

SUBMISSION TO THE
NUNAVUT WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT BOARD
SEPTEMBER 2021

FOR

Information: X

Decision:

Issue: Department of Fisheries and Oceans Canada – Fisheries Management Operational Updates

Updates:

Marine Mammals:

1) Narwhal:

- DFO is in the process of coordinating with Hunters and Trappers Organizations/Associations (HTOs/HTAs) for the 2020/21 narwhal tag returns and summarizing the harvest statistics. This includes calculating the amount of carry-over tags available.
- The 2021/22 narwhal harvest season has commenced and all four communities with seasonal tags (Arctic Bay, Clyde River, Pond Inlet, and Qikiqtarjuaq) will have started their summer season by the time of this meeting. DFO has received most community allocation decisions from the Regional Wildlife Organizations including the carry-over numbers. Narwhal tags and information packages for the 2021/22 harvest season have been sent to all communities. Once the final allocation decisions have been confirmed, the remaining 2021/22 tags will be distributed to communities.
- DFO continues to attempt coordination of a virtual meeting for the Nunavut Narwhal Working Group in 2021 at a time when all co-management organizations will be available to participate. This meeting will involve discussing the recently published Science advice on Admiralty Inlet and Eclipse Sound narwhal stocks and initiating a review of the Integrated Fisheries Management Plan for Narwhal in the Nunavut Settlement Area.

2) Walrus:

- The Federal Minister of Fisheries and Oceans has approved a total of 27 walrus sport hunts for 2021 (Coral Harbour 23 and Arviat 4). Walrus sport hunt outfitters have been notified of their 2021 sport hunt allocation approvals.

- DFO is working with sport hunt outfitters on obtaining the necessary information for booked hunts and distributing sport hunt packages, which include the hunt report form, sampling kit, and licence.
- DFO has been informed that walrus sport hunts are being planned in Coral Harbour this year. No walrus sport hunts are being planned in Arviat this summer as a result of COVID-19.
- The Community-based Catch Monitoring (CBCM) Program for Walrus continues for a fourth year in the community of Sanirajak with a Community Coordinator hired again for the upcoming 2021 harvest season. The purpose of the CBCM Program is to build local capacity, formalize local knowledge in decision-making, improve harvest reporting, and to identify ecologically and biologically important areas. DFO and the Aiviit HTO expanded the CBCM Program for Walrus to the community of Coral Harbour in 2020 with implementation of the program ongoing in 2021, and a Community Coordinator has recently been hired in that community.

3) Cumberland Sound Beluga:

- The Cumberland Sound Beluga Working Group continues to meet virtually while COVID-19 restrictions limit in-person meetings. In 2021, teleconferences were held in January, February, and March. The April meeting was cancelled due to the COVID-19 outbreak on Baffin Island, but the Working Group was able to resume meeting in June. The next teleconference is being tentatively planned for late August.
- The annual Cumberland Sound Beluga harvest in Pangnirtung is complete. On July 22nd, the HTO notified DFO that the quota of 41 has been met and DFO issued a Closure Notice for the fishery.

4) Bowhead:

- In the Kivalliq, DFO issued Marine Mammal Fishing Licenses to Coral Harbour on July 6th and Baker Lake on July 15th, for the 2021 bowhead harvest. Coral Harbour successfully harvested a bowhead on July 10th and has forwarded hunt information to DFO. Sample collection is currently ongoing.
- In the Qikiqtaaluk, Igloolik had received approval for a bowhead hunt but has since decided not to host, citing COVID-19 concerns.
- In the Kitikmeot, Taloyoak had received approval for a bowhead hunt but has also decided not to host, citing difficulties securing funding and a short timeline with which to prepare.

- DFO is tentatively planning to hold a teleconference meeting of the Bowhead Working Group in September 2021 to continue to engage on the development of the bowhead Integrated Fisheries Management Plan (IFMP).

Greenland Halibut (Turbot):

1) Cumberland Sound Turbot Fishery

- DFO continues to work with the Pangnirtung HTA as the licence holder for the Cumberland Sound Turbot Management Area (CSTMA) on plans for a summer fishery. Out of the 500 tonne Total Allowable Harvest, 436.8 tonnes was harvested during the on-ice winter fishery. This leaves 63.2 tonnes remaining and available for open water fishing this summer.

Prepared by: Fisheries and Oceans Canada – Fisheries Management

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