWB that he hoped that the TAH could be reset as of July 1, 2020, but this was not certain.
- 2.3. Subsequently, QWB and HTO staff discussed this issue on several occasions by telephone and email, in consultation with David Lee of NTI.
- 2.4. In November 2019, the GN submitted 3 documents to the NWMB for the NWMB's Regular Meeting held in December 2019. These documents had not been shared or discussed directly by the GN with either the QWB or the HTO. These documents included (not attached herein. The QWB obtained them from the NWMB web site, as they were not provided by the GN.):
  - a) Update on Southern Hudson Bay Polar Bear Subpopulation Harvest Risk Assessment and Consultation Plan.  
Note: This information briefing note included a recommendation to hold a joint Wildlife Management Board hearing, and the announcement that the GN intended to consult with the HTO following a User-to-User meeting to be held early in 2020.
  - b) Executive Summary: Harvest Risk Assessment for the Southern Hudson Bay Polar Bear Subpopulation, 07 June 2019.
  - c) Executive Summary: Re-Assessment of the Southern Hudson Bay Polar Bear Subpopulation, 11 September 2019.

To our knowledge, **no** community or regional consultation on these documents or their contents had yet been completed by the GN before presenting them to the NWMB.

- 2.5. On February 11, 2020, the GN made a consultation presentation on the survey and risk assessment models to the HTO in Sanikiluaq. James Qillaq attended on behalf of the QWB. Via telephone with QWB staff, the HTO Manager informed us that he understood the GN to say that the sub-population was declining and would continue to decline in future, and that the GN directed the HTO to chose one of the risk models that they had presented to the HTO. The HTO Manager said that the models were not understandable to him or the HTO Board as presented by the GN. Also, the HTO could not accept any of the GN's conclusions because the polar bear population is increasing according to Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit, not decreasing. The GN did not hold a public meeting on the issue in Sanikiluaq.
- 2.6. In preparation for the User-to-User Meeting in Montreal later in February, the HTO held both public and Board meetings to ensure that they understood the community's knowledge and views on the population's status and trends, and their understanding of possible future trends and harvesting. The HTO delegates at the User-to User Meeting in Montreal clearly expressed that information and views from Sanikiluaq to all community, government and management board representatives attending the User-to-User Meeting. This information and that learned by QWB and HTO delegates from other parties are briefly summarized in the briefing note submitted by the QWB to the NWMB on May 8, 2020.
- 2.7. On March 3, 2020, the HTO sent a March 2 motion (attached) to the QWB requesting support that their credits should be carried forward at least one more year because the Southern Hudson Bay polar bear population is increasing. Via telephone, QWB staff clarified the HTO's intent, which included no reset of the TAH and zeroing of credits until after a better survey is conducted with more planning input and active participation by all Inuit and Cree communities.
- 2.8. On March 26, 2020, the QWB Executive passed a motion of support, moved by Adamie Nuna, seconded by Jawlie Akavak, with all in favor, stating the following: The Executive of the Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board requests that the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board (NWMB) does not reset the TAH for Southern Hudson Bay polar bears at least until the results of the next survey become available; and that the NWMB ensure that any of Sanikiluaq's harvest credits that may be unused as of June 30, 2020 shall be carried forward for future use. It was agreed that this motion would be put in the form of a briefing note for decision to the NWMB at a subsequent Executive meeting.
- 2.9. On May 7, 20020, the QWB Executive Committee passed a motion moved by Adamie Nuna and seconded by Philip Manik, Sr., with all in favor, to approve the briefing note for decision for submission to NWMB. This briefing note was sent to the NWMB on May 8, 2020. (Motion will be included in the meeting minutes, which have not been approved and printed at this time.)

### **3. Baffin Island Caribou TAH Amendment, 2020**

- 3.1. During the GN's consultation tour in January 2019, all HTOs that traditionally harvest Baffin Island caribou expressed their concerns about the current TAH, Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit regarding increases in caribou abundance on Baffin Island, and concerns related to the male-only harvest. These issues were not specifically on the GN's agenda for the consultations, but these issues are so important to Inuit that they were voiced repeatedly.
- 3.2. During the QWB AGM in 2019, all HTO delegates from communities that harvest Baffin Island caribou again expressed concerns that the TAH should be increased in the presence of multiple GN delegates, and at other points during the AGM. The QWB Executive accepted the general direction from the AGM to continue to work to have the TAH increased as soon as possible, including increased harvesting of female caribou. The distribution of caribou is expanding in the hunting areas on almost all communities. No communities reported any decrease in the local abundance of caribou. Although caribou remain a long distance from Qikiqtarjuaq, this has been the normal situation for this community for several decades.

During the QWB AGM, the GN biologist was asked the following question: "Can the DOE support an increase of TAH in the communities that have more caribou?" The GN responded as follows: "The GN needs an abundance survey completed before that could happen. As of now, the whole island is managed as one unit. The predicted date of the abundance survey is in 2024." Contrary to clause 5.1.2(e) and others of the Nunavut Agreement, it appears that the GN will not willingly incorporate current Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit and values, and Inuit systems (e.g., on-going monitoring) to conserve and manage Baffin Island caribou.

- 3.3. The Baffin Island caribou TAH has been discussed many times throughout 2019 and 2020 during many QWB and HTO meetings and telephone calls.
- 3.4. Specifically, during the QWB Executive meeting of March 26, 2020, the Executive Director reviewed the history of the TAH for Baffin Island Caribou, noting that the QWB has been questioning the TAH since it was implemented in 2015. The Executive Director requested feedback and direction from the Executive regarding potential submission of another request to the NWMB for an increase in the TAH. After some discussion among the Executive and staff, the QWB Executive passed a motion, moved by Phillip Manik Sr. and seconded by Adamie Nuna with all in favor, giving their full support for development of a submission to the NWMB requesting that the TAH for Baffin Island caribou increase to between 325 and 375, of which 35 would be open to females.
- 3.5. On May 7, 2020, the QWB Executive Committee passed a motion moved by Philip Manik, Sr and seconded by Adamie Nuna, with all in favor, to approve the briefing note for decision for submission to NWMB. This briefing note was sent to

the NWMB on May 8, 2020. (Motion will be included in the meeting minutes, which have not been approved and printed at this time.)

#### **4. Amendment of Narwhal Summer Stock Management 2020**

- 4.1 The HTOs and the QWB have questioned summer-stock narwhal management along Baffin Island several times since 2017. They have questioned the lack of scientific data to support it. They have called for the amalgamation of the Admiralty and Eclipse areas. They have asked for the elimination of summer and migratory seasons in several areas. They have asked to harvest narwhals in the three different areas using tags from any of the 6 communities. These concerns have been expressed in writing and orally directly to DFO and through the NWMB. The QWB believes that the proposal should not be a surprise to either the NWMB or DFO.
- 4.2 QWB AGM 2019 resolution to eliminate seasonal harvest management for Arctic Bay, and to allow Pond Inlet and Arctic Bay to harvest narwhal in each other's areas (attached). This idea led to extensive discussion among the six HTO representatives at the narwhal survey meeting in Winnipeg in January 2020, and among the QWB and HTOs subsequently. These discussions lead to the current proposal, reflecting the position of the six HTOs and the QWB. Via email, written support has been received from Nativak HTO, Qikiqtarjuaq, Nangmautang HTO, Clyde river, Mittimatilik HTO, Pond Inlet,
- 4.3 During the meeting in Winnipeg, M. Ferguson pointed out that to demonstrate that summer stock management is valid, DFO should have evidence that individual or groups of narwhal show fidelity to specific summering areas over multiple years.

During the meeting, "C. Watt of DFO was asked if DFO had plans for a study to show whether or not narwhal may return to same summering area year after year. She replied that although DFO has many satellite tagging studies with the hopes of gathering data on whether narwhal return to the same summering area, tag retention time is typically shorter than one year, no other tag attachment technology exists for increasing tag retention time that she is aware of." (The above quotation is from an email reply sent by C. Watt to M Ferguson on May 12, 2020, with the specific intent to accurately reflect C. Watt's response in January 2020, with her knowledge.)

- 4.4 QWB Executive Committee Motion, May 7, 2020: Approval of submission to NWMB for briefing note for decision; Moved by Philip Manik, Sr. Seconded by Adamie Nuna. Approved all in favour.

**SUBMISSION TO THE**  
**NUNAVUT WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT BOARD**  
**June 2020**

**FOR**

**Information:** X

**Decision:**

**Issue:** Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) Initial Response to the Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board's (QWB) Request for Decision titled "Amendment of Narwhal Summer-Stock Harvest Management for Baffin Island, 2020"

**Background**

The QWB has submitted a Request for Decision for consideration by the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board (NWMB or Board) at its Regular Meeting 002-2020 on June 10, 2020.

NWMB staff requested DFO's written response to the QWB submission to inform discussion at the Regular Meeting. DFO was not aware of the QWB's planned submission in advance of the submission deadline. It is also unclear whether other co-management organizations were provided advance notice of this submission or were advised thereafter. DFO would like to thank the NWMB for the opportunity to provide this information note summarizing some initial observations to assist the Board's consideration of the QWB's proposal.

In DFO's view, the QWB's Request for Decision was submitted in a manner that is inconsistent with the NWMB's Governance Manual. Section 4.3 (Procedural Fairness) notes that the NWMB is subject to administrative law and its decisions are made using procedures that are fair to the affected parties. These include that the parties be provided timely notice, reasonable disclosure, and adequate opportunity to respond before a decision is made affecting their interests or rights. Section 4.4 (Proposal for Decision) lists five specific elements that are to be included in Requests for NWMB Decision, three of which do not appear in the QWB submission. The QWB did not include the relevant western scientific information [some of which includes available Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit (IQ)] related to its proposal, did not consult with DFO as a key co-management organization prior to proposal submission, and requests prompt attention by the NWMB without addressing the NWMB's planned review of the Integrated Fisheries Management Plan (IFMP) for narwhal in the Nunavut Settlement Area.

**Information**

In 2013, the NWMB and DFO approved the narwhal IFMP that resulted from significant public consultations and included, where available, the input of IQ. It includes information about the fishery and the allocation system that accounts for harvests from migratory herds of mixed stocks of Baffin Bay narwhal. In 2017, the NWMB modified the Total Allowable Harvest (TAH) for Somerset Island, East Baffin Island, Jones Sound, and Smith Sound stocks. The community allocations following this modification were agreed to by co-management partners at a 2018 allocation workshop held in Rankin Inlet. The decision-making process for Admiralty Inlet and Eclipse Sound stocks is currently adjourned until additional science advice is published on the connectivity of those two stocks.

As noted by the QWB, the IFMP states that the NWMB would review the narwhal management system after the 2017 harvesting season. From the 2013 Narwhal IFMP: “In addition to the annual post season reviews, the NWMB will conduct a formal review of the levels of TAH, the narwhal management system based on summering stocks, and the overall Integrated Fisheries Management Plan in five years (following the 2017 harvesting season)”. However, at a 2018 meeting in Iqaluit, the narwhal co-management organizations (including the QWB) agreed that the NWMB’s review of the IFMP would occur when DFO Science advice was available regarding the connectivity of the Admiralty Inlet and Eclipse Sound management units. Science advice regarding the connectivity of those two stocks is expected in 2020. It would be premature to amend the narwhal management system ahead of this planned IFMP review and the publication of DFO Science advice for Admiralty Inlet and Eclipse Sound.

### **DFO Recommendation**

The NWMB may wish to consider deferring the QWB’s Request for Decision until the DFO Science advice is available to inform the NWMB’s formal review of the IFMP as outlined in the 2013 Narwhal IFMP and subsequent amendments approved by the Board. This recommendation is based on the following:

1. Sufficient lead time for the narwhal co-management organizations to prepare formal positions for discussion, consistent with the Nunavut Agreement decision-making process. This approach ensures that potential revisions to the narwhal management regime are discussed in a collaborative and inclusive manner.
2. The 2020/21 narwhal hunting season is currently underway and any changes to the current management system would not be possible without significant delays, which may restrict harvesting opportunities for communities.
3. The timelines anticipated to schedule and conduct a public hearing, and to complete the Nunavut Agreement decision-making process on the matter, will also determine when potential changes in narwhal management can be implemented.
4. Lack of evidence that the QWB has discussed its proposal with the Kitikmeot Regional Wildlife Board, Kivalliq Wildlife Board, and their constituent communities.
5. The QWB does not address the potential implications of its proposal to international trade in narwhal products, which is regulated by the Committee on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES). If the current management system is changed, then international trade in narwhal products will depend on positive assessment from Canada’s CITES Scientific Authority.

DFO representatives (Resource Management and Science Sectors) remain available to assist the NWMB upon request.

**Prepared by:** DFO Resource Management & DFO Science

**Date:** June 01, 2020

**SUBMISSION TO THE**  
**NUNAVUT WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT BOARD AND NUNAVIK MARINE**  
**REGION WILDLIFE BOARD**  
**FOR**

**Information:**

**Decision: X**

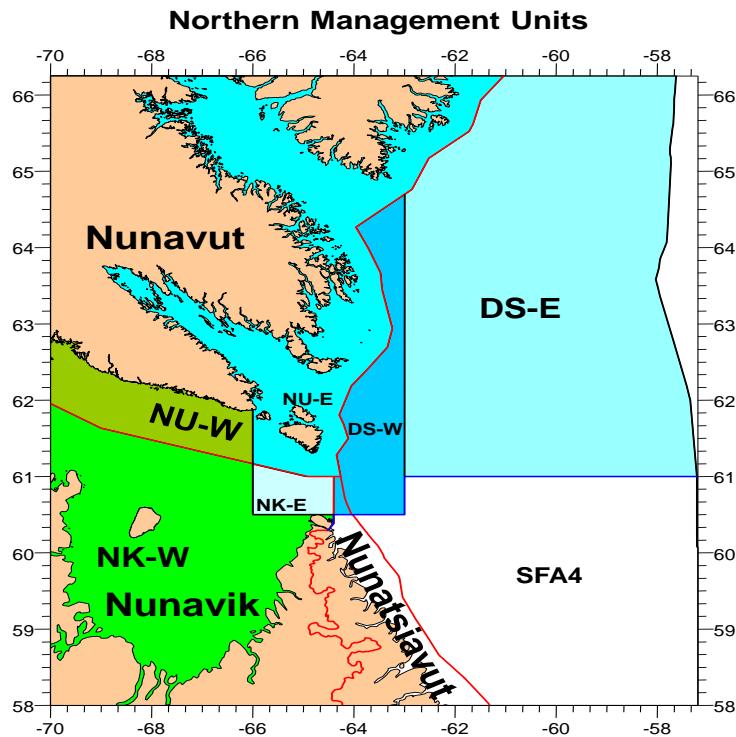
**Recommendation: X**

**Issue: Extension of Season Bridging for Nunavut and Nunavik allocations in the Northern shrimp fishery**

**Map:**

Blue areas – Eastern Assessment Zone

Green areas – Western Assessment Zone



Northern shrimp (*Pandalus borealis*)



Striped shrimp (*Pandalus montagui*)

## **Background**

Two shrimp species (*Pandalus montagui* and *Pandalus borealis*) occur in the Northern shrimp fishery that takes place in the Davis Strait and eastern Hudson Strait, which includes parts of the Nunavut Settlement Area (NSA) and the Nunavik Marine Region (NMR). Total Allowable Catch (TAC) for each species is set for two distinct science assessment zones, the Western Assessment Zone (WAZ) and Eastern Assessment Zone (EAZ) (see Map).

Collectively, season bridging refers to 1) borrowing from the following year's quota to be fished in the last month of the current year; and 2) the ability to carry forward some of the current year's unused quota to be caught in the following year.

In 2018, the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board and the Nunavik Marine Region Wildlife Board (the Boards) approved a two year pilot project for season bridging of Nunavut and Nunavik *P. montagui* allocations in the WAZ and *P. borealis* allocations in Davis Strait. The pilot project for Nunavut and Nunavik allocations was developed to be as consistent as possible with the season bridging protocol for the offshore fleet. Specifics of this season bridging protocol as it relates to amounts eligible for borrowing or carry forward are available at Appendix 1 – Table 1.

The original pilot project indicated that amounts available for bridging could be reduced or suspended where the stock status is no longer in the Healthy Zone of the PA Framework. Of note, the offshore fleet has recently reduced carry forward amounts to a maximum of 17% of the previous year's allocation in the Cautious Zone and suspended carry forwards in the Critical Zone.

The Department intends to establish limit reference points and upper stock reference points as part of the Precautionary Approach (PA) framework for stocks in the WAZ by 2021, and for southern Shrimp Fishing Areas 4-6 by 2023. The Department intends to formalize season bridging protocols for all eligible allocations, including those of Nunavut and Nunavik, in Harvest Control Rules (HCRs) which are a component of the PA framework.

Subject to the Minister's decision to remove the bycatch designation for *P. borealis* quota in the Nunavut / Nunavik East (NU/NK E) management units, these allocations could be eligible for season bridging in 2021/22 (season bridging in the EAZ is currently limited to the Davis Strait management units).

The two-year season bridging pilot project expired March 31, 2020. The Department is now seeking the Boards' decisions and recommendation, as appropriate, on renewed season bridging protocols for Nunavut and Nunavik allocations within the settlement areas and in Davis Strait beginning in the 2021/22 season.

## **Consultations**

The department sought the views of relevant stakeholders and Nunavut and Nunavik industry in April 2020. A list of recipients and a summary of views is at Appendix 2.



Makivik Corporation supported extension of the season bridging protocol with additions as recommended by the Department, outlined below. Members of the Nunavut Fisheries Association also supported extension of the season bridging protocol with recommended additions, but for one year only.

### **Science Considerations**

While catches will not exceed the TACs for the bridged fishing seasons, collectively, season bridging will result in an increased exploitation rate, especially if carry forward and borrowed quota is fished in the same year.

For example, in the 2020/21 season, the exploitation rate as a result of season bridging would increase by no more than 2.1% in the WAZ, and 0.64% in the EAZ. Any increase in the exploitation rate, to the extent that season bridging is fully used by industry, would therefore be minimal.

Given that *P. borealis* is the healthy zone of the PA Framework, DFO Science does not foresee negative consequences to the stock. Where there is no PA framework for *P. montagui* in the WAZ, the stock status is uncertain.

### **Recommendations**

DFO recommends that, beginning in the 2021/22 fishery and until such a time as HCRs are developed for the WAZ and/or southern SFAs, to maintain the existing season bridging protocols for Nunavut and Nunavik allocations within the WAZ and in the Davis Strait, with two additions:

- *Subject to the Minister's decision to remove the bycatch designation:* allow season bridging of *P. borealis* allocations in the NU/NK E; and
- In the EAZ where there is currently an established PA framework, reduce or suspend carry forward amounts where the *P. borealis* stock is no longer in the Healthy Zone, such that:
  - If the stock is in the Cautious Zone, original carry forward amounts are reduced by 13% and 26% in the upper- and lower-half of the Cautious Zone, respectively.
  - If the stock is in the Critical Zone, no carry forward is permitted.

These recommended additions to the existing season bridging protocol are illustrated at Appendix 1.

### **Summary of Request**

The Department is seeking from the Boards, for implementation beginning in the 2021/22 until such a time as HCRs are developed for the WAZ and southern SFAs:

- 1) A decision to maintain the existing season bridging protocols for *P. montagui* allocations in the WAZ, and a recommendation to maintain the existing season bridging protocols for *P. borealis* allocations in Davis Strait.
- 2) *Subject to the Minister's decision to remove the bycatch designation:* A decision to allow season bridging of *P. borealis* allocations in the NU/NK E management units.
- 3) In the EAZ, a decision within the settlement areas, and a recommendation outside, to reduce or suspend carry forward amounts for *P. borealis* where the stock is no longer in the Healthy Zone, as described above.

*Applicable to the 2020/21 fishing season only:* the Boards could agree that the Department could allow extra time, if deemed necessary and appropriate, for quota carried forward from 2019/20 to be caught in the WAZ after the September 30, 2020 deadline. This is in consideration of the ongoing COVID-19 situation and potential impacts on industry's ability to fish within the allotted timeframe.

**Prepared by:** Fisheries Resource Management, Fisheries and Oceans Canada

**Date:** May 8, 2020

### **Appendices**

**Appendix 1-** Season Bridging Protocol for NU and NK Allocations in the WAZ and EAZ

**Appendix 2-** Consultation Summary and Recipients List (April 2020)

## Season Bridging Protocol for NU and NK Allocations in the WAZ and EAZ

### Carry Forward

#### WAZ (*P. montagui*)

The Department will make 800t available in the WAZ for carry forward to Nunavut and Nunavik allocation holders annually; sharing of this amount will be consistent with the sharing arrangement established by the Boards.

Currently, based on the 50/50 split, Nunavut and Nunavik will each be able to bridge a total of 400t each. Any carry forward quota not caught by September 30 of the following year will remain unfished.

#### EAZ - Davis Strait, NU/NK E<sup>1</sup> (*P. borealis*)

350t will be available for carry forward for Nunavut and 20t for Nunavik allocations, to be fished by July 31 of the following year. Quota that is not caught by this date will remain unfished.

Where the *P. borealis* stock is no longer in the Healthy Zone, carry forward amounts are reduced such that:

- If the stock is in the Cautious Zone, original carry forward amounts for Nunavut and Nunavik allocations are reduced by 13% and 26% in the upper- and lower-half of the Cautious Zone, respectively.
- If the stock is in the Critical Zone, no carry forward is permitted.

### Borrowing

#### WAZ (*P. montagui*)

Nunavut and Nunavik shall share a total of 550t annually for borrowing based on sharing arrangements established by the Boards, which is currently 275t each. Requests to borrow quota will be assessed by the Department on a case by case basis in consideration of ice and climate conditions.

#### EAZ - Davis Strait, NU/NK E<sup>2</sup> (*P. borealis*)

Nunavut and Nunavik entities shall be allowed to borrow a total of 225t and 10t respectively from their following year's allocations, to be fished in the last month (March) of the current fishery.

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<sup>1</sup> Subject to the Minister's decision to remove the bycatch designation for *P. Borealis* in NU/NK E.

<sup>2</sup> Subject to the Minister's decision to remove the bycatch designation for *P. Borealis* in NU/NK E.

**Table 1.** Nunavut and Nunavik allocations available for carry forward and borrow.

Area	Nunavik		Nunavut	
	Carry forward	Borrow	Carry forward	Borrow
<b>WAZ</b> <i>P. montagui</i>	400t	275t	400t	275t
<b>WAZ</b> <i>P. borealis</i>	<i>N/A – Bycatch</i>			
<b>EAZ</b> <i>P. montagui</i>	<i>N/A – Bycatch</i>			
<b>EAZ</b> <i>P. borealis</i> (Davis Strait, NU/NK E <sup>3</sup> )	20t	10t	350t	225t

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<sup>3</sup> Subject to the Minister's decision to remove the bycatch designation for *P. Borealis* in NU/NK E.

## Consultation Summary and Recipients List (April 2020)

The Department solicited via email industry's views to:

- Maintain the existing season bridging protocols for *P. montagui* allocations in the WAZ, and *P. borealis* allocations in Davis Strait;
- Reduce or suspend carry forward amounts in the EAZ where the *P. borealis* stock is no longer in the Healthy Zone, such that;
  - If the stock is in the Cautious Zone, original carry forward amounts are reduced by 13% and 26% in the upper- and lower-half of the Cautious Zone, respectively.
  - If the stock is in the Critical Zone, no carry forward is permitted.
- Allow season bridging of *P. Borealis* allocations in the NU/NK E management units.

### Recipients:

Amber Giles – Nunavut Wildlife Management Board  
Frankie Jean-Gagnon – Nunavik Marine Region Wildlife Board

Jerry Ward - Qikiqtaaluk Corporation  
Chris Flanagan – Baffin Fisheries Coalition  
Brian Burke – Nunavut Fisheries Association  
Brian McNamara – Newfound Resources Ltd.  
Peter Rose, Tony Wright – Makivik Corporation

### Summary of views

Views were received from Makivik Corporation and Nunavut Fisheries Association (NFA).

Makivik Corporation supported extension of the existing season bridging protocol with recommended additions, as outlined by the Department in this briefing note.

Members of NFA also supported extension of the existing season bridging protocol with additions outlined herein, for one year only. NFA called for further discussion and analysis before setting season bridging amounts for the long term. Further, NFA viewed the deadline for carry forward catches to be limiting given the challenges associated with ice conditions and weather in these areas.

May 4, 2020

Jason Akearok  
Executive Director  
Nunavut Wildlife Management Board  
PO Box 1379, Iqaluit, NU  
X0A 0H0

**Re: Season Bridging of NU & NK Allocations in the EAZ and WAZ**

Dear Mr. Akearok:

On April 15, 2020, the Nunavut Fisheries Association (NFA) and its members received a request from Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) to provide “views on the extension of season bridging for Nunavut and Nunavik allocations in the Eastern and Western Assessment Zones, with two proposed additions”. Subsequent to providing these views, which differed from the DFO recommendations, NFA was informed that DFO would be proceeding to bring its recommendations forward to the NWMB Board at its June meeting. As a result, NFA is writing this letter to detail its position on season bridging in the EAZ and WAZ.

The current season bridging protocol for the EAZ and WAZ was approved in 2018 as a pilot project, with significant input from industry. DFO has indicated to NFA that it will be recommending the following to the Board:

DFO recommends that, beginning in the 2021/22 fishery and until such a time as HCRs are developed for the WAZ and southern SFAs, to maintain the existing season bridging protocols for Nunavut and Nunavik allocations within the WAZ and in Davis Strait; with two additions:

- Should a decision be taken between the Boards and the Minister: allow season bridging of *P. borealis* allocations in the NU/NK E; and
- In the EAZ, reduce or suspend carry-forward amounts where the *P. borealis* stock is no longer in the Healthy Zone, such that:
  - If the stock is in the Cautious Zone, original carry-forward amounts for Nunavut and Nunavik allocations are reduced by 13% and 26% in the upper- and lower-half of the Cautious Zone, respectively.
  - If the stock is in the Critical Zone, no carry-forward is permitted.

NFA does not support the implementation of the current season bridging protocol with the additions requested by DFO at the present time. Since this pilot project was put in place in 2018 significant changes have taken place in both the EAZ and WAZ which requires further analysis on season bridging protocols before full implementation. The concerns of NFA with respect to the proposed protocol relate to both the season bridging levels and the implementation dates.

In the WAZ shrimp allocations were significantly increased in 2019 and in the EAZ recent survey results indicate that significant increases in *P. borealis* allocations may take place for 2020. NFA therefore requests consultation on increasing carry forward amounts in proportion to allocation increases. The Harvest Control Rules (HCRs) have not been established as of yet for the WAZ but should be in the near future. These significant changes in

allocations and having HCRs that indicate stock status in the WAZ need to be considered before establishing final season bridging levels for both areas.

NFA members are also concerned with the implementation dates outlined in the current pilot project. Ice and weather conditions continue to limit the available fishing season in both the WAZ and EAZ. The requirement to complete harvesting prior to September 30 in the WAZ and July 31 in the EAZ provides very little time to harvest any carry-forward amounts.

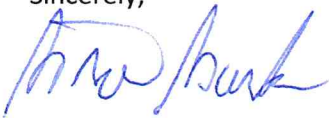
Although NFA agrees that season bridging amounts should be adjusted if stocks are in the top or bottom sections of the cautious zone, further assessment is needed on whether the reductions proposed by DFO are reasonable. NFA does agree that season bridging should not be considered for stocks in the critical zone and that NU/NK E should be considered for season bridging upon conversion from a bycatch to directed fishery.

Based on the above, NFA is recommending to the NWMB Board that it does not implement final season bridging protocols at this point, that the current pilot project protocols with DFO's adjustments be implemented for 2020, and that further discussions take place between industry, DFO, the NWMB and other stakeholders on this issue prior to the 2021 season, with a goal of reaching consensus of future season bridging protocols in the EAZ and WAZ.

The northern stocks of shrimp in the EAZ and WAZ are becoming ever more important for the shrimp industry, given the recent positive biomass estimates in these areas and the continued stock reductions in southern SFAs. As such, implementing season bridging protocols that are reasonable and provide the best opportunity for industry to harvest these important resources warrants the further analysis and discussion being requested. NFA foresees utilizing season bridging in these areas on a regular basis as required in the future.

Thank you in advance for the Board's consideration of NFA's position on this important issue.

Sincerely,



Brian Burke  
Executive Director, Nunavut Fisheries Association

c.c. Sakiasie Sowdloolik, A/Chair, Nunavut Fisheries Association  
Jaypetee Akeeagok, Director, Nunavut Fisheries Association  
David Alexander, Director, Nunavut Fisheries Association  
Jerry Ward, Director, Nunavut Fisheries Association





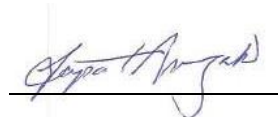
- The problems the industry faces this season in relation to crewing, potential infections, potential quarantines, possible needs to sanitize vessels, requirements for safe distancing, sourcing protective clothing supplies, testing crew for possible infection, crew availability and other similar issues will require an inordinate amount of management time during the fishing season when we should be devoting attention to producing the best possible quota application proposal. This added pressure on management could result in not having the time or focus to presenting the best possible quota application and thereby result in an unfavourable recommendation from the FAC for a five-year allocation.
- In addition, significantly more management efforts and time will have to be devoted to the issues surrounding the landing of vessels in Greenland ports under strict controls affecting the discharge and resupply of vessels, restrictions on crews, crew exchanges and crew emergencies. Regardless of how well the industry plans its visits in Greenland, issues will arise that will require significant management time and could affect the success of this season's fishery.
- Problems created by Nunavut's restrictions on entry into the territory and prohibitions on landing in the territory's ports, as the industry's vessels have routinely done every fishing season to pick up/drop off crew and spare parts.
- Due to the special level of restrictions imposed by GN we will be faced with additional restrictions and controls unlike what any other fishery in Canada will have to contend with. The recently announced conditions Nunavut's Chief Public Health Officer stipulated for an easing of the restrictions suggest it could be several months before there is any easing of them.
- As a result of the stay at home orders issued by GN, we are faced as a Nunavut company with a number of additional problems as we must work from home and are prohibited from inter-community travel. Further, the overburdened internet service, especially in our high Arctic communities, renders video conferencing virtually impossible. Therefore, we will be unable to engage in meaningful consultation with our stakeholders while preparing a major five-year quota application. "In view of the importance attached to the requirement for director, stakeholder and community engagement throughout the 2019 revised "Allocation Policy for Commercial Marine Fisheries" it is essential that quota applicants be able to engage in **meaningful consultations** with its community owners in order to properly prepare their allocation applications. This is simply not possible in the current crisis environment and the restrictions related to it.
- Owing to the fact that we are Nunavut companies, we will have to deal with three different jurisdictions and sets of rules in Nunavut, Newfoundland and Greenland.
- All of these limitations will undoubtedly drive up industry operating costs and negatively affect our profitability. In fact, as the Federal Government has recognized our industry as an essential service it has identified the need for special assistance to keep us operating and deal with the additional hurdles we must overcome. Staying on top of these programs and making application to the various programs will occupy considerable management time.

- The industry is facing an very uncertain market outlook for our products this year as the worldwide food service markets where the bulk of our products are sold have been heavily disrupted and we do not have any indication at this time when they will stabilize and at what price levels. This will also have in the short-term a negative impact on profitability and will likely require significant adjustments to our businesses.
- We have no idea when we will return to what is now being called “a new normal”. It is, however, clear that this will take a number of months and likely at least this full fishing season. What if we are faced with a second wave of infections this fall or next winter, as some experts predict? When will a vaccine be available?
- Faced with such instability and uncertainty how can one accurately produce with any degree of confidence a five- year business plan?
- If we present now an application for a multi-year allocation, we will have to live with the consequences of this potential mistake for the next five years.
- NWMB and FAC will be faced with issues considering and studying applications if you are still required to work from home.
- It may not be possible to appear in person before the FAC or NWMB to explain and defend our applications, thereby resulting in less effective presentations and consideration of our applications.
- In the case of AFA, our fishing season has already been seriously disrupted by the impact throughout the world of Covid-19. We have been engaged for several months in our plans to purchase a new vessel that would increase our harvesting capacity. However, we have not been able to complete the purchase because the vessel must undergo significant modifications at a shipyard to improve its ice classification. Until restrictions are eased in Poland, we cannot get the vessel in the shipyard to complete the required work. We had hoped to have the vessel fishing this season but owing to the virus it will be delayed to next season.

We believe we have presented strong arguments as to why delaying the multi-year quota application and maintaining the current allocations for another year is a wise course of action that will permit us to focus on surviving the crisis we face because of Covid-19.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Jaypetee Akeeagok,  
Executive Chairman

cc: Honourable Bernadette Jordan, Minister of Fisheries and Oceans  
Arctic Fishery Alliance Board of Directors  
Mr. Lootie Toomasie, President & CEO, Arctic Fishery Alliance



May 8, 2020

Honourable Bernadette Jordan PC  
Minister of Fisheries and Oceans and Canadian Coast Guard  
House of Commons  
Ottawa, Ontario

Dear Minister Jordan:

I am writing you on behalf of the Board of Directors of the Arctic Fishery Alliance (AFA) owned by the communities of Qikiqtarjuaq, Grise Fjord, Resolute Bay, and Arctic Bay to express our concerns about the possibility of Nunavut Wildlife Management Board (NWMB) issuing a call this year for a multi-year quota application under the revised "Allocation Policy for Commercial Marine Fisheries". As you are aware, for matters related to the fishery beyond the Land Claim Area the Board's role is only advisory and it makes recommendations on allocations that you can either accept, reject or modify. As we all know, Canada and Nunavut are in the midst of the most serious health and economic crisis experienced in the past century. Thus, in this crisis environment, we request that you advise NWMB that it should not be asking the Nunavut fishing industry to prepare a quota application that will shape its future for the next five years.

Instead, we would suggest a continuation of the present allocations that the four organizations have for the 2020 season, which would include the quota sharing agreement the Nunavut Fisheries Association agreed to for the two- year period 2019-20 and that your predecessor accepted as a recommendation from NWMB.

We have given this issue considerable thought over the past two months since Covid-19 became an epidemic in our country. We have identified a number of factors that we feel support our recommendation that we should not be required in these circumstances to submit an application to NWMB for a five-year quota decision.

- Since we do not have any TAC increases available for turbot now or in the foreseeable future (due to a lack of DFO research surveys) we will be engaged in a "zero-sum game " in a multi-year allocation process as any quota adjustments can only be made at the expense of another quota holder. We feel that it would be unfair and totally unjust to the existing quota holders to have any of them risk any quota reductions during the current economic crisis caused by the virus. Such action could have unfavourable and harmful impacts on our communities. We feel the only fair course of action is to maintain the status quo for one more year.

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Arctic Bay

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P.O. Box 205  
Qikiqtarjuaq, NU X0A 0B0

☎ (867) 927-8894  
☎ (867) 927-8896  
arcticfisheryalliance@qiniq.com

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59A Lemarchant Rd.  
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St. John's, NL A1B 3T1

☎ (709) 579.3278  
☎ (709) 579.3304  
harry@arcticfisheryalliance.com

- Never has the Nunavut fishing industry been faced with such a degree of uncertainty as we enter the 2020 turbot fishery as a result of problems caused by the virus. Madame Minister, you are dealing on a daily basis with the economic problems our industry is facing. We need to focus all of our management efforts to ensure we are able to survive this crisis.
- The problems the industry faces this season in relation to crewing, potential infections, potential quarantines, possible needs to sanitize vessels, requirements for safe distancing, sourcing protective clothing supplies, testing crew for possible infection, crew availability and other similar issues will require an inordinate amount of management time during the fishing season when we should be devoting attention to producing the best possible quota application proposal. This added pressure on management could result in not having the time or focus to presenting the best possible quota application and thereby result in an unfavourable recommendation from the NWMB for a five-year allocation.
- In addition, significantly more management efforts and time will have to be devoted to the issues surrounding the landing of vessels in Greenland ports under strict controls affecting the discharge and resupply of vessels, restrictions on crews, crew exchanges and crew emergencies. Regardless of how well the industry plans its visits in Greenland, issues will arise that will require significant management time and could affect the success of this season's fishery. As you know, we are forced to land in a foreign country due to the lack of harbour infrastructure in the eastern Arctic.
- Problems created by Nunavut's restrictions on entry into the territory and prohibitions on landing in the territory's ports as the industry's vessels have routinely done every fishing season to pick up/drop off crew and spare parts.
- Due to the special level of restrictions imposed by GN we will be faced with additional restrictions and controls unlike what any other fishery in Canada will have to contend with. The recently announced conditions Nunavut's Chief Public Health Officer stipulated for an easing of the restrictions suggest it could be several months before there is any easing of them.
- Owing to the fact that, we are Nunavut companies, we will have to deal with three different jurisdictions and sets of rules in Nunavut, Newfoundland and Greenland.
- All of these limitations will undoubtedly drive up industry operating costs and negatively affect our profitability. In fact, as your Government has recognized our industry as an essential service it has identified the need for special assistance to keep us operating and deal with the additional hurdles we must overcome. Staying on top of these programs and making application to the various programs will occupy considerable management time and take away from the time necessary to prepare a multi-year quota application.

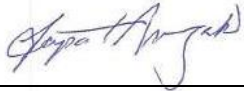
- The industry is facing a very uncertain market outlook for our products this year as the worldwide food service markets where the bulk of our products are sold have been heavily disrupted and we do not have any indication at this time when they will stabilize and at what price levels. This will also have in the short-term a negative impact on profitability and will likely require significant adjustments to our businesses.
- We have no idea when we will return to a what is now being called “a new normal”. It is, however, clear that this will take a number of months and likely at least this full fishing season. What if we are faced with a second wave of infections this fall or next winter as some experts predict? When will a vaccine be available?
- As a result of the stay at home orders issued by GN, we are faced as a Nunavut company with a number of additional problems as we must work from home and are prohibited from inter-community travel. Further, the overburdened internet service, especially in our high Arctic communities, renders video conferencing virtually impossible. Therefore, we will be unable to engage in **meaningful consultation** with our stakeholders while preparing a major five-year quota application. This is simply not possible in the current crisis environment and the restrictions related to it.
- Faced with such instability and uncertainty how can one accurately produce with any degree of confidence a five- year business plan as required under NWMB quota application process?
- If we present now an application for a multi-year allocation, we will have to live with the consequences of this potential mistake for the next 5 years.
- NWMB and its Fishery Advisory Committee (FAC) will be faced with issues considering and studying applications if they are still required to work from home.
- It may not be possible to appear in person before the FAC or NWMB to explain and defend our applications, thereby resulting in less effective presentations and consideration of our applications.
- In the case of AFA our fishing season has already been seriously disrupted by the impact throughout the world of Covid-19. We have been engaged for several months in our plans to purchase a new vessel that would increase our harvesting capacity. However, we have not been able to complete the purchase because the vessel must undergo significant modifications at a shipyard to improve its ice classification. Until restrictions are eased in Poland, we cannot get the vessel in the shipyard to complete the required work. We had hoped to have the vessel fishing this season but owing to the virus it will be delayed until next season.

We believe we have presented strong arguments as to why maintaining the current allocations for another year is a wise course of action that will permit us to focus on surviving the crisis we face because of Covid-19. We know that in your position as Minister of Fisheries and Ocean you understand all too well the disruption in the normal way of conducting our business and the importance of meaningful consultation to our indigenous communities. We therefore urge you to request NWMB to delay their

request for multi-year quota applications until we are operating in a more stable health and financial environment.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jaypetee Akeeagok", written over a horizontal line.

Jaypetee Akeeagok  
Executive Chairman

cc: Mr. Daniel Shewchuk, Chairperson, Nunavut Wildlife Management Board  
Arctic Fishery Alliance Board of Directors  
Mr. Lootie Toomasie, President & CEO, Arctic Fishery Alliance



To: Jason Akearok  
Executive Director  
NWMB  
Tel. (867) 975-7300  
[jakearok@nwmb.com](mailto:jakearok@nwmb.com)

Re: NWMB Call for Allocation Applications 2020

May 12, 2020

Dear Jason

Thank you for forwarding the letter from Arctic Fisheries Alliance requesting a delay in the NWMB's Call for Allocation Application for 2020/2021.

Baffin Fisheries is confident it will be able to complete its allocation application this year and is not requesting a delay at this time. Baffin Fisheries acknowledges that the COVID-19 pandemic will cause some inconvenience in the preparation of applications, and that strategic plans may evolve over time as the pandemic evolves. However, the impact of COVID-19 should be equal to all Nunavut fishing enterprises.

The allocation process is important for Baffin Fisheries to secure bank financing and economic certainty, as it moves forward with required fleet renewal plans, and Nunavut economic investment plans.

If the pandemic affects the NWMB's ability to conduct the review process, Baffin Fisheries is willing to enter discussions and consultation on how to address all issues, and is open to changes that may be required to ensure a fair and transparent review process.

Sincerely,

David Alexander, Chairman  
Baffin Fisheries

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Baffin Fisheries  
Building 208  
P.O. Box 6008  
Iqaluit, Nunavut  
X0A 1H0

867-979-3070  
[baffinfisheries.ca](http://baffinfisheries.ca)





May 12, 2020

Daniel Shewchuk  
Chairman  
Nunavut Wildlife Management Board  
P.O. Box 1379, Iqaluit, NU  
X0A 0H0

Jason Akearok  
Executive Director  
Nunavut Wildlife Management Board  
PO Box 1379, Iqaluit, NU  
X0A 0H0

**Re: AFA Request for Delay in Full Call for Applications**

Dear Mr. Shewchuk & Mr. Akearok:

Qikiqtaaluk Corporation (QC) is writing to express its opposition to the request submitted by the Arctic Fishery Alliance (AFA) for a one year delay in the NWMB's full call for applications, as scheduled under the *2019 Allocation Policy for Commercial Marine Fisheries*.

As you are aware, in the past QC expressed deep disappointment in the several delays that occurred in finalizing the revised 2019 policy, delays that resulted in the sharing of allocations being maintained at levels that were detrimental to our company for an extended period of time. To allow time for industry to become familiar with the changes to the policy, we agreed to work with other members of the Nunavut Fisheries Association (NFA) on a two-year agreement for the sharing of the 2019 increase in turbot in OA and OB and sharing of the increase in WAZ shrimp. In both cases, these agreements helped improve QC's allocations of adjacent resources. With these agreements expiring in 2020, QC does not feel that any further delay in the multi-year allocation process is warranted.

This full call is the only opportunity provided to industry to obtain a reset and redistribution of allocations based on their past performance and future commitments. Companies should be willing and ready to stand by their activities and performance over the past several years, in terms of their financial performance, the benefits they have provided to Nunavut, and meeting the commitments they have made. QC is proud of its commitments and performance and feels that the time has finally come for this to be reflected in its share of adjacent turbot and shrimp allocations administered through the NWMB.

AFA is requesting the delay largely based on the impacts of COVID-19. From QC's perspective, COVID-19 is impacting on all members involved in the Nunavut fishery and on all aspects of the economy.





We are confident that the impacts we will all feel in 2020 will be considered by NWMB in its future deliberations. In fact, the full submission will primarily reflect the results for years up to 2019, since the 2020 season is ongoing, so the current situation would have no impact on this past performance. In addition, we are all managing our businesses to continue fishing during the pandemic and, although this entails extra effort and commitment, QC is moving forward with its operations and does not feel that the already scheduled completion of this full submission would add unwarranted or unmanageable requirements.

In summary, QC is requesting that the NWMB proceed with the long-scheduled full call for multi-year allocations. We look forward to the opportunity to outline for the NWMB our past performance and our extensive commitments to the future benefit of Nunavut.

Regards,

Harry Flaherty, President & CEO

Olayuk Akesuk, Chairman

**CC:**

Honourable Bernadette Jordan, Minister of Fisheries & Oceans

Peter Keenainak, Vice President, QC

Jerry Ward, Director of Fisheries, QC Fishery division