



Environment and  
Climate Change Canada

Environnement et  
Changement climatique Canada

Canada



# **National Polar Bear Management Plan:**

## **Overview of the Federal Addition, consultation and engagement efforts, and next steps**

Lauren Schmuck, Wildlife Biologist

Wildlife Management and Regulatory Affairs Division, Canadian Wildlife Service, Environment and  
Climate Change Canada

June 15, 2022

# Presentation outline:

---

- **National Polar Bear Management Plan**
  - Background and Structure
  - Status of documents to be included in the National Polar Bear Management Plan
- **Federal Addition**
  - Overview
  - Key Information
- **Consultation and engagement with Indigenous rights' holders and coordination with co-management partners in Nunavut**
- **Next Steps**
- **Appendix I: Consultation on the Management Plan: A National Perspective**



# Background and Structure of the National Polar Bear Management Plan

- First written by Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC) in 2014 as a single National Management Plan
- Original National Plan drew heavily from the Polar Bear Administrative Committee (PBAC)-approved *National Polar Bear Conservation Strategy for Canada* (2011)
- Following review and discussion of ECCC's preliminary draft, PBAC advised to instead structure the National Plan as the six jurisdictional documents, tied together by the Federal Addition (2016)
- Drafts of Federal Addition shared with co-management partners for comment in October 2018, July 2019 and October 2021



## National Polar Bear Management Plan

Part 1 – Federal  
Addition (ECCC)

Part 2 – Inuvialuit  
Settlement Region  
Joint Polar Bear  
Management Plan

Part 3 – Nunavut  
Polar Bear Co-  
Management Plan

Part 4 – Manitoba  
Polar Bear  
Conservation and  
Recovery Strategy

Part 5 – Ontario Polar  
Bear Recovery Strategy  
and Government  
Response Statement

Part 6 – QC-EMR-  
NMR Polar Bear  
Management Plan

Part 7 –  
Newfoundland and  
Labrador Polar  
Bear Management  
Plan



Environment and  
Climate Change Canada

Environnement et  
Changement climatique Canada

Canada

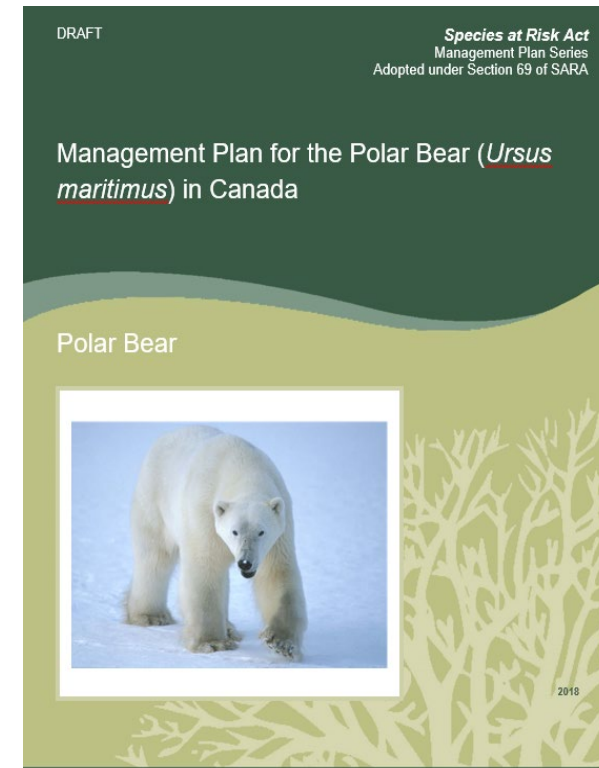
# Status of Documents to be included in the National Polar Bear Management Plan

Federal Addition – Part 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Three drafts completed and shared with partners for comment (2018 – 2021). Current draft ready for discussion with Boards.</li></ul>
ISR – Part 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Completed in 2017</li></ul>
Nunavut – Part 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Completed in 2019</li></ul>
Manitoba – Part 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Draft produced in August 2021; with senior management for review</li></ul>
Ontario – Part 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Completed in 2011</li></ul>
Québec-EMR-NMR – Part 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Submitted to Boards/Advisory Committee in spring 2021. Approval/advice pending</li></ul>
Newfoundland and Labrador – Part 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Document finalized in November 2021. In discussions regarding consultations</li></ul>



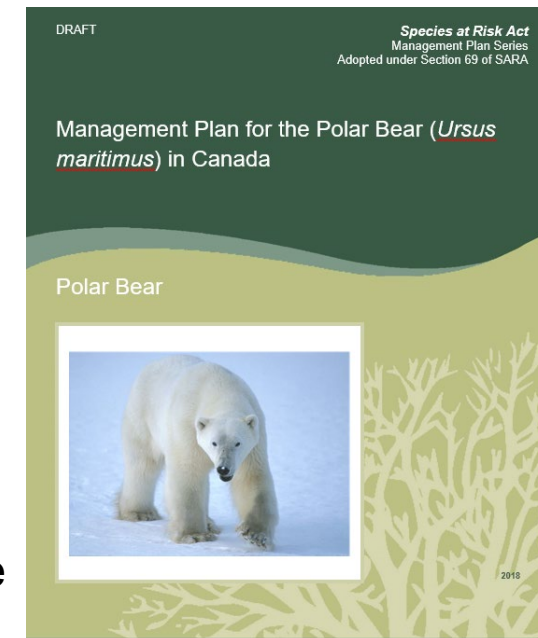
# Federal Addition – Overview

- Developed by ECCC with significant input from P/T governments, WMBs and Indigenous land claims organization co-management partners
- Written in parallel with jurisdictional documents; in many cases being informed by joint federal/jurisdictional engagement with rights holders
- Key considerations:
  - Threat assessment borrowed from the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC)'s November 2019 status report
  - Geographic scope: all polar bears within Canada
  - Contains all sections of a federal management plan that are required by the federal *Species at Risk Act* (SARA)
  - No critical habitat identified



# Key Information included in the Federal Addition (1/2)

- **COSEWIC Species Assessment Information, Species Status Information, and Species Information:** standard sections required in federal Management Plans
- **Threats:** COSEWIC assessment
  - **Climate Change (HIGH):** sea ice habitat loss from increasing temperatures
  - **Biological Resource Use (LOW):** management of human-induced mortality, including sustainable harvest
  - **Pollution (LOW):** Polar bears can be exposed to pollutants that bioaccumulate
  - **Other (NEGLIGIBLE):** mining, transportation, and human activities
  - **Other (UNKNOWN):** dams & other ecosystem modifications, and invasive species
- The Federal Addition focuses on conservation actions within the federal mandate (e.g., climate emissions, arctic shipping regulations) and refers the reader to jurisdictional documents for matters under P/T authority (e.g. harvest management is generally under P/T authority, and is addressed in jurisdictional management plans and recovery strategies)



# Key Information included in the Federal Addition (2/2)

- **Management Objective:** Maintain the resilience, redundancy and representation of the population in the species' known range in Canada.
- **Broad Strategies and Management Actions** (limited to matters under federal jurisdiction; actions that most directly impact subsistence rights are generally in the jurisdictional management plans and recovery strategies).
  - Work with Canadian partners to co-manage and conserve polar bears and their habitat
  - Work with international partners to manage and conserve polar bears on circumpolar scale
  - Conduct scientific and Indigenous Knowledge research and monitoring in Canada and internationally
  - Promote and support public outreach and education related to polar bear management and conservation
- **Measuring Progress:** Identifies how success will be measured every 5 years, based on the goal stated in the Management Objective
- **Effects on the Environment and Other Species:** Identifies whether outcomes of the document could be harmful to the environment or other species.



## **Consultation and engagement with Indigenous rights' holders and coordination with co-management partners in Nunavut:**

### **What consultations occurred on the territorial management plan?**

- Community-level consultations were completed throughout the area of application of the Nunavut Polar Bear Co-Management Plan (2016)
- ECCC was involved in these consultations, and heard the concerns raised by rights holders

### **What coordination with co-management partners has occurred to date on the Federal Addition?**

- All PBAC organizations offered opportunity to comment on three drafts of the Federal Addition
- Five P/T governments (Northwest Territories, Nunavut, Ontario, Quebec and Yukon), the Inuvialuit Game Council, Makivik Corporation, Nunavik Marine Region Wildlife Board, and the Wildlife Management Advisory Councils (Northwest Territories and North Slope) involved in development of Federal Addition

### **What opportunities are there for additional engagement on the Federal Addition?**

- Letters sent to communities, Regional Wildlife Organizations, and Hunters and Trappers Organizations to offer consultation
- 90-day public comment period on SAR Registry: opportunity to comment on content of Federal Addition

*Note: All consultations on all parts of the Management Plan are summarized in Appendix I*



Environment and  
Climate Change Canada

Environnement et  
Changement climatique Canada

Canada 

# Next Steps

## Step 1 (We are here)

Outreach to Boards to do a signals' check and discuss proposed process

## Step 2

If Boards support:

1. Post the Management Plan to the SAR Registry for public comment (90 days; July – September 2022)
2. Complete community consultations (January – September 2022)

## Step 3

Revise Federal Addition based on comments received (fall 2022)

## Step 4

Submit 'proposed final' National Polar Bear Management Plan to Boards (winter 2023)

Boards determine process for considering whether to approve/support



# Thank you

Page 10 – May 10, 2022



Environment and  
Climate Change Canada

Environnement et  
Changement climatique Canada

Canada 

## Appendix I: Consultation on the Management Plan: A National Perspective

<b>Jurisdiction:</b>	<b>Consultation on jurisdictional management plan or recovery strategy:</b>	<b>Federal Addition:</b>
<b>Inuvialuit Settlement Region</b>	Community-level consultations completed throughout the area of application (2016).	Board staff and other co-management partners involved in development of the Federal Addition (2018 – 2021) Consultation invitations will be extended to communities (March 2022)
<b>Nunavut</b>	Community-level consultations completed throughout the area of application (2016). In-person NWMB public hearing (2018).	Co-management partners involved in development of the Federal Addition (2018 – 2021) Consultation invitations will be extended to communities (March 2022)
<b>Manitoba</b>	To be determined	To be determined
<b>Ontario</b>	Community-level consultations completed by Government of Ontario (2010)	Community-level consultations partially completed in 2019. Consultation invitations extended to remaining communities in November 2021.
<b>Québec</b>	Community-level consultations completed throughout the area of application (2016 – 2017) NMRWB-EMRWB joint written hearing (2021 – 2022)	Board staff and other co-management partners involved in development of the Federal Addition (2018 – 2021) Consultation invitations will be extended to communities (March 2022)
<b>Newfoundland and Labrador</b>	Consultations anticipated to begin in 2022	ECRC intending to participate in joint consultations with provincial government (anticipated 2022)