



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

Regular Meeting No. RM 004-2021

FOR

**Information:** ☐

**Decision:** ☒

**Issue:** Government of Nunavut's Polar Bear Harvest Administration and Credit Calculation System (HACCS)

### Background:

- In 2019, the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board (NWMB) provided interim approval pending consultation to a version of the Government of Nunavut's (GN) Polar Bear Harvest Administration and Credit Calculation System (HACCS). The GN did not consult the Regional Wildlife Organizations (RWOs) and the Hunters and Trappers Organizations (HTOs) on this document before submitting it to the NWMB for approval.
- The GN did consult the RWOs and HTOs in two 2-hour conference calls in April and July 2021. Most HTOs were unable to participate due to short notice and poor seasonal timing. As well, the GN did not provide enough time during these calls for both parties to resolve the concerns of the RWOs and HTOs about the HACCS.
- On August 10, 2021, the GN provided the QWB and other RWOs with an updated version of HACCS, requesting RWO feedback by October 1, 2021.
- The latest version of HACCS infringes on the powers and functions of the RWOs, as provided for in section (s.) 5.7.6 of the Nunavut Agreement (NA), infringes on other sections of the NA, and fails to address concerns raised by Inuit during and after the 2018 NWMB public hearing on the polar bear management plan.
- The staff of the Kitikmeot Regional Wildlife Board (KRWB), the Kivalliq Wildlife Board (KWB) and the *Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board* (QWB) have collaborated to develop a draft RWO-sponsored Nunavut Polar Bear Harvest Administration System (NPB HAS), which addresses NA infringements, and other RWO and HTO concerns regarding the GN's revised HACCS.
- Through a QWB Executive motion on September 29, 2021 sent to both the GN and NWMB on October 1, 2021, the QWB did the following:



- The QWB advised the GN that it does not support the GN's revised HACCS proposal;
  - The QWB invited the GN to develop a joint GN-RWO submission for the NWMB, based on the draft RWO-sponsored NPB HAS as soon as possible;
  - The final NPB HAS or any other polar bear harvest system should work hand-in-hand with RWO Polar Bear Harvest Administration By-laws (PBHAB) in accordance with the NA (currently under active development);
  - The QWB asked both the GN and the NWMB to conduct staff reviews of the draft RWO-sponsored NPB HAS, which was attached, and provide constructive comments on the draft NPB HAS to the QWB, KRWB and KWB on or before October 22, 2021.
- Active work by the QWB has continued on the NPB HAS and potential conditions and terms for the developing PBHAB with six of 13 individual HTO consultations completed as of October 30, 2021.
  - On October 19, 2021, the QWB received a letter from Drikus Gissing, Director of Wildlife Management and Research for the GN Department of Environment, indicating that the RWO's proposed NPB HAS will require extensive review, and that the review would not be completed by October 22, 2021. Mr. Gissing did not indicate when the review could eventually be completed.
  - In spite of the fact that the QWB does not support the revised HACCS, Mr. Gissing stated that the GN would still submit the updated version of the Polar Bear Harvest Administration and Credit Calculation System (HACCS) for the NWMB meeting of December 08, 2021.
  - The GN has not provided any urgent justification for that submission date.
  - The version of HACCS given interim NWMB approval pending consultation in 2019 has functioned adequately since then, while subsequent versions of HACCS offered by the GN have generated significant and serious concerns among the RWOs and HTOs.
  - The QWB and other RWOs will continue to develop RWO Polar Bear Harvest Administration By-laws, in accordance with sections 5.7.8 to 5.7.12 inclusive of the NA, and present them to NWMB together with the RWO NPB HAS. The RWOs will incorporate any appropriate comments and input that we may receive from the GN and/or NWMB.
  - A letter from QWB's legal counsel addressed to the Chairperson of the NWMB is attached.



### Recommendations:

In brief, the QWB's legal position is that "... the RWOs and HTOs are populated by Inuit members who are more than simply stakeholders — they are *rights* holders under the NA.

The QWB thus respectfully requests that the NWMB delay adjudicating on the GN proposed HACCS until such time that (a) the QWB and the other RWOs have satisfactorily been consulted by the GN and (b) the GN has had an appropriate amount of time to complete the “extensive review” of the RWO proposed NPB HAS to which it committed in its October 19, 2021 letter to the QWB.”

In the meantime, the QWB respectfully requests that the NWMB continue to utilize the 2019 version of HACCS, which was given interim approval pending consultation, which is incomplete at this time.

**Prepared by:** *Michael Ferguson and Kolola Pitsiulak, Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board*

**Date prepared:** November 1, 2021



