

APPENDIX C

Potential Implications of the QWB-HTO Proposal to International Trade in Narwhal Products

In 2020, in DFO's initial response to the QWB-HTO Inuit System of Narwhal Management for Northern and Eastern Baffin Island, they raised the following issue:

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.

During the June 2020 NWMB Regular meeting, the QWB pointed out that this specific issue is clearly not within QWB's powers and functions or within its scope of expertise. The QWB suggested that it falls within the mandate of the federal government. The QWB believes that Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) should have undertaken at least an initial evaluation of this issue based on the stated terms of submitted proposal.

On September 27, 2021, M. Ferguson of the QWB had an on-line meeting with A. McPhee and G. Nirlungnayuq of DFO. During that meeting, DFO staff raised this issue again. In response, QWB asked DFO how and why conditions related to international trade could potentially change, given that QWB-HTO proposal did not request any change in the combined current Total Allowable Harvest (TAH) for the Northern and Eastern Baffin Island (NEBI), which is part of the Baffin Bay narwhal population. DFO replied that they did not know the answer to QWB's question, and needed to ask the Scientific Authority. Apparently, DFO had not done this over the previous 15 months after raising the issue themselves. During this meeting, DFO did not request additional specific details about the proposal from QWB related to this issue.

During a telephone/on-line meeting of the Nunavut Narwhal Working Group on January 27, 2022, DFO staff again raised a similar question. QWB staff reminded DFO and other representatives that the QWB-HTO proposal had not requested any change to the combined TAH for the NEBI stock, identified by Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit. QWB also pointed out that the actual harvest of narwhal in NEBI waters had consistently been less than the total combined TAHs each year since 2013. Therefore, QWB has found no evidence of overharvesting of Baffin Bay narwhal at current TAH levels for NEBI. Again, after about four additional months, DFO staff has not shared any preliminary or other evaluation of their own repeated question, which is within the mandate of the Crown of Canada and not the responsibility of the QWB, in the QWB's opinion.

Please note that the QWB's assertion of the primacy of Inuit Systems of Wildlife Management under the Nunavut Agreement as an Inuit should apply to any evaluation of the international trade in narwhal products in Nunavut, in the QWB's opinion.

Given that the Crown has had about 20 months to provide a preliminary evaluation of this issue under federal jurisdiction and raised repeatedly by DFO, the QWB requests the NWMB does not further delay at least an interim decision on the QWB-HTO proposal.