

# **Nunavut Consultation Report**

## **Consultations on the Proposed Listing of the Polar Bear as Special Concern under the *Species at Risk Act***

**Conducted February—April 2009  
by the Canadian Wildlife Service**

Submitted to the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board in accordance with Step 3.8 of the Memorandum of Understanding to Harmonize the Designation of Endangered Species under the *Nunavut Land Claims Agreement* and the *Species at Risk Act*

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# Table of Contents

1. Introduction .....	2
2. Consultation Procedures .....	3
Pre-consultation.....	3
During consultation .....	3
Post-consultation .....	4
3. Consultation Dates and Attendance .....	5
4. Summary of Feedback .....	7
A. Written responses received .....	7
B. Main Comments and Concerns .....	8
Distribution of main comments and concerns by community .....	12
C. Other comments and concerns .....	14
Distribution of other comments and concerns by community .....	19
D. Short Meeting Summaries.....	22
Pangnirtung.....	22
Qikiqtarjuaq.....	22
Clyde River .....	22
Pond Inlet.....	22
Arctic Bay.....	23
Resolute Bay.....	23
Grise Fiord .....	23
Cape Dorset.....	23
Hall Beach.....	24
Igloolik.....	24
Sanikiluaq .....	24
Iqaluit .....	25
Kimmirut.....	25
Kugluktuk .....	25
Cambridge Bay .....	26
Taloyoak .....	26
Kugaaruk.....	26
Gjoa Haven .....	26
Rankin Inlet .....	27
Arviat.....	27
Whale Cove .....	27
Coral Harbour.....	28
Repulse Bay.....	28
Chesterfield Inlet .....	28
Appendices .....	30
Appendix A. Consultation Materials .....	30
Appendix B. Full Meeting Summaries.....	60
Appendix C. HTO Response Forms and Letters Received.....	187
Appendix D. Public Response Forms and Letters Received .....	215
Appendix E. Organizations- Letters Received .....	245
Appendix F. Schedule of consultations in other regions .....	247

# 1. Introduction

The polar bear was assessed as a species of Special Concern by the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC) in April 2008. Under the *Species at Risk Act (SARA)*, the Minister of the Environment must consult relevant provinces and territories as well as relevant wildlife management boards before making a legal listing recommendation to the Governor in Council on whether to accept the assessment of the status of a species by COSEWIC.

Under the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement (NLCA), government seeks community input before bringing issues to the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board (NWMB) for decision. The process for *SARA* listing consultations in Nunavut is detailed in a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the federal government and the NWMB which harmonizes the listing process under *SARA* with the NLCA. The *SARA-NLCA* Harmonization MOU outlines a process in which the federal government conducts public consultations with affected communities before seeking NWMB approval for species listings.

Environment Canada held consultations on the proposed listing of the polar bear in Nunavut from February to April 2009. This report summarizes the results of the Nunavut consultations and is being submitted to the NWMB in correspondence with Step 3.8 of the *SARA-NLCA* Harmonization MOU. The results of Nunavut consultations are also for consideration by the federal Minister of the Environment.

Consultation is also occurring in other provinces and territories and with other wildlife management boards that have jurisdiction or that share responsibility for the management of polar bear populations. Summaries of consultations in other regions are not yet available. Refer to Appendix F for the schedule of consultations in other regions.

## **2. Consultation Procedures**

### ***Pre-consultation***

In December 2008, Environment Canada briefed the NWMB on the proposed listing and asked for recommendations on the proposed consultation approach. It was decided that Environment Canada would consult every Nunavut community on the proposed listing through in-person meetings. Each community was sent a consultation package (Appendix A) with information on the proposed listing, including narrated presentations, and invited to indicate whether or not they wished to have an in-person meeting.

A copy of the consultation package was provided to the NWMB in January 2009 before consultations began and was reviewed by NWMB staff. The materials were also provided to the Government of Nunavut (GN), Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated (NTI), and the Chair of COSEWIC and the Chair of the COSEWIC Mammals Subcommittee with opportunity for review.

NTI and Regional Wildlife Organizations accepted the invitation to participate in the consultations. The GN declined the invitation to participate in the consultations; however, local GN Conservation Officers were invited to meetings in each community.

The Hunters and Trappers Organizations (HTOs) in each community, through a contract, provided logistical support to Environment Canada, including help to ensure that meetings were well-advertised and that materials could be shared with, and collected from, the public after the meetings took place.

### ***During consultation***

In each community, meetings were held with the HTO Directors and then with the public. HTOs are elected bodies established under Article 5 of the NLCA that manage wildlife at the community level.

The consultation team was comprised of an Environment Canada biologist who led the presentations and responded to questions, another EC staff to manage the administration, logistics and recording (audio and written), a contract interpreter, a second local interpreter in some cases, and in most cases the representative(s) from NTI and/or the Regional Wildlife Organization.

Environment Canada made two presentations at each in-person meeting. The first was an overview of *SARA*: its purpose, the process followed to list a species under the Act, the protection and recovery measures of the Act, and how *SARA* works with the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement.

The second presentation summarized the information that was used to assess the polar bear (key points from the COSEWIC Assessment and Update Status Report on the Polar Bear), and reviewed the decision-making processes under *SARA* and the implications of the species being listed as Special Concern.

Key points from the Environment Canada presentations were:

- The Nunavut Land Claims Agreement takes precedence over *SARA*. *SARA* prohibitions for Threatened and Endangered Species do not apply to Inuit who are harvesting under the NLCA. *SARA* also requires consultation with the NWMB before any decisions affecting Nunavut can be made.
- Under *SARA* there is no requirement for harvest restrictions, quotas, tags or any other changes to harvesting practices if a species is listed as Special Concern.
- The main obligation is development of a national management plan for a Special Concern species.
- Development of the *SARA* management plan requires consultation with communities, and the plan must be approved by the NWMB.

The HTO Directors or public were then asked to respond with their opinion or position about the proposed listing, as well as any other questions, concerns or information.

Materials available at the meetings to support the verbal presentations included copies of the full COSEWIC Assessment and Update Status Report on the Polar Bear (available at [http://www.sararegistry.gc.ca/document/dspDocument\\_e.cfm?documentID=1635](http://www.sararegistry.gc.ca/document/dspDocument_e.cfm?documentID=1635)), a summary of the COSEWIC Status Report, and copies of the Environment Canada slide presentations. All materials were available in English and Inuktitut (or Innuinaqtun upon request).

Response from the HTO Directors and public was collected in the form of comments at the meetings, which were noted and recorded. Public response forms were distributed at the public meeting to collect written responses. The public response forms were also left at the HTO offices after the meetings for people unable to attend the public meeting. The HTO was requested to submit an official written response on an HTO response form which was left at the HTO office after the meetings. HTOs and the public were also invited to submit written responses in the form of letters.

Refer to Appendix A: Consultation Materials for copies of all presentations, response forms and other materials.

### ***Post-consultation***

Environment Canada wrote meeting summaries of the verbal comments made at each HTO Directors and public meeting. Meeting summaries were sent to HTOs with opportunity for review and approval through a meeting summary review form. Feedback from the HTOs on the meeting summaries was incorporated into the finalized summaries.

In addition to seeking input on the meeting summaries, Environment Canada followed up with HTOs to collect their official written position on the proposed listing on an HTO response form or in a letter. HTOs were also encouraged to make an effort to distribute consultation materials and collect responses from the public. Members of the public were able to submit public response forms or letters directly to Environment Canada or via the HTO for several months after the meetings.

### 3. Consultation Dates and Attendance

Community	Date (2009)	Attendance		Consultation Support
		HTO Meeting	Public Meeting (approximate)	
Pangnirtung	February 2	7 HTO	23	None
Qikiqtarjuaq	February 3	8 HTO, 1 GN	17	None
Clyde River	February 4	7 HTO, 1 GN	61	None
Pond Inlet	February 5	7 HTO, 1 GN	36	None
Arctic Bay	February 16	6 HTO	27	Paul Irngaut, Nunavut Tunngavik Inc Jayko Aooloo, Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board
Resolute Bay	February 17	6 HTO	14	Paul Irngaut, Nunavut Tunngavik Inc Jayko Aooloo, Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board
Grise Fiord	February 18	7 HTO	37	Paul Irngaut, Nunavut Tunngavik Inc Jayko Aooloo, Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board
Cape Dorset	March 3	7 HTO, 1 GN	32	Joannie Ikkidluak, Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board
Hall Beach	March 4	7 HTO, 1 GN	19	Joannie Ikkidluak, Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board
Igloolik	March 5	5 HTO, 2 GN	22	Joannie Ikkidluak, Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board
Kugluktuk	March 2	6 HTO	8	None
Cambridge Bay	March 3	7 HTO	5	None
Taloyoak	March 5/6	6 HTO, 1 GN	36	None
Kugaaruk	March 6	6 HTO	22	Gabriel Nirlungayuk, Nunavut Tunngavik Inc
Rankin Inlet	March 31	6 HTO, 2 GN	15	Gabriel Nirlungayuk, Nunavut Tunngavik Inc Bert Dean, Nunavut Tunngavik Inc
Arviat	April 2	7 HTO	49	Paul Irngaut, Nunavut Tunngavik Inc
Sanikiluaq	April 3	6 HTO	49	Paul Irngaut, Nunavut Tunngavik Inc (HTO meeting) Joshua Kango, Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board
Whale Cove	April 6	7 HTO, 1 GN	23	Gabriel Nirlungayuk, Nunavut Tunngavik Inc
Gjoa Haven	April 8	7 HTO	25	Bert Dean, Nunavut Tunngavik Inc Attima Hadlari, Kitikmeot Regional Wildlife Board
Coral Harbour	April 14	6 HTO, 1 GN	33	Michel Akkuardjuk, Kivalliq Wildlife Board (Public meeting)
Repulse Bay	April 15	7 HTO	14	Michel Akkuardjuk, Kivalliq Wildlife Board
Chesterfield Inlet	April 16	7 HTO, 1 GN	4	Michel Akkuardjuk, Kivalliq Wildlife Board
Iqaluit	April 22/23	6 HTO, 2 GN	23	Bert Dean, Nunavut Tunngavik Inc
Kimmirut	April 27	7 HTO, 1 GN	26	Joannie Ikkidluak, Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board
Bathurst Inlet	Efforts to arrange in-person consultation are ongoing			
Baker Lake	Declined in-person consultation			

## Map of communities visited



## 4. Summary of Feedback

### A. Written responses received

Community	HTO Response			Public Response	
	Position	Response Form	Letter	Response Forms	Letters
Pangnirtung	<i>(Do not support)*</i>				
Qikiqtarjuaq	<i>(Do not support)*</i>				
Clyde River	<i>(Do not support)*</i>				
Pond Inlet	<i>(Do not support)*</i>				1
Arctic Bay	<i>Do not support</i>	X			
Resolute Bay					
Grise Fiord	<i>Do not support</i>		X	4- <i>Do not support</i>	
Cape Dorset	<i>Do not support</i>	X			1
Hall Beach	<i>Do not support</i>	X			
Igloolik	<i>(Do not support)*</i>			8- <i>Do not support</i>	
Sanikiluaq	<i>Do not support</i>	X			
Iqaluit	<i>(Do not support)*</i>				1
Kimmirut	<i>Do not support</i>	X	X	1- <i>Do not support</i>	
Kugluktuk	<i>Support</i>	X		1- <i>Support</i>	
Cambridge Bay	<i>Do not support</i>	X		1- <i>Do not support</i>	
Taloyoak	<i>Do not support</i>		X		
Kugaaruk	<i>Do not support</i>	X		1	
Gjoa Haven	<i>(Do not support)**</i>				
Bathurst Inlet					
Rankin Inlet	<i>Do not support</i>	X			
Arviat	<i>Do not support</i>	X	X		
Whale Cove	<i>Do not support</i>	X		1- <i>Do not support</i>	
Coral Harbour	<i>(Do not support)*</i>			1- <i>Do not support</i> 1- <i>Support</i>	
Repulse Bay	<i>Do not support</i>	X		1- <i>Do not support</i>	
Chesterfield Inlet	<i>(Do not support)*</i>				
Baker Lake	<i>Indifferent</i>	X			

Organization	Position
Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board	<i>Do not support</i>

\* Although no written response was received, comments during the HTO and public meetings indicated that the participants do not support the listing.

\*\* Comments during the HTO meeting indicated that the participants do not support the listing, but comments at the public meeting were made in support of the listing.

## **B. Main Comments and Concerns**

These comments and concerns expressed during HTO Director and public in-person meetings or on written responses or letters were all brought up in more than five communities.

### **Number of polar bears**

- 1) There are more polar bears seen now compared to the past. More polar bears are seen around communities and more are coming into communities. The polar bear population is increasing, not decreasing. It just doesn't make sense to list an animal that is increasing in population.
- 2) If polar bears were declining in number, there wouldn't be more of them coming into communities, there wouldn't be so many defense kills, and people wouldn't need polar bear monitors for protection.
- 3) Inuit knowledge of increasing populations is in conflict with the "decreasing" or "unknown" labels on some of the subpopulations in the COSEWIC Status Report. The population is greater than the population estimates in the COSEWIC report.

### **Danger from polar bears**

- 4) The increasing number of polar bears now poses a serious risk to human safety. This is the foremost concern with respect to polar bears. There is danger when bears come into communities and also when people are out on the land. This makes it hard to follow traditions and to go to traditional areas.
- 5) Polar bears are less afraid of humans and more aggressive now. This is because a) any species that is overpopulated will become more aggressive, b) human activities have accustomed them to noise and to humans, or c) research activities have caused hearing loss and changed behavior.
- 6) Polar bears are damaging human property such as cabins and food caches.
- 7) Suggestions that there should be reimbursement for destroyed property.
- 8) This proposed listing makes it seem as if people care more about the polar bear than they do about Inuit. Human safety, human property, and the rights of humans to food (i.e. right to eat polar bear meat) should be the biggest priority.
- 9) More defense kills are becoming necessary. This is a difficult situation when there are lower quotas or harvest moratoriums.

### **Inuit Qaujimatqangit: population cycles**

- 10) It is natural for wildlife to go through population cycles. All animals are continuously moving around looking for their source of food. Disappearance from one area does not mean that the species has declined in number. They have moved to another place and will eventually return.
- 11) Polar bears do not follow subpopulation boundaries. Some subpopulations in particular were mentioned as being one subpopulation (M'Clintock Channel and Gulf of Boothia, Western Hudson Bay and Southern Hudson Bay). Scientists may label a subpopulation as declining when in fact the bears have just moved to another subpopulation.

### **Impacts of climate change (general) a concern**

- 12) Inuit are seeing impacts of climate change such as thinning of sea ice, less sea ice, changes in timing of sea ice, melting of glaciers, changes in wildlife species, and changes in snow texture.

**Impacts of climate change (general) barely noticed/not a concern**

- 13) It is still cold and there is still a lot of ice. Climate change is not a concern.

**Polar bears and climate change**

- 14) Climate change will not cause a decline in the polar bear population and is not a good reason to list the polar bear. Polar bears are very capable hunters and they will be able to adapt to climate change. Polar bears can survive and hunt on land and in water as well as on sea ice. They do not eat only seals. For example, in the South Baffin area there are a lot of polar bears even though there have been sea ice changes. Maybe polar bears will move further north in response to climate change.
- 15) Climate change has impacted polar bear populations already and has the potential to impact polar bears in the future due to loss of habitat and hunting ability.

**Use of Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit (IQ)**

- 16) Inuit are a valuable source of knowledge about species. Inuit knowledge has existed for a long time. It is based on experience and it is fact, not opinion. Scientists don't live here and witness polar bears so they don't know certain things.
- 17) The use of IQ in the COSEWIC status report was inadequate. The full spectrum of IQ needs to be considered more seriously in assessments and decision-making. Currently it seems that even if IQ is involved in a decision-making process, it does not show in the end; in the end they rely on the scientific information.

**Effect of listing on harvest rights**

- 18) There was concern that the listing would directly affect Inuit harvesting rights or would be used as a case for the Government of Nunavut and the NWMB to cut off quotas, thus jeopardizing diet, traditions, and local economy.

**International management of bears**

- 19) There was concern about harvest levels in Greenland, northern Quebec, and Alaska. In addition to this SARA listing proposal within Canada, there should be international coordination to ensure that all areas have quotas and to protect polar bear habitat. Polar bears move back and forth between countries.

**Outside influences on listing proposal**

- 20) The listing proposal and other management decisions are due to international political pressure, for example from the USA or from animal rights groups like Greenpeace.

**Media influence**

- 21) People around the world are misled by the portrayal of polar bears on TV as cute and cuddly. The shows seen on television and reports, e.g. those from Al Gore, are not accurate and make Inuit look very bad. Many people simply do not understand Inuit culture and traditions.

**Inuit have followed quotas**

22) If the polar bear is listed as a species at risk, it is not the Inuit's fault. It is the government's fault because they set the quotas, using scientific knowledge. Inuit have been obedient and followed the hunting quotas. Since the introduction of quotas, Inuit have had little input into the management.

#### **Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit: overpopulation**

23) When any wildlife population is too high in numbers, they tend to die off because they run out of food and starve, or a disease spreads through the population, or they resort to cannibalism. Thus, trying to protect the polar bear too much could ultimately be detrimental to the population.

#### **Decrease in number of seals**

24) There are fewer seals or seal pups now or seals are unhealthy. Maybe polar bears are eating too many seals now.

#### **Traditional Inuit harvesting laws**

25) Inuit conserve the animals that they harvest because they rely on them for food. Even today in some cases not all of the quotas allocated are used. Inuit are in the best position to manage their own wildlife, including the polar bear.

#### **Over-regulation of wildlife**

26) It is not right that so many different levels of government are telling Inuit how to manage and harvest different species. There are so many regulations that they are difficult to follow. The historical imposition of regulations on Inuit makes it difficult when proposals are made to list species under the *Species at Risk Act*. It makes Inuit nervous to hear of polar bears and legislation.

#### **Quotas cause overpopulation**

27) The population explosion has resulted from the institution of quotas. The polar bear population will continue to increase if the use of quotas continues.

#### **Revision of quotas**

28) It doesn't make sense that there are so many polar bears yet they cannot be harvested. Quotas should be increased in order to decrease the number of bears.

#### **Influence of industrial development on polar bears**

29) Polar bears and other wildlife are negatively affected by shipping, fishing, mining, noise disturbance, oil and gas development, airplane traffic, oil spills, contaminants and air pollution. It should be considered that some of these activities could be causing the polar bear to move away from certain areas.

#### **Polar bears in zoos**

30) It is cruel to put polar bears in zoos. It seems hypocritical for people to be concerned that there are too few polar bears, and yet still put them in zoos.

#### **Sex-selective harvesting causes declines**

31) The regulation regarding selective harvesting of male polar bears should be reviewed as it could cause decline in the population.

#### **Research**

32) The research currently done on polar bears is inaccurate and not thorough enough.

- Techniques: bears are hard to spot from the air, many bears are missed

- Time of year: surveys should be done in the spring when bears are out of their dens/ in summer/ in October-November/ all year round/ in many different seasons
  - Location: surveys are too limited in location, they should count over the ocean as well as on the shore or inland
  - Timing: surveys are too infrequent and too short, they should survey for longer or all the time
- 33) Many bears have been sighted that are not tagged. This proves that scientists miss a lot of bears in their counts.
  - 34) Inuit are not satisfied with the computer estimates that researchers come up with. They want actual numbers to be used in assessing the polar bear.
  - 35) In some areas there is a lack of research or the research available is out of date.
  - 36) The listing decision should wait until there is more up to date and accurate research available. Since Inuit say the polar bear population is increasing, but science says it is decreasing, Inuit will need very concrete evidence of polar bear numbers to agree with the proposed listing. The COSEWIC Status Report should also include the new research from Davis Strait and Foxe Basin.
  - 37) Meat from polar bears that have been tranquilized for research is inedible or the taste/texture is different. This is a concern as Inuit do not like to waste food, Inuit crave for polar bear meat, and food from the store is expensive.
  - 38) Research activities have adverse effects on polar bear health. For example, helicopters cause hearing loss which makes the bears less successful at hunting, causing them to starve. Research traumatizes the bears mentally. Clipping nails, removing fang teeth, and tagging ears are also concerns. Research activities may be a cause of decline in the population. Research methods should be quieter and less intrusive.
  - 39) Some people said that they are against tranquilization and that this [mark-recapture] research should stop altogether.
  - 40) There is a lack of communication between Inuit and researchers. It's frustrating that research results are not shared more with Inuit.
  - 41) Inuit and communities should be involved in the research on polar bears or should conduct their own research. Scientists and Inuit should work together and communicate more. That way Inuit knowledge could be included from the beginning, research could be done year-round by Inuit "on the ground", and Inuit would know more about how research is conducted and would not be so against the science.
  - 42) Researchers disturb wildlife in general. For example, they look at birds' nests. These effects should be considered when looking at species at risk. Inuit traditionally respected wildlife and did not bother wildlife.

### **Feedback on consultation process**

- 43) It is good that the government is consulting Inuit before they make a decision.
- 44) Many people wanted to have polar bear researchers and experts, COSEWIC, the ATK subcommittee of COSEWIC, RWOs, NTI, NWMB, DFO, the Government of Nunavut, animal rights organizations, or decision-makers present at the consultations to hear their concerns and answer questions, for example, about research methods.
- 45) The government should listen more to Inuit.

## Distribution of main comments and concerns by community

Table 1 of 2      **Concern Number:**

<b>Community:</b>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
Pangnirtung	X			X						X				X		X	X		X	X		
Qikiqtarjuaq	X			X	X	X								X	X	X	X		X		X	X
Clyde River	X			X	X	X	X	X		X			X	X		X	X				X	X
Pond Inlet	X			X	X	X			X	X	X	X		X		X	X		X	X	X	X
Arctic Bay	X			X	X	X				X		X		X	X				X	X		
Resolute Bay	X			X	X				X	X				X		X	X					
Grise Fiord	X			X	X				X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X
Cape Dorset	X		X	X				X		X						X						X
Hall Beach	X	X		X	X	X	X		X	X		X		X			X			X	X	
Igloolik	X			X	X	X		X		X				X		X		X	X	X		
Sanikiluaq	X			X	X	X	X			X	X	X	X	X		X			X			
Iqaluit	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X			X	X	X	X	X	X			X		X
Kimmitut	X			X						X				X			X		X	X		X
Kugluktuk												X		X	X				X			
Cambridge Bay	X	X		X						X	X	X			X		X					X
Taloyoak	X			X	X	X		X	X	X	X					X	X	X		X		X
Kugaaruk	X	X		X		X	X			X	X	X		X		X		X				X
Gjoa Haven	X		X	X	X			X		X	X	X		X	X	X	X		X			
Rankin Inlet	X			X		X	X		X	X			X	X		X	X		X		X	X
Arviat	X	X	X	X	X	X			X	X		X				X	X				X	
Whale Cove	X			X		X		X		X	X	X		X		X	X		X	X		X
Coral Harbour	X		X	X					X	X		X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X		
Repulse Bay	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X			X	X		X			X	X		
Chesterfield Inlet	X	X	X	X		X	X			X	X			X		X	X	X	X			X

(Table continued on next page)

Table 2 of 2

**Concern Number:**

<b>Community:</b>	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	
Pangnirtung							X			X	X			X									X	
Qikiqtarjuaq		X	X							X				X				X		X				
Clyde River	X	X	X	X			X			X	X		X			X			X					
Pond Inlet	X	X	X		X		X	X		X	X	X		X		X			X	X			X	
Arctic Bay		X	X	X	X		X			X			X		X	X			X		X	X	X	X
Resolute Bay	X						X			X					X	X				X	X			
Grise Fiord	X		X	X	X		X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X				X	X	X	X	X	X
Cape Dorset	X	X	X		X	X				X	X	X		X		X			X					
Hall Beach	X		X	X	X			X							X	X	X			X		X	X	X
Igloolik	X		X	X		X			X	X		X			X	X	X	X	X	X			X	X
Sanikiluaq	X						X		X	X	X	X			X	X	X							X
Iqaluit			X	X			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X			X	X
Kimmirut			X		X	X				X		X		X				X	X		X	X		
Kugluktuk													X	X		X								
Cambridge Bay													X	X					X				X	
Taloyoak			X	X		X		X	X	X			X	X	X	X	X	X	X				X	
Kugaaruk			X		X	X	X	X		X			X		X	X			X		X			
Gjoa Haven					X		X	X		X						X			X				X	X
Rankin Inlet	X		X				X	X	X	X					X	X			X					
Arviat	X		X			X		X	X	X		X		X		X			X					
Whale Cove	X	X	X	X		X		X		X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X			X
Coral Harbour	X		X	X		X				X			X	X	X	X	X	X	X				X	
Repulse Bay		X								X		X				X	X		X					
Chesterfield Inlet			X			X	X			X		X	X		X		X		X		X			

## **C. Other comments and concerns**

These comments and concerns expressed during HTO Director and public in-person meetings or on written responses or letters were all heard in five or fewer communities.

### **Number and condition of polar bears**

- 1) There are fewer polar bears seen now.
- 2) Polar bears are skinnier now.
- 3) Perhaps polar bears are skinnier because of a lack of food. They seem really hungry as they keep coming into communities for food. Maybe they are hungry because there are too many polar bears now.

### **Birth rates**

- 4) Female polar bears are reproducing more now. There are more females seen with two cubs rather than one. A bear with three cubs was seen.
- 5) Nowadays polar bears have one cub and the cubs are very small; polar bears used to have three cubs.
- 6) Birth rates seem high as many cubs and cub tracks are seen.

### **SARA listing would NOT affect harvest rights**

- 7) It's understood that listing the polar bear under the *Species at Risk Act* would not affect Inuit harvesting rights.

### **SARA listing: perhaps in the future**

- 8) The listing is not supported for now but perhaps the polar bear could be listed at some point in the future, due to future impacts of climate change or if some regions continue to harvest without quotas.

### **Different COSEWIC category**

- 9) COSEWIC should put the polar bear in the Not at Risk or Data Deficient category.

### **Disagreement with the principle of Species at Risk**

- 10) Inuit are not concerned about species being endangered. Based on IQ, if animals are used properly they can't become endangered.
- 11) To list an animal under the *Species at Risk Act* degrades the animal.
- 12) Money should be invested in solving climate change instead of in species at risk.

### **Current management of polar bears is sufficient**

- 13) Polar bear management is already strict and sustainable. For example, climate change is more noticeable in the high Arctic, yet the Lancaster Sound subpopulation is increasing.
- 14) This listing proposal seems as if the federal government is coming in to take over management of polar bears from Nunavut, which is not good.

### **Reasons for listing too theoretical**

- 15) This proposed listing is entirely based on the assumption that polar bears will decline in number due to sea ice changes in the future. The potential for things to happen in the future does not seem like a good basis for this decision, especially as the listing would impact Inuit in the present.

**Polar bears don't frequent multi-year ice**

- 16) Polar bears are not found on multi-year ice, or at the North Pole, or on glaciers, therefore changes to these things are not a concern.

**Sea ice shrinking is natural**

- 17) It's normal for the ice to vary from year to year. Sometimes the ice is around all summer and sometimes it is not.

**Listing proposal is based on emotion**

- 18) The listing of the polar bear has become an emotional issue; it has been proposed despite the fact that the number of bears is increasing, while other species go extinct.

**Support SARA**

- 19) In support of the *Species at Risk Act* as it states that Inuit knowledge has to be considered in decision-making.

**Listing issue not much of a concern (some Kitikmeot communities)**

- 20) There are not many polar bears around the area. The listing issue is not a concern as it would not impact lifestyle. Changes in sea ice are more of a concern.  
21) It is difficult to make a decision on the listing because Eastern Nunavut is strongly against it and we don't want to "water down" their concerns or opinions.

**Not enough of a decline**

- 22) Not enough of the polar bear population is declining to list the bear; IQ and science both say that most subpopulations are stable or even increasing.

**Inuit are not to blame for climate change**

- 23) This listing proposal seems to punish Inuit rather than industrial countries, who are the ones to blame for any problems with the polar bear populations as they cause climate change and pollution.

**People should see for themselves**

- 24) People who think that the polar bear population is declining should actually come up north and see for themselves. It seems as if people not living here are working against those that live here.

**Western Hudson Bay subpopulation**

- 25) Due to forest fires near polar bear denning areas south of Churchill in the summers of 2004 and 2005, polar bears moved to the other side of Hudson Bay. This is something that could affect the subpopulation count for WHB.  
26) Polar bears stopped going near Churchill when the dump closed or the polar bears in this area are moving northwards. This is why scientists started thinking polar bears were disappearing.  
27) The Western Hudson Bay subpopulation should not be used as a case study or model for effects of sea ice on polar bears. The Manitoba population of bears that was studied is unique as there is no harvesting and they feed in garbage dumps.  
28) The survey done in the summer of 2007 was inadequate.

**Canadian population shouldn't be assessed as a whole**

- 29) The polar bear population in Canada should not be assessed as a whole. Not all subpopulations interact. There are a lot of specific regional concerns.

### **Projections of polar bear populations based on climate change**

- 30) The COSEWIC report doesn't actually include projections of polar bear populations that are based on climate change.
- 31) There is no unanimous scientific opinion on polar bears or on climate change, or on the connection between polar bears and climate change.

### **Movement of bears due to climate change**

- 32) Polar bears are going to places they have never been before because of climate change.

### **Ice-breakers**

- 33) It should be considered that ice-breaking ships can also affect sea ice extent, ultimately affecting survival of polar bears.

### **Effects of listing on import/export**

- 34) Would a Special Concern listing affect export of polar bear parts?

### **Sports hunt**

- 35) Would a *Species at Risk Act* listing affect polar bear sports hunting?
- 36) There should be compensation if the sports hunt is stopped. Sports hunts are an important source of income for communities.
- 37) It's not right that Americans say that the number of polar bears is decreasing, yet American hunters come here for sports hunting.

### **Inuit should disobey laws**

- 38) Inuit should go ahead and shoot polar bears while they have the chance, if climate change is going to kill off all the polar bears anyway.

### **Resources for deterrence**

- 39) There is a lack of resources for deterring polar bears. The government should consider additional compensation or funding for protection from polar bears.

### **Disturbance by skidoos**

- 40) Polar bears are disturbed by the use of skidoos.

### **Management through quotas will help recovery**

- 41) Hopefully proper management of the polar bear through quotas can help the polar bear population to increase, as has happened with muskox.

### **Efficient transportation**

- 42) The reason that people are seeing so many polar bears is that people now have very efficient transportation to get around.

### **Family groups**

- 43) The regulations against hunting family groups may be one factor causing the population to increase rapidly.

### **Intraspecific predation**

- 44) Inuit have known about intraspecific predation among polar bears for a long time. It varies from year to year depending on food source.

### **Polar bears cause declines in other species**

- 45) Other wildlife may be in danger as a result of overpopulation of the polar bear. Research and management should consider these interactions between polar bears and other species.

46) Ducks have been driven away to nest in new areas/ there are fewer duck eggs.

### **Seals**

47) Seals could be more affected by sea ice changes than polar bears. The effects of sea ice changes on seals should be considered as an independent concern.

48) Seals will adapt to a lack of ice; they can survive and give birth on shore.

49) Support listing because if polar bears go extinct, seals will become overpopulated and then fish will disappear.

50) The seal population is abundant and healthy, so there doesn't seem to be any effect on the polar bear with respect to the seal population.

### **IQ: species don't decline from hunting**

51) Inuit know that species disappear if they are not hunted. The numbers of a species will grow if it is hunted.

52) Before the introduction of regulations, when Inuit caught what they wanted, the number of bears didn't decrease. There were times when there were more bears.

### **More bears harvested due to quotas**

53) When quotas were introduced more polar bears were actually killed than before.

### **Cultural importance of polar bear**

54) Harvesting of polar bears is very important for passing on cultural traditions.

Anything that affects the polar bear is important as it affects Inuit traditions.

### **Importance of polar bear for food**

55) If the polar bear is listed, there should be compensation for loss of food or loss of livelihood if food availability is affected. Polar bear meat is a staple in Inuit diet.

### **Concern about defense kills**

56) If we want to conserve polar bears, perhaps those bears that come into communities should be moved instead of killed.

### **Impact of hunting**

57) Hunting has had an impact on polar bear populations in addition to climate change.

### **Further areas of research**

58) There should be studies done on polar bear diet, as they eat many things other than seals.

59) There should be studies done to find out what the causes of death are when polar bears die naturally.

60) There should be more studies done on polar bear physiology regarding temperature control and how bears survive in both hot and cold climates.

61) Cameras and/or remote sensing should be used to count bears in areas that they frequent and that are difficult for humans to reach.

### **Feedback on consultation process**

62) More consultations should be held and more information given about government activities regarding polar bears.

63) A one-day consultation is quite short to understand the knowledge about polar bears.

64) There should be more advance notice of consultations and more information given in advance of consultations.

- 65) The Inuit views gathered during the consultation will probably be disregarded.
- 66) There are not enough people attending these consultations; effort should be made to more people to respond on this issue outside of the meetings.
- 67) The various public hearings about polar bears held by different organizations should be more shared and combined.
- 68) Not enough information was provided during the consultation to be comfortable making a decision about the listing.
- 69) The information provided during the consultation was clear and useful.
- 70) If any species is going to be added to *SARA*, Inuit should be consulted and should agree first.

**Changes to COSEWIC**

- 71) COSEWIC should consider public input/ do consultations during the writing of their status reports on species.
- 72) There should be more representation from Inuit on COSEWIC, rather than a single representative from Nunavut Tunngavik Inc.

**Representation by the NWMB**

- 73) Representation of the Kitikmeot region by the NWMB is questionable; the NWMB focuses on eastern Nunavut issues.
- 74) The NWMB should do more consultations with the community. They should come to the community to talk about polar bear issues.

## Distribution of other comments and concerns by community

Table 1 of 3

**Concern Number:**

<b>Community:</b>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
Pangnirtung																								X	
Qikiqtarjuaq																									
Clyde River										X															
Pond Inlet				X		X			X				X												
Arctic Bay							X	X					X												
Resolute Bay								X							X										
Grise Fiord								X				X	X		X	X						X	X	X	
Cape Dorset																X									
Hall Beach		X	X		X												X								
Igloolik		X	X							X												X			
Sanikiluaq		X	X													X									
Iqaluit		X							X	X		X		X	X	X		X					X	X	
Kimmitut							X								X									X	
Kugluktuk	X																			X	X				
Cambridge Bay									X											X					
Taloyoak																							X		
Kugaaruk								X																	
Gjoa Haven																			X						
Rankin Inlet												X				X									
Arviat						X																X		X	
Whale Cove		X																							
Coral Harbour			X				X	X																	
Repulse Bay							X		X								X								X
Chesterfield Inlet																									X

(Table continued on next page)

Table 2 of 3

**Concern Number:**

<b>Community:</b>	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50
Pangnirtung																									
Qikiqtarjuaq													X	X								X			
Clyde River																						X			
Pond Inlet																			X	X					
Arctic Bay								X															X		
Resolute Bay																			X						
Grise Fiord				X					X					X									X	X	
Cape Dorset								X													X	X			
Hall Beach															X						X				
Igloolik					X								X		X										
Sanikiluaq																									
Iqaluit		X			X	X								X			X				X				
Kimmitut										X															
Kugluktuk																							X		X
Cambridge Bay																									
Taloyoak				X						X															
Kugaaruk																			X					X	
Gjoa Haven															X	X									
Rankin Inlet	X		X							X									X						
Arviat	X		X								X			X											X
Whale Cove	X												X												
Coral Harbour			X						X	X		X													
Repulse Bay	X																								X
Chesterfield Inlet							X																		X

(Table continued on next page)

Table 3 of 3

**Concern Number:**

<b>Community:</b>	51	52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	60	61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70	71	72	73	74
Pangnirtung					X																			
Qikiqtarjuaq																								
Clyde River																								
Pond Inlet											X													
Arctic Bay																								
Resolute Bay					X																			
Grise Fiord									X										X					
Cape Dorset												X												
Hall Beach																								
Igloolik		X		X										X										
Sanikiluaq	X											X												
Iqaluit				X							X	X	X	X	X							X		
Kimmirut									X										X		X			
Kugluktuk								X								X								
Cambridge Bay						X	X																X	X
Taloyoak				X	X							X	X											X
Kugaaruk																								
Gjoa Haven												X												
Rankin Inlet												X									X			
Arviat				X																				
Whale Cove			X																		X			
Coral Harbour														X	X	X	X					X		
Repulse Bay																						X		
Chesterfield Inlet															X									

## **D. Short Meeting Summaries**

### **Pangnirtung**

Participants indicated they do not support the addition of the polar bear to the *Species at Risk Act* as a species of Special Concern. They see more polar bears now than in the past and the bears pose a risk to human safety. Participants felt that more IQ should be considered with respect to polar bears, and it should be considered that polar bears move around to survive. Other concerns were that there is a lack of information about polar bears and scientific research methods are not accurate. There are concerns that the listing would affect the ability of Inuit to depend on the polar bear for food.

### **Qikiqtarjuaq**

Participants indicated they do not support the addition of the polar bear to the *Species at Risk Act* as a species of Special Concern. One reason given was that polar bears do not wholly rely on sea ice. Participants said that there are more polar bears seen around Qikiqtarjuaq and they believe the population to be increasing. There are fewer seals now because of more polar bears. Many were concerned about danger to people and destruction of property due to polar bears. They identified a need for an effective and cheap way to deter polar bears instead of using their own guns. They expressed doubts about the accuracy of surveys.

### **Clyde River**

Participants indicated they do not support the addition of the polar bear to the *Species at Risk Act* as a species of Special Concern. They said it's natural for there to be more or fewer animals at times. Also, polar bears can survive on water and land as well as sea ice. Many people said there are now more polar bears. The bears are less frightened now and people are in danger, making it difficult to pass on traditional skills. Property damage and the fact that there are now fewer baby seals due to polar bears were also mentioned as issues. There are concerns that surveys referenced in the COSEWIC assessment are inaccurate, out of date and are harmful to the bears. Participants said Inuit knowledge should be considered more in assessing polar bears and suggested Inuit do their own research.

### **Pond Inlet**

Participants indicated they do not support the addition of the polar bear to the *Species at Risk Act* as a species of Special Concern. They said that, contrary to the COSEWIC status report, there are now more bears around Pond Inlet. Birth rates seem high as many cubs/cub tracks are seen. People are now in danger from polar bears. There are fewer seal pups and such changes in other species should be considered in management. Participants said they do not agree with the COSEWIC subpopulation trends as polar bears move back and forth between zones. They believe that polar bears can survive climate change. IQ should have been more considered in the COSEWIC assessment. There is concern that population estimates from surveys are not accurate. Quieter, less intrusive research should be done for longer periods of time and Inuit should be involved. Participants blamed animal activist groups for the concerns about the polar bear. They noted that

action needs to be coordinated on an international level, for example through cooperation with Greenland.

### **Arctic Bay**

Participants indicated they do not support the addition of the polar bear to the *Species at Risk Act* as a species of Special Concern. The main reason given is there are more polar bears around now. There is concern about the danger that they pose to humans and human property. Some said that polar bears are now more aggressive, perhaps due to being researched. It seems that nobody is listening to Inuit on this issue. Some participants noted that there have been changes in ice, but participants said they think polar bears can survive a warmer climate. Several people said they would consider listing the bear in the future, e.g. when it's much warmer or if Greenland continues to harvest without quotas. There were concerns about the effects of human activities like mining and effects of research on bears. Participants felt the current scientific research on bears is not accurate and is outdated.

### **Resolute Bay**

Participants said that planning for something that might happen is not a good enough reason to list the polar bear and to implement a management plan. They said if sea ice does change, polar bears will survive. Participants said that noise from research helicopters and also collaring of bears causes them to starve, and this is why bears come into the community. They said that there are more polar bears now and that the bears are more aggressive. Participants spoke about the danger to people due to bears coming into the community.

### **Grise Fiord**

Participants indicated they do not support the addition of the polar bear to the *Species at Risk Act* as a species of Special Concern. One reason given was that there are now more polar bears in the area. Endangerment of people is an issue. They said that the research for their area was out of date and that Inuit knowledge of the Kane Basin had not been included. More research, including use of IQ to assess polar bear populations, is needed. Many participants also felt that polar bears would be able to survive sea ice change and that it was not an appropriate reason to list the polar bear, although two people said they thought effects of climate change needed to be considered for the polar bear in the future. Participants said that they follow current regulations and Inuit of Grise Fiord do not even finish their quota. They said the listing could potentially have a negative impact on diet, traditional hunting practices, and the local economy (through sport hunt).

### **Cape Dorset**

Participants indicated they do not support the addition of the polar bear to the *Species at Risk Act* as a species of Special Concern. They said their knowledge that the number of polar bears around Cape Dorset has increased makes it difficult to agree to the proposed listing. Participants felt the numbers from population surveys are not accurate. They said they would only agree with the proposed listing if there was evidence from accurate counts done in a large area and with Inuit input. Participants said wildlife moves around and disappearance from an area does not necessarily mean they are decreasing in number. There were concerns about the increased danger to humans from polar bears and that

there are decreases in other species due to the increased number of polar bears. Participants said the polar bear population would continue to increase if the use of quotas continues.

### **Hall Beach**

Participants indicated they do not support the addition of the polar bear to the *Species at Risk Act* as a species of Special Concern. The main reason given was that there are now more polar bears around Hall Beach. Participants said animals move from place to place and disappearance from one place doesn't mean they've decreased in number. They said that polar bears are not in danger from climate change. Participants said their concerns were more related to overabundance of bears. These include the danger that bears pose to humans, damage to human property, and potential effects of overpopulation on other wildlife species. Several participants said that polar bears are skinnier now due to adverse effects of research.

### **Igloodik**

Participants indicated they do not support the addition of the polar bear to the *Species at Risk Act* as a species of Special Concern. They said there are more polar bears around Igloodik today and they believe the population to be increasing. Participants emphasized their concern for human safety due to the increased number of polar bears. Two participants said they believe the listing would lead to regulations that would adversely affect Inuit. Others said changes in sea ice are not a concern as polar bears don't rely on sea ice. There were many concerns expressed regarding polar bear research. Participants said that current research methods have negative effects on polar bears and that Inuit cannot eat the meat of polar bears that have been tranquilized. They also said that they believe the results from research surveys are not accurate and that Inuit should be more involved in the research. Participants wanted a polar bear expert present at the meetings. They emphasized the serious nature of this issue to Inuit.

### **Sanikiluaq**

Participants indicated they do not support the addition of the polar bear to the *Species at Risk Act* as a species of Special Concern. They emphasized that they know the polar bear population is increasing rather than decreasing, in other communities as well as in Sanikiluaq. In the past, hardly any polar bears were seen around Sanikiluaq. Now, people cannot go camping due to fear of bears. Cabins and caches have been destroyed by bears. Participants said that they do not believe climate change will cause the disappearance of polar bears as they can hunt in water. They said that Inuit knowledge should be considered more. According to IQ, it is normal for the polar bear population to increase and decrease, in a cycle. Participants had concerns that tranquilization of polar bears affects bear behavior and health, and makes the meat inedible. There were also concerns about the accuracy of polar bear research. One participant said that polar bears are now skinnier and less healthy, perhaps due to lack of food. There was concern that harvest of only males could cause decline in the polar bear population. One participant said that there should be action to introduce a quota system to Quebec.

## **Iqaluit**

Participants indicated they do not support the addition of the polar bear to the *Species at Risk Act* as a species of Special Concern. Participants said the polar bear population is increasing and higher than stated in COSEWIC status report. Polar bears are bolder now. They are endangering people and destroying property. Some participants said there have been changes in sea ice and snow. Some participants also said sea ice changes alone were not a sufficient reason for concern about the polar bear, especially since it is concern about *future* changes. Polar bears can live on water or land as well as sea ice, they don't live on multi-year sea ice and they don't eat only meat. Participants were concerned about the effects of marine traffic and pollution on polar bears and on the environment in general. They said human activities like fishing or oil and gas exploration may be causing polar bears to move to other areas. Participants said they do not have confidence in the population estimates and research methods. The listing should wait until there is more accurate information, and the recent research from Davis Strait should be included. There were concerns that sex-selective harvesting could cause declines in the population. Participants pointed out that a lot of people who would have had comments on the proposed listing were not present at the consultation. One participant said there wasn't enough information provided at the consultation to make a decision. Participants said that there was not enough IQ included and not enough Inuit representation on COSEWIC. Inuit knowledge and science can't seem to agree on this issue. Inuit and scientists need to work together more seriously to reach a middle ground.

## **Kimmirut**

Participants said that the number of polar bears around Kimmirut is not declining. Many polar bears are seen now. Two participants said that they believe polar bears do not depend just on sea ice for survival. Participants said that research should be done on polar bear physiology to see how they survive in hot and cold climates. Participants noted that now people are saying that the polar bear is overhunted, but Inuit have followed quotas and they are not the ones that set the quotas. There were concerns expressed that data from the Davis Strait and Foxe Basin subpopulations should be considered before a listing decision can be made. One participant was concerned about the lack of quotas in some countries or regions. Another participant was concerned that COSEWIC was influenced by organizations like Greenpeace. One participant asked whether sports hunting would be affected by a SARA listing. There was concern that researchers can only study a limited area. Participants said that Inuit should do their own research on polar bears. They said that researchers should provide more information about results to the community and should be involved in future consultations.

## **Kugluktuk**

Several participants indicated that there are not many polar bears around Kugluktuk so this issue was not a big concern but they were more concerned about changes in ice conditions and the impact on the community. Some people suggested more information and study was needed in the region before they could know if polar bears were at risk. Global warming and its impact on sea ice is impacting caribou, polar bears and people.

## **Cambridge Bay**

Participants indicated that they feel the polar bear population is increasing as they are now seeing more bears near Cambridge Bay than in the past but polar bears are more of a concern in eastern Nunavut. Some people did not agree with the subpopulation boundaries and population estimates and felt polar bears should be considered “data deficient” until further studies are done. Some felt that Inuit were not being listened to and traditional knowledge was not considered adequately. There was concern expressed over public safety since communities are seeing more polar bears and an increase in attacks on humans.

## **Taloyoak**

Participants indicated they do not support the listing of polar bear as a species of Special Concern under the *Species at Risk Act*. The main reasons are that polar bears are now increasing and the scientific information used in the assessment is outdated and inaccurate and they did not agree with the subpopulation boundaries. Several people were concerned about the danger polar bears pose to humans and property and that bears are now more aggressive and people aren't able to use traditional areas. Some people expressed frustration that traditional knowledge was not being considered and that different levels of government were telling Inuit how to manage polar bears. Some people suggested that industry, pollution and scientific research are big issues for polar bears. Some participants indicated they didn't like the conflict between communities and scientists and that we need to work together because we are stronger when we work together.

## **Kugaaruk**

Participants indicated they do not support the listing of polar bear as a species of Special Concern under the *Species at Risk Act*. Many people said the polar bears in their area were increasing and this has become a problem with bears causing property damage or getting into food caches and people not feeling safe while out camping. Many people didn't agree that the polar bear population was declining but that bears were moving around. Scientific research is a concern for the community because of how polar bears are being handled and the survey techniques have limitation. People have noticed the impacts of climate change and are concerned but they have not seen the impacts to bears and think the bears, like the seals, will adapt.

## **Gjoa Haven**

Participants at the HTO meeting indicated they do not support the listing of polar bear as a species of Special Concern under the *Species at Risk Act*, while some participants at the public meeting supported the listing if it would not impact quotas. Many people didn't agree that the polar bear population was declining and said that bears were moving around. Some people felt that bears were being impacted by noise disturbance and from transportation. Concern expressed that researchers may not be getting accurate counts because they were missing bears/areas. Climate change will have an impact on habitat but bears will adapt. People were frustrated that polar bear experts and decision makers were not at the meeting to answer questions.

## **Rankin Inlet**

Participants said there are more polar bears than before around Rankin Inlet. They believe the population is increasing, not declining. Participants said that changes in multi-year ice in the North Pole are not a concern to them as there are no polar bears there anyway. They said that climate change is not a concern, as wildlife can migrate to where there is food to survive. Polar bears can hunt without sea ice. Participants had concerns that tranquilization affects polar bear health and makes meat inedible. They were also concerned about the accuracy of polar bear research and said that Inuit and IQ should be more included in research. They pointed out that there are many things other than climate change, like mining or gases that come from the south, which can affect Arctic wildlife. There was concern about the lack of quotas in some other regions that share polar bear subpopulations with Nunavut.

## **Arviat**

Participants indicated they do not support the addition of the polar bear to the *Species at Risk Act* as a species of Special Concern. They said that there are more polar bears than before. They said it simply doesn't make sense to them to list a species that is increasing in population. Polar bears have become unafraid and are a risk to human life, dogs, property like cabins, meat caches, and are making it difficult to hunt and camp. Participants said that it is normal for species to move around looking for food. Some participants said that they think polar bears have moved east across Hudson Bay. Participants said that there are still many seals in the Kivalliq. There are more killer whales seen near Arviat, too, which eat seals. They said that the sea ice breaks up in late June, not in May as it says in the COSEWIC Status Report. Participants emphasized that they believe polar bear research has been inaccurate, particularly the summer 2007 survey. They said that more accurate research should be done for the WHB subpopulation, in the fall time and with Inuit participation, before a listing decision can be made. There were also concerns about adverse effects of tranquilization on polar bear health. Participants said that the recent quota decrease does not make sense because there are more bears. They said that Arviat is the community most affected by the quota cuts. The loss of polar bear hunting has meant loss of tradition, food, and income.

## **Whale Cove**

Participants indicated they do not support the addition of the polar bear to the *Species at Risk Act* as a species of Special Concern. They said that the polar bear population around Whale Cove is increasing rather than decreasing. There were very few polar bears in the 1940s—1960s. People have to worry about the danger to their safety now. Participants said that polar bears will be able to survive climate change. Participants said that polar bears move freely between subpopulations, particularly between Western Hudson Bay and Southern Hudson Bay. Participants said perhaps it's because bears have moved away that scientists think the population is declining. IQ says that when animals disappear they will come back, but one participant said that perhaps that is not true today. Some participants said that polar bears are very scrawny now. Participants said that the accuracy of research needs to be improved. One participant said that maybe Inuit are against scientific research because they are not involved in the studies. Participants had concerns that research causes hearing loss in bears and that tranquilizing bears makes

their meat inedible. There were many concerns expressed about the quota system and the recent quota decrease.

### **Coral Harbour**

Participants indicated they do not support the addition of the polar bear to the *Species at Risk Act* as a species of Special Concern. Participants said that there are lots of polar bears around Coral Harbour and that the population has increased. Two participants said that polar bears would be able to survive climate change, while one participant and one public response form expressed concern about the effects of climate change on polar bears. Participants said that according to IQ, species that decline will eventually rebound. They said that IQ is not fully considered in decision-making. Participants felt that designation of critical habitat would not be possible for the polar bear, as polar bears can move anywhere. They were also concerned that a SARA listing would affect export and import of polar bear parts or sports hunting. Participants emphasized that they think research should be done year round or at least at times when there is ice. They said that more research needs to be done before a listing decision is made. Participants had concerns about tranquilized bears being inedible and about the effects of tranquilization and collaring on polar bear health. Participants also had concerns about the effects of noise pollution from ships on seals, and about effects of oil spills and chemicals on polar bears.

### **Repulse Bay**

Participants indicated they do not support the addition of the polar bear to the *Species at Risk Act* as a species of Special Concern. Participants said that the polar bear population around Repulse Bay is increasing rather than decreasing. There are lots of bears around particularly in spring and summer. Participants had a lot of concerns about human safety and about their inability to cache meat. They said that polar bears are more aggressive now. Participants said that it's important to realize that polar bears move around but will return eventually. Some participants said that polar bears have moved away from Western Hudson Bay. Participants said that they don't agree that climate change will affect polar bears. There were concerns that tranquilization makes bears sick and skinny. Participants said that Inuit should be listened to and involved in any further research in Foxe Basin. One participant was concerned about harvest levels in Greenland and Alaska.

### **Chesterfield Inlet**

Participants indicated they do not support the addition of the polar bear to the *Species at Risk Act* as a species of Special Concern. The main reason given was that they know the polar bear population is increasing not decreasing. There are so many bears that it is dangerous from the spring to the fall time. Property damage and polar bears eating eggs before Inuit can pick them are also issues. Participants said that polar bears don't follow boundaries. Bears from Western Hudson Bay (WHB) go to Sanikiluaq and to northern Quebec following food. Animals disappear but they come back. Participants said that it is important that quotas be introduced to all areas since polar bears move between areas. Participants felt that science tends to be considered before Inuit knowledge. There was concern that their input would not be properly considered in this listing decision. Participants said Inuit should be believed more, e.g. by COSEWIC, as they have more knowledge about species than scientists. Participants had doubts about the accuracy of

population numbers from scientific research and felt that tranquilization ruins polar bear meat. They said that thorough research needs to be done in all areas since polar bears move between areas. Participants felt the recent quota decrease in WHB is not fair as guides in Churchill are still making money from tourists seeing the polar bears.

## **Appendices**

### ***Appendix A. Consultation Materials***



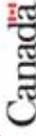
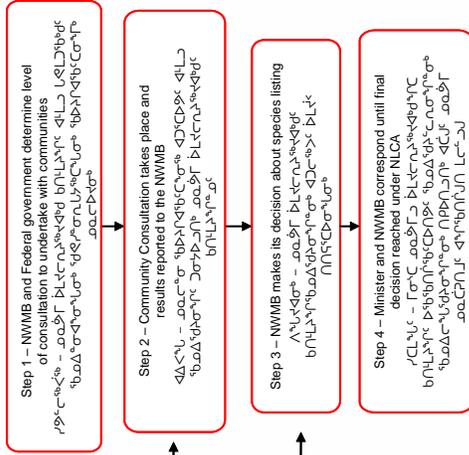




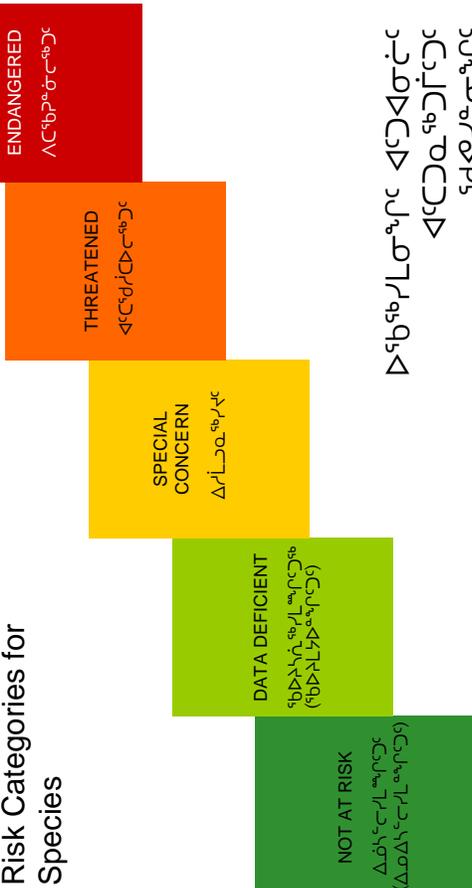
### The Listing Process in Nunavut

#### 4. Federal Government Consults

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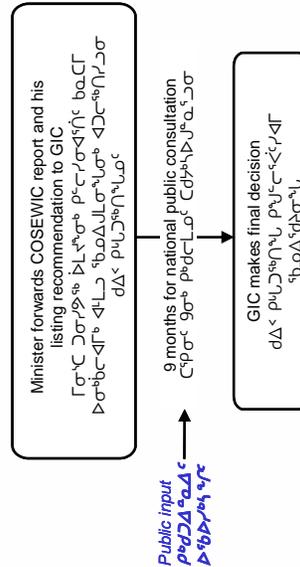


### COSEWIC Risk Categories for Species



### The Listing Process in Nunavut

#### 5. Federal Government Decides



### How does the Act Protect?

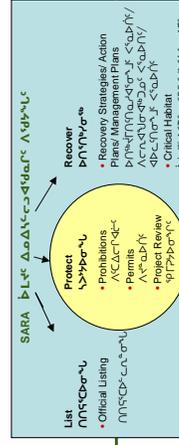


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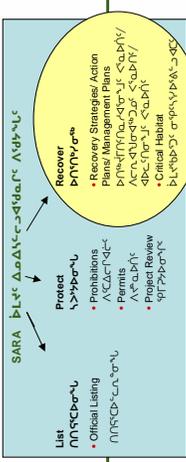
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**How does the Act Recover?**

Written plans to help species at risk recover

- Recovery Strategy

• Broad recovery goals and objectives
- Action Plan

• Specific recovery actions
- Management Plan

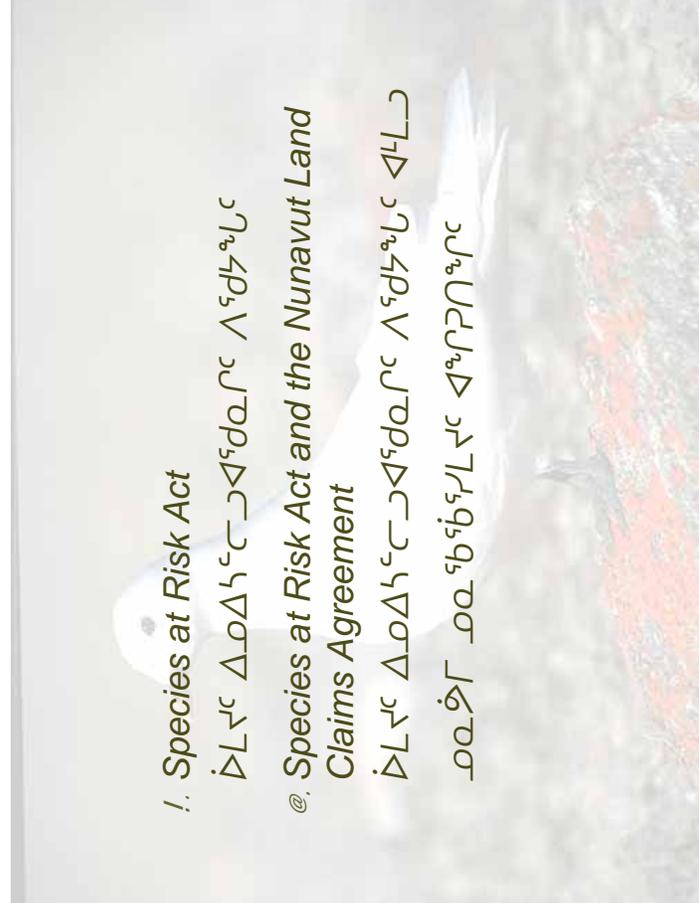
• Management actions to prevent species from becoming Endangered or Threatened



**How does the Act Recover?**

Protect critical habitat

- Habitat needed for survival or recovery of a listed species
- Identified in recovery strategy or action plan
- Needs to be protected



Species at Risk Act

Species at Risk Act and the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement

**Nunavut Inuit rights are protected by:**

- Canadian Constitution (Section 35)
  - "The existing aboriginal and treaty rights of the aboriginal peoples of Canada are hereby recognized and affirmed."
- Nunavut Land Claims Agreement (Section 2.12.2)
  - "Where there is inconsistency or conflict between any federal ... laws and the Agreement, the Agreement shall prevail..."







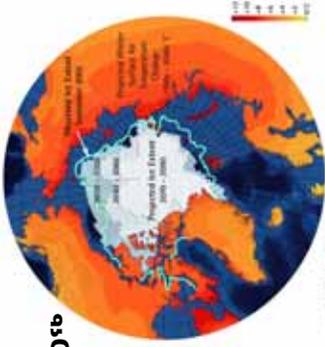


# Measured Changes in Sea Ice

- Average thickness of sea ice likely decreased up to 1 metre (3.3 feet) from 1987-1997 in central Arctic region. Decrease in ice extent (3.3 million km<sup>2</sup>) is also likely. 1987-1997 decrease in ice extent is 1.5 million km<sup>2</sup>.
- Spring temperatures are increasing in parts of the Arctic region. Spring ice break-up is occurring up to a month earlier (1970s to the present) in some areas.

# Predicted Changes in Sea Ice

- Climate warming will change when and where sea ice will form.
- There are many different predictions about how sea ice will change in the future:
  - Less multi-year ice; replaced with a thinner, annual ice formation



# Measured Changes in Sea Ice

- Average thickness of sea ice likely decreased up to 1 metre (3.3 feet) from 1987-1997 in central Arctic region. Decrease in ice extent (3.3 million km<sup>2</sup>) is also likely. 1987-1997 decrease in ice extent is 1.5 million km<sup>2</sup>.
- Spring temperatures are increasing in parts of the Arctic region. Spring ice break-up is occurring up to a month earlier (1970s to the present) in some areas.

# Western Hudson Bay Research

- Research in Western Hudson Bay
  - Changes in climate used to explain changes in polar bear survival
  - Increase in average air temperature in April, May, and June
  - Spring break-up shifted from late June to late May

# Western Hudson Bay Research

- Research in Western Hudson Bay
  - Changes in sea ice affects the seal population and where seals are found
  - Reduced numbers of seals was related to poorer polar bear health (weight, survival of cubs)











# COSEWIC Assessment and Update Status Report Summary of the Polar Bear (Special Concern 2008)

Authors: Philip McLaughlin, Mitch Taylor, and Martha Dowsley

## Reason for Special Concern Designation

- Although the overall population and habitat trends in Canada did not meet the criteria for the polar bear to be considered Threatened or Endangered, the information about declines in some subpopulations combined with concern about long-term trends related to climate change, motivated COSEWIC to recommend that it be considered a species of Special Concern.
- Subpopulations that are currently decreasing in size are thought to be declining because they cannot support the current level of harvest and/or because the effects of climate change are reducing the health of the population. Other potential limiting factors are intraspecific predation, pollution from development, and environmental contaminants. Climate change will affect all of these and will likely be the ultimate factor influencing long-term population trends.

**Where polar bears are found in Canada:** Yukon, Northwest Territories, Nunavut, Manitoba, Ontario, Quebec, Newfoundland and Labrador

## Status History

- 2008: Status re-examined and recommended as Special Concern
- 2002: Confirmed as Special Concern
- 1999: Confirmed as Special Concern
- 1991: Status re-examined and uplisted to Special Concern
- 1986: Designated Not at Risk

**Special Concern (SC)** – A wildlife species that may become threatened or an endangered species because of a combination of biological characteristics and identified threats.

## Background

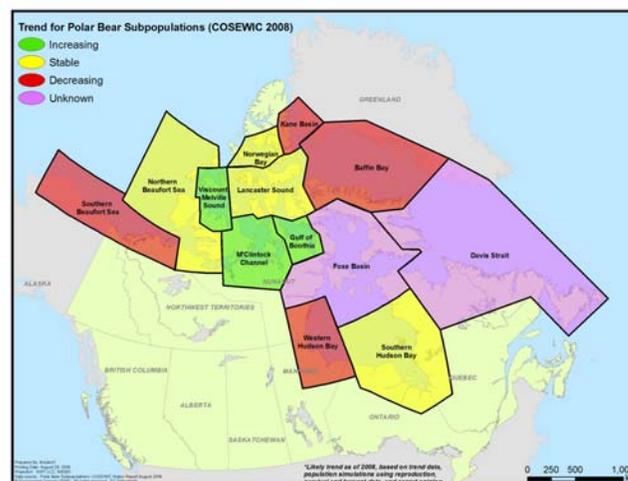
- Polar bears are the top predator in the arctic marine ecosystem.
- Polar bears are important to the culture of Canadian people, and are also very important spiritually and economically to northern people.

- In Canada, polar bears are divided into 13 subpopulations but they move and breed between these subpopulations, so are considered part of a single unit (Designatable Unit) for the status assessment.
- Trends (up, down, stable) for the subpopulations are described in the report. Harvest is managed on a subpopulation basis and changes due to climate warming are not expected to be consistent across the arctic, which is important to understanding the trends in subpopulations.
- The total population of polar bears in Canada is estimated to be 15,500 bears. These bears are shared by Canada and its neighbours, Greenland and the United States.

### Subpopulation Trends

- The best available data from western science and Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge suggests the following trends in the 13 polar bear subpopulations:

Polar Bear Subpopulation	Trend	Number of Sub-populations	Percent (%) of total population
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Western Hudson Bay</li> <li>• Southern Beaufort Sea</li> <li>• Baffin Bay</li> <li>• Kane Basin</li> </ul>	↓ Declining	4 of 13	28%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Northern Beaufort Sea</li> <li>• Southern Hudson Bay</li> <li>• Norwegian Bay</li> <li>• Lancaster Sound</li> </ul>	Stable	4 of 13	29%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Viscount Melville Sound</li> <li>• M'Clintock Channel</li> <li>• Gulf of Boothia</li> </ul>	↑ Increasing	3 of 13	14%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Davis Strait</li> <li>• Foxe Basin</li> </ul>	? Data deficient	2 of 13	29%



### **What is COSEWIC?**

- COSEWIC stands for the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada
- COSEWIC is a group of experts that compile and review the best available information and decide which wild species are in some danger of disappearing from Canada.
- COSEWIC assesses the status of wildlife species in Canada and provides advice to the Minister of the Environment and the Canadian Endangered Species Conservation Council (CESCC).

### **What is a Species Status Report and Assessment?**

- A species status report is a technical report that gathers and analyzes the best available information (science and Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge) on a species' status in Canada.
- Using information in a status report, COSEWIC assesses the national status of a species and classifies it as being extinct, extirpated, endangered, threatened or of special concern. They can also decide that a species is Not at Risk or data deficient.

### **Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge (Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit)**

Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge (Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit) was considered with respect in the current COSEWIC status report:

- Personal communications with respected elders and hunters
- Update on ATK on polar bears in Inukjuak and Puvirnutuq, Nunavik (2006)
- Inuit Qaujimaningit Nanurnut – Gjoa Haven HTO (2005)
- Inuit perspectives on climate change in Nunavut (NTI 2005)
- Dowsley
  - 70 interviews with elders and active hunters about polar bear management,
  - Management consultations - Qikiqtarjuaq, Clyde River, Pond Inlet, Western Hudson Bay communities (2006)
  - In-depth review of Igloodik oral history archives on the traditional use of polar bears by Inuit
  - Inuit knowledge regarding climate change and Baffin Bay polar bear (2005)
- Paulatuk oral history project (2004)
- Aklavik Inuvialuit describe status of birds and animals in the Yukon North Slope (2003)
- Collection of local knowledge about polar bears in Alaska (1997)
- Inuit land use across the arctic (1976)

**Both Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge and Western Science were used in this assessment.**

The COSEWIC Status Report assesses the status of polar bears in Canada. The text that follows gives a brief description of the information in the status report. This is a **plain language or layperson's summary** of the full English COSEWIC Status Report on Polar Bears. The English and Inuktitut translation of the full COSEWIC Status Report has been provided to the HTO and is available from the Canadian Wildlife Service upon request.

This report:

- Describes the information in the full English version of the COSEWIC Status Report
- Is organized by the page numbers in the COSEWIC English status report
- Non-italicized text is a summary of information in the status report. Text in **bold** is either of particular interest or is directly relevant to Nunavumiut.
- *Italicized text* is more detailed information taken directly from the COSEWIC Status Report.

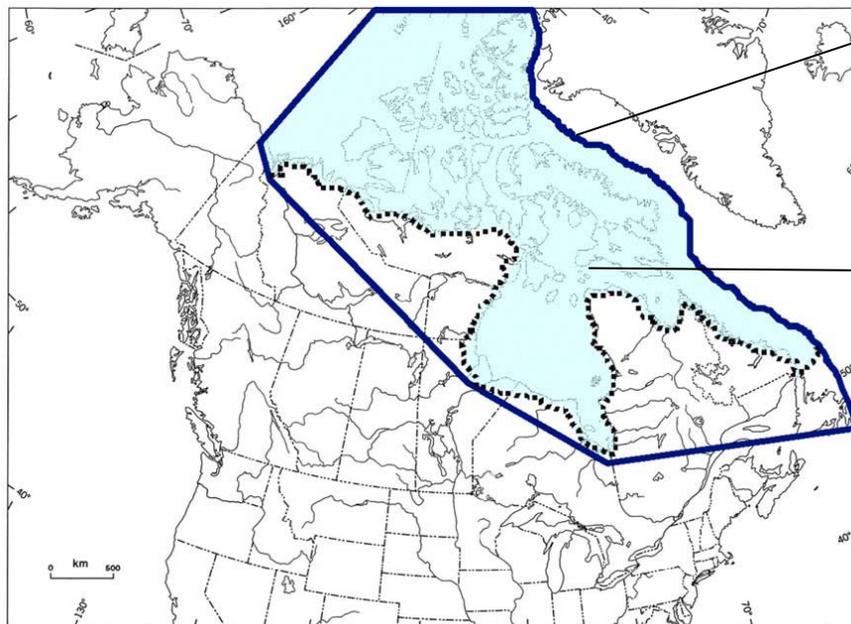
## What polar bears look like and their genetics (Page 5 – 8 of the COSEWIC Status Report)

- This section of the COSEWIC Status Report describes what polar bears look like and how scientists have grouped polar bears. Genetic information tells us that there are small differences between the different subpopulations but not enough to call them different subspecies.
- Polar bears evolved from Grizzly (Brown) bears and many of the changes are adaptations to hunting arctic seals.

<p><b>English name:</b> Polar bear  <b>French name:</b> ours blanc  <b>Inuktitut name:</b> Nanuq, Nanuk  <b>Cree name:</b> Wapusk  <b>Latin name:</b> <i>Ursus maritimus</i></p>
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## Where polar bears are found in Canada (Page 8 – 13 of the Status Report)

- This section of the COSEWIC Status Report describes where polar bears are found around the circumpolar north and where they occur in Canada, shown below. There has been little change in the present and historic range of polar bears since the end of the last major glacier retreat.

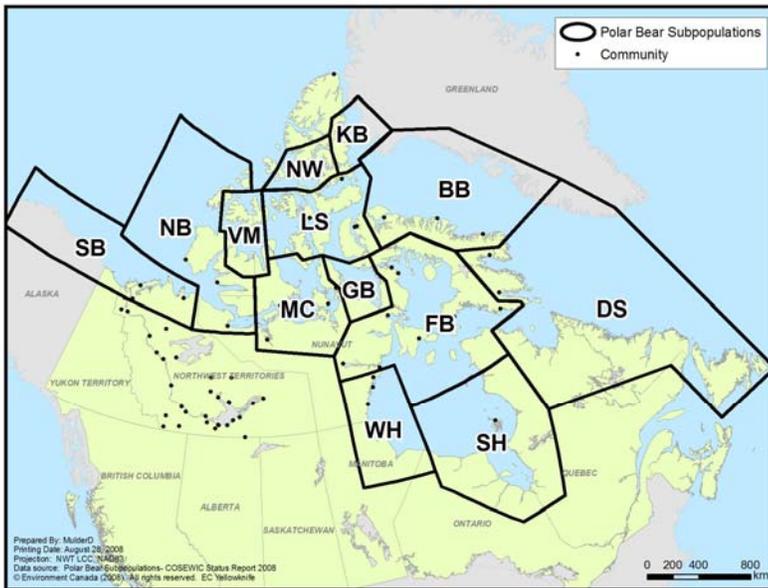


The bold line shows the outer boundary of where polar bears are found in Canada (extent of occurrence) (8,700,000 km<sup>2</sup>)

The shaded area is where polar bears are found in Canada (5,600,000 km<sup>2</sup>)

- Polar bears can move very large distances but research shows they do not wander as nomads through the whole Arctic as we used to think. **From season to season, polar bears stay in the same general area (seasonal fidelity).**

- Polar bears in Canada are divided into thirteen (13) subpopulations that range into or are entirely within Canada.

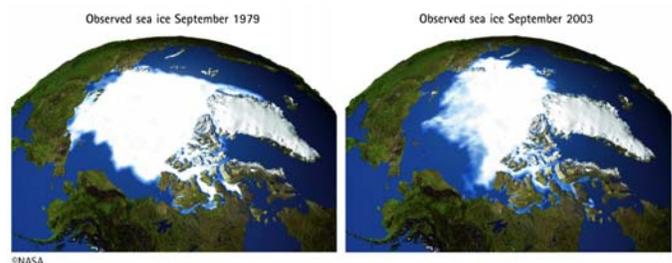


- Viscount Melville Sound (VM)
- Norwegian Bay (NW)
- Kane Basin (KB)
- Lancaster Sound (LS)
- Baffin Bay (BB)
- Davis Strait (DS)
- Southern Hudson Bay (SH)
- Western Hudson Bay (WH)
- Foxe Basin (FB)
- Gulf of Boothia (GB)
- M'Clintock Channel (MC)
- Southern Beaufort Sea (SB)
- Northern Beaufort Sea (NB)

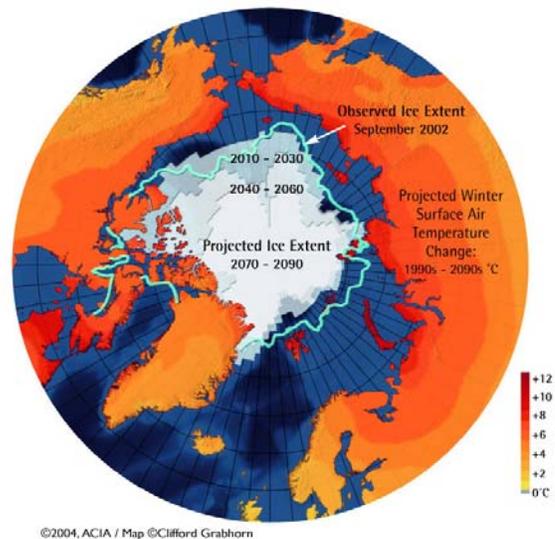
- Subpopulations have varying degrees of genetic differences between them but the differences are not strong enough to identify the subpopulations as unrelated or as subspecies.
- Subpopulations are useful to describe local trends in population growth and for managing populations but for COSEWIC different polar bear subpopulations in Canada are related closely enough that there is only one national status for the species (i.e. polar bears were considered a single “Designatable” unit.)

### Habitat (Page 14 – 20 of the COSEWIC Status Report)

- This section of the COSEWIC Status Report describes the main features of good polar bear habitat. Good habitat is closely linked to sea ice and good habitat for ringed seals (beside pressure ridges, between multi-year and first-year ice, and at the floe edge). Any changes in where seals are found due to climate change are certain to impact where polar bears are found.
- Sea-ice cover gives polar bears access to seals, so the distribution of polar bears in most areas changes as sea-ice cover changes from season to season.
- The north-south movement of bears seems to depend on the seasonal melting and freezing of ice near the shore. Polar bears are forced onto land (summer retreat areas) for several months during the open water season.



- **Trends in Habitat** (Page 15 - 19) – Describes changes in polar bear habitat and sea ice reported by scientific observations and from Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge. The main concern for the status of polar bears is how climate warming will impact the types of sea ice and where it is found, and the length of the open-water season.
- Satellite data shows sea ice extent has gone down by 2.7% per decade since 1978. Sea ice covering arctic waters in the summer has declined by 7.4% per decade since 1979 and in the central Arctic the average thickness has likely decreased up to 1 metre from 1987-1997.
- Spring temperatures are increasing in many parts of the Arctic and spring ice break-up is occurring up to a month earlier (1970s to the present) in some areas, although this is not consistent across the Arctic.
- There are many different predictions about how climate and sea ice will change in the future: the Arctic will continue to warm; more precipitation in winter; Less multi-year ice; replaced with a thinner, annual ice formation; in summer, more ice will melt in areas that now have ice year round.
- Polar bears depend on sea ice and there is concern that major reductions in the amount of sea ice (how much there is and how long it lasts) will have negative effects on the survival of polar bears.
- Higher temperatures and loss of sea ice in the Arctic is not good for the future of the polar bear; some predict the loss of 2/3 of the world's polar bears in 45 years.
- **Habitat Protection** (Page 20) – This section describes the parks and protected areas across the polar bears' range. There is no formal protection for most of the polar bear habitat in Canada.



## **Biology** (Page 20 – 27 of the COSEWIC Status Report)

- This section of the COSEWIC Status Report reviews general information about polar bear reproduction, denning, predation, physiology, home ranges, movements, and behaviour.
- **Life Cycle and Reproduction** (Page 20 – 24) - Reproduction rates differ between subpopulations but all are relatively low. Females usually have their first litters

between 4-6 years and have litters of no more than 1-2 cubs every 3 years. Most males usually start to breed between the ages of 8-10 years.

- **Predation** (Page 25) – Polar bears have no natural predators but killing by/of other polar bears does happen. There may be more conflicts and predation between polar bears if climate change reduces the number of bears an area can support.
- **Physiology** (Page 25) – Bears fast for long periods of time during the ice-free periods and while on land they must rely on stored fat reserves. Pollution and contaminants in the environment could affect polar bear survival and reproduction.
- **Home Ranges, Movements, Dispersal** (Page 26 – 27) –Home range size varies depending on how much sea ice is around and on special places such as polynyas, which attract bear. Home ranges are larger for bears that use land during the ice-free season or who live in areas with a lot of seasonal changes in the type of ice cover than bear with year round access to ice. Research shows that as the sea ice thins, the home range size get bigger.
- **Behavioural Adaptations** (Page 27) – ATK studies in Gjoa Haven, Cambridge Bay and Taloyoak reported that polar bears change their movements to changes in the environment and availability of food, but are sensitive to human activity. Garbage and other harmful substances are known to attract bears. Bears can get used to people and this can lead to problem bears and defense kills.

### **Limiting Factors and Threats to Polar Bears** (Page 28 – 35 of the COSEWIC Status Report)

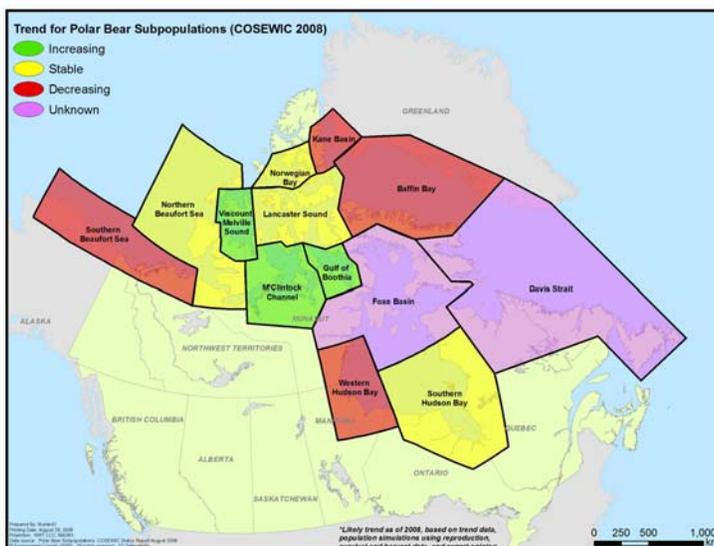
- This section of the COSEWIC Status Report describes general factors that might cause polar bear populations to decline, or prevent them from increasing. There are two main factors that limit where and how many polar bears we have in Canada:
- **Starvation** (access to and abundance of ice-dependent seals) - Research in Western Hudson Bay shows that ringed seal numbers have been reduced by climate warming (earlier break-up of sea ice) and that polar bears may be responding to these declines in the number of seals.
- **Human-Caused Mortality** - Harvest data for the Canadian population is reviewed. Hunting in Canada is regulated through quotas. There is concern that quotas for some subpopulations may be too high because they may have been based on outdated or potentially inaccurate information. Until 2006, some shared subpopulations were harvested in Greenland and not based on quotas, so may not have been sustainable.
- Current management mainly seeks the maximum sustainable harvest, which may cause declines if we don't have current/accurate population numbers.

Other potential limiting factors are reviewed:

- Intraspecific predation – killing by/of other polar bears does happen
- Pollution, especially from offshore oil and gas development, and increased ship traffic
- Build up of environmental contaminants in tissues of polar bears
- Climate change is likely to influence all of the factors above and should be treated as the ultimate limiting factor to polar bears. If the climate continues to warm as projected by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), all populations of polar bears will eventually be affected.

### Population Size and Trends (Page 35 – 51 of the COSEWIC Status Report)

- This section of the COSEWIC Status Report describes the harvest quota and best available population estimate data for each subpopulation of polar bears in Canada, using western science and Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge (ATK). For a few polar bear subpopulations, scientific estimates of numbers and trends and ATK did not agree.
- All estimates of current population growth are based on available data and do not account for the possible effects of climate change.
- The world population of polar bears is estimated at 20,000 and 25,000 bears. The Canadian population is estimated to be 15,500 bears. These bears are shared by Canada and its neighbours, Greenland and the United States.



*Population models project that 4 of 13 subpopulations (including approximately 28% of 15,500 polar bears in Canada) have a high risk of declining by 30% or more over the next 3 bear generations (36 years). Declines are partly attributed to climate change for Western Hudson Bay and Southern Beaufort Sea, but are mostly due to unsustainable harvest in Kane Basin and Baffin Bay. Seven subpopulations (about 43% of the total population) are*

*projected to be stable or increasing. Trends currently cannot be projected for 2 subpopulations (29% of the total population). Bears in some subpopulations show declining body condition and changes in denning location linked to decreased availability of sea ice. For most subpopulations*

*with repeated censuses, data suggest a slight increase in the last 10-25 years. All estimates of current population growth rates are based on currently available data and do not account for the possible effects of climate change.*

### **Why polar bears are important (Species Significance)** (Page 51 of the COSEWIC Status Report)

- This section of the COSEWIC Status Report discusses why polar bears are important – as an indicator species of important environmental issues such as climate change and pollution.
- Polar bears are important to the culture of Canadian people, particularly in the North, and are also very important spiritually and economically to northern native people.
- Canada has a responsibility (nationally and internationally) to study, manage and protect polar bears, especially since we manage 55-65% of the world's polar bears.

### **Status and protection polar bears have now** (Page 52 – 56 of the COSEWIC Status Report)

- This section of the COSEWIC Status Report reviews the status of polar bears in other parts of the world. Globally the polar is listed as Vulnerable. In May 2008, the United States announced it would list polar bears as Threatened under the US Endangered Species Act.
- Management of polar bears within Canada is by the provinces and territories. The decision-making process for some is shared with Aboriginal groups as part of their settled land claim.
- 80% of the hunting of polar bears happens in the Northwest Territories and Nunavut. Management agreements and/or memoranda of understanding with local communities help ensure all human-caused mortality (hunting or problem bears) is sustainable.
- **Risks from Lack of Protection/Trends in Management** (Page 55 - 56) - Describes how current polar bear management focuses mainly on harvest and the concerns with this approach.
- Discusses the important of co-management agreements where jurisdictions share polar bears subpopulations. There is a risk of harvesting too many bears (unsustainable harvest) if these inter-jurisdictional agreements are not in place, such as between Nunavut and Greenland.

- Stresses the importance of the “precautionary approach” to harvesting of polar bears and the need to think about the potential effects of climate warming when planning for management and conservation.



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## HTO Response Form

# Polar Bears

## Proposed Listing as a Species of Special Concern

HTO name: \_\_\_\_\_

Community: \_\_\_\_\_

### The HTO's position/opinion on the proposed listing of Polar Bear as Special Concern:

- The HTO Directors support the listing of Polar Bear as Special Concern
- The HTO Directors do not support the listing of Polar Bear as Special Concern
- The HTO Directors are indifferent to the listing of Polar Bear as Special Concern

### What are your reasons for this position?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

You are also recommended to draft a letter if you wish your HTO's views to be reported verbatim. The letter should tell us your formal position (supports, does not support, or indifferent) and any other comments, concerns or information that should be considered in listing Polar Bears as Special Concern.

If you did not include a letter with this form, will you be sending one?  Yes  No

If yes, when can we expect to receive it? \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Please send this form and/or your letter to:	
Fax:	<b>867-975-4645</b>
Mail:	<b>Species at Risk Biologist, Canadian Wildlife Service Box 1714, Iqaluit, NU, X0A 0H0</b>
E-mail:	<b>Heather.Main@ec.gc.ca</b>
Please send your response to us by <b>June 26, 2009</b> .	



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## Polar Bears

### Proposed Listing as a Species of Special Concern

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To Participants in Public Meeting:

The Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC) has reviewed the status of the Polar Bear. COSEWIC has assessed the Polar Bear as a species of Special Concern in Canada. Before the Federal Government decides whether to list Polar Bears under the *Species at Risk Act* (SARA), we need to consult with you.

Although the overall population and habitat trends in Canada did not meet the criteria for the polar bear to be considered Threatened or Endangered, the information about declines in some subpopulations combined with concern about long-term trends related to climate change, motivated COSEWIC to recommend that it be considered a species of Special Concern.

Your observations and comments on the proposed listing of polar bears are important to us. All responses will be reviewed, and considered by the Minister of Environment and the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board in deciding whether or not to recommend that polar bears should be added to the SARA list.

**Listing the Polar Bear as Special Concern would not result in any prohibitions or designation of critical habitat, but it would require preparation of a national management plan for the species. If the Polar Bear is listed, communities would be consulted on the management plan.**

Please attend the community meeting or look at the Summary of the COSEWIC Assessment and Update Status Report for the Polar Bear for more information.

We want to hear what you think about listing polar bears as special concern.  
Please fill in the form or send us a letter.

In person: **Give it to us at the community consultation meeting**  
**OR Submit it to the local HTO office**  
 Fax: **867-975-4645**  
 Mail: **Species at Risk Biologist**  
**Canadian Wildlife Service**  
**Box 1714**  
**Iqaluit, NU X0A 0H0**  
 E-mail: **Heather.Main@ec.gc.ca**

Please send your comments to us by **June 26 2009**.



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# Community Response Form

## Polar Bears

### Proposed Listing as a Species of Special Concern

Your community: \_\_\_\_\_

Your name (optional): \_\_\_\_\_

Your organization (optional): \_\_\_\_\_

#### 1. What is your opinion on the listing of the Polar Bear as Special Concern?

- The Polar Bear should be listed as Special Concern.
- The Polar Bear should not be listed as Special Concern.
- I am indifferent to the listing of the Polar Bear as Special Concern.

#### 2. What are your reasons for this opinion?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

#### 3. What do you feel are the potential impacts of listing the Polar Bear as Special Concern?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

#### 4. Do you have any other information or concerns that the Minister should consider in making a decision on the listing of the Polar Bear?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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\_\_\_\_\_



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## Meeting Summary Review Form

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# Polar Bears

## Proposed Listing as a Species of Special Concern

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HTO name: \_\_\_\_\_

Community: \_\_\_\_\_

The meeting summaries will form the basis of our consultation report to the NWMB and the federal Minister of the Environment.

Please review the meeting summaries and ensure that they accurately reflect community concerns. If changes or additions are needed, please make the changes and send the summaries back to us. Deadline: **June 26, 2009**.

### Short (Combined) Summary

- APPROVE
- DO NOT APPROVE. Changes have been made:
  - In the electronic file in track changes and emailed back to CWS
  - On a paper copy and faxed to CWS

### HTO Meeting Summary

- APPROVE
- DO NOT APPROVE. Changes have been made:
  - In the electronic file in track changes and emailed back to CWS
  - On a paper copy and faxed to CWS

### Public Meeting Summary

- APPROVE
- DO NOT APPROVE. Changes have been made:
  - In the electronic file in track changes and emailed back to CWS
  - On a paper copy and faxed to CWS

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Please send this form and any changes to:

Fax: **867-975-4645**  
 Mail: **Species at Risk Biologist, Canadian Wildlife Service  
 Box 1714, Iqaluit, NU, X0A 0H0**  
 E-mail: **Heather.Main@ec.gc.ca**

Please send your response to us by ***June 26, 2009***.

***Appendix B. Full Meeting Summaries***

## **Pangnirtung—HTO Directors Meeting**

### **Consultation on the Proposed Listing of the Polar Bear as a species of Special Concern under the federal *Species at Risk Act***

February 2, 2009 at 2:00 pm

Pangnirtung HTO Office, Pangnirtung, NU

#### *Present*

- Peterosie Qappik, Chairperson, Pangnirtung HTO
- Patrick Kilabuk, Director, Pangnirtung HTO
- Leopa Akpalialuk, Director, Pangnirtung HTO
- Eena Alivaktuk, Director, Pangnirtung HTO
- Jacopie Maniapik, Director, Pangnirtung HTO
- Jaypetie Qappik, Director, Pangnirtung HTO
- Tommy Qaqqasiq, Director, Pangnirtung HTO
- Elisapee Ikkidluak, Interpreter

#### *Consultation Support*

- None

#### *Consultation Team*

- Heather Main, Canadian Wildlife Service, Iqaluit
- Claudine Vallerand, Canadian Wildlife Service, Iqaluit

#### *Discussion*

- It's important to know what the status of the polar bear is in other countries in order to understand what's happening with the polar bear population.
- It would not be fair to list the polar bear under the Species at Risk Act now as there is a lack of information. More research should be done.
- Global warming is not so much of a concern for the polar bear because as long as there is some ice, the bears will go there and survive.
- Polar bears move around to survive and this should be considered when scientists decide that subpopulations are declining.
- Some hunters know more about polar bears than others—it depends on how many they encounter.
- There are too many polar bears now and they bother people at their camps.
- It would be good to talk to the people from COSEWIC who wrote the status report.
- The HTO questions the source of the concern for polar bears- does it have anything to do with the USA? It's hard to know who should be believed when it comes to polar bears. For example, the HTO recently met with the Nunavut Department of

Environment and were advised by the GN that the population was growing and to increase the quota.

- The HTO does not support the listing for now. Perhaps in 5-10 years another consultation can be done.

## **Pangnirtung—Public Meeting**

### **Consultation on the Proposed Listing of the Polar Bear as a species of Special Concern under the federal *Species at Risk Act***

February 2, 2009 at 7:00 pm  
Pangnirtung Community Hall, Pangnirtung, NU

#### *Present*

- Members of the public: approximately 22 people
- Peterosie Qappik, Chairperson, Pangnirtung HTO
- Elisapee Ikkidluak, Interpreter
- Jonah Kilabuk, Interpreter

#### *Consultation Support*

- None

#### *Consultation Team*

- Heather Main, Canadian Wildlife Service, Iqaluit
- Claudine Vallerand, Canadian Wildlife Service, Iqaluit

#### *Discussion*

- The risk to polar bears from climate change does not seem true because the community sees more polar bears than in the past. One hunter related his encounters with polar bears. Polar bears have been seen in iceless waters, in rocky areas in the spring time, and in coastal areas. There are concerns about safety, for example when camping in tents, on the land in the dark or on the water.
- There was not enough Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit (IQ) included in the Status Report. This is the first time they've heard about this report and it seems the decision has already been made. But IQ does not support this assessment of the polar bear e.g. the fact that habitat will disappear due to sea ice. Inuit are not believed even though they have more day-to-day knowledge of the environment than the scientists. The knowledge of hunters and elders should be taken into account. Interviews are a better way of gathering knowledge from Inuit.
- The local Economic Development Officer commented that there should be a way for Inuit themselves to gather Inuit knowledge. This would also create jobs in the community. There should be a consistent, simple source of funding for this as the current funding is difficult to apply for.
- There used to be monetary rewards for catching polar bears that were tagged. This should be reinstated by the HTO, and all rewards should be equal among tags and species.
- There is concern about the accuracy of the methods that scientists use to count bears (mark and recapture). One person doesn't think the bears that are not tagged are counted. Researchers do not stay long enough to see all the bears.

- Inuit care about conserving the polar bear, not for the money but for the food. Inuit depend on the polar bear as a food source, unlike the government. Inuit will be the ones most affected by the listing. If the polar bear is listed under SARA Inuit should be compensated for loss of food.
- Animals have no boundaries—they move from place to place. We should look for the place to which polar bears are moving for better food or better habitat. We could look at seal populations to see where polar bears might be moving.
- Industrial countries should be blamed for any problems with the polar bear populations as they are the ones who caused climate change. Current problems are due to climate change rather than harvesting. Therefore industry should be involved in these meetings. Industrial countries have also polluted Inuit land with contaminants and pollutants.
- The polar bear should not be listed as a species of Special Concern (expressed by individuals and also by a majority of hands shown in a vote).

## **Qikiqtarjuaq—HTO Directors Meeting**

### **Consultation on the Proposed Listing of the Polar Bear as a species of Special Concern under the federal *Species at Risk Act***

February 3, 2009 at 2:00 pm

Avviujaq Gymnasium, Qikiqtarjuaq, NU

#### *Present*

- Lootie Toomasie, Chairperson, Nattivak HTO
- Yukipa Audlakiak, Vice-chairperson, Nattivak HTO
- Jaypootie Mosesie, Director, Nattivak HTO
- Imona Koksiak, Director, Nattivak HTO
- Levi Nutaralak, Director, Nattivak HTO
- Jacopee Newkingnak, Director, Nattivak HTO
- Allan Kooneeliusie, Director, Nattivak HTO
- Toomasie Newkingnak, Director, Nattivak HTO
- Hanna Audlakiak, HTO Minutes Recorder, Nattivak HTO
- Greg Iles, Conservation Officer, Government of Nunavut
- Elisapee Ikkidluak, Interpreter
- Lavinia Curley, Interpreter

#### *Consultation Support*

- None

#### *Consultation Team*

- Heather Main, Canadian Wildlife Service, Iqaluit
- Claudine Vallerand, Canadian Wildlife Service, Iqaluit

#### *Discussion*

- Polar bears should not be listed under SARA. The polar bear population is increasing. There are now more polar bears and polar bear tracks around. The government should listen and believe the Inuit of Qikiqtarjuaq.
- Allan said that the abundance of polar bears has driven ducks away to nest in new areas. There are fewer seals in certain areas, e.g. Arvaqtuuq between Qikiqtarjuaq and Clyde River, because of hunting by polar bears. Since 1996 it's not possible to hunt seals quickly anymore. Polar bears are hunting seals year round.
- Levi said that female polar bears with cubs have started wandering out of their dens. For example, he saw a female with cubs this month (February) looking for food at the thin ice.
- People now have to be careful because they are in danger from polar bears. There have been many cases of people coming close to polar bears—some participants told stories of close encounters. It changes the way of life. For example, people can't sleep in tents anymore. People must keep guns loaded. Even women and children see polar

bears. Humans are at risk, not polar bears. When Qikiqtarjuaq was first created and people were working on the DEW line, there was no need for polar bear monitors. Now they are needed for DEW line cleanup.

- Polar bears are getting more dangerous. The methods used to deter polar bears (e.g. cracker shells) are not effective. Polar bears used to be afraid of humans, even when they had cubs. Now the researchers and noises from planes have accustomed them to noise and humans.
- The government hasn't approved requests for polar bear deterrents and people are forced to use their own ammunition.
- Inuit traditionally had rules regarding not bothering wildlife. It's the researchers that bother wildlife, e.g. touching bird nests.
- IQ tells us animals cannot all be killed off by humans. Inuit traditionally had laws to kill only what was needed.
- Inuit speak from experience and facts from themselves and from elders and hunters. It is not their *opinion* that they are giving. IQ gives knowledge.
- Lootie said that they want Greenland to manage their polar bears with quotas as Nunavut does.
- Researchers looking for polar bears by helicopter cannot see the polar bear tracks that Inuit see.
- Allan says that they have not seen research reports since the research on polar bears began decades ago, even though he has assisted with the research.
- Al Gore's reports are not accurate and make Inuit look very bad.

## **Qikiqtarjuaq—Public Meeting**

### **Consultation on the Proposed Listing of the Polar Bear as a species of Special Concern under the federal *Species at Risk Act***

February 3, 2009 at 7:00 pm  
Avviujaq Gymnasium, Qikiqtarjuaq, NU

#### *Present*

- Members of the public: approximately 15 people
- Lootie Toomasie, Chairperson, Nattivak HTO
- Greg Iles, Conservation Officer, Government of Nunavut
- Elisapee Ikkidluak, Interpreter

#### *Consultation Support*

- None

#### *Consultation Team*

- Heather Main, Canadian Wildlife Service, Iqaluit
- Claudine Vallerand, Canadian Wildlife Service, Iqaluit

#### *Discussion*

- Participants disagree with the government information on polar bears. People see more polar bears now compared to the past, although they said they are constantly told that the population is decreasing. Polar bears are seen right in town, between buildings, and on the road. They said the population is definitely not declining.
- Polar bears used to be seen rarely and were easily frightened away, for example, by dog team tracks.
- One person said that working on vessels at the sea he has seen many polar bears. He has heard from people in Labrador that there are more bears there now.
- This is not an opinion—it is what Inuit know. Inuit tend to repeat the same stories because this is what's happening in the communities.
- One person said that because polar bears hunt in the areas of thin sea ice they can be affected by sea ice changes.
- The presentation talked about seals pups being in poor health. When pups are yearlings they can get very skinny.
- White people assume that changes in sea ice mean the polar bear won't have anywhere to go. But they can hunt and feed in water as well as on sea ice. They also hunt in dangerous areas of sea ice where the ice is thin, so won't be affected by sea ice changes.
- There have been lots of dangerous encounters with polar bears. They are very scary and aggressive. There were lots of polar bears around last fall and this coming spring

will be dangerous because of the females with cubs. Even little kids can give reports of seeing polar bears.

- People have to take many precautions because of polar bears. Women who go berry picking have to keep watch. People have to build cabins now for safety. People set 5 gallon cans as precautions, or take cracker shells, but need a cheap way to deter polar bears. Guns are too expensive.
- This past spring there were fewer seal pups because there were more polar bears hunting them.
- Polar bears have been doing a lot of damage around Qikiqtarjuaq. Once polar bears start to disturb a camp to eat they will keep coming back until there's nothing left. They have destroyed drying sealskins and eaten aged seal blubber. Inuit are not reimbursed for the destroyed items.
- Researchers don't live in places where there are polar bears and they come only for a very short time. Survey people should come to see all the bears that Inuit see! They should come for six months or more. They should stay in the North. One person said he has seen a polar bear that was extremely muddy and that someone not familiar might think it was not a polar bear. The survey helicopters only seem to go inland—they should check in places where there are many icebergs and glaciers.
- More research needs to be done for these listings. Sometimes when they are asked a question the government people don't know the answer. It seems a waste of time to propose listings when the government doesn't know about the species. They end up pointing fingers at Inuit.
- The government doesn't collect information well from the Inuit. Inuit try to give accurate information. This information is recorded but not heard.
- In Qikiqtarjuaq people have obediently followed the quotas and listened to the Conservation Officer regarding not killing nuisance bears.
- One person said that perhaps Inuit should go ahead and shoot polar bears while they have the chance, if it is to be believed that they are declining.

## **Clyde River—HTO Directors Meeting**

### **Consultation on the Proposed Listing of the Polar Bear as a species of Special Concern under the federal *Species at Risk Act***

February 4, 2009 at 2:00 pm  
Clyde River HTO Office, Clyde River, NU

#### *Present*

- Manasie Audlakiak, Vice-Chair, Clyde River HTO
- Jaysie Tigullaraq, Secretary-Treasurer, Clyde River HTO
- Jayko Apak, Director, Clyde River HTO
- Jacopie Ikalukjuaq, Director, Clyde River HTO
- Jayko Ashevak, Director, Clyde River HTO
- Joannasie Apak, Director, Clyde River HTO
- Josephie Panikpak, Director, Clyde River HTO
- Bruce Jerry Hainnu, Conservation Officer, Government of Nunavut
- Elisapee Ikkidluak, Interpreter
- Looseosie, Interpreter

#### *Consultation Support*

- None

#### *Consultation Team*

- Heather Main, Canadian Wildlife Service, Iqaluit
- Claudine Vallerand, Canadian Wildlife Service, Iqaluit

#### *Discussion*

- Many of the hunters indicated that they don't support the listing of the polar bear under SARA. They don't believe polar bears are at risk now and are not worried about them.
- The polar bear population is increasing. Hunters see many tracks, all the way to Pond Inlet. They haven't recorded these observations with research equipment or research papers. They say it's not an opinion but what they know.
- Decreasing sea ice does not lead to decreasing polar bear populations. The ice between Baffin Island and Greenland is decreasing but the number of polar bears is increasing.
- Since 1996 or 1997 residents of Clyde River have had to watch out for polar bears especially in the fall. There has been a lot of property damage. Polar bears bother dogs and take their food. It is believed that they come into town for food.
- Research reports like the COSEWIC status report take too long. By the time they're finished, the information is out of date. Animals move from place to place, following their food. Researchers cannot know the Baffin Bay subpopulation is declining when the last survey was done 12 years ago.

- Researchers need to change their methods to see what Inuit mean about the increasing polar bear population. For example, they could put up a tent and actually research on the land. They should consult with Inuit and have an Inuk with them. Josephie thinks that there shouldn't be any more polar bear researchers at all.
- Polar bears can survive on water and land as well as sea ice.
- Jacopie hasn't noticed any effects of global warming except for changes in tides (getting faster). He believes even if it did get warmer it would just be in July.
- The tranquilizers used for researching bears make them skinnier.
- Manasie thinks Inuit would win if there was a court case regarding polar bear management. Clyde River follows the hunting quotas and the MOU between communities regarding polar bear quotas. They don't hunt polar bears as much as they did before quotas. In the past, even females and cubs were hunted.
- Josephie said that today Inuit are controlled by other organizations when it comes to wildlife. These agreements are making Inuit into criminals.
- The position regarding quotas can be difficult for the HTO as they must listen to both the government and the public. Sometimes it is also difficult due to lack of resources for the HTO (e.g. no truck).
- Inuit can't do anything about global warming. Therefore the only thing Inuit can do to help the polar bear is to stop hunting them, but Inuit have to eat too. Human beings are naturally concerned about themselves (their food, property, safety).
- Manasie said that several people from Clyde River have been talking about Inuit creating their own animal rights group. The only obstacle is how to finance it.

## **Clyde River—Public Meeting**

### **Consultation on the Proposed Listing of the Polar Bear as a species of Special Concern under the federal *Species at Risk Act***

February 4, 2009 at 7:00 pm  
Community Hall, Clyde River, NU

#### *Present*

- Members of the public: approximately 60 people
- Manasie Audlakiak, Vice-Chair, Clyde River HTO
- Elisapee Ikkidluak, Interpreter
- Looseosie, Interpreter

#### *Consultation Support*

- None

#### *Consultation Team*

- Heather Main, Canadian Wildlife Service, Iqaluit
- Claudine Vallerand, Canadian Wildlife Service, Iqaluit

#### *Discussion*

- Many people said that there are now more polar bears.
- There are now fewer baby seals because there are so many polar bears. One person believes there are fewer duck eggs on the islands at Arvaqtuuq due to more polar bears eating the eggs.
- Polar bears and other animals are not as frightened anymore since people started using motorized vehicles. It's dangerous for Inuit.
- It is now too dangerous to hunt seals at seal holes, because of polar bears. It is scary to camp in tents. This makes it difficult to teach traditional skills.
- Polar bears have destroyed property such as skidoos, cabins, and houses. One person said that he has requested reimbursement but was denied.
- IQ tells us that when polar bears are overpopulated they will start to kill one another or will become very skinny. When there are too many of one species, they start to die off from diseases, etc.
- The COSEWIC assessments should be based on Inuit knowledge. Inuit are the ones who live up here and know what is going on with species. Inuit knowledge is not believed even when it's written down in reports such as the one CWS will write for this consultation. Inuit knowledge should be listened to more. Inuit elders should be considered experts too. The government and Inuit should work together.
- Several people commented that Inuit should receive funding to do their own research on wildlife. One person believes Inuit should be handling all of the research, using

equipment from the government. More people working could get more information, and then there would be facts not estimates. If Inuit document their knowledge, they will have to be believed. One person suggested a one-year moratorium on polar bear hunting to count the bears.

- If the federal government wants to own the Arctic they have to work with Inuit.
- Researchers come to research for a short time only, and yet what they write is believed. The polar bears have not been counted by researchers for many years now. The researchers would never know if there was an overpopulation at one time because they don't do research every year.
- One reason that Inuit don't believe survey numbers are accurate is because they have caught untagged polar bears, thus believing that not all polar bears were counted by the research.
- Two people said they believe bears that have been tranquilized are not able to eat and so become too skinny. Also, there is concern regarding researchers chasing bears until they are exhausted. According to Inuit elders, if one does that to an animal one must kill it.
- Two people expressed concern about the effects of pollution from mines, ships, and oil/gas development on wildlife. There should be research on this, which could be done from the North.
- There is concern over the effect of increased shipping in the North. A decline in polar bears could be due to the increase in turbot fishing ships in coastal areas.
- The shows on TV regarding polar bears are not accurate. People all over the world love the polar bear because it looks nice. The actual facts should be shown.
- Inuit should not be blamed for changes in wildlife. Inuit are not overharvesting animals. Elders say if Inuit do not catch enough of a species, there will be too many of that species. Inuit do not try to endanger animals.
- Animals became extinct from whalers not from Inuit.
- Peter Panniuq (the eldest of the elders attending) believes that to put an animal on the SARA degrades the animal. Inuit used to say not to speak badly of the polar bear or else it would take revenge.
- It's natural for animals, such as caribou, to sometimes be overpopulated and sometimes be few in number. At these times they seem to have disappeared but it's not the case.
- Species should only be considered "at risk" if they're in an environment in which they can't survive anymore.
- Elders will probably never get another chance to eat polar bear cub meat and they miss it. This doesn't seem fair as white people get to eat what they like (e.g. shrimp and turbot).

## **Pond Inlet—HTO Directors Meeting**

### **Consultation on the Proposed Listing of the Polar Bear as a species of Special Concern under the federal *Species at Risk Act***

February 5, 2009 at 2:00 pm  
Pond Inlet HTO Office, Pond Inlet, NU

#### *Present*

- Jayko Aooloo, Chairperson, Pond Inlet HTO
- Elijah Panikpakoocho, Director, Pond Inlet HTO
- James Atagootak, Director, Pond Inlet HTO
- Daniel Komangapik, Director, Pond Inlet HTO
- Peter Oolateetak, Director, Pond Inlet HTO
- Jaykolasie Killiktee, Director, Pond Inlet HTO
- Bryan Simonee, Director, Pond Inlet HTO
- Molleen Anaviapik, Manager Pond Inlet HTO
- George Koonoo, Conservation Officer, Government of Nunavut
- Elisapee Ikkidluak, Interpreter
- Malachi Arreak, Interpreter

#### *Consultation Support*

- None

#### *Consultation Team*

- Heather Main, Canadian Wildlife Service, Iqaluit
- Claudine Vallerand, Canadian Wildlife Service, Iqaluit

#### *Discussion*

- The polar bear population does not seem to be at risk, at least around Pond Inlet.
- Many hunters said there used to be very few polar bears around Pond Inlet. People used to have to go far to catch a bear, and it was gratifying because it was rare. Bears used to be found only around Lancaster Sound.
- The number of polar bears seen around Pond Inlet is now increasing. There are more bears at the floe edge. They are even found on the moving pack ice. They are seen almost daily in the spring.
- In the 1950-60s, bait and foxes in fox traps from Button Point/Guy's Bite all the way to Clyde River was not eaten by polar bears. Caches, for example the ones at Beloeil Island in the 1970-80s, were also rarely disturbed in the past. Now these caches can't be used any more as polar bears will raid them. Polar bears now tend to get fat during the summer from raiding caches.
- Polar bears are coming into people's camps. There has to be constant watch for bears, when boating or camping. Bears are seen where they never used to be seen. People even have to be careful summer camping in the deep fjords where there used to be

very few bears. Exploration crews at Mary River had to have polar bear monitors. The hunters told stories of close encounters with bears. It is hard to consider listing bears as at risk when Inuit are in constant danger from them.

- Coastal areas around Clyde River have fewer seal pups now because of polar bears.
- The population explosion has resulted from the quotas instituted in 1963.
- Two hunters said that female polar bears are reproducing more now. There are more females seen with two cubs rather than one. One hunter said that last year he saw a female with three cubs for the first time, and that maybe this change was due to the warming climate.
- It is a difficult situation when harvest quotas are being decreased, and yet more defense kills are becoming necessary. One hunter told a story of having to kill a bear in self-defense. Sometimes the law has to be broken when there are no more tags. There are always defense kills in the spring at the floe edge.
- Inuit are unreasonably blamed for declines in species.
- Animal rights activists are to be blamed for the proposed listing of the polar bear. Southerners are influenced by what special interest groups tell them about bears. Al Gore has also misinformed people. It's difficult to accept interference from outside groups especially when Inuit can't meet directly with them. They should come here to talk instead of the federal government.
- One hunter said that the problem comes from Greenland, and right now the HTO feels excluded from the consultation with Greenland. It is a big concern that they cannot work together with Greenlanders.
- Jayko said that WWF and CWS polar bear researchers (Ian Stirling) are the main instruments pushing the idea of declines in polar bear populations. He knows that the Government of Nunavut does not agree. At the Polar Bear Roundtable in January 2009 Minister Prentice stated that Inuit knowledge and science have to work together.
- The effects of researchers disturbing animals, e.g. the nests of birds, should be considered when looking at species at risk.
- Perhaps the shrimp trawlers between Nunavut and Greenland are disturbing bears and forcing them over towards Pond Inlet.
- Inuit knowledge regarding polar bear populations should be believed as Inuit are on the land all the time.
- There should be more collaboration between Inuit and scientists regarding research. There should be studies in specific places where Inuit know polar bears are found.
- Researchers should do research on the ground. They should research for longer periods. The time of year is important too—there should be surveys when females are coming out of their dens.
- The scientists should count all the bears not just the tagged ones.

- Researchers should use methods that are less intrusive and quieter. Exposure to noise makes polar bears less successful at hunting and they become skinnier.
- Polar bears can survive in open water. In certain areas with no ice in summer, it's common to see polar bears swimming surrounded only by water. In Lancaster Sound polar bears harvest seals from the waves when it's windy.
- James said that he doesn't agree with the assessment of subpopulation trends by COSEWIC as all animals, including polar bears, move back and forth between places.
- Polar bears traverse inland areas across Baffin Island especially in the summer. They don't remain in the same place. In the winter polar bears go down the coast on the pack ice and return up the coast in summer. They can go all the way from Labrador to the Beaufort Sea—not just in Nunavut.
- When a species is overpopulated they will start dying.
- There is concern about polar bears in zoos which become yellow and skinny.

## **Pond Inlet—Public Meeting**

### **Consultation on the Proposed Listing of the Polar Bear as a species of Special Concern under the federal *Species at Risk Act***

February 5, 2009 from 7:00 pm to 11:00 pm  
Sauniq Inns North, Pond Inlet, NU

#### *Present*

- Members of the public: approximately 35 people
- Jayko Aloo, Chairperson, Pond Inlet HTO
- Elisapee Ikkidluak, Interpreter
- Malachi Arreak, Interpreter

#### *Consultation Support*

- None

#### *Consultation Team*

- Heather Main, Canadian Wildlife Service, Iqaluit
- Claudine Vallerand, Canadian Wildlife Service, Iqaluit

#### *Discussion*

- Many people said that they have personally observed an increased number of polar bears. They do not believe the number is decreasing. They do not believe the polar bear should be listed as at risk. They should be in the Not at Risk or Data Deficient categories.
- More polar bears have been observed inland and on the coastline.
- Polar bears used to be found far away from land. Hunters used to go to Button Point and east to Clyde River for polar bears. There were not many bears in Eclipse Sound in the past.
- Birth rates have not decreased in this area because lots of polar bear cub tracks have been seen.
- One person said that he doesn't believe the COSEWIC assessment of subpopulation trends because he has seen lots of polar bears in areas where the report says the subpopulation is declining, and few polar bears in areas where the report says the subpopulation is stable or increasing.
- There have been changes in polar bear behavior.
- Humans are now in danger from polar bears. There has to be constant monitoring for bears. They have to have monitors at Mary River. Polar bears search for food just as humans do.
- Seals are less abundant in Pond Inlet than they were before. There are fewer seal pups now.

- James Arvaluk said that Inuit want a more holistic approach to management, which in this case means considering the decline in seal populations. It has been heard that in Arviat there used to be lots of seals but the polar bears are depleting them. If polar bears are skinnier and declining in numbers due to lack of seals in Western Hudson Bay, polar bear quotas should be increased there to equilibrate. The interaction between species should be considered.
- Declines in species can be caused by overpopulations in other species. For a lot of species, declines are not related to human activities.
- Polar bear populations have always fluctuated.
- Inuit knowledge should be considered for the Baffin Bay subpopulation. It seems that it has not been considered by COSEWIC in this report. Inuit knowledge tells us that this subpopulation is increasing in numbers.
- One person said he doesn't believe that untagged polar bears are counted in the population surveys. Another said that he understands how scientists form estimates based on tagged bears, but doesn't believe this is a proper way to count bears. Several people said that researchers should come up with actual numbers for the population sizes, not just estimates, before listing the species.
- This more exhaustive study of polar bear populations should be done in cooperation with Inuit. There are Inuit that are ready to initiate these types of studies—they just need funding.
- Polar bears should be studied in areas where they congregate.
- Inuit tell what they know. It's not an opinion. It's based on experience.
- IQ tells us animals should not be disturbed unless they are to be eaten.
- One person said that Inuit have known about intra-specific killing among polar bears due to lack of habitat for a long time. He doesn't believe that it's linked to global warming. He doesn't believe in global warming. An elder said that inter-specific killing among polar bears varies from year to year depending on food source.
- Knowledge regarding polar bear behavior patterns in different seasons should be considered. Polar bears are not cyclical. They will be active and hunt for a while, then wander, and then stay in the same place for a while, etc. More stories and behavior should be included in the COSEWIC report. What is in there now is the “watered down” version of IQ.
- Misinformation and pressure about the polar bears has come from activist groups. Their theories are all hypothetical. Activist groups have attacked the Inuit because the GN increased the quotas. Now some Inuit regret the quota change.
- Inuit concerns are not self-interested. Inuit volunteer to protect the animals, whereas animal activist groups use misinformation to gather revenue.
- Climate change is not a concern for the polar bear. It's not a good enough reason for now to list polar bears as Special Concern. There are many examples of polar bears living in warmer climates and surviving, e.g. in zoos, in the summertime. Seals have

gone through warming and cooling periods and survived. Polar bears have been observed swimming in water with no ice around. They can also harvest seals while in the water.

- An elder said that Inuit have been expecting changes to the climate for a long time (prior to the 1800s). In his lifetime he has observed that glaciers are calving further inland.
- Polar bears get skinny at the end of a season, e.g. mother bears coming out of their dens. But polar bears don't starve immediately. They survive as long as their hunting success is about one per week.
- Polar bears seem to have a migration route straight across Baffin Island. The bears cut between the Lancaster Sound and Baffin Bay subpopulations. Perhaps they are heading to the area that freezes up first.
- There is frustration that people in communities are working hard to follow quotas and manage bears, but people keep coming in and telling them what is happening with polar bears. If quotas are decreased, more illegal kills will happen.
- It seems that Nunavut is being victimized. The polar bear management in Canada is already very strict and people want it to be stricter. Meanwhile, this is an international problem and there needs to be more action on the international level.
- The status and legislation regarding bears in other countries should be considered. Inuit knowledge tells us that polar bears do not follow jurisdictions.

## **Arctic Bay—HTO Directors Meeting**

### **Consultation on the Proposed Listing of the Polar Bear as a species of Special Concern under the federal *Species at Risk Act***

February 16, 2009 at 2:00 pm  
Arctic Bay HTO Office, Arctic Bay, NU

#### *Present*

- Moses Oyukuluk, Chairperson, Arctic Bay HTO
- Jason Qaunaq, Director, Arctic Bay HTO
- Norman Pauloosie, Director, Arctic Bay HTO
- Rhoda Olayuk, Director, Arctic Bay HTO
- Jobie Attitaq, Director, Arctic Bay HTO
- Ikey Kigutikajuk, Director, Arctic Bay HTO
- Maaki Kakkik, Interpreter
- Misha Allurut, Interpreter

#### *Consultation Support*

- Paul Irngaut, Nunavut Tunngavik Inc
- Jayko Aooloo, Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board

#### *Consultation Team*

- Heather Main, Canadian Wildlife Service, Iqaluit
- Claudine Vallerand, Canadian Wildlife Service, Iqaluit

#### *Discussion*

- There are more bears now. One hunter said that they hear about global warming, but they see more polar bears. There are more bears on land as well as on sea ice. You can see polar bear tracks in any direction from Arctic Bay. Two hunters told stories of encounters with bears. There used to be some areas without many polar bears, but those areas are too dangerous to hunt in now.
- Polar bears seem to be more aggressive now. They are coming closer to town. It is scary to go hunting overnight nowadays. It is dangerous for young people.
- Don't agree with the listing of the polar bear as Special Concern.
- One hunter said that COSEWIC should consider the fact that animals move around. It doesn't mean that they're declining.
- The HTO expressed concerns about the methods that are used to study polar bears. The studies only cover certain areas and they don't go to areas where Inuit know there are bears. Several of the hunters say they do not believe in the accuracy of these studies. The studies for many subpopulations are outdated. Studies should be done more frequently.

- They also feel that the research has adverse effects on the bears. Moses has observed a bear with a satellite collar that had trouble hunting seals and ended up starving. Rhoda thinks that polar bear behavior changes after they have been tranquilized. The bears are more aggressive and unafraid to go into communities. They stop hunting and eat from caches. Polar bears that have been tagged, collared, or spray painted become really skinny and probably don't survive.
- It is more logical for the communities to be involved in polar bear studies. Suggestions that the HTO has made during past consultations prior to research haven't been used. The studies should at least have Inuk participants so that they can study the areas with bears.
- Polar bear behavior changes by month.

## **Arctic Bay—Public Meeting**

### **Consultation on the Proposed Listing of the Polar Bear as a species of Special Concern under the federal *Species at Risk Act***

February 16, 2009 at 7:00 pm  
Qaggivik Hall, Arctic Bay, NU

#### *Present*

- Members of the public: approximately 27 people
- Moses Oyukuluk, Chairperson, Arctic Bay HTO
- Maaki Kakkik, Interpreter
- Misha Allurut, Interpreter

#### *Consultation Support*

- Paul Irngaut, Nunavut Tunngavik Inc
- Jayko Aooloo, Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board

#### *Consultation Team*

- Heather Main, Canadian Wildlife Service, Iqaluit
- Claudine Vallerand, Canadian Wildlife Service, Iqaluit

#### *Discussion*

- Many people said that the population of polar bears has increased. Hunters used to have to go far to find polar bears. Sometimes they wouldn't find any.
- One person said that he thinks the Lancaster Sound population is greater than 2500 (the most recent estimate used by COSEWIC).
- The effect of an increased polar bear population on humans is a big concern. One person said humans are in danger because there are more bears and the sea ice is melting earlier. Cabins are being damaged. Polar bears will keep coming back because they're hungry.
- Seals used to be healthy but now their breathing cannot be heard.
- The effects of sea ice changes on seals should be considered as an independent concern. Seals could be more affected by an ice-free Arctic than polar bears. Seals could adapt by giving birth on the coast. Scientists should study Arctic coasts to find out about this.
- Many people said that they do not think polar bears should be listed as Special Concern. Several people said maybe later (e.g. in 2050, when it's much warmer), but not for now. One person said that this time they don't want to agree with whatever the government says. He said if the polar bear is listed, he feels a lot of people would be in danger. Another said the bear shouldn't be listed because there are so many. There is a good management plan in place already.

- Polar bears can survive in warmer climates with no ice or snow. The survival of polar bears in zoos was given as an example. One person said as long as there is food available (seals), he doesn't think polar bears will decrease in number. Polar bears have been seen inland in areas with no ice in the summer. These bears are healthy and fat. They can swim in the water. One person said he thinks polar bears could adapt to feed on fish in lakes. Polar bears think like humans, they will always find prey.
- There is still a lot of ice in this area as well as in Foxe Basin (near Iglulik). But near Kugaaruk there is not as much moving ice. Narwhal go around to Iglulik now—they used to be unable. It's also why there are more polar bears around Iglulik now. People used to say that polar bears on moving ice were bigger.
- The glacier around Grise Fiord is starting to melt and affect Arctic Bay.
- Ice-breaking ships could affect sea ice extent—this should be considered in addition to the effects of climate change.
- One person said that he believes polar bears have been affected by climate change, because he has heard there was a polar bear down where there are trees.
- If Greenland continues to harvest without quotas near Grise Fiord in the Kane Basin subpopulation, the polar bear will have to be listed as Special Concern in the future.
- People should be concerned about human activities like mining with respect to the polar bear.
- One person reported seeing a polar bear feeding on another bear more than once in Grise Fiord.
- Any species will continue to increase in numbers unless affected by contaminants. The polar bear population is going to keep growing because there are quotas.
- Two people said they were concerned about the effects of tranquilizers on bears. One has seen contaminated (yellow) areas in the fat of bears that have been tranquilized. He is worried about eating the meat of bears that have been researched. He also thinks that the chemicals kill the bears. Another person believes that satellite collars affect the bears' capabilities.
- When researchers count bears in the fall, the females are already in their dens.
- The behavior of bears seems to have changed. It seems they're adapting to the actions of humans. They are harassed and aggravated by the research. Polar bears lose interest in hunting for their own prey after they've been hunted by humans. One person has encountered a numbered bear that was not behaving normally—it was very persistent in approaching him.
- Two people said that they would have liked to see COSEWIC members included in the consultation. An elder said that she would like to see hunters conducting the consultation instead of women.
- The government of Nunavut and NTI should disregard the Americans' opinions when they make management decisions.

- The polar bear affects Inuit daily life, so it is an important one to be consulted on. One person said that he is happy that the government is consulting on this issue. Another said that even though this particular issue would not affect quotas, he doesn't want to see legislation passed without community input. He said that Inuit will continue to give whatever input is necessary to protect wildlife.
- A couple of people said that the government should listen to Inuit more often. Although Inuit bring up concerns regarding the increasing number of polar bears, it seems that nobody listens.
- Inuit have always tried to conserve the animals that they harvest.
- Inuit don't completely rely on polar bears for meat but still like to hunt them.
- One person wondered if the whole Earth has been studied, because elders used to say that animals are always moving.

## **Resolute Bay—HTO Directors Meeting**

### **Consultation on the Proposed Listing of the Polar Bear as a species of Special Concern under the federal *Species at Risk Act***

February 17, 2009 at 2:00 pm  
South Camp Inn, Resolute Bay, NU

#### *Present*

- Simon Idlout, Chairperson, Resolute Bay HTO
- Philip Manik Sr, Vice-Chair, Resolute Bay HTO
- Norman Idlout, Secretary-Treasurer, Resolute Bay HTO
- Paddy Aqiatusuk, Director, Resolute Bay HTO
- Allie Salluviniq, Director, Resolute Bay HTO
- Mark Amarualik, Director, Resolute Bay HTO
- Maaki Kakkik, Interpreter

#### *Consultation Support*

- Jayko Aooloo, Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board
- Paul Irgaut, Nunavut Tunngavik Inc. (NTI)

#### *Consultation Team*

- Heather Main, Canadian Wildlife Service, Iqaluit
- Claudine Vallerand, Canadian Wildlife Service, Iqaluit

#### *Discussion*

- Several people said that there are more polar bears now. There are more all over the area, not just around the community.
- One person said he can't say there's a decrease in the number of polar bears now but maybe in the future.
- One person said although he thinks planning for the future is good, this is planning for something that might happen and it's all theoretical. He doesn't like this thinking, especially because it involves being affected by the new management plan regardless of what ends up happening to the polar bear population.
- Polar bears depend on the sea ice but they can also survive in the sea.
- If the ice gets thinner, maybe polar bears will move up north. Maybe they will move to a place with more ice.
- Simon said that climate change does not have an effect during the winter. He thinks the changes are not so much about climate change but instead due to the shifting of the Earth.
- Polar bears are more aggressive now. Polar bears have also been witnessed eating each other. It is Inuit knowledge that any species that is overpopulated will be more

aggressive towards humans and also towards their own species. One person said that Inuit predict polar bears will be more aggressive once the ice has melted.

- Sometimes polar bears even come into Resolute Bay in the daytime now—they used to come mostly at night. Kids have to be driven to school sometimes and given an early curfew. Resolute Bay never had these problems in the past. The Conservation Officer and HTO have done their part to protect the community.
- The possible consequences of too many polar bears on the health of polar bears should be considered.
- Some of the hunters were concerned about biologists coming up to do research on wildlife. Inuit are conservative regarding touching wildlife. The hunters expressed concerns about the effects of research on walrus, the effects of touching bird nests, and possible effects of bird bands.
- Simon said that the sense of hearing and sense of smell of polar bears is affected by research activities. This affects their ability to hunt and the polar bears starve. This is why polar bears are very skinny in some areas. Polar bears are coming into communities because they can't hunt. Simon also thinks that collared bears will starve. Polar bears are affected by human activities other than hunting. He wants the research methods to change.
- Another participant said that Inuit could also be causing hearing loss of polar bears.
- COSEWIC relies on written information. But Inuit laws are in their heads. Even though Inuit try to give IQ, COSEWIC does not include it.
- Simon said that he is happy that today the government and researchers are working more with Inuit.

## **Resolute Bay—Public Meeting**

### **Consultation on the Proposed Listing of the Polar Bear as a species of Special Concern under the federal *Species at Risk Act***

February 17, 2009 at 7:30 pm  
South Camp Inn, Resolute Bay, NU

#### *Present*

- Members of the public: approximately 13 people
- Simon Idlout, Chairperson, Resolute Bay HTO
- Maaki Kakkik, Interpreter

#### *Consultation Support*

- Jayko Aooloo, Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board
- Paul Irgaut, Nunavut Tunngavik Inc. (NTI)

#### *Consultation Team*

- Heather Main, Canadian Wildlife Service, Iqaluit
- Claudine Vallerand, Canadian Wildlife Service, Iqaluit

#### *Discussion*

- One person said that he feels that the polar bear should not be listed as Special Concern.
- Simon Idlout (HTO Chair) said he thinks that there are more polar bears than indicated in the numbers from surveys that are included in the COSEWIC status report. Polar bears can be hard to spot on the land, just as people can be hard to find sometimes. Polar bears move around all the time—sometimes they are found in a certain area and sometimes they are not there at all.
- Inuit are not the only reason for species declines. There are many other potential reasons, for example, man-made contaminants.
- Simon said that if there are declines, loss of hearing due to helicopter noise should be blamed rather than climate change. As well as research activities, the use of cracker shells can also affect the hearing of polar bears. The polar bears then starve because they cannot hunt seals. This is why they go to communities for food. Polar bear researchers should apologize to Inuit for this. They should find a quieter way of doing surveys.
- Another person said that radio collars affect the ability of polar bears to hunt, and that tranquilization makes bears unsafe to eat.
- One person said that the currents seem to be affected by pollution. Currents affect ice because water freezes when it stops moving. The dams in Quebec also affect the currents and sea ice in Western Hudson Bay.

- There is concern about the danger to people because of polar bears. Many bears are approaching the community. When polar bears come to the community and can't be scared away, people are forced to kill them out of self-defense even if the bear is skinny. It is scary to set up tents because of polar bears.
- One person said that there should be compensation for damage to Inuit livelihood or loss of food from polar bears.
- Simon said that he's thankful that the government is consulting before they make a decision. It's felt that in the past Ottawa used to just inform Inuit of decisions after they were made.

## **Grise Fiord—HTO Directors Meeting**

### **Consultation on the Proposed Listing of the Polar Bear as a species of Special Concern under the federal *Species at Risk Act***

February 18, 2009 at 2:00 pm  
Iviq HTO Office, Grise Fiord, NU

#### *Present*

- Jaypetee Akeeagok, Chairperson, Iviq HTO
- Imooshie Nutarajuk, Vice-Chair, Iviq HTO
- Marty Kuluguqtu, Secretary-Treasurer, Iviq HTO
- Larry Audlaluk, Director, Iviq HTO
- Aksajuk Ningiuk, Director, Iviq HTO
- Jopee Kiguktak, Director, Iviq HTO
- Annie Audlaluk, Director, Iviq HTO
- Leetia Noah, Manager, Iviq HTO
- Maaki Kakkik, Interpreter

#### *Consultation Support*

- Paul Irngaut, Nunavut Tunngavik Inc.
- Jayko Aooloo, Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board

#### *Consultation Team*

- Heather Main, Canadian Wildlife Service, Iqaluit
- Claudine Vallerand, Canadian Wildlife Service, Iqaluit

#### *Discussion*

- Several people said that they don't support the listing of the polar bear as Special Concern. Marty said that a decline in 28% of the Canadian population of polar bears is not enough information to list the polar bear as Special Concern. The 1998 Kane Basin study is not up to date enough as polar bears move from area to area. Inuit elders believe that species are always moving, and therefore have said never to believe white people who say that species are decreasing in number. Imooshie said that polar bears are the best hunters in the world and would be able to survive climate change. Jaypetee said that polar bears will not go extinct as they can walk on ice that is only 1.5 inches thick. This proposal would punish Inuit instead of targeting the real causes of climate change.
- The polar bear population in Canada should not be assessed as a whole. For example, surely there is no interaction between the Norwegian Bay and Hudson Bay subpopulations.
- Jaypetee wondered if a listing as Special Concern would affect export to the EU.
- The polar bear population does not seem to be declining. The whole community can probably say that the numbers have increased. Kids have to be warned to be careful.

Polar bears even walk between houses in the community. Polar bears are increasing everywhere from Arviat up to Grise Fiord.

- Quotas can cause overpopulation, e.g. Peary caribou in the 1970s. If Inuit had been allowed to kill as many muskox or caribou as they wanted the numbers would probably have remained stable. Inuit conserve wildlife.
- If the polar bear population goes too high in number, there will be a sudden decline. The Arctic is a harsh environment, not as rich in resources as other places, so there has to be an eventual decline.
- Annie said that contaminants and industry like mining and oil development could be the cause if the polar bear population is declining.
- There are concerns that research can cause declines in species, e.g. Ivory Gull. Biologists seem to be allowed to do any kind of research with polar bears.
- One person said he had heard that the estimates of subpopulation size are based on counting only the tagged polar bears and asked for clarification.
- Jopee said that it's hard to tell what bears have died from when they die naturally—perhaps it would be a good idea to find out, e.g. by doing autopsies.
- It seems that scientists are pressured to make statements even if they don't have the right numbers or are misinformed.
- People's feelings towards animals are based on their upbringing. Hollywood movies and comic books, etc, all influence people's opinions.
- COSEWIC doesn't hear Inuit knowledge because COSEWIC relies on written documents. This has happened before with other scientists. Leetia said that perhaps Inuit should start documenting their knowledge.
- Grise Fiord doesn't even finish its polar bear quota now, e.g. for Kane Basin. This is not out of laziness but because Inuit respect the species.
- The river in Grise Fiord used to be larger. Inuit are seeing climate changes in the Grise Fiord area. Spring ice break up is three weeks earlier and ice formation is later in the fall.
- Jaypetee believes that the issue of climate change is a way for researchers to get money from the government, including this COSEWIC status report.
- The NWMB is missing a lot of community concerns by not being directly present at these consultations. It is also unfortunate that there is no one present from COSEWIC.
- These days the government actually asks for input from Inuit and gives them information. Jaypetee said Inuit should take this opportunity to express their concerns.

## **Grise Fiord—Public Meeting**

### **Consultation on the Proposed Listing of the Polar Bear as a species of Special Concern under the federal *Species at Risk Act***

February 18, 2009 at 7:00 pm  
Community Hall, Grise Fiord, NU

#### *Present*

- Members of the public: approximately 30 people
- Jaypetee Akeeagok, Chairperson, Iviq HTO
- Imooshie Nutarajuk, Vice-Chair, Iviq HTO
- Marty Kuluguqtu, Secretary-Treasurer, Iviq HTO
- Aksajuk Ningiuk, Director, Iviq HTO
- Annie Audlaluk, Director, Iviq HTO
- Leetia Noah, Manager, Iviq HTO
- Larry Audlaluk, Director, Iviq HTO/ Interpreter
- Maaki Kakkik, Interpreter

#### *Consultation Support*

- Paul Irngaut, Nunavut Tunngavik Inc.
- Jayko Aooloo, Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board

#### *Consultation Team*

- Heather Main, Canadian Wildlife Service, Iqaluit
- Claudine Vallerand, Canadian Wildlife Service, Iqaluit

#### *Discussion*

- Several people said they believe the population of polar bear around Grise Fiord is not declining and some said that it is increasing. One person said he has seen many bear tracks in Jones Sound, Norwegian Bay, and Eureka Sound. The population seems healthy and seems to be increasing each year. Leetia (HTO Manager) says that there are bears out there—perhaps it's because people from Grise Fiord are not hunting them anymore that COSEWIC thinks they are declining. Aksajuk Ningiuk (HTO Director) says that there are more bears in the area now. There were no bears in a certain area between Grise Fiord and Greenland in the 1950s and 60s. Now people in Resolute Bay and Grise Fiord are used to seeing bears everyday.
- The fact that COSEWIC says the Kane Basin subpopulation is declining makes one wonder how COSEWIC did their assessment of the Kane Basin subpopulation. Inuit have not been consulted for their knowledge of the Kane Basin subpopulation. Even Mitch Taylor said there are lots of polar bears in this region (he tagged 36 bears in 12 hours), and now he says the subpopulation is declining as an author of the COSEWIC status report.
- Several people said they do not support the Special Concern listing. One person said the issue of declining polar bear populations is a waste of government time because it

is not considered a problem by Inuit. Larry Audlaluk said he doesn't think that climate change is an appropriate reason for listing. Another person said he doesn't think climate change is a worry.

- Marty Kuluguqtuq, a polar bear outfitter, believes that a listing as Special Concern would affect future generations because they wouldn't be able to hunt anymore. Sport hunters benefit the whole community.
- Aksajuk said that scientists make lots of reasons why Inuit shouldn't hunt the bears, but Inuit rely on these bears.
- Meeka Kiguktak (Mayor) said that she doesn't agree with the Special Concern listing but does not completely disagree either. She believes that the future effects of climate change and pollution on the Arctic have to be considered, and that Inuit should think about a future without polar bears. The effects of climate change and pollution on smaller animals like seals should be considered as well.
- Jaypetee Akeeagok (HTO Chair) said that it makes Inuit nervous to hear of polar bears and legislation. Money should be invested in investigating and solving climate change instead of studying species at risk.
- Aksajuk believes we should live in the present and not worry about the future. Inuit always respect wildlife so he doesn't think there will be a decline in polar bears anytime soon. If Inuit don't hunt polar bears, they'll increase in number every year. Lots of people will be in danger from polar bears.
- The polar bear issue for Inuit is that there are too many, not the other way around. People are in danger because there are too many polar bears. The government should consider compensation or funding for Inuit to hire polar bear watch-persons. Conservation Officers are not enough protection. Inuit try not to shoot bears that they encounter, even to the point of putting themselves in danger.
- Several people said that polar bears and sea ice are not as linked as many non-Inuit believe. Polar bears travel by land and sea as well as ice. They have been seen catching seals in summer in water with no ice. In fact bears that are always on the ice don't look as healthy as those on the shore near water. Polar bears don't frequent multi-year ice.
- Aksajuk doesn't believe the main reason for polar bears declining is climate change—even if the ice does disappear, polar bears will adapt.
- Polar bears are very smart. They know how to walk on thin ice. They have strong jaws to pull things from the water. They are predators and know how to survive. They move around a lot to hunt. Jaypetee said that, for example, polar bears are one of the few animals that can use tools to hunt.
- Experts are worried about seals giving birth with no ice, but seals can also have pups on land.
- Several people said that people around the world are misled by the portrayal of polar bears on TV. The Arctic should be portrayed accurately. Celebrities and companies

are being listened to more than Inuit. People should worry about people that are starving and those in warzones instead.

- There is concern that the status report covers only the Canadian population as polar bears go back and forth between countries.
- There is concern about polar bears that get taken away to zoos. If COSEWIC is worried about polar bears, this should be considered too.
- Inuit knowledge tells us that when there are increased numbers of polar bears, they get more aggressive. There needs to be a balance. Jaypetee says that polar bears are more aggressive now.
- Tranquilized bears are considered not good to eat.
- Manhandling species causes them to leave the area—Inuit used to be told not to do this. Polar bears and other animals also should not be transferred to another place by people, as was done in the past for caribou and muskox.
- IQ is still applicable today. Inuit deal with polar bears today through their traditional knowledge and respect for the bears as neighbours. Polar bears are dangerous and not to be mocked. Inuit knowledge is from the heart—it is not written on paper. Although COSEWIC respects Aboriginal Knowledge they still rely on documentation.
- Real facts and traditional Inuit knowledge should be used to assess the polar bear instead of computer models. Scientists have lots of knowledge but they didn't grow up here so they don't know certain things.
- The Minister should not make a decision with the wrong information given to him. Polar bears should be counted properly first with advice from Inuit.
- Inuit respect wildlife and follow regulations. All of the quotas are not used up. Bears are not killed just for the sake of killing them—there are reasons used to decide to kill a bear, e.g. if it's healthy, fat, or the skin is needed. Inuit used to say each hunter should get 2 polar bears per year and that is still followed, even if there are quotas for more. The upper Kane Basin hasn't been hunted by Inuit.
- Two people said that it's unfortunate that COSEWIC themselves are not here for the consultations. They would like to talk to them directly.
- Two people said that the presentation was very clear and has been useful to understand the process.
- People need more information regarding what's happening with polar bears in Greenland.

## **Cape Dorset—HTO Directors Meeting**

### **Consultation on the Proposed Listing of the Polar Bear as a species of Special Concern under the federal *Species at Risk Act***

March 3, 2009 at 2:00 pm  
Kinngait Inn, Cape Dorset, NU

#### *Present*

- Saviajuk Jaw, Chairperson, Aiviq HTO
- Egetsiaq Egetsiaq, Vice-Chair, Aiviq HTO
- Adamie Nuna, Director, Aiviq HTO
- Negeoseak Peter, Director, Aiviq HTO
- Aningmiuq Samayualie, Director, Aiviq HTO
- Kovianatuliaq Tapaungai, Director, Aiviq HTO
- Josie Sharky, Director, Aiviq HTO
- Tivii Qiatsuk, Conservation Officer, Government of Nunavut
- Maaki Kakkik, Interpreter
- Qiatsuk Qiatsuk, Interpreter

#### *Consultation Support*

- Joannie Ikkidluak, Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board

#### *Consultation Team*

- Heather Main, Canadian Wildlife Service, Iqaluit
- Claudine Vallerand, Canadian Wildlife Service, Iqaluit

#### *Discussion*

- The number of polar bears around Cape Dorset has increased. Sometimes several bears are seen in one day when hunting or camping. More bears are caught in traps set up around camps. Polar bears seem to be overpopulated. People used to go hungry in the past when there were no bears—it's not that way today. Polar bears are not decreasing in number.
- Several hunters said that they do not want the polar bear to be listed. It's difficult to agree to the proposed listing knowing that there are more polar bears in the Cape Dorset area.
- One hunter expressed doubts about the accuracy of computer estimates used for population numbers. He pointed out that sometimes weather forecasts done by computer are not accurate. Another hunter said that Foxe Basin is a huge area but only limited areas are surveyed. For example, there has never been a survey at Coral Harbour. There should be accurate counts outside Canadian borders as well.
- Participants said that the polar bear shouldn't be listed until there is a finalized and accurate count of polar bear numbers. Maybe then they could agree with the proposed listing. The government should provide funding for this accurate count.

- One hunter said that the listing could be proposed again in the future after a count is done in which they distinguish between male and female bears.
- Inuit have good knowledge of polar bear status. Researchers could work with Inuit to come up with more accurate information.
- One hunter said that it would be good if Inuit were consulted more on these issues. Elders need to be asked specific things as they will not volunteer information. This research does affect people outside of the government. The government will get public support if they keep people informed of activities regarding polar bears.
- There are not so many polar bears found up on the multi-year Arctic sea ice which the presentation showed is declining in extent. Inuit know that there are a lot fewer bears in the far North compared to further south. It seems that these areas have not been properly surveyed for bears, and yet this is where people keep saying sea ice is declining.
- Two hunters talked about current safety concerns due to the polar bear when camping in tents. Humans should be considered to be “at risk”, not the bears.

## **Cape Dorset—Public Meeting**

### **Consultation on the Proposed Listing of the Polar Bear as a species of Special Concern under the federal *Species at Risk Act***

March 3, 2009 at 7:00 pm  
Community Hall, Cape Dorset, NU

#### *Present*

- Members of the public: approximately 30 people
- Saviajuk Jaw, Chairperson, Aiviq HTO
- Adamie Nuna, Director, Aiviq HTO
- Maaki Kakkik, Interpreter
- Qiatsuq Qiatsuq, Interpreter

#### *Consultation Support*

- Joannie Ikkidluak, Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board

#### *Consultation Team*

- Heather Main, Canadian Wildlife Service, Iqaluit
- Claudine Vallerand, Canadian Wildlife Service, Iqaluit

#### *Discussion*

- All of the people who spoke said that the polar bear population is increasing. They said that as Inuit grow up, and go out on the land, they know what is happening with species. Younger people stated that they believe it when elders say the population is increasing.
- Since Inuit say the polar bear population is increasing, but science says it is decreasing, Inuit will need very concrete evidence of polar bear numbers to agree with the proposed listing.
- One person said he doubts the accuracy of polar bear survey numbers, including for those subpopulations that COSEWIC believes to be declining. He is concerned that the numbers are only estimates, surveys are only done every 10-20 years, and that only limited areas are surveyed. He believes that an accurate count can be done only with input of Inuit knowledge, and that an accurate count would find 30-40 000 bears in Canada and 40-50 000 globally.
- One person said he thinks that researchers count only the bears that are tranquilized.
- One person believes that research harms polar bears mentally. Polar bears have good memories like humans.
- Wildlife doesn't stay in one area. They move around for food and use different migration routes. Their numbers differ from year to year. It does not necessarily mean they are decreasing in number.

- One person said polar bears have not yet starved though he does know they are skinny in some regions.
- One person was concerned that polar bears are eating a lot of eider duck eggs. Another said that it has already been seen that polar bears are eating more seals and so Inuit get fewer seals. Another person thinks polar bears are the reason for the decrease in migratory birds. The potential decreases in other species due to increased numbers of polar bears should be considered. It is Inuit knowledge that when there is an increase in one species, it can affect the food chain.
- Several people said that they are worried about the danger to humans from polar bears. Nowadays fewer Inuit go camping in tents because they are afraid of polar bears. One person told a story of an encounter with a polar bear when camping in a tent. In the past Inuit didn't have to worry about encountering a lot of polar bears. There needs to be a balance between wildlife and humans.
- One person thinks it's unfair that sport hunters from the south come to hunt polar bears in Nunavut. He also thinks it's unfair that some Nunavut communities have larger quotas than others.
- Since the introduction of quotas it has been difficult to manage polar bears because Inuit have little control in the management. Inuit have obeyed the quotas and now the number of polar bears has increased. The polar bear population will continue to increase if the use of quotas continues.
- Perhaps the number of polar bears can be decreased by increasing the quota in the fall or winter, or allowing hunting all year round, or even lifting the quota.
- If a species is overpopulated, it will start to die off from lack of food.
- Inuit have always respected wildlife and that's why wildlife never completely disappears. For example, Inuit never used to kill female bears with cubs.
- Greenpeace is very against the hunting of polar bears but there is lots of hunting of other species all over the world.
- It seems that Nunavut is for the polar bears and bowhead whales rather than for Inuit. It seems that polar bears are protected but Inuit are not.

## **Hall Beach—HTO Directors Meeting**

### **Consultation on the Proposed Listing of the Polar Bear as a species of Special Concern under the federal *Species at Risk Act***

March 4, 2009 at 2:00 pm

Hall Beach HTO Office, Hall Beach, NU

#### *Present*

- Percy Pikuyak, Chairperson, Hall Beach HTO
- Levi Kaunak, Vice-Chair, Hall Beach HTO
- Manasie Naullaq, Director, Hall Beach HTO
- David Irgittuq, Director, Hall Beach HTO
- Abraham Qammaniq, Director, Hall Beach HTO
- Timothy Kuppaq, Director, Hall Beach HTO
- Peter Siakuluk, Director, Hall Beach HTO
- Andrew Qaunaq, Conservation Officer, Government of Nunavut
- Maaki Kakkik, Interpreter

#### *Consultation Support*

- Joannie Ikkidluak, Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board

#### *Consultation Team*

- Heather Main, Canadian Wildlife Service, Iqaluit
- Claudine Vallerand, Canadian Wildlife Service, Iqaluit

#### *Discussion*

- It is impossible to say that there is a decrease in the number of polar bears as Inuit know otherwise. Timothy said that hunters from Arctic Bay have seen a large increase in a certain area near Lancaster Sound that used to be called “a place with very few bears”. There are more bears in Foxe Basin too. Inuit don’t have to travel far to fill their quotas. Polar bears can be seen at the beach (near town). Levi said that they see polar bears coming from all directions. In the 1950s and 1970s there were not as many bears. Peter said that the increase is due to quotas.
- The hunters said that they do not support a Special Concern listing. Abraham said he doesn’t think polar bears are in danger from climate change and does not want a Special Concern listing due to climate change. Manasie said that melting of glaciers should not affect polar bears as bears den in the snow. The hunters said that overabundance of polar bears is more of a concern.
- Peter said he can understand a COSEWIC recommendation if there is a decrease in the species. But Inuit have seen an increase in the number of polar bears.
- Timothy said that the melting of ice in the future is a concern.
- Percy said that he does believe in climate change as he has seen glaciers melting and disappearing.

- Species move from place to place to find new food—it doesn't mean that they have decreased in number. These things are understandable if one looks at the whole system. Changes are not necessarily due to human activities.
- It is Inuit knowledge that increases in one species can imbalance the food chain. That is happening now with polar bears. There are concerns that other wildlife may be in danger as a result. Timothy also gave a number of examples of species that had died naturally because they were overpopulated.
- Abraham said that the government and COSEWIC should consult Inuit for their knowledge before making decisions. The government has been concerned about species in the past (e.g. geese, bowhead whale) that have increased in number afterwards. Percy said he doesn't want people to make laws without living in the North.
- Timothy had concerns about eating the meat of bears that had been tranquilized.
- There are concerns about the effects of research methods (e.g. helicopters, tranquilization, clipping of nails, tagging, collaring) on polar bears. Percy believes that helicopters affect hearing and the bears get skinny as a result. Their survival on the land is affected. Inuit do not want wildlife disturbed or harassed.
- Inuit have always respected wildlife. Inuit hunt animals to eat them. Even before the current management they did not overharvest wildlife. The hunters gave some examples of traditional hunting practices, e.g. Inuit hunt animals that run away not those that come to them, and Inuit do not kill an animal that is not ordinary.
- There is concern about outside influences on the polar bear issue. It is felt some people are against hunting because they think bears are cuddly. Abraham said that the Canadian government should support Inuit when it comes to the US government decisions. Manasie said many white people do not understand Inuit culture and traditions.
- Peter said polar bear behaviour has changed. They approach Inuit more.
- The hunters said that there should be more concern about the danger that polar bears pose to humans. Abraham said there is a danger to people who are caribou hunting inland and that there have been incidences of people being killed by bears. People have to be constantly alert when camping. This is true in all Nunavut communities, not just Hall Beach. Polar bears also destroy people's food.

## **Hall Beach—Public Meeting**

### **Consultation on the Proposed Listing of the Polar Bear as a species of Special Concern under the federal *Species at Risk Act***

March 4, 2009 at 7:00 pm  
Arnaqjuaq School, Hall Beach, NU

#### *Present*

- Members of the public: approximately 15 people
- Percy Pikuyak, Chairperson, Hall Beach HTO
- Levi Kaunak, Vice-Chair, Hall Beach HTO
- Abraham Qammaniq, Director, Hall Beach HTO
- Peter Siakuluk, Director, Hall Beach HTO
- Maaki Kakkik, Interpreter

#### *Consultation Support*

- Joannie Ikkidluak, Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board

#### *Consultation Team*

- Heather Main, Canadian Wildlife Service, Iqaluit
- Claudine Vallerand, Canadian Wildlife Service, Iqaluit

#### *Discussion*

- Several people talked about how there are now more polar bears. One person said that he understands the Act and why the listing has been proposed but he believes the elders, who say the number of polar bears is increasing. In the past people used to have to go very far to catch a polar bear. One person said he doesn't believe that the number of polar bears is decreasing as there are more polar bears coming into Hall Beach. It is not because polar bears don't have food that they're coming into town.
- The shrinking of sea ice is natural.
- There are lots of reasons that the climate is changing. It could be due to pollution.
- If the ice is melting then polar bears will still be able to use multi-year ice.
- One person said that Inuit accept decreases in species as natural.
- One person said that there are lots of reasons that bears could be skinnier—for example, if there was not enough food for them.
- Several people talked about how polar bears are not as healthy and are skinnier nowadays due to the research that disturbs them. There is concern about tranquilization weakening the bears and also about adverse effects of removing fang teeth. One person said that examination by researchers can kill mother bears and then the cubs cannot survive on their own. People said that they do not want this type of research done anymore.

- One person said that nowadays polar bears have one cub and the cubs are very small. When he grew up polar bears had three cubs. This can't be due to hunting as people do not hunt cubs. This should be studied.
- Polar bears don't like the sound of skidoos. The noise makes mothers run away and abandon their cubs.
- One person said that he does not want to eat bears that have been tranquilized.
- There is concern about the danger posed to humans because there are too many polar bears. There are more people afraid now. Several people said that humans should be listed as "at risk".
- Inuit are sometimes left with no choice but to kill polar bears that come into town. People have to defend themselves when hunting as well. Hunters can't sit around and enjoy their time on the land. Sometimes hunters have had to return early because there are too many bears.
- Polar bear behavior is very different now. They are less easily scared than they used to be. Maybe it's because they are accustomed to noise from humans.
- Polar bears are vandalizing cabins outside of Hall Beach. The replacement of damaged materials is an issue, because not everybody has a job.
- One person said that he wants the bears that have been taken away to zoos returned.
- Several people said that it's unfortunate that the polar bear experts were not participating in the consultation as they have many questions for the experts. They want to speak to the decision-makers directly.
- Nothing seems to be happening even though Inuit can talk a lot about polar bears. Inuit talk about concerns every year but nothing is done.
- One person said that he is frustrated with people taking information from Inuit and then using it themselves and sounding like experts, when they don't even live or visit Nunavut.
- One person said he sometimes sees a misinterpretation of what Inuit people have said in finalized documents, so he wants to make sure that the HTO gets to review the final report from these meetings.
- One person said that although southerners are against polar bear hunting, they still buy polar bear skins.
- Participants were concerned that there are too many laws and regulations regarding wildlife. It was promised that Inuit would manage their own wildlife with the creation of Nunavut but this has not happened. Hunters are scared that if they shoot something by mistake or for self-defense they will be charged under the law. It is important that Inuit have accurate information about laws like the Species at Risk Act.

## **Igloolik—HTO Directors and Public Meeting**

### **Consultation on the Proposed Listing of the Polar Bear as a species of Special Concern under the federal *Species at Risk Act***

March 5, 2009 at 6:00 pm (HTO Directors) and 7:00 pm (Public)  
Community Hall, Igloolik, NU

Note: The afternoon HTO meeting was postponed due to lack of attendance. Thus the HTO Directors meeting and public meeting, normally held separately with separate presentations and discussion, were combined into one meeting. The HTO met at 6 pm to have a chance to discuss and prepare for the meeting, but the full presentation was given at 7 pm at the same time as to the public and discussion took place as a whole.

#### *Present (HTO Directors Meeting)*

- David Irngaut, Acting Chairperson, Igloolik HTO
- Simonie Issigaitok, Director, Igloolik HTO
- Peter Awa, Director, Igloolik HTO
- Gideon Taqaogak, Director, Igloolik HTO
- David Aqqairuq, Director, Igloolik HTO
- Rebecca Mikki, Manager, Igloolik HTO
- Chris Hotson, Department of Environment, Government of Nunavut
- Theo Ikummaq, Conservation Officer, Government of Nunavut
- Maaki Kakkik, Interpreter
- Micah Arreak, Interpreter

#### *Present (Public Meeting)*

- Members of the public: approximately 14 people
- David Irngaut, Acting Chairperson, Igloolik HTO
- Simonie Issigaitok, Director, Igloolik HTO
- Peter Awa, Director, Igloolik HTO
- Gideon Taqaogak, Director, Igloolik HTO
- David Aqqairuq, Director, Igloolik HTO
- Rebecca Mikki, Manager, Igloolik HTO
- Chris Hotson, Department of Environment, Government of Nunavut
- Theo Ikummaq, Conservation Officer, Government of Nunavut
- Maaki Kakkik, Interpreter
- Micah Arreak, Interpreter

#### *Consultation Support*

- Joannie Ikkidluak, Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board

#### *Consultation Team*

- Heather Main, Canadian Wildlife Service, Iqaluit
- Claudine Vallerand, Canadian Wildlife Service, Iqaluit

*Discussion (HTO Directors Meeting)*

- Participants said they do not want the polar bear listed as a species of Special Concern. Peter said that people are not worried that the polar bear has to be listed as an “at risk” species.
- There has been an increase in the polar bear population. There are a lot of polar bears around. Peter said this is related to the fact that Greenlanders do not harvest from the subpopulation around Igloodik. They used to see polar bears rarely around Igloodik. Peter said the population will not be decreasing in the near future.
- People are concerned that polar bears are found close inland. Many people are scared when camping. Last winter a polar bear attacked dogs.
- David said that the polar bears around Hall Beach and Igloodik should be considered to be separate.
- Polar bears are being disturbed by the noises of research helicopters and planes as well as by snowmobiles. Peter said he thinks the noise from researchers disturbs bears more than noise from regular hunting activity. This has made polar bears less sensitive than they were in the past. Scientists are to blame for the decrease in the polar bear population.
- When any wildlife population is too high in numbers, they tend to die off from famine or illness. It’s the natural way of stabilizing a population. Inuit have tried to emphasize this to scientists but it’s felt that scientists do not respond.

*Discussion (Public Meeting)*

- There are more polar bears seen today. People see them when they are out hunting. There are more polar bears at the dump. The polar bear population is not decreasing. Inuit can’t cache meat anymore as there are too many polar bears roaming around. Scientific information and Inuit knowledge is conflicting.
- There is concern about the danger to humans from the increasing number of polar bears. Participants said this is the foremost concern with respect to polar bears. They don’t want to wait for someone to get mauled. It’s difficult for hunters to hunt on the ice now. One person said that he doesn’t care if the polar bear becomes extinct because it would be safer for Inuit. Another said it seems that influential people are on the side of polar bears instead of on the side of humans.
- There are many skinny polar bears and they will go anywhere for food.
- One person said he would prefer that Inuit are allowed to finish off the polar bears.
- COSEWIC’s concerns are all about sea ice but polar bears don’t rely on sea ice. They eat from other places too and sometimes even hunt caribou. One participant told a story of seeing a polar bear manage to kill a killer whale.
- One person said that the COSEWIC report has been criticized for not going far enough, in that it doesn’t actually include projections of polar bear populations that

are based on climate change. For example, we don't know whether changes in areas of multi-year ice will create better habitat for polar bears.

- Greenpeace seems to have an idea that Inuit don't respect wildlife, but it's not true. It has always been part of Inuit culture and traditions to respect wildlife.
- One person said that he feels that this listing was proposed only for political reasons. He believes the government received pressure from strong organizations due to the drastic increase in polar bear skin prices. He feels the proposed listing is the government's way of controlling aboriginal groups and wildlife. He thinks that the Special Concern listing would lead to prohibitions which adversely affect Inuit.
- Peter Awa (HTO Director) said he doesn't want the polar bear to be listed. He believes that listing the polar bear would affect Inuit's daily lives as a result of regulations.
- Several participants said they cannot consume polar bear meat because of handling by researchers and because of contaminants. Inuit can't rely on polar bears for food anymore. One person said that inoculation by researchers changes the texture of the meat. One participant pointed out that food from the store is expensive.
- There are also concerns that research activities affect the health of polar bears. Participants said the bears starve as a result. Peter Awa said that research on female bears causes hearing loss, which affects their ability to hunt. He asked that research on female bears be prohibited. He also said researchers should not tamper with polar bear teeth and mouths; these are their survival tools. Another person said he doesn't want surveys done anymore at all. If the research had a specific timeframe to come up with conclusions, that would be different, but it seems to be just continuous.
- Several participants said they don't believe in the accuracy of the numbers presented from surveys. They said that they want facts not estimates. It seems that there are never any conclusions to the research.
- Inuit should be more involved in polar bear research. Inuit are polar bear experts but are not recognized as such. Inuit knowledge is demeaned by scientific knowledge. It's very frustrating that researchers do not notify Inuit or listen to Inuit when they try to share their knowledge. Inuit believe in what they see and experience, going out on the land and hunting, whereas the scientific experts rely on computers. They do not live here and witness the polar bears. Inuit should be treated equally.
- Peter Awa questioned why researchers from the south do not want the number of polar bears and other species to decrease. Inuit are the ones who live with and eat this wildlife. Inuit would not go south to do research on southern wildlife. What is the purpose?
- David Irngaut (HTO Chair) was concerned that hunting only male bears was preventing polar bears from reproducing as they should. He said that polar bears are very important to Inuit and Inuit should be free to kill them whenever they want.

- An HTO Director said that he has heard from the Conservation Officer that research on polar bear fur can tell you the sex and age of a bear. Perhaps this could be a harmless alternative method to do research.
- Several participants said they wanted polar bear experts to be present at the consultations to answer their questions and to understand their concerns. A couple of people said COSEWIC should also be present at the consultations.
- One person said that in the future there should be more information given in advance of the public meetings and presentations, so that people could prepare. Also, it may be better to start in the morning so people are not tired.
- Participants said this is an important and serious matter for Inuit. Anything that affects the polar bear will affect Inuit who eat polar bear meat and use the skin.
- One person said that people have many questions on other species which can't be answered at this meeting.
- One person said he thinks the consultations will get more information from the public rather than the HTO Board members.
- One person said he wants to make sure that the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement is being followed by any Act that is introduced.
- One person said he doesn't like the fact that the NWMB is supposed to represent Inuit and yet he has seen the members sit around and barbeque.
- There was a question about harvest levels in Greenland.

## **Sanikiluaq—HTO Directors Meeting**

### **Consultation on the Proposed Listing of the Polar Bear as a species of Special Concern under the federal *Species at Risk Act***

April 3, 2009 at 2:00 pm

Hamlet Council Chambers, Sanikiluaq, NU

#### *Present*

- Joe Arragutainaq, Chairperson, Sanikiluaq HTO
- Johnny Tookalook, Vice-Chairperson, Sanikiluaq HTO
- Mina Inuktaluk, Director, Sanikiluaq HTO
- Harry Sala, Director, Sanikiluaq HTO
- Charlie Sala, Director, Sanikiluaq HTO
- Johnassie Iqaluk, Director, Sanikiluaq HTO
- John Ayaruaq, Interpreter

#### *Consultation Support*

- Joshua Kango, Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board
- Paul Irgaut, Nunavut Tunngavik Inc. (NTI)

#### *Consultation Team*

- Heather Main, Canadian Wildlife Service, Iqaluit
- Claudine Vallerand, Canadian Wildlife Service, Iqaluit

#### *Discussion*

- Polar bears should not be listed under SARA, because they are increasing in number. The number of polar bears is not decreasing, unlike what the scientists say. Joe said that they hear this from every other community as well as Sanikiluaq. Participants said that they know, as hunters, that there are a lot of polar bears.
- There are a lot of polar bears today compared to the past (e.g. 1954). In the 1940s-1950s, it was rare to see polar bears outside the iglu. For many years in the past there was only one polar bear sighted around the Belcher Islands. Inuit used to not even bother with polar bears because they were so few and far away. Inuit never over-harvested them.
- Polar bears are getting more dangerous to humans and communities, because there are more of them and because they are no longer afraid. They are coming into communities. People can't go camping anymore. There never used to be these problems with polar bears. They never bothered people before.
- The glaciers may be melting but polar bears don't live on glaciers. They prefer to live on sea ice. They also don't live at the top of the world because it's only ice; there is no habitat there for polar bears.
- Polar bears can still hunt even in the summer with no ice, because they are from the sea.

- Mina said one reason for the decline in polar bears is that fact that only males can be harvested, so there are no males to mate with the females anymore.
- Johnny said that maybe polar bears are just moving on. They will come back.
- Polar bears can travel long, long distances.
- Inuit know that species disappear if they are not hunted. If the polar bear is not hunted they will disappear. The numbers of a species will grow if it is hunted. In 1954, Inuit were told to start harvesting polar bears, and since then the numbers have been increasing.
- IQ says that polar bears will increase in abundance, then decrease, then increase again, in a cycle. Mina said her grandfather used to tell her that polar bears would be back, and now they are. When scientists say that the polar bear is now decreasing in number, Mina believes her grandfather who said that they will be back again. Another participant said, according to his grandfather, there used to be lots of polar bears and it's normal for the population to decrease at times in a cycle. Joe said that he doesn't think that any species will ever be completely gone.
- Mina said that in the last few years, polar bears have been very skinny. They used to be very healthy and fat. She said they may be skinny because there's no more food source. Polar bears seem really hungry because every year they come to Sanikiluaq and other communities in the fall time.
- Tranquilization makes polar bear meat inedible, even after the recommended 45 days. Even if Inuit are compensated to replace the meat, Inuit were taught that it's not right to waste any meat.
- Tranquilization also changes polar bear behavior and they lose their ability to hunt. The few polar bears that look healthy are the ones that have not been tranquilized. The government should observe scientists more because they are the ones killing off the polar bears.
- There is no quota system in Quebec even though they are very close to Sanikiluaq. The Nunavut government should be working to get a quota system introduced to Quebec and Greenland.
- Polar bears should be considered as one population, not the 13 subpopulations. Polar bears move around across boundaries and they can't be forced to stay in one place.
- It doesn't make sense that scientists say there are so few polar bears, and yet polar bears are still put into zoos.
- Mina said she thinks new species will start to come to the Belcher Islands due to global warming.
- Mina said that nowadays in the water around the Belcher Islands, there is a layer of fresh water on top of the salt water, due to global warming. She said species living in the salt water will move away to saltier waters or die off. She said that there are some areas where the ice is too thin to camp now, due to this freshwater. She said the freshwater has to do with the numerous rivers entering Hudson Bay.

- Mina said that despite global warming, it's still cold.
- Inuit used to be told that animals would disappear but they will be back in time. Now a lot of species, e.g. mussels, clams, very small sculpins, and a particular type of very small seagull, have moved away following their food sources and are no longer seen. This is not due to overhunting. One participant said that he believes it's due to climate change. The Inuit were told that this would happen and now it has happened.
- The Inuit of Sanikiluaq are very unique, as islanders, not living on the mainland. The government and scientists should believe what they have to say.

## **Sanikiluaq—Public Meeting**

### **Consultation on the Proposed Listing of the Polar Bear as a species of Special Concern under the federal *Species at Risk Act***

April 3, 2009 at 7:00 pm  
Nuiyak School, Sanikiluaq, NU

#### *Present*

- Members of the public: approximately 44 people
- Joe Arragutainaq, Chairperson, Sanikiluaq HTO
- Johnny Tookalook, Sanikiluaq HTO
- Mina Inuktaluk, Sanikiluaq HTO
- Harry Sala, Sanikiluaq HTO
- Johnassie Iqaluk, Sanikiluaq HTO
- John Ayaruaq, Interpreter

#### *Consultation Support*

- Joshua Kango, Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board

#### *Consultation Team*

- Heather Main, Canadian Wildlife Service, Iqaluit
- Claudine Vallerand, Canadian Wildlife Service, Iqaluit

#### *Discussion*

- Many participants said that the polar bear population is not declining. They said that it is increasing very rapidly. There are more polar bears because they are coming near the community like never before. Complaints about too many polar bears in or near the community are heard from every community, not just Sanikiluaq. If one goes outside the Belcher Islands, polar bears are everywhere. Participants (elders) said that there used to be hardly any polar bears seen. There never used to be polar bears near the community.
- People are in danger now from polar bears. People cannot go camping anymore due to fear of polar bears. People cannot enjoy camping or being outdoors. People cannot enjoy their lives anymore.
- Polar bears have destroyed cabins and caches. Polar bear senses are very strong so if there's anything edible inside or near a cabin, bears will go there. It must be realized that this is going to be an ongoing problem.
- One participant said she was in favor of the idea of compensation for destroyed property (idea brought up by Joshua Kango, QWB participant).
- One participant said that the fact that only harvesting of males, not females, is allowed may be one reason the polar bear is at risk.

- There will be polar bears regardless of whether there is ice or not. Polar bears can hunt in the ocean as well as on sea ice. Climate change is not going to be a reason for declining of polar bears. It is not a concern.
- Mina (HTO Director) said that although there are a lot of polar bears, she is concerned that they are scrawny and unhealthy. She said maybe their food source is declining. Another participant said he believes polar bears have an abundant food source.
- When polar bears are overpopulated, they start to fight and turn to cannibalism, just like Inuit.
- Foxes that follow polar bears are in the same situation. When there are lots of foxes, there are lots of polar bears.
- IQ is the most accurate knowledge and it should be continued to be followed. The elders are a lot wiser than the biologists.
- Inuit know that the polar bear population will never totally disappear. Inuit ancestors said that polar bears will increase and decrease in numbers in a cycle. All animals are continuously moving around looking for their source of food. Ancestors said that there used to be lots of polar bears and during our generation they will decline. One participant said that he expects the polar bear population to continue to increase, and then decline eventually because it's a cycle. Scientists think they are declining but they don't understand that it's because the polar bear moves around, it's a cycle.
- Inuit should be consulted more often.
- Scientists saying that the polar bear population is decreasing are just taking advantage of Inuit.
- Scientists come here for just a few days and don't know everything. When they do counts in the summer, they do not count the polar bears that are swimming in the middle of the ocean. When the biologists count by flying, the counting is not very accurate and they just estimate. This is known because sometimes people harvest a bear that hasn't been tranquilized.
- Polar bear behavior has changed over the years. The behavior of a tranquilized bear changes a lot. No species should be tranquilized.
- One participant said that elders crave for good polar meat. Even if they are not starving, they still want to be able to eat polar bear meat. But they would prefer to eat polar bear that hasn't been tranquilized, as they believe chemicals stay in the bear's system.
- Polar bear hides were a good source of money in the past, but they are very cheap now so cannot be relied upon for money anymore.
- Mina (HTO Director) said that salt water is disappearing and becoming fresh water. She said that a fat seal, when caught, sank through the top layer of fresh water to the salt water below.

- One participant was concerned that animals could become contaminated by mining and oil and gas activities and then the contaminated animals could be eaten by Inuit.
- One participant said that the community will rely on the HTO to let them know what is happening with the proposed listing.

## **Iqaluit—HTO Directors Meeting**

### **Consultation on the Proposed Listing of the Polar Bear as a species of Special Concern under the federal *Species at Risk Act***

April 22, 2009 at 2:00 pm  
Amarok HTO Office, Iqaluit, NU

#### *Present*

- Joshua Kango, Chairperson, Amarok HTO
- Jeetalo Kakkee, Director, Amarok HTO
- Rosemary Machmer, Director, Amarok HTO
- Sammy Josephee, Director, Amarok HTO
- Nute Arnayumayuk, Director, Amarok HTO
- Paul Idlout, Director, Amarok HTO
- Johnny Nowdlak, Conservation Officer, Government of Nunavut
- James Noble, Conservation Officer, Government of Nunavut
- Dominique Henri, Oxford University
- Charlotte Sharkey, Nunavut Wildlife Management Board
- Martha Padluq, Nunavut Inuit Wildlife Secretariat
- Jose Arreak, Interpreter

#### *Consultation Support*

- Bert Dean, Nunavut Tunngavik Inc.

#### *Consultation Team*

- Heather Main, Canadian Wildlife Service, Iqaluit
- Claudine Vallerand, Canadian Wildlife Service, Iqaluit

#### *Discussion*

- Participants said that they do not support the proposed listing.
- IQ says that no animals decline, they just move away. Eventually they will come back. Jeetalo gave an example that caribou change their migration routes every 75 years or so when the vegetation is just about finished. Animals follow their game or habitat. There seems to be a historical pattern, whether it's polar bears or caribou.
- Joshua said that, if COSEWIC estimates 15 500 bears inside Canada and now say that the population is decreasing from that number, it's as if they're not considering that the bears have cubs each year. The population would actually increase from 15 500. If we assume that half of the population or 7000 can have cubs in a given year, then the population could actually increase a lot.
- Inuit want to protect species and habitats.

- Rosemary asked whether the listing of the polar bear has been proposed in Canada due to the fact that the USA has already listed the polar bear as Threatened. She feels there is some influence.
- One participant said that from the media it sounds as if polar bears are already listed under the 'Threatened' category, and asked for clarification.
- James asked what the overall implications and the negative effects on people would be if the polar bear was listed as Special Concern.
- James asked whether a species could ever be removed from SARA once it is listed, and how often species have to be reassessed.
- James asked what other species are being considered for listing.

### **Number of bears**

- In the past, in the 1940s, there were hardly any polar bears seen. Now Inuit are seeing a lot more bears. Based on year round observations, it can be said fairly accurately that the number of polar bears is increasing.
- Polar bears are not as intimidated by humans as they used to be. Normally when polar bears see footprints, they go away. This is not the case anymore. Jeetaloo said he believes the change in polar bear behavior is due to human activities. Another participant said that when there's an increase in a population of animals, behavior changes.
- There are fewer Inuit camping now because people are scared of polar bears.
- If COSEWIC is going to propose this listing, what are they going to do about property damage from polar bears? People have been saying for some time now that some sort of compensation or insurance is needed. There should be protection for human lives as well.

### **Sea ice changes**

- One participant said that ice conditions have changed a lot. There is less ice forming.
- Jeetaloo said that Inuit would never use sea ice changes as the sole justification for changes in the polar bear population because there are a lot of other factors involved. Polar bears don't eat only meat; they also eat other things like vegetation when they go inland. Are we getting overly concerned when it's not necessary?
- Paul said that even though they have heard about climate change and the ice has melted a lot faster, as hunters they are not very concerned about sea ice changes.
- Even without ice, there will still be polar bears and seals. There will still be water. It's just the cycle of life.
- James said that the assessment of the polar bear as Special Concern is all based on assumptions for the future regarding sea ice changes. There are no real reasons for concern other than these sea ice changes.
- Nute said that waste from oil spills, nuclear accidents, etc. has been going into the Russian sea and this is why the most sea ice has been lost on the Russian side

according to the map shown. He said that instead of looking at declines in polar bears, money and research should go into cleaning up the world, so that the Arctic sea ice can return. He recommends including a global warming strategy along with the report to the federal government.

- One participant asked about the cause of global warming. He asked whether there are any reports about the sun getting closer to the Earth.
- Everybody is talking about climate change. Even Pauktuutit, the women's organization, had a meeting about climate change.

### **Human activity**

- It is true what the COSEWIC Status Report says about human activities affecting polar bears and causing population decline. IQ says that animals tend to move away when there is lots of activity in their area and predators follow their prey. In the areas where polar bears have declined, activities that could have caused them to move away should be considered. For example, in Baffin Bay there is shrimp fishing almost year round and in the Beaufort Sea, there is oil and gas activity. If animals are scared away, then polar bears have to move away to follow their food. All the animals that keep the polar bear alive should be studied, not just the polar bear.
- Wildlife need to be protected against increased ship traffic and human activities. The wildlife organizations need to support Inuit to prevent pollution.
- At the Wildlife Symposium in Rankin Inlet, young students said that the Americans are the ones who are emitting a lot of pollutants. They should look at themselves as the cause of problems before they point fingers at Inuit.
- James asked what other species are being looked at that could be affected by marine traffic and oil spills.

### **Research**

- It's difficult to do aerial counts of animals. For example, they did an aerial count of polar bears in September around Resolution Island.
- Inuit have difficulty agreeing with the western research because researchers only count the polar bears around the shore area. They don't go into the ocean.
- The percentages and numbers from research are just estimates. For example, the 28% (the percentage of the Canadian population currently declining according to COSEWIC) could really be 10 or 20% if bears could actually be counted. The 15,500 bears is just an estimate as well.
- Participants said that they do not believe the estimated numbers. One participant said that some Inuit may not understand the concept of estimating or percentages. Inuit use traditional knowledge that they see as valid. They want information that is as accurate as possible. As long as accurate information is given, they listen with interest.
- There was a question about how extensive the research in each subpopulation has been. The participant said that in some areas, there has been no recent research. Maybe the polar bear should be considered 'data deficient'.

- Participants said that the assessment and listing decision should wait until there is enough information to be well-informed. One participant said that he thinks around 2012 there will be more accurate information than now. Another said that it seems that the information is out there, but it's just not included in the COSEWIC report. Participants said that until all of the information is included in the COSEWIC report, they do not agree with the Special Concern listing.
- James and Johnny as well as several HTO participants said that it is important that the recent study from Davis Strait be considered in the assessment. They said that this research would make a big impact on the assessment of polar bears, as it shows a large increase in the subpopulation and it agrees with IQ. Nute questioned whether the polar bear can be put on SARA since the extra information about Davis Strait wasn't included. James said that he thought there was a slim chance that COSEWIC would consider this information as they go by whatever information they receive.
- One participant said that there is too much research happening on the polar bear. A lot of agencies doing polar bear research go through the Amaroq HTO. The research should stop, or at least all the agencies should cooperate to do the studies together all at once. The research is adversely affecting polar bears. Polar bears don't forget. For example, they don't forget being tranquilized. This is why polar bears often seem angry when humans encounter them.

### **Use of IQ**

- For the area up to 12 miles out into the ocean, Inuit already have a pretty good idea of the polar bear statistics.
- One participant said that they are not trying to fight the federal government, but they are protective of their knowledge.
- The traditional knowledge and the western science approach are very different and can't seem to see eye to eye. Most communities have been suggesting that there is an increase in the polar bear population, which is contrary to what the western researchers say.
- Inuit knowledge existed for a long time before COSEWIC was formed. Sammy said that, for example, elders used to say that there will come a time when the land where Inuit are will no longer have any ice. Inuit used to have their own predictions, and now they are coming true. That is how accurate IQ is.
- There must be some kind of middle ground for both sides to agree upon. There has been a lack of information sharing between western research and Inuit. It would be better if researchers and Inuit could start on the same page, and information could be shared from the beginning. Inuit knowledge could be included. Inuit want to give support but want to have support as well. For example, if Inuit had been informed by western researchers about climate change back in the 1970s and 1980s, then they could have incorporated this information together with IQ.
- James said that a lot of the IQ included in the COSEWIC status report was collected from areas that aren't labeled as declining in population. Also, the interviews with

elders that were included were from the smallest communities in Nunavut. There was not enough IQ included. The years for the IQ also seem outdated.

- Joshua said that at the Wildlife Symposium in Rankin Inlet, he kept hearing about how IQ is being incorporated. He thinks this is just lip service. IQ should be incorporated more seriously.
- On COSEWIC, there should be a representative from each region, rather than a single representative from NTI. The representatives should be elders as elders have a lot of knowledge.

### **Consultation process**

- There was a question about how important this meeting was.
- One participant asked whether CWS would be involved in the re-assessment of the polar bear using more accurate information, and about whether CWS would be able to present information from these consultations.
- Many people do not care to fill out forms. But they could be used as a way to try to get more input from the public as many people will not show up at the public meeting.
- James asked about the outcome of the consultations in other communities.
- James asked how the input of the Conservation Officers was going to be included in the consultation report.

### **Quotas**

- In the past, there was good management of polar bears. There was hardly any overpopulation because Inuit managed to keep the population under control. Now with the sex-selective harvesting, the picture of the population is not accurate.
- Due to sex-selective harvesting of males, there may not be enough polar bears being produced.

## **Iqaluit—Public Meeting**

### **Consultation on the Proposed Listing of the Polar Bear as a species of Special Concern under the federal *Species at Risk Act***

April 23, 2009 at 7:00 pm  
Anglican Parish Hall, Iqaluit, NU

#### *Present*

- Members of the public: approximately 20 people
- Joshua Kango, Chairperson, Amarok HTO
- Jeetalo Kakkee, Director, Amarok HTO
- Nute Arnayumayuk, Director, Amarok HTO
- Jose Arreak, Interpreter
- Leetia Janes, Interpreter

#### *Consultation Support*

- Bert Dean, Nunavut Tunngavik Inc.

#### *Consultation Team*

- Heather Main, Canadian Wildlife Service, Iqaluit
- Claudine Vallerand, Canadian Wildlife Service, Iqaluit

#### *Discussion*

- Two participants said that polar bears should not be listed as Special Concern. One participant said that in the Baffin polar bears are not endangered.
- One participant said that as elders, going hunting on the land, they didn't think about the polar bear being endangered or Special Concern. It was only after it was introduced on paper that Inuit started talking about them. Inuit are not concerned about species being endangered.
- One participant said that she has a problem with the proposed listing as it makes it seem like the federal government is coming in to co-manage polar bears. It gives the impression that the Nunavut government and the NWMB are not managing polar bears well enough. She would like support from the federal government but does not want the federal government to manage polar bears on Nunavut's behalf.
- One participant said that this COSEWIC recommendation and all of the levels of government that try to regulate Inuit are disrespectful. Inuit have been saying this since the first polar bear meeting in Norway in 1973. Inuit have never failed the territorial or federal government or the NWMB, and have never failed the polar bear or any species that they rely on. Regardless of what regulations are made, the regulators cannot always be present. If Inuit want to shoot a polar bear cub, they will.
- One participant said that the Western Hudson Bay subpopulation should not be used as a case study or model for effects of sea ice on polar bears. The Manitoba

population of bears that were studied is unique as there is no harvesting and they feed in garbage dumps.

- One participant said that statistical figures about defense kills due to the increased number of bears coming to the communities should be added to the COSEWIC report. He said that maybe about 4 bears are killed in defence by each community each year outside of the hunting season.
- One participant said that polar bears in zoos are treated badly. If people think that polar bears are declining in number, they should return those that are in zoos.
- Polar bears and other marine mammals are a lot skinnier than they used to be.

### **Number of bears**

- In the past there didn't seem to be many polar bears. When participants were young, they saw fewer polar bears. Inuit didn't have problems with polar bears. One participant said that an elder that lived around Kimmirut used to see polar bears only every few years. Another participant said that from 1936-1960, he lived near Kimmirut and they saw only one polar bear track. From the 1960s onwards, a lot more polar bears have been seen in that area. There seem to be more/lots of polar bears based on observations. One participant said that the number of polar bears has increased since the late 1960s/early 1970s.
- One participant said that the reason that people are seeing so many polar bears is that people now have very efficient transportation to get around.
- Polar bears are causing problems for people. One participant said that as the number of polar bears increases, the bears are more intimidating to humans. Her cabin was broken into again this winter. Polar bears are eating people's seal meat and killing a lot of caribou as well. She encourages people to continue to harvest polar bears for these reasons. Another participant said that if polar bears were decreasing in number, they wouldn't be destroying cabins out on the land.
- Polar bears are not endangered but people are in danger from polar bears. People are more important than polar bears.
- Participants said that the Canadian and global population estimates in the COSEWIC report should be greater, based on Inuit observations throughout the year and based on people almost getting eaten. If the polar bears from each sighting were added, the estimates would be a lot higher. The federal and Nunavut governments and NWMB should all get together to reassess the population estimate for Canada.
- Inuit would say that they can only know what's happening in their specific area and can only count what they have seen.

### **Changes in sea ice**

- Some participants said that the climate has changed. In the past, the sea ice was thick and now it is very thin. In the past people didn't have to worry like they do today. One participant said that when he first moved to Iqaluit there were different layers of sea ice. People in Iqaluit are involved in sea ice and affected by sea ice. The sea currents have shifted and the warmer current is now in this area. The texture of snow

has also changed. It's not solid enough to build iglus. Routes on the sea ice and navigation for ships have changed.

- One participant said that when he was on a flight in 2005, he didn't see any icebergs and he thought maybe the sea ice was receding. But then on the same flight in 2008, there were lots of icebergs again.
- One participant said that he totally disagrees with the idea of polar bears declining in number because of lack of ice. He recalls never seeing polar bears near big pieces of multi-year ice (*kaqvaq*). Another participant also said that declining sea ice is not a concern. Polar bears are adaptable and can live on sea ice, water, or land. He has seen this from ships in Davis Strait.
- One participant said that it's true that climate change has contributed to a lot of changes with polar bears.
- We have to be careful when we show slides that depict changes in multi-year ice and then jump to conclusions that this could potentially harm polar bears.
- Polar bears like to go where there is thin sea ice, not where it is thick.
- One participant said that he thinks there are probably not very many polar bears up at the North Pole
- Climate change is happening to a certain extent, but COSEWIC is making a decision based on the *potential* for changes in sea ice. We don't know if it will happen, yet this listing would have a profound impact on Inuit.

### **Impacts of human activities**

- We should be observant of the environment. Right now we take for granted things that go through the environment, like jet planes, etc. There are so many contaminants in the environment that melted ice now tarnishes the kettle.
- Polar bears used to roam free without being bothered, but now there is lots of traffic and ships from the south.
- One participant was concerned about ships that go everywhere for fishing, etc, and that dump pollutants and contaminants into the environment. The participant was concerned about the next generations who will live with the consequences and will need a basic level of polar bears and other species to hunt.
- Some populations of polar bears have started to migrate to different areas, not just because of climate change but also due to other traffic.

### **Inuit involvement and inclusion of IQ**

- One participant said that a "disconnect" has occurred, so that people not living here are working against those that live here.
- The number of polar bears has actually increased, yet the polar bear is thought to be at risk while other species go extinct. This has become an emotional issue.
- It's sad that people in the south care more about polar bears than about people, and that people in the south are the ones making decisions about the North.

- Inuit beneficiaries don't seem to have much say in how to write documents. This proposal seems to be premature. It's established under the NLCA that there has to be research on wildlife species to establish total allowable harvest.
- When will Inuit be believed? When will scientists sit down with Inuit and make decisions together?

### **Inuit knowledge on polar bears**

- Inuit weren't traditionally worried about what type of polar bear to hunt. They could choose. But Inuit were taught to value and respect wildlife and to use conservation measures. Inuit had to survive on what they had and had to adapt. Inuit had laws even though they were not written down.
- Inuit respect polar bears as fellow predators because they have a similar diet to humans. Inuit are part of the food chain along with polar bears.
- One participant said that as part of Inuit culture, they do not want to fight about animals or polar bears because they can hear us.
- In the summer, polar bears can stay on the land but they prefer not to stay on the land too long. They can survive in the ocean and on the sea ice for a long time.
- All hunters know that normally polar bears go to an area where there are no people and where there is enough food. If they leave these areas they are in danger. They can only survive by finding their food.
- Really big, male polar bears stay down near the sea and don't come inland much.
- In the Pangnirtung area, when tracks were coming from the north it was better because in south Baffin in the 1800s and 1900s there was an abundance of very old polar bears. There were different populations of polar bears.
- Polar bears can migrate for thousands of miles. It's always been like that and it's still like that today.
- Polar bears are territorial so if they see another polar bear, they move elsewhere.

### **Consultation process**

- One participant said he was concerned about the attendance sheet. This way of counting people who come in is embarrassing because of the number of people that came in. He did not sign his name.
- Participants said that a lot of people from Iqaluit who would have had a lot to say were not present at the consultation. One participant said that the federal or territorial government should do more consultations on this issue.
- Perhaps they should use a calendar setting out dates for consultations. If there are more consultations in the future, people should be notified well in advance.
- One participant said that consultations wouldn't be happening on this issue if there weren't significant consequences.

- One participant said she didn't think enough information was provided during the consultation to know how COSEWIC made its decision. The IQ included by COSEWIC is listed but it is not said what this IQ is or what weight it was given. The participant also said that there is not enough information about the consequences of a Management Plan. There is not enough information to be comfortable making a decision about the listing.
- One participant said that a technician was needed to explain research methods.

### **Research**

- One participant was concerned that people don't want to eat polar bears that have been tranquilized, so they leave the meat on the land. He said that people are very concerned about the contamination of meat in tranquilized bears. Elders have noticed a different texture and taste to the contaminated meat. Inuit were told before not to eat the meat of bears that have been tagged.
- The scientists who came to do research on polar bears didn't bother to look for polar bears. They did estimates without seeing any polar bears. This is not right. As Inuit, it's necessary to be very observant of the environment.
- One participant said based on her own previous research, she knows there is no unanimous scientific opinion on polar bears or on climate change, or on the connection between polar bears and climate change. Polar bear research is not all uniform and neither are theories and predictions about climate change. She thinks there is not sufficient information to list the species.
- One participant said that the scientific research is not fact. They are only trying to *find* the facts. He said that pure science is proven facts. Not too long ago scientists thought the world was flat, and now they are saying the number of polar bears is decreasing.
- The decrease in polar bear numbers would only be believed if scientists studied the polar bears all year round. Science doesn't know exact numbers.
- Two participants said that, out of the 20-25 polar bears that are allowed to be caught each year in Iqaluit, most of those caught are untagged. This confirms to them that there are many more polar bears than the 2000–3000 that were counted and tagged. They do not have confidence in the population estimates.
- Participants wanted clarification on how the individual subpopulation estimates and the overall Canadian and global population estimates were derived. One participant wondered what the Inuit input was for each population estimate.

### **Quotas and regulations**

- Two participants were concerned that due to sex-selective harvesting, male polar bears may be over-hunted and then polar bears would not be able to reproduce. The sex-selective harvesting is more dangerous in terms of contributing to a potential decline in the population. They are not asking for changes in the quotas but they want to be able to hunt females as well as males.
- Polar bears are very important to Inuit and allowable harvest should be made equal all the way around. Polar bears should be protected for the benefit of future generations.

- One participant said that when he was in Greenland for about three weeks he didn't hear of anyone catching a polar bear. Perhaps the quota system in Nunavut is totally different than the 600 plus bears they're allowed to hunt in Greenland. In Northern Quebec, he hasn't heard of many polar bears being killed, because they only hunt if they want to eat polar bear meat.
- One participant said that the rules are not as strict as when they were first introduced but Inuit feel wary about following them. All the rules are hard to follow because of the overregulation.

## **Kimmirut—HTO Directors Meeting**

### **Consultation on the Proposed Listing of the Polar Bear as a species of Special Concern under the federal *Species at Risk Act***

April 27, 2009 at 2:00 pm  
Mayukalik HTO Office, Kimmirut, NU

#### *Present*

- Sandy Akavak, Vice-Chairperson, Mayukalik HTO
- Kolola Pitsiulak, Secretary-Treasurer, Mayukalik HTO
- Peter Tunnillie, Director, Mayukalik HTO
- Temela Okpik, Director, Mayukalik HTO
- Mikidjuk Kolola, Director, Mayukalik HTO
- Thomasie Keenainak, Director, Mayukalik HTO
- Josephie Padluq, Director, Mayukalik HTO
- Seemeega Aqpik, Manager, Mayukalik HTO
- Andrew Nakashuk, Conservation Officer, Government of Nunavut
- Elisapee Ikkidluak, Interpreter
- Leevee Temela, Interpreter

#### *Consultation Support*

- Joannie Ikkidluak, Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board

#### *Consultation Team*

- Heather Main, Canadian Wildlife Service, Iqaluit
- Claudine Vallerand, Canadian Wildlife Service, Iqaluit

#### *Discussion*

- Sandy said that he cannot say that the number of polar bears in Kimmirut is declining. There were no polar bears when he was a child. In the past there was only one area which seemed to have polar bears. There are many more polar bears now. In 1957 he went walrus hunting to Brevoort Island in October, and saw only one polar bear in over a week. Whereas in 1994 he saw 20 polar bears in one day close by at the sea ice.
- Polar bears are going to be put under Special Concern because of lack of quotas in some other countries or regions. One participant asked whether these countries or regions could be approached about this and asked to adopt quotas.
- One participant wondered whether the whole Arctic population of polar bears was being considered for the proposed SARA listing or just the Canadian subpopulations. He asked whether Greenland was not worried about polar bears as well.
- Kolola said that he doesn't know if it is true that changes in sea ice timing lead to changes in polar bear survival, because polar bears survive in the summer as well by looking for things to eat.

- One participant asked whether polar bears are going to go extinct if all of the multi-year ice disappears. He asked whether there has been research done on the polar bears that have been sent south to see how they are adapting to life in the heat without ice.
- Josephie said that there should be more studies done on polar bear physiology regarding temperature control and how bears survive in cold and hot climates. He doesn't know of any studies done on this. They should do a study in the summer and winter. If this research was done then maybe it would be believed that polar bears' bodies actually change to survive in different climates.
- Kolola said he thinks they are beginning to understand about the polar bear studies done with tagging and about the additional proposals for research. He is not too old so doesn't know how the polar bear population was in the past, but if there has been data collected regarding that, he would believe it.
- The polar bear biologist Lily Peacock said that polar bears are increasing in number in Davis Strait because there are lots of harp seals. There was a question about whether the COSEWIC status report could be updated to include the Davis Strait research and if the status designation could be changed as a result. Another participant wondered if the polar bear would be put on SARA if the trends in two subpopulations (Davis Strait and Foxe Basin) are still unknown.
- Inuit elders and holders of traditional knowledge need to do their own research on polar bears. The government has done lots of research but Inuit have not done their own yet. There are no kinds of Acts or regulations on the polar bear that actually come from the Inuit.
- Kolola said that he understands that Inuit are not being prevented from hunting by this proposed listing. But he wonders whether sports hunting would be affected by a SARA listing.
- There were questions about whether COSEWIC verifies the truth of written sources of information about species, and whether COSEWIC does consultations during the writing of status reports.
- There was a question about how COSEWIC decides the category of a species—do they vote, and does it have to be unanimous?
- There was a question about how COSEWIC relates to the NWMB—are they above or under in terms of authority.
- One participant asked about the timing of reporting from these consultations.
- Mikidjuk said that when quotas were introduced, the number of polar bears started to increase. The government knew that number of polar bears would increase when they introduced the quotas.
- The polar bear biologists started to say that the polar bear is overhunted, but Inuit were following the quotas.

- When quotas were first introduced, the government didn't count the polar bears, they just made up the quota. Inuit were not asked questions about their traditional knowledge back then.
- The government won't increase the quotas until they have scientific results.
- Mikidjuk said that he wants polar bear hunters to continue to be able to hunt polar bears for the sake of the elders. He does not want this changed under polar bear management.
- Sandy said he doesn't mind if the people of Kimmirut can't catch polar bears anymore. It doesn't matter to him either way.

## **Kimmirut—Public Meeting**

### **Consultation on the Proposed Listing of the Polar Bear as a species of Special Concern under the federal *Species at Risk Act***

April 27, 2009 at 7:00 pm

Qaqqalik School Gymnasium, Kimmirut, NU

#### *Present*

- Members of the public: approximately 20 people
- Sandy Akavak, Vice-Chairperson, Mayukalik HTO
- Kolola Pitsiulak, Secretary-Treasurer, Mayukalik HTO
- Temela Okpik, Director, Mayukalik HTO
- Mikidjuk Kolola, Director, Mayukalik HTO
- Thomasie Keenainak, Director, Mayukalik HTO
- Josephie Padluq, Director, Mayukalik HTO
- Elisapee Ikkidluak, Interpreter
- Leevée Temela, Interpreter

#### *Consultation Support*

- Joannie Ikkidluak, Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board

#### *Consultation Team*

- Heather Main, Canadian Wildlife Service, Iqaluit
- Claudine Vallerand, Canadian Wildlife Service, Iqaluit

#### *Discussion*

- One participant said that as Inuit, they don't think the polar bear is at risk right now. In the future, when he has passed away, probably bears will be at risk then.
- Polar bears are seen all year long, especially in the spring and summer.
- Inuit don't even stay in one spot when camping because they don't want polar bears to come.
- In the South Baffin area there are a lot of polar bears even though there have been sea ice changes. So polar bears don't only depend on sea ice.
- There was a question about whether there have been changes in the Southern Hudson Bay subpopulation of polar bears, which might be expected given the discussed effects of sea ice change on polar bears.
- There was a question about whether the proposal to list the polar bear comes from the federal government. The participant said that maybe COSEWIC is influenced by organizations like Greenpeace.
- The polar bear listing is proposed even though polar bears are not declining. The proposal is because of assumptions about the future.

- There was a question about whether the polar bear could be taken off SARA if the ice became thicker again in the future.
- One participant said that the polar bear hunters in the community have had this type of meeting more than once. Those people saying that the polar bear population is declining, even though they don't know exactly, shouldn't say so. They should instead come to the community to learn more about it.
- There has been too much talk about polar bears, especially this winter.
- There was a question about polar bear research—how many polar bears have been counted in each Nunavut community?
- One participant asked why the polar bear numbers considered by COSEWIC are just estimates.
- The researchers who count animals can only study in a small limited area. People are limited in the areas that they can reach whereas animals can go everywhere.
- One participant said that next time a polar bear count is done, he would like the community to be informed about how many are counted and he would like to see written information.
- There was a question about how COSEWIC found out about changes in sea ice and declines in polar bears. The participant said that, as COSEWIC and polar bear researchers are not from the Arctic, how do they know about the polar bears?
- They have been doing studies on the polar bear for a long time, since the GNWT days. Then the study results go to the people making the quota decisions. It is now said that some polar bear subpopulations are overharvested, but Inuit are not the ones that make the quotas. Inuit would like to hunt more polar bears, but they can't because of the management.
- The polar bear biologist recently said that the Davis Strait subpopulation was increasing. Yet COSEWIC labeled the Davis Strait subpopulation as 'data deficient'. Is this designation for the subpopulation the same as the 'data deficient' COSEWIC risk category? What year was the 'cut-off' for inclusion of research in the COSEWIC report? Will they be able to consider this new information for Davis Strait before the listing decision is made? COSEWIC should have the numbers for Foxe Basin and Davis Strait before they make a decision about putting the polar bear as Special Concern.
- One participant asked whether there are numbers attached to the criteria for risk categories. He asked whether there are a specific number of polar bears that would have to be reached in order for the polar bear to be put in a certain risk category. E.g. is 15,500 bears the 'magic' number that has to be maintained?
- One participant asked for clarification on the difference between federal land and Crown land in Nunavut, when it comes to the application of SARA regulations in Nunavut.

- One participant asked that next time consultations are held, the polar bear biologists should come to the consultations as well so participants could understand more about research and polar bear numbers.
- One participant said that the presentations were clearly understood and said he was thankful for the consultations.
- One participant asked about how many endangered species there are all over the world. He wondered whether all of the animals and birds in the world are at risk.

## **Kugluktuk—HTO Directors Meeting**

### **Consultation on the Proposed Listing of the Polar Bear as a species of Special Concern under the federal *Species at Risk Act***

March 2, 2009 from 1:00 – 3:00 pm  
Kugluktuk HTO Office, Kugluktuk, NU

#### *Present*

- Floyd Kaitak, Chair, Kugluktuk Bay Hunters and Trappers Organization
- Peggy Adjun, Kugluktuk Hunters and Trappers Organization
- Peter Taktogon, Kugluktuk Hunters and Trappers Organization
- Mike Hala, Kugluktuk Hunters and Trappers Organization
- Nuka Bolt, Kugluktuk Hunters and Trappers Organization
- Colin Adjun, Kugluktuk Hunters and Trappers Organization/Conservation Officer

#### *Consultation Support*

- None

#### *Consultation Team*

- Donna Mulders, Canadian Wildlife Service, Yellowknife
- Caroline Morissette, Canadian Wildlife Service, Yellowknife

#### *Discussion*

- Several people said there are not many polar bears around Kugluktuk and they only have a quota of two bears per year so polar bears are not a big concern for them. This issue is more of a concern for people in the Kivalliq and Qikiqtaaluk. The concern in Kugluktuk has more to do with sea ice condition.
- One person noted that additional studies should be done on the diet of the polar bear, especially what they are eating in the summer season. The presentation given only mentioned seals but polar bears also eat other things like fish, plants, ducks and vegetation during summer.
- Several people mentioned that polar bears move around and do not just stay on the ice. Polar bears can survive in the water and swim for miles as well as live on the land. Polar bears also den on both the sea ice and the land. Before the polar bear is listed as a species of Special Concern better surveys should be done in both winter and summer and over both sea ice and land and get better population estimate for the region.
- Scientific information on polar bear populations is lacking in the Kugluktuk area. The polar bear might be endangered in the Kitikmeot region but without this information there is not a clear understanding of how many polar bears there are.
- Ice conditions have changed in the last few years around Kugluktuk. In recent years, sport hunts out of Kugluktuk had to be stopped because the sea ice was too dangerous. The sea ice patterns have changed from long ago and this change is a big concern for the community.

- Hunters are also seeing fewer polar bears than normal when out hunting. Hunters used to see many polar bear tracks near open water/leads but last year there weren't any observed. Polar bear was even sighted near Fort MacPherson, NT; is that because there is no ice where there used to be?
- Traditional knowledge and scientific knowledge/biologists do not always agree. Some people say that polar bears can adapt to the change in sea ice. Hard to comment on this because polar bears live on ice; they come from ice; easier for polar bears to hunt from ice.
- In the eastern arctic (Kivalliq and Qikiqtaaluk) there is a lot of discussion about how polar bears are declining. IQ and biologists have very different ideas and don't agree with each other. In Kugluktuk, we don't live in polar bear country and if the community wants to hunt polar bears they have go quite a ways from the community.
- Polar bears are not much of a concern; it is mostly in the eastern communities that they have polar bear concerns. It is quite different here from eastern Arctic, they have lots of talk about polar bears, and there are very different ideas, where people don't agree with each other. Here is a different story because we don't live in a polar bear country. When we go hunting we go along the coast between Kugluktuk and Paulatuk.
- Global warming and its impact on the ice and island caribou (Dolphin/Union caribou) is another concern that was expressed. Caribou herds cross from Victoria Island to the mainland every November. In the last few years fewer have crossed – probably due to drowning because of late freeze ups and the ice not being thick enough for caribou to cross safely. There is no updated information on radio-collared caribou. This is a concern for Inuit, as it has an impact on access to caribou but also shows how climate warming and changing ice conditions impact wildlife.
- The community requested a copy of the consultation feedback from the other NWT and Nunavut communities.

## **Kugluktuk—Public Meeting**

### **Consultation on the Proposed Listing of the Polar Bear as a species of Special Concern under the federal *Species at Risk Act***

March 2, 2009 from 7:00 – 9:00 pm  
Complex Conference Room, Kugluktuk, NU

#### *Present*

- Members of the public: 8 people
- Agnes Allen, Interpreter

#### *Consultation Support*

- None

#### *Consultation Team*

- Donna Mulders, Canadian Wildlife Service, Yellowknife
- Caroline Morissette, Canadian Wildlife Service, Yellowknife

#### *Discussion*

- This is the first time people have heard about the *Species at Risk Act*.
- Why is Environment Canada coming to Kugluktuk to consult on polar bears because there are hardly any polar bears in Kugluktuk and grizzly bears are more important? Kugluktuk only have two polar bear tags and this listing will not affect their life style.
- One person told us how polar bears may be impacted by changes or loss of sea ice because of having fewer resting areas. Is it possible the polar bear population is declining because polar bears are drowning?
- Maybe the bear population is changing because of the seal population is changing. Is there any research being done on the seal population?
- One person asked about the impacts of scientists tranquilizing polar bears and the potential negative impacts on the polar bear population. When the scientists tranquilize a bear, does the bear get hungrier?
- One person asked if Greenland was part of the *Species at Risk Act* or if Canada and Greenland are working together.
- One lady questioned where all the hunters and sport hunter guides were and why they weren't at the meeting. This is an important issue and they should be here to listen to this information and give their feedback. She felt someone should take the public response form and go door-to-door and get people to give comments.
- Listing the polar bear as a species of special concern is one step closer to threatened. It is getting really close. What about if it becomes threatened?

- It is really hard for us to make a decision on the listing to support or not support the listing, because the Eastern arctic is strongly against it and we don't want to water down what they are saying.

## **Cambridge Bay- HTO Directors Meeting**

### **Consultation on the Proposed Listing of the Polar Bear as a species of Special Concern under the federal *Species at Risk Act***

March 3, 2009 at 1:00 – 3:30 pm

Inns North Conference Room, Cambridge Bay, NU

#### *Present*

- James Panioyak, Chair, Ekaluktutiak HTA
- Mark Haongak, Ekaluktutiak HTA
- Andre Otokiak, Ekaluktutiak HTA
- Johnny Lyall, Ekaluktutiak HTA
- David Evalik, Ekaluktutiak HTA
- Tommy Epakohak, Ekaluktutiak HTA
- Cathy Aitoak, Ekaluktutiak HTA

#### *Consultation Support*

- None

#### *Consultation Team*

- Donna Mulders, Canadian Wildlife Service, Yellowknife
- Caroline Morissette, Canadian Wildlife Service, Yellowknife

#### *Discussion*

- People living in the north and on the land say there are more polar bears than ever but people in Ottawa say there are no more polar bears. Who are we to believe – biologists or traditional knowledge? Cambridge Bay hasn't seen polar bears since the 1950s and now they are seeing one or two pass through the community each year and it has never happened before.
- Since human activity is causing species to decline around the world, why are the polar bears approaching the communities? Why are more communities seeing more polar bears? Does this mean that polar bears are disappearing on the land?
- Concerns were expressed about the need to update the population estimates for McClintock Channel and the Gulf of Boothia. One person mentioned that they didn't feel the polar bear biologists were listening to them and that the biologists always have to "win" and that Inuit should be taking part in the polar bear research. They felt polar bears should be assessed as "data deficient" until there is enough adequate information to assign it a risk.
- One person questioned how much money was spent on the polar bear research in the last 16 years. When is the research going to end? Will they keep on studying? This person felt that the polar bear population doesn't go up or down, the polar bears just move away to another area.

- There was a concern expressed over public safety with communities seeing more polar bears and an increase in attacks on humans by polar bears.
- The community has noticed changes in the polar bears habits/movements and noted seeing more polar bears just after freeze-up at the gravel pits, the dump and along the coast. Changes in grizzly bear movements are also happening with more and more sightings on Victoria Island and in Cambridge Bay where there haven't been before. "We don't know if it is because of global warming, mineral development or forest fires."
- Our elders are saying the animal populations go in natural cycles; some years the population increases, other years it decreases. Our elders are telling us the truth. We don't believe the polar bear researchers.
- Polar bears, quotas and listing are more of a concern in eastern Nunavut, especially Baffin communities, where they have much higher quotas than we do in Cambridge Bay.
- Concern over the polar bear population estimates and the survey techniques and their impact on quotas. Polar bears move between subpopulation boundaries (M'Clintock Channel vs Gulf of Boothia) so the survey may determine that one subpopulation has more animals than the other and this [inaccurate] information is used by decision-maker when they set quotas and our region is affected.
- Concern in eastern Nunavut about polar bears coming into the communities and it is dangerous for the public, so bears are being killed. If we want to conserve polar bears, then maybe the bears should be moved instead of killed.
- People in Cambridge Bay have noticed the impacts of climate change. Spring temperatures are increasing and breakup is happening faster. In the fall, freeze-up is happening a month or so later than is used to October.
- In Cambridge Bay, we manage polar bears through quotas and we also had a moratorium on hunting so the community is doing its part to conserve polar bears. We should increase our polar bear tags because two or three a year is not enough.
- There were concerns about how the NWMB (Nunavut Wildlife Management Board) represents the Kitikmeot region. Why wasn't someone from NWMB at these consultations? It was suggested that the Kitikmeot Regional Wildlife Organization should send an observer to the NWMB meetings. Cambridge Bay has wildlife issues relating to fish and muskox harvest. It was felt that the NWMB focus was on issues in eastern Nunavut. NWMB, like the government, also needs to consult with the community before making its decisions.
- There was question about how Cambridge Bay could appoint someone to the COSEWIC ATK Subcommittee. Why are there not representatives/members from the ATK Subcommittee at these consultations?
- Concern about migratory birds picking up contaminants while feeding down south and later on die. Asked whether there was anybody doing COSEWIC status reports and assessments on birds?
- The community requested an update on the progress for listing the polar bear and asked Environment Canada to come back and talk to them again.

## **Cambridge Bay—Public Meeting**

### **Consultation on the Proposed Listing of the Polar Bear as a species of Special Concern under the federal *Species at Risk Act***

March 3, 2009 at 7:00 – 9:00p  
KIA Boardroom, Cambridge Bay, NU

#### *Present*

- Members of the public: 4 people
- Mark Haongak, Ekaluktutiak HTA
- Gwen Angulalik, Interpreter

#### *Consultation Support*

- None

#### *Consultation Team*

- Donna Mulders, Canadian Wildlife Service, Yellowknife
- Caroline Morissette, Canadian Wildlife Service, Yellowknife

#### *Discussion*

- The oral traditional knowledge of Cambridge Bay is not taken into account in the COSEWIC status report and assessment. If traditional knowledge needs to be documented in order for COSEWIC to use it in the report, who is responsible for collecting information about polar bear? Hunters & Trappers Organization? The NWMB? The wildlife officers?
- One person mentioned that global warming is impacting polar bears but also hunting has had an impact on the polar bear populations.
- The community requested a summary of the results of polar bear consultations from the other communities so they could see what others communities thought of listing the polar bear.
- Concern over how the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board (NWMB) represents Cambridge Bay's views. It was felt that NWMB should travel Cambridge Bay and meet with the public because the community has concerns. Cambridge Bay feels like it is in a forgotten region, left behind.
- There were questions about how the Nunavut government fits into the consultations and why they were not attending the consultations.
- People felt that the regional wildlife board should be the group consulting and then information should be brought up to the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board.
- One person noted changes in animals they are seeing in the community. They started seeing ravens in the 1960 and 1970s and last year there were reports of a Kingfisher around the community.
- Concerns expressed about the quota system and the subpopulation boundaries. Hunters are bound by the imaginary subpopulation boundary and if a polar bear is on one side of the "line" then they cannot hunt it or they'll have to answer to another jurisdiction.

## **Taloyoak—HTO Directors Meeting**

### **Consultation on the Proposed Listing of the Polar Bear as a species of Special Concern under the federal *Species at Risk Act***

March 6, 2009 from 10:00 am– 12:00 pm  
Hamlet Chambers, Taloyoak, NU

#### *Present*

- Lucassie Nakoolak, Chair, Taloyoak Hunters and Trappers Organization
- David Irqut, Taloyoak Hunters and Trappers Organization
- Sam Tulurialik, Taloyoak Hunters and Trappers Organization
- Willy Inuksak, Taloyoak Hunters and Trappers Organization
- George Akiyah, Taloyoak Hunters and Trappers Organization
- Simon Qingnaqtuq, Taloyoak Hunters and Trappers Organization
- Joe Ashevak, Conservation Officer, Government of Nunavut
- Joe Tulurialik, Public Member

#### *Consultation Support*

- None

#### *Consultation Team*

- Donna Mulders, Canadian Wildlife Service, Yellowknife
- Caroline Morissette, Canadian Wildlife Service, Yellowknife

#### *Discussion*

- HTO members have many reasons not to list the polar bear as a species of Special Concern under the *Species at Risk Act*. We have a special concern for polar bear but don't feel they should be listed as special concern.
- From the COSEWIC report, the last survey done in the M'Clintock Channel was in 2000, almost 10 years ago. There is not enough evidence/study to say the polar bear should be listed. Without updated data you shouldn't list the polar bear as a species of special concern.
- Traditional knowledge (IQ) is not taken seriously when it comes to polar bears. Inuit view the M'Clintock Channel and Gulf of Boothia as one subpopulation, instead of two. During consultation on subpopulations, Inuit traditional knowledge and elders' views were not considered so this needs to be discussed again.
- The polar bear population is increasing. Elders say in the 1950s and 60s it was very hard to locate bears but now there are lots. Elders, local experience and assessments tell us there are more bears today than in the past and that wildlife goes through natural population cycles.
- "We live off the polar bear, we are aware of how many bears there are as we live in their habitat. We are concerned about bears, if we noticed there is a decrease in bears, we are very open to let you guys know, because we have to think of our future, our descendants, our kids, our grandchildren. It is very important that polar bears don't become extinct, as we are all told by our fathers to catch only what you need, do not overharvest, do not leave meat, do not

leave anything of the animals, we are asked not to waste any part of it, we want to take care of our animals, we care for our animals.”

- Several people mentioned concerns for public safety because there are more polar bears. Traditional camping and hunting areas aren't safe to go to because of the number of bears, especially in the M'Clintock Channel area. Polar bears are being protected but not humans.
- Polar bear meat is a staple in Inuit diet and it is culturally important to harvest polar bear. It is also part of our community life and economy. People eat polar bear meat and depend on sports hunts to generate income for Inuit. There are no more American sport hunters. We are not being compensated for all the stuff we are losing. It is a lot bigger than just being concerned about the polar bear harvest, to feed our family and it really links to our cultural and it has a lot to do with how we live, and we want to pass on that tradition to our children. As soon as they are listed you will see, the Nunavut government and NWMB will jump on it and they will make their case stronger, then we will lose, they will put a moratorium on the Gulf of Boothia and what do we do? You understand? So we are not just thinking now, we are thinking in the future.
- Several people expressed concerns about the inaccuracy of the scientific information from aerial surveys and how they don't believe the surveys and the subpopulation estimates. Surveys around Taloyoak are done in the spring (April-May) but most bears are in their denning area.
- One person suggested that the Coast Guard and their helicopters should be used to count polar bears during the summer when it would be easier to spot the bears on the land.
- Polar bears move from one subpopulation to another. Elders tell us and the biologists that the bears always move from one area to another area where the seals are plenty. We have tried to work with them [the biologists] but there was miscommunication.
- Several people felt there should be only one subpopulation in their area instead of the two subpopulations - Gulf of Boothia and M'Clintock Channel. Based on the aerial surveys, the quotas were increased in Gulf of Boothia and decreased in M'Clintock Channel. This inaccurate information may be putting the Gulf of Boothia population in danger if too many are being harvested. Biologists refuse to listen to our elders.
- People were frustrated with how different levels of government are telling Inuit how to manage and harvest different species. They just hoped that something positive would come out of sharing the information from the consultations with the Government of Nunavut and the NWMB and that they start to listen to Inuit. Their biggest concern was setting quotas. “We are concerned; we have a really good history of taking care of our wildlife. And I think we are in the best position to manage our own wildlife and that includes polar bear.”
- There was concern expressed that the Canadian government is getting pressured from the American government about polar bears.
- Concern expressed regarding the 1973 polar bear agreement between Canada, United States, Norway, Denmark & Russia and whether Canada stands up against these countries and if we are outvoted what would happen.

- **Harvest Rights:** Concern expressed that if polar bears are listed as a species of Special Concern under the *Species at Risk Act* that it would be more difficult to have an increase in their quota or they may lose their right to harvest altogether.
- **Sex selective harvest:** Inuit have always respected polar bear regulations and quotas for both M'Clintock Channel and Gulf of Boothia although the elders and community members disagree with the sex selective harvest (more males) regulation. This regulation will stop the population from growing so it needs to be discussed and reviewed.
- **NWMB:** Concern over the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board not being at these consultations even though Taloyoak specifically asked them to attend. Taloyoak has asked NWMB to come to their community to talk about polar bears but they haven't shown an interest. They could do a teleconference if they can't come to the community.
- **Zoos:** Several people expressed concerns about polar bears in zoos and asked that something be done about bears living in zoos since they don't belong there. People hate to see polar bears in zoos and something should be done.
- **Tranquilizing:** Concern over tranquilized and ear tagged bears tasting different. People are against tranquilizers and research should be done using new technology available such as the Gjoa Haven DNA hair snagging project.
- **Working together:** Scientists and Inuit have to work together because it will not work if we are against each other. Working side by side with scientific research is a way to include our knowledge. We need to work together as one because we are stronger that way.
- **Designatable Unit:** Polar bears should not be listed as one population from Yukon to Labrador. It should be changed because the community has a lot of concerns for polar bear specifically in our region, in the Kitikmeot.
- **Compensation:** If the federal government and NWMB list polar bear as a species of special concern, it is not the fault of northern people – it is the government's fault because biologists have done the research and set the quotas. Everyone in Nunavut should be compensated if polar bears become a listed species.
- Thank you to the Canadian Wildlife Service (CWS) for coming to our community. We hope our concerns will be shared.

## Taloyoak—Public Meeting

### **Consultation on the Proposed Listing of the Polar Bear as a species of Special Concern under the federal *Species at Risk Act***

March 5, 2009 from 7:00 – 11:00 pm  
Hamlet Chambers, Taloyoak, NU

#### *Present*

- Members of the public: 30 people
- Lucassie Nakoolak, Chair, Taloyoak Hunters and Trappers Organization
- David Irqiuq, Taloyoak Hunters and Trappers Organization
- Sam Tulurialik, Taloyoak Hunters and Trappers Organization
- Willy Inuksak, Taloyoak Hunters and Trappers Organization
- George Akiyah, Taloyoak Hunters and Trappers Organization
- Simon Qingnaqtuq, Taloyoak Hunters and Trappers Organization
- Eunice Paningayak, Interpreter

#### *Consultation Support*

- None

#### *Consultation Team*

- Donna Mulders, Canadian Wildlife Service, Yellowknife
- Caroline Morissette, Canadian Wildlife Service, Yellowknife

#### *Discussion*

- Several people didn't think the majority of northern people wanted polar bears listed under SARA. All people are all saying that polar bear endanger Inuit lives, but still government is asking if we should list polar bear as a species of special concern.
- Inuit information/knowledge is valid because it is learned it from our parents that learned it from their parents. As example, when I was young there was no caribou but our elders told us that the caribou would come back and after a number of years the caribou would disappear again, and it is not because we over hunt them but because our elders tell us these are natural cycles that happen. I used to belong to wildlife board and they would tell us that the animals die of starvation and they would completely disappear and come back after. Our elders are telling us that this is the longest cycle will be. The next few years they will make a recovery and come back and that's always what our elders have taught us. The hunters and trappers give accurate information.
- **Human and Property Safety:** Several people explained that local knowledge shows polar bears are increasing and are more aggressive. People are feeling threatened as bears get into food caches, cabins and their traditional areas. This is stressful and people feel helpless because there are no tags so people cannot kill problem bears without negative consequences. Bears are coming into communities and people fear for their lives because of the number of bears. People feel threatened and do not want to abandon traditional areas.

- **Sex Selective Harvest:** Hunters used to have to track polar bears for long periods during spring hunts but today people can see 5 or 6 bears when traveling but they can't hunt them because they are females. Concern that the population is not going to grow with sex selective harvest and only females.
- **Human Safety:** We are not allowed to hunt polar bear anymore in the M'Clintock Channel where the moratorium was put and we don't go camping that far anymore because we are afraid that polar bears are going to our camps, are going in our tents. Before the moratorium was placed, it was a traditional area for bearded-seal hunt and other mammals hunt in that area. We are not going hunting there anymore; it is a way of life that we lost. So Environment Canada really has to consider what they want to protect. I think the polar bears have more rights than we do. I think we are the ones that are in endangered. When people are on land and they fear for their butt, you have to be constantly alert, it is because the polar bear is always coming around.
- One person said her mother grew up in McClintock Channel and they hardly saw polar bears but today they cannot go into the area because of all the bears. If this is the case, they hope the hunt will reopen in the M'Clintock Channel.
- **Compensation:** It sounds as if polar bears have more rights than people. Would like to see compensation if someone dies because a polar bear attack.
- **Land Claim Agreement:** Concern that the federal government is not implementing many aspects of the land claim agreement and Inuit are suffering and this is not acceptable.
- **Industry/Pollution:** Inuit say polar bears are becoming a problem and increasing and the scientists and others are all saying polar bear are declining in our region. Who do you believe? We hunters seem always to be the culprit. But the real culprit is the industry, the pollution and the effect it contributes on the whole world and environment.
- **Harvest Rights:** Concern expressed that if polar bears are listed under the *Species at Risk Act*, then the government may forbid Inuit to harvest polar bear.
- **Tranquilizing:** Concern over tranquilizing polar bears and the stress it causes bears and that bears may die after being tranquilized. Inuit practice is to not waste food but meat from bears that have been tranquilized is not eatable.
- **Collars:** People know that collars are needed track polar bear movement but there is concern that collared bears lose weight because the collars affects its ability to hunt. Polar bear may be "at risk" because of these unnatural things being done to them.
- **Photographers:** One of the concerns is that photographer harass wildlife and photograph them in distress. Animals are stressed and die and the population is reduced.
- **Bird disease:** We know the earth's condition is deteriorating and the wildlife is being affected as well. Have you found birds that have diseases? The ones we hear through the media that could contribute to the problem as well?

- The community thanked Environment Canada for coming to Taloyoak to hear and consider their views. The community did feel that a one-day consultation was quite short to understand their knowledge. Suggested we come to the communities more often.

## **Kugaaruk—HTO Directors Meeting**

### **Consultation on the Proposed Listing of the Polar Bear as a species of Special Concern under the federal *Species at Risk Act***

March 6, 2009 from 4:00 – 6:00 pm  
Church Hall, Kugaaruk, NU

#### *Present*

- Mariano Uqqaluk, Chair, Kugaaruk Hunters and Trappers Organization
- Bathelemy Nirlungayuk, Kugaaruk Hunters and Trappers Organization
- Zachary Bogark, Kugaaruk Hunters and Trappers Organization
- Emiliano Qrigorn, Kugaaruk Hunters and Trappers Organization
- Ovide Alakannoak, Kugaaruk Hunters and Trappers Organization
- Stephan Inaksajak, Kugaaruk Hunters and Trappers Organization
- Nick Amautinuvar, Interpreter

#### *Consultation Support*

- Gabriel Nirlungayuk, Nunavut Tunngavik Inc

#### *Consultation Team*

- Donna Mulders, Canadian Wildlife Service, Yellowknife
- Caroline Morissette, Canadian Wildlife Service, Yellowknife

#### *Discussion*

- People appreciated that they were being consulted on whether to support or not support the polar bear listing but were concerned that if polar bears are listed under the *SARA* then it would restrict hunting.
- One individual said he was concerned about polar bears being listed under the *Species at Risk Act*. Inuit aren't concerned about the polar bear population declining, so it will be a tough decision for the HTO to make.
- Many people did not agree with the polar bear subpopulations in Canada.
- Inuit traditional knowledge (IQ) shows that the polar bear population is increasing, not declining. It was felt that not being able to hunt family groups was causing the population to increase rapidly.
- Several directors felt the reason the sea ice is thinner than in the past is because the sea temperature is rising and not the air temperature. The ice is not as thick as it used to be because the water temperature is rising, coming from the bottom and mixing with the cold water.
- Several people had concerns regarding their personal safety and property damage when they are travelling on the land because of the increase in the number of polar bears. In the 1960s they rarely saw polar bears in the community but are seeing bears more often today. People used to cache seal meat on the islands or at their camping areas and bears didn't bother the

meat but nowadays polar bears are getting into it. Today people have to camp in framed cabins instead of tents because of the threat of polar bears.

- One person felt that because scientists do their work from aircraft and Inuit are on the ground and covering the entire area that Inuit can contribute solid knowledge and information to polar bear research.
- Some people did not agree with the survey techniques and population estimates of polar bear subpopulations and did not feel they were accurate.
- People felt the quota system needed to be updated and numbers revised because they feel the population is increasing.

## **Kugaaruk—Public Meeting**

### **Consultation on the Proposed Listing of the Polar Bear as a species of Special Concern under the federal *Species at Risk Act***

March 6, 2009 from 7:00 – 10:00pm  
Church Hall, Kugaaruk, NU

#### *Present*

- Members of the public: 16 people
- Mariano Uqqaluk, Chair, Kugaaruk Hunters and Trappers Organization
- Bathelemy Nirlungayuk, Kugaaruk Hunters and Trappers Organization
- Zachary Bogark, Kugaaruk Hunters and Trappers Organization
- Emiliano Qrigorn, Kugaaruk Hunters and Trappers Organization
- Ovide Alakannoak, Kugaaruk Hunters and Trappers Organization
- Stephan Inaksajak, Kugaaruk Hunters and Trappers Organization
- Nick Amautinuvar, Interpreter

#### *Consultation Support*

- Gabriel Nirlungayuk, Nunavut Tunngavik Inc. (NTI)

#### *Consultation Team*

- Donna Mulders, Canadian Wildlife Service, Yellowknife
- Caroline Morissette, Canadian Wildlife Service, Yellowknife

#### *Discussion*

- Perhaps the polar bears might be considered Special Concern in the future, but not now. Inuit are concerned about the polar bears because they don't want to deplete their own food resource.
- The community is concerned about polar bears. Researchers come north and hypothesize but Inuit live here and see the animals and the environment and are the experts in the region. We, people in Kugaaruk, hunt here. There is nobody else that could have better applied knowledge.
- Some people mentioned the conflict between Inuit and scientists in their belief that polar bears are declining. The hypothesis that polar bears will decline in the future is not true; there are more polar bears.
- Several people were concerned about scientific research and survey techniques and that researchers were not surveying all areas and only within certain study areas or subpopulation boundaries, which bears don't know. If an animal is not in the study area, it is not counted. Polar bears move between the subpopulations.
- Many people expressed concern over researchers handling bears and tattooing and collaring them. Perhaps this is stressing the bears and impacting the subpopulations, especially in Western Hudson Bay considering all the research that is done on polar bears there.

- There are limitations to the helicopter aerial survey techniques. Although it can cover large areas, it does not mean it is better because there are limitation due to weather, wind and fuel.
- The meat of polar bears that have been handled tastes different, even when the meat is cooked.
- Some people said that long ago, hunters hunted by dog team and would come back with no meat. In the last few decades there have been lots of polar bears so the community does not have any concern about polar bears. They don't think they should be Special Concern.
- The increase in polar bears has resulted in bears getting into personal property and meat caches. In the past, people cached seal meat for winter use without any bear problems but today polar bears are getting into the caches.
- Inuit harvest of polar bears has changed from the past because prohibitions/regulations don't allow people to hunt family groups. Inuit have respected the moratoriums and regulations so the polar bear population is growing and this is what Inuit see on the land.
- Around Kugaaruk, there is a lot of good polar bear denning habitat. In the past, people have counted up to 45 denning areas in a ten days trip.
- People in this community are all hunters. We know that you want to hear from communities. But we would like NWMB and the ministers to hear that the polar bear population is healthy. We don't want any ignorance or perceptions that polar bear numbers are going down in numbers. They are not going down.
- Our rules of hunting are when people go fishing, even if there is plenty they still stop when they think they have enough food. Even if there is still fish to fish, they let the fish go, thinking about the future for next year. Inuit know how to keep our species for the future.
- Several people expressed concern about the threat of bears to humans and their property with the increase in the number of polar bears. People are reluctant to go on spring camping trips because polar bears are trashing their property. People feel they should be compensated for the damage/loss of their property.
- People noted that if polar bears were declining they would not be coming into communities like they have been in recent years. Polar bears are very dangerous, especially for children playing out at night. It is a public nuisance.
- One person questioned the sex selective harvest and how it has resulted in the increase in the polar bear population. Male bears are being targeted more with the selective harvest.
- Inuit are seeing the impacts of climate change with the declining and thinning sea ice but are not seeing the decrease in polar bears that researchers say will come with these changes in sea ice.
- There is a need for more consultation and collaboration between the scientists and the communities. The polar bear researchers and hunters should get together and figure out why there is conflict. Inuit hunters and elders should be believed by researchers; we have to talk and resolve our differences. The scientists would have more information from the elders and more communication would exist between the two parties. Right now, this is not happening.

- One person commented that scientists are concerned about the thinning ice and how it will impact the polar bear's ability to hunt seals. "That would not be the case as I observed polar bears hunting on the sea ice. It is able to catch seals in the hole even if the ice is very thin. I have seen it, I have experienced it, I have proof and I also talk about my past experience. I also heard from my father that used to be in area with no ice. And right now there is no ice. I believe what I have said."
- Polar bears have been observed catching seals in the open water in summer time. They are almost like a mammal; they swim in the water, they know how to prey on seals in the water.
- One person said it is good to see the research in their area and that the results are made public, however more research needs to be done in areas where the ice is declining every year, because the seal and polar bear populations are unknown in those areas.
- Many people recognized that climate change is happening and they are seeing the changes around their community. The ice is not as thick anymore and the sea is not as cold anymore.
- Local people have been involved in climate change research by monitoring the difference in ice thickness of some areas. When the sea ice was measured, they found it was not a consistent thickness everywhere. This may be due to the currents and the bay as areas with less current are thicker.
- Multi-year ice used to be found in the Kugaaruk area but there is less ice and it is thinning so it is consistent with what the COSEWIC report says.
- Some people expressed concern about polar bears in southern zoos. They felt that there were no restrictions on bears being shipped to zoos aside from a permit.
- Seals are said to be depleting but seals have adapted to climate change for thousands of years. If there is no ice, seals go on shore so we know that seals will adapt.
- Large ships are a real concern with the noise the sonar used. These are big threats to the wildlife up here.
- Climate change and its impacts on the north are in the media a lot and they predict ice will be gone and there will be no more seals. If this happens, people need to be aware that animals move/migrate and also their numbers cycle. Animals don't have boundaries. For example, we see walrus now where we never seen them before. Walrus have been caught and some walrus have a seal diet; so there might be some other explanations as to what is going on. Inuit think about things holistically.
- Polar bears are not only near the sea but also go inland. In the past during summer caribou hunting trips inland, people sometimes shoot polar bear.

## **Gjoa Haven—HTO Directors Meeting**

### **Consultation on the Proposed Listing of the Polar Bear as a species of Special Concern under the federal *Species at Risk Act***

April 8, 2009 at 3:00 – 5:30 pm  
Gjoa Haven HTO Office, Gjoa Haven, NU

#### *Present*

- Ralph Porter Sr, Chair, Gjoa Haven Hunters and Trappers Organization
- Miriam Aglukkaq, Gjoa Haven Hunters and Trappers Organization
- Josephine Kamookak, Gjoa Haven Hunters and Trappers Organization
- Jane Putuguq, Gjoa Haven Hunters and Trappers Organization
- Jimmy Qirqqut, Gjoa Haven Hunters and Trappers Organization
- Kelly Putuguq, Gjoa Haven Hunters and Trappers Organization
- Teddy Carter, Gjoa Haven Hunters and Trappers Organization
- Thomas Anguttitauruq, Interpreter

#### *Consultation Support*

- Attima Hadlari, Kitikmeot Regional Wildlife Board (KRWB)
- Bert Dean, Nunavut Tunngavik Inc. (NTI)

#### *Consultation Team*

- Donna Mulders, Canadian Wildlife Service, Yellowknife
- Caroline Morissette, Canadian Wildlife Service, Yellowknife

#### *Discussion*

- People felt polar bears populations are increasing so they should not be listed as a species of Special Concern.
- The directors did not agree with the population estimates and stated that Inuit live in the north and know polar bears are not declining but naturally vary from year to year. People are tired of having people that don't live in the north saying the animals are declining.
- Concern expressed about the increasing population of polar bear and that Inuit are afraid of camping because of the bears. People [Greenpeace] seem to be more concerned about polar bears than Inuit. The Inuit people know that the polar bears are getting overpopulated; they are more visible then the past.
- Climate change is a concern and even though we talk about it there is nothing we can do about it.
- Elders and locals are impacted by quotas because quotas restrict their hunting for food. How would southerners feel if Inuit started to remove beef or berries from their store shelves saying that they eat too much and they are putting the species at risk? The north is vast, but Inuit are being told they cannot hunt and cannot get polar bear, their favourite meat, for themselves and store-bought meat is very expensive.

- Concern was expressed about survey techniques and that polar bears can be difficult to see from the helicopter because they hide or blend in. Scientists need to listen to the hunters who have been hunting and studying the animals for thousands of years/generations.
- Polar bear populations are being negatively impacted by many things such as scientific research drugging bears and causing diseases, garbage on the land, and pollution. The hunters are not the only culprits.
- One person had concern about polar bears in zoos. IQ says that if someone hurts the feelings of a polar bear, it will fight back. The polar bear is a very smart and wise animal. It knows that humans have taken cubs to zoos and its revenge is by attacking people. In the past the polar bear didn't attack people, unless it was cornered. Polar bears are more aggressive now and will attack dogs and people instead of trying to avoid them.
- One person said she wished the consultation information focused more on the Kitikmeot region alone and not on all of Canada. These meetings are very quick and even though scientists know a lot, they do not have the same knowledge as Inuit and scientists should try to listen to Inuit.
- The *Species at Risk Act* is new to the HTO and as new members this is the first time they have heard about it.

## Gjoa Haven—Public Meeting

### **Consultation on the Proposed Listing of the Polar Bear as a species of Special Concern under the federal *Species at Risk Act***

April 8, 2009 from 7:30 – 10:30pm  
Hamlet Boardroom, Gjoa Haven, NU

#### *Present*

- Members of the public: 18 people
- Ralph Porter Sr, Chair, Gjoa Haven Hunters and Trappers Organization
- Miriam Aglukkaq, Gjoa Haven Hunters and Trappers Organization
- Josephine Kamookak, Gjoa Haven Hunters and Trappers Organization
- Jane Putuguq, Gjoa Haven Hunters and Trappers Organization
- Jimmy Qirqut, Gjoa Haven Hunters and Trappers Organization
- Kelly Putuguq, Gjoa Haven Hunters and Trappers Organization
- Teddy Carter, Gjoa Haven Hunters and Trappers Organization
- Thomas Anguttitauruq, Interpreter

#### *Consultation Support*

- Attima Hadlari, Kitikmeot Regional Wildlife Board (KRWB)
- Bert Dean, Nunavut Tunngavik Inc. (NTI)

#### *Consultation Team*

- Donna Mulders, Canadian Wildlife Service, Yellowknife
- Caroline Morissette, Canadian Wildlife Service, Yellowknife

#### *Discussion*

- In Canada, for the 13 subpopulations some are increasing and some are decreasing. Western science says that overall the 13 subpopulations have increased. With this information and if the quotas won't be affected, we would like polar bears to be a species of Special Concern.
- Some people supported the listing of polar bear as a species of special concern at the moment, especially if tags and quotas will stay the same.
- **Population:** Some people said Inuit haven't seen a decline in polar bear populations. They don't have any concerns since the polar bears are migrating from one area to another.
- In the past Inuit killed many polar bears. But today, with the quota system it is different; people are not killing as many as they used to. The Inuit people don't have dog team to feed anymore and only have their family to feed. Since Inuit are not being allowed to hunt the polar bear as much, it seems to be unbalanced. Inuit are afraid to be the reason for the species declining. But the species are not declining because of Inuit. It is the environment and habitat being used by industries. The pollution produced and the increase in industrial traffic causes serious threats to the animals.
- **Disturbance:** Noise and its effect on polar bears is a concern. Noise from the engines of snowmobiles, aircraft, ships, and helicopters impact bears. Bears try to hide from helicopters

doing surveys and it makes it hard for biologists to count the bears properly. Another disturbance is ships/barges which are noisy and their routes are through polar bear areas and they scare the polar bear away. The route that those ships use is another disturbance that should be considered.

- **Climate Change:** Inuit are aware and concerned about global warming. The ice is thinning and people know that some day there will be no ice for polar bear habitat. This has happened long ago. Some people felt polar bears could hunt seals even without ice. Bears will adapt to climate change.
- **Research:** Some people were concerned that some scientific studies were incomplete and gave false information (Western Hudson Bay study). The surveys are not accurate because the scientists don't know exactly where the polar bears are. Concern was expressed about tranquilizing bears.
- **Traditional Knowledge:** During the round table in Winnipeg, the Minister of Environment mentioned that they would like to see the Inuit and traditional knowledge (IQ) being equally involved as western science in research. They hoped that COSEWIC would also go in this direction.
- **Polar bear experts/decision makers:** Some people were frustrated that polar bear experts and decision makers were not at these meetings. These meetings are very important so it would be really good to have polar bear biologists here since many people have questions that cannot be answered here today. Would a follow-up meeting be possible?
- **Concern & Quotas.** Every animal is a special concern. Muskox are an example of how proper management can help a species. There weren't many and then the quotas came into effect and now the numbers have increased and now people can hunt many animals. I hope it would be happening to the polar bear too. I hope polar bear populations increase, due to the fact that we are only permitted to catch only 1 or 2 a year.
- **International agreements:** "Not too long ago, I was in a meeting where scientific and Inuit knowledge was making their decisions, and sometimes it seems like the scientific world has the upper hand because of their certificates." The 13 subpopulations of polar bears are a scientific vision, while the Inuit vision is one big population including Greenland and Russia. If the polar bear is being recognized as a species at risk, is there any work plan with Greenland and other countries to reduce its decline? As no countries owns its water and the globalization is increasing shipping activity throughout the north; as global warming is an international issue, is there any international work being done to protect polar bear habitat, instead of telling us that our quotas might be set up too high?
- "I just want to personally say that I support the Species at Risk Act they are working on. Because it states that Inuit knowledge will be involved and it has to be involved in decision-making."

## **Rankin Inlet—HTO Directors Meeting**

### **Consultation on the Proposed Listing of the Polar Bear as a species of Special Concern under the federal *Species at Risk Act***

March 31, 2009 at 2:00 pm  
Siniktarvik Hotel, Rankin Inlet, NU

#### *Present*

- Ross Tatty, Chairperson, Kaniqliniq HTO
- Jack Kabvitok, Vice-Chairperson, Kaniqliniq HTO
- Cedric Autut, Secretary-Treasurer, Kaniqliniq HTO
- Titaq Komaksiutiksaq, Director, Kaniqliniq HTO
- Neco Towtongie, Director, Kaniqliniq HTO
- Harry Ittinuar, Director, Kaniqliniq HTO
- Norman Ford, Manager, Kaniqliniq HTO
- Johanne Coutu-Autut, Conservation Officer, Government of Nunavut
- Raymond Mercer, Conservation Officer, Government of Nunavut
- John Ayaruaq, Interpreter

#### *Consultation Support*

- Gabriel Nirlungayuk, Nunavut Tunngavik Inc. (NTI)
- Bert Dean, Nunavut Tunngavik Inc. (NTI)

#### *Consultation Team*

- Heather Main, Canadian Wildlife Service, Iqaluit
- Claudine Vallerand, Canadian Wildlife Service, Iqaluit

#### *Discussion*

- In the 1940s and 1950s there weren't many bears seen between Churchill and Arviat. There used to be more seen up around Chesterfield Inlet. But since the 1980s, the number of polar bears in the Rankin area has increased.
- Ross said that he traveled from Resolute from Alert and saw one polar bear and no seals up there on the multi-year ice. It seems to be more of a transient area. It seems that concerns are focused on changes in ice in areas where there aren't any polar bears anyway.
- Titaq said that, though scientists say there is less ice, every year there are problems trying to get to Repulse Bay in the middle of July due to ice.
- Jack said he does not think that climate change will affect wildlife species, because any animal will move where there is food in order to survive.
- Polar bears should not be tranquilized as tranquilization makes the meat inedible. There were also concerns that tranquilization adversely affects the polar bears, contrary to what the biologists say. Jack said he has caught a scrawny polar bear with inedible meat which he believes was affected by tranquilization. Titaq said he has

heard of a bear dying after being tranquilized, and he is concerned that more may have died.

- One director commented that it would be better if Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit (IQ) about polar bears was treated with respect. He does not understand how the polar bear biologists do research and doesn't believe that biologists and IQ are working together to get real, accurate numbers of polar bears.
- IQ is very important with respect to wildlife in Nunavut. Before the NWMB makes decisions each community should be consulted as they know what is happening with each wildlife population.
- Inuit harvesters have not caused species to be at risk. Wildlife is very important to Inuit harvesters as they hunt in order to eat. Other human activities affect wildlife instead. For example, former and current mining activities have caused caribou to decline around Rankin Inlet.
- Jack said that the lack of tags in Chesterfield Inlet for a number of months this past year created a big problem because of the lack of polar bear meat. The meat is distributed in the community if a healthy bear is harvested, but the residents didn't have any tags to harvest.
- Johanne (GN Conservation Officer) raised the question of whether a Threatened or Endangered listing for the polar bear would affect sports hunting.
- Johanne believes that the Lancaster Sound subpopulation should be considered increasing rather than as stable, as the survey done in 1997-98 showed an increase. Quotas were even increased following this survey.
- Johanne said that climate change is more noticeable in the high Arctic, yet the Lancaster Sound subpopulation is increasing. This shows that polar bears are already well-managed.
- Johanne said she is not so sure that the Western Hudson Bay subpopulation is declining. She believes the bears were moving north to where there was sea ice. The polar bears move north of Chesterfield Inlet after they come off the sea ice in the summer. There has been lots of ice north of Chesterfield in the summer for the last couple of years. Polar bears move around following their sources of food. The biologists were told to but didn't survey that area during the survey they did in summer 2007. Also, only females are traditionally collared yet the males travel further.
- Johanne said that the climate fluctuates so she doesn't believe we can make predictions regarding climate change for the future. It could easily get colder rather than warmer.
- Johanne said that changes in polar bear populations could be due to things other than sea ice changes- for example, the dump in Churchill.

## **Rankin Inlet—Public Meeting**

### **Consultation on the Proposed Listing of the Polar Bear as a species of Special Concern under the federal *Species at Risk Act***

March 31, 2009 at 7:00 pm  
Siniktarvik Hotel, Rankin Inlet, NU

#### *Present*

- Members of the public: approximately 12
- Ross Tatty, Chairperson, Kaniqliniq HTO
- Titaaq Komaksiutiksaq, Director, Kaniqliniq HTO
- Norman Ford, Manager, Kaniqliniq HTO
- John Ayaruaq, Interpreter

#### *Consultation Support*

- Gabriel Nirlungayuk, Nunavut Tunngavik Inc. (NTI)
- Bert Dean, Nunavut Tunngavik Inc. (NTI)

#### *Consultation Team*

- Heather Main, Canadian Wildlife Service, Iqaluit
- Claudine Vallerand, Canadian Wildlife Service, Iqaluit

#### *Discussion*

- The polar bear population is not declining. There are too many polar bears right now. The population is increasing. There were more bears than ever before near Arviat this fall. There were polar bears near the Rankin Inlet garbage dump. Participants said they see polar bears everywhere on the land recently. Participant said they are not concerned about the polar bear population. In the 1950s, there were no polar bears seen. There is no question that there are more bears now.
- The same thing regarding climate change has been heard over and over from different organizations.
- Inuit are not concerned about changes to the ice at the North Pole, because there are no animals and no polar bears up there. Scientists should not be bothering with the polar bear up in the North Pole and should be focusing on this region.
- Polar bears can hunt anywhere, not only on the sea ice. They can hunt in the summer time in the water.
- There is concern about the effects on wildlife, including polar bears, from gases from the south which travel to the fragile Arctic environment. This should be studied, instead of just the effects of sea ice changes.
- Inuit are not worried about the effects of climate change on wildlife, because animals migrate. Wildlife can be protected through community-based management.

- Sometimes animals move on to a different place. Scientists may think animals are gone from a certain area but they will be back eventually. This is what is happening with the polar bears. Polar bears don't stay in one certain area. They move around to hunt to survive, because there are strong currents and the ice moves around. The polar bears also follow seasonal patterns of movement based on the break-up and freeze-up of the ice.
- When species are overpopulated, like the polar bear is now, they die off because their food disappears or a disease spreads through the population.
- The only reason people want to list the polar bear is because they think it's cute. Inuit do not think like this because they rely on polar bear meat.
- The COSEWIC concerns for species should only be valid if they consult with Inuit and Inuit agree that a species is at risk.
- It's impossible to camp safely in tents now because of polar bears. A polar bear mauled a person. Cabins are destroyed by polar bears and there's no compensation. 48 cabins were ransacked last year. Cached meat is eaten by polar bears. These same problems are occurring all over Nunavut.
- Scientists and Inuit should work together and communicate more. Right now they are very far apart.
- It should be acknowledged that Inuit know more than the scientists and organizations that come here to consult. The scientists do not have the experience that Inuit have. Inuit hunters travel the land and look for the animals that they hunt. Scientists come here for only a few days and then consider themselves experts on these species. Inuit would be happier if Inuit were included in the polar bear research.
- The aerial counts and surveys done by scientists are inaccurate. Polar bears are white and they're not always easy to see. Scientists also miss a lot of bears because polar bears hide or dive when they hear a helicopter.
- Biologists are mistreating polar bears by removing teeth, putting tags in their ears, and tranquilizing them. It has been noticed that a number of tranquilized bears have died. Last year 8 bears died from this. Sometimes when scientists write reports they don't include everything that was done to the animal. It seems that scientists are afraid that Inuit will tell the world that they're mistreating animals.
- Scientists should respect the animals they research. Perhaps research on the polar bear could be done differently. For example, they could give the bears less anesthetic, so that the meat is not destroyed.
- There is concern about the fact that Greenland and Quebec, which both share subpopulations with Nunavut, do not have quotas. In Nunavut, Inuit abide by quotas through community management. The Americans said they don't want people to harvest without quotas anymore. Inuit from the 7 Nunavut communities in Foxe Basin (shared with Quebec) say the subpopulation is not decreasing.

- Inuit are only allowed to hunt males under the MOU regarding quotas. This should be changed the next time the MOU is renewed. The government should know that this is something that could cause decline in the population.
- One possible reason that the population of polar bears is increasing is that Inuit can't hunt family groups under the MOU. This means one can't hunt cubs, even if they are bigger than their mother.
- The tags were supposed to be equally distributed among communities, but Arviat used the Western Hudson Bay quota of 8 due to polar bear problems. There should be special tags for defense kills.
- One participant was concerned that putting polar bears in zoos and in 'polar bear jail' in Churchill was cruel. After the polar bears are flown away from the jail in Churchill, they may lose their tracks and not know where to go.

## **Arviat—HTO Directors Meeting**

### **Consultation on the Proposed Listing of the Polar Bear as a species of Special Concern under the federal *Species at Risk Act***

April 2, 2009 at 2:00 pm  
Arviat HTO, Arviat, NU

#### *Present*

- Alex Ishalook, Chairperson, Arviat HTO
- Laurent Angalik, Vice-Chairperson, Arviat HTO
- Paul Kattau, Secretary-Treasurer, Arviat HTO
- Thomas Ubluriak, Director, Arviat HTO
- Louis Angalik, Director, Arviat HTO
- Thomas Alikaswa, Director, Arviat HTO
- Gordy Kidlapik, Director, Arviat HTO
- John Ayaruaq, Interpreter

#### *Consultation Support*

- Paul Irngaut, Nunavut Tunngavik Inc

#### *Consultation Team*

- Heather Main, Canadian Wildlife Service, Iqaluit
- Claudine Vallerand, Canadian Wildlife Service, Iqaluit

#### *Discussion*

- Many people in Arviat have noticed that the polar bear population has increased. When people first moved to the coast to Arviat, there weren't any polar bears. Many polar bears are seen around now. More bears are seen in winter, summer and fall time. Hunters and even berry pickers are seeing more polar bears than ever before. There were lots of polar bears this fall. If scientists or organizations visited Arviat for 2-3 weeks in October/November, they would understand. They would easily see 20-30 bears per day.
- The participants said they do not think the polar bear should be listed under SARA. There are just too many bears. It doesn't make sense to list an animal that is increasing in population. The number of bears seen around Arviat doesn't seem connected to the Special Concern issue at all.
- It is dangerous due to polar bears. Polar bears have become unafraid. The bears come right into town. A number of bears have had to be killed as a result. It's necessary to hire people to do polar bear watch during the night for security purposes. Especially this year and last year, people can't go caribou hunting at Nunaalaaq because there are too many polar bears. People cannot go hunting or camping due to polar bears.
- Polar bears with cubs are seen around Arviat. The bears seen have all been fat and healthy. No sick ones have been seen.

- Thomas Alikaswa said he has heard about bears are coming into Baker Lake, where they have never had any polar bears before.
- Polar bears don't follow subpopulation boundaries. Animals follow food. Hunters know that animals won't be in the same place year after year. Polar bears can cause depletion in one subpopulation by moving to another subpopulation.
- Elders say that due to forest fires south of Churchill near polar bear denning areas in the summers of 2004 and 2005 polar bears moved to the other side of Hudson Bay. Alex said that this is something that could affect the subpopulation count for WHB. He thinks WHB polar bears have moved to the Southern Hudson Bay subpopulation and they will return eventually.
- Polar bears stopped going near Churchill when the dump was closed. This is why scientists started thinking polar bears were disappearing.
- The changes in sea ice break-up for Western Hudson Bay that are detailed in the status report are not correct. In the report it says that break-up is now in May. In fact it now happens in the middle or end of June, whereas it used to be in July. Ice starts forming around the end of September/October. There is about 1-2 weeks difference in the timing of sea ice from the 1970s to today.
- The inaccuracies regarding the timing of sea ice in Western Hudson Bay in the status report need to be fixed.
- There are still a lot of seals from Arviat down to Seal River. There have been a lot of killer whales passing by Arviat lately, and they also eat seals. But the seals are still abundant.
- The polar bear biologists themselves have said that their subpopulation counts are estimates. They also just count the bears that are inland, not those on the ice. The biologists fly so fast and high in the air that they don't see polar bears even when they are there.
- Many of the participants said that they were not satisfied with the Western Hudson Bay subpopulation survey done in 2007 by the Government of Nunavut. The survey was planned for 14 days, but the researchers only surveyed for two days. The survey was done in summer, when they could have missed bears because many bears were in the water. Gordy said that while the biologists saw only 25 bears between Seal River and Chesterfield Inlet, 20 bears were seen in a small area just around Arviat in November 2008. The participants said this inaccurate survey is one of the reasons that scientists think the WHB subpopulation is declining. The study should be re-done.
- Ubluriak pointed out that the 2007 study was not meant to be an actual count, though many people thought it was. The scientists saw more than 25 bears. 25 was the number of bears that they actually captured.
- The current research doesn't seem reliable enough for COSEWIC to label the WHB subpopulation as declining or to label the polar bear as Special Concern. The surveys they have done are not accurate since the declining designation for WHB is not correct.

- The polar bears should be well counted before anything like this SARA listing is proposed. Alex said that the HTO supports the surveying, but wants surveys to be accurate.
- There's too much difference between the studies done in the 1960s on the WHB subpopulation and the ones done today.
- When polar bears have been tranquilized and collared, they lose their hunting ability and they die. Thomas Alikaswa said that he has seen a very skinny and unhealthy collared bear. Alex said that at the Wildlife Symposium in Rankin Inlet, even the biologists said that animal behavior changes after tranquilization.
- The scientific counts are believed rather than IQ. Inuit do not feel listened to. Scientists are taking advantage of Inuit.
- The Cree are involved in the polar bear studies down in Manitoba. The Cree say there are lots of polar bears, but the scientists don't believe them.
- Ubluriak said that IQ and science need to work together before it can be decided whether to list the polar bear. Inuit live in the Arctic and rely on wildlife for food. They should be involved with the science.
- Although the polar bear biologists try to include IQ from the elders, sometimes it is not properly considered or is misinterpreted.
- It seems that Inuit are being targeted regarding polar bear issues, even though Inuit are not to be blamed for global warming.
- It is not right that the tourists feed the polar bears in Churchill.
- According to IQ, if there are too many polar bears in one area, they will run out of food and starve. They will resort to cannibalism.
- It seems that the four subpopulations COSEWIC labeled as declining are also the ones with sports hunting.
- Quotas were decreased when in fact polar bear numbers are increasing. Arviat is the most affected community with respect to quotas. This past year almost the entire WHB quota was used in Arviat for defense kills.
- Alex said that two things have been lost in Arviat. 1) The domestic, traditional hunt, in which Inuit were taught how to hunt and how to prepare food. 2) The sports hunt, which used to bring money into the community.

## **Arviat—Public Meeting**

### **Consultation on the Proposed Listing of the Polar Bear as a species of Special Concern under the federal *Species at Risk Act***

April 2, 2009 at 7:00 pm

Mark Kalluak Community Hall, Arviat, NU

#### *Present*

- Members of the public: approximately 42 people
- Alex Ishalook, Chairperson, Arviat HTO
- Laurent Angalik, Vice-Chairperson, Arviat HTO
- Paul Kattau, Secretary-Treasurer, Arviat HTO
- Thomas Ubluriak, Director, Arviat HTO
- Louis Angalik, Director, Arviat HTO
- Thomas Alikaswa, Director, Arviat HTO
- Gordy Kidlapik, Director, Arviat HTO
- John Ayaruaq, Interpreter
- Thomas Suluk, Interpreter

#### *Consultation Support*

- Paul Irngaut, Nunavut Tunngavik Inc

#### *Consultation Team*

- Heather Main, Canadian Wildlife Service, Iqaluit
- Claudine Vallerand, Canadian Wildlife Service, Iqaluit

#### *Discussion*

- Polar bears are not declining. The assessment of COSEWIC for the WHB subpopulation is not correct. Inuit elders and hunters know more than this stuff that is written on paper—it's just embarrassing. If the WHB subpopulation is decreasing, why does Arviat need to use polar bear tags from other communities for defense kills? A species that is coming into town every day is not considered to be depleting. Polar bears are everywhere on the land and ice. There are too many bears. Lots of polar bears came to Arviat last fall. Hunters have to bring extra bullets when hunting just because of polar bears. There was even a bear caught in a fox trap.
- The listing of the polar bear as Special Concern is not supported. The concern instead is that there are too many polar bears.
- One person said that when polar bears run out in Churchill that's when they'll be depleted.
- It doesn't make sense that there are so many polar bears yet they cannot be harvested.
- One person said the only skinny polar bear he has seen was an elderly, 25 year old polar bear.

- One person said he has never heard of the sea ice breaking up in May, as it states for the Western Hudson Bay region in the status report.
- Polar bears have become a source of fear. Around 1980-1990 it was possible to sleep outside without being afraid of polar bears; now it's impossible to do so, especially in July and August. In the past a person was mauled and nine dogs were killed, and again last fall a dog was killed. This fall lots of cabins were destroyed. Food in cabins and meat caches were eaten by bears.
- Alex (HTO Chairperson) said that polar bears get used to people due to the tourism in Churchill, so they're no longer afraid when they come to Arviat. He said that if the quotas are not returned, the HTO is going to try to find a way to protect the town, e.g. a fence, rubber bullets.
- One person said he doesn't think the HTO was able to function properly last fall because they were forced to protect the town against polar bears.
- One person said that he does not want problem bears transported up to Arviat from Churchill.
- Species move away, looking for food, and then they will come back.
- One person said he thinks that polar bears are migrating to the east, across Hudson Bay.
- One participant said that around 1979, scientists believed caribou were disappearing but after a few months they discovered it was not true.
- One person wondered why many people have not heard about how SARA works with the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement.
- One person said that biologists would see a lot of seals if they came here in June. Another person said that several thousand seals have been seen in the Kivalliq region. Another person said that the number of seals is different all the time, and that there needs to be more research to find out about this.
- There have been many killer whales seen around Arviat. One person asked whether it was known why killer whales are coming closer to Arviat now, because this relates to the depletion of seals.
- The population counts that have been done are inaccurate yet the government is using those numbers as justification to decrease the quotas for Arviat.
- Alex (HTO Chair) talked about how the HTO does not approve of the GN survey from summer 2007. The study was done in July, when Inuit know there are not many bears.
- Participants said that for the summer 2007 study, the scientists said they couldn't consider the bears in the water. There must have been a lot of bears in the water that they didn't count. The scientists do not see all of the bears the way they do their count.

- Ubluriak (HTO Director) clarified that the summer 2007 study was trying to find out the condition of bears, not counting. They did see more than 25 bears.
- Participants from the public said that they want more accurate counting done. For putting species on the SARA, rough estimates are not good enough. Exact numbers are needed. Scientists should choose the right time of year to do their studies. They should count in the fall time, for example in October or November.
- A motion was raised and passed for the HTO to request a new population count that includes Inuit participation. Alex (HTO Chair) said that this request would be passed on the Arviat MLA, Daniel Sewchuk, GN Minister of Environment. They will ask that biologists study bears in the fall time.
- Inuit should be involved in research. The results would be more believable if the researchers worked together with the people who live here. The scientists should be accompanied by elders. They should consult everyone who hunts, not only elders. Maybe scientists could bring along HTO Board members. Inuit should be asked about what they know before scientists do their counts. Just like the building of a house, research needs to be done with cooperation or it will not be good. Alex (HTO Chair) said that at the Rankin Inlet Wildlife Symposium these issues were all brought up, and biologists said they wanted to work with IQ.
- Inuit have knowledge too, though it is not written down. Inuit knowledge about species is in their heads. They know what is happening with the species around Arviat.
- Counting is not the Inuk way. One person said that he believes it's impossible to ever count a species accurately and to finish counting them. People cannot be so presumptuous as to say that they know the number of a species. Species are not depleting as they continue growing and increasing in number every year.
- Inuit should be listened to because Nunavut is Inuit land. Inuit become unhappy because their knowledge is not being used. Inuit take care of wildlife as well, because they rely on them for food. White people should not put restrictions on wildlife, because they do not have all of the information.
- Inuit do not love animals because they are only animals. They are dangerous. They do not think like humans.
- One person said she is concerned that, if unable to harvest polar bears, the traditions will not be passed on to children.
- There is a loss of income when polar bears cannot be hunted.
- If unable to harvest polar bears, the meat is lost as food. One participant told the story of an elder in Arviat who was hungry for polar bear meat and had to get some from the Baffin. Another participant said he missed polar meat but probably wouldn't get to eat it again. This meat satisfies Inuit (those who traditionally live by the sea) because it is their kind of food. It is not right for the government to take away Inuit's food. Sharing and exchanging food is the proper way.

- Arviat is the most affected by this quota decrease, because polar bears always come here. Rankin Inlet never used to finish their quota but Arviat did.
- Alex (HTO Chair) said the HTO would like harvest to continue. They want to be able to teach children how to hunt and skin polar bears. The HTO will soon meet with the Arviat MLA, Daniel Sewchuk, to discuss polar bear harvest and research.
- One person said that maybe it's the fact that there are not enough male polar bears for reproduction (due to harvesting rules) that has caused depletion in the WHB subpopulation. Alex (HTO Chair) said that this issue was brought up during the Wildlife Symposium in Rankin Inlet and is going to be addressed.

## **Whale Cove—HTO Directors Meeting**

### **Consultation on the Proposed Listing of the Polar Bear as a species of Special Concern under the federal *Species at Risk Act***

April 6, 2009 at 2:00 pm  
Issatik HTO Office, Whale Cove, NU

#### *Present*

- Stanley Adjuk, Chairperson, Issatik HTO
- Lewis Voisey, Vice-chairperson, Issatik HTO
- Jackie Napayok, Director, Issatik HTO
- Roy Kriterdluk, Director, Issatik HTO
- Sophie Igviksaq, Director, Issatik HTO
- Cecile Panika, Director, Issatik HTO
- Tommy Igviksak, Director, Issatik HTO
- Jimmy Kennedy, Conservation Officer, Department of Environment
- John Ayaruaq, Interpreter

#### *Consultation Support*

- Gabriel Nirlungayuk, Nunavut Tunngavik Inc

#### *Consultation Team*

- Heather Main, Canadian Wildlife Service, Iqaluit
- Claudine Vallerand, Canadian Wildlife Service, Iqaluit

#### *Discussion*

- The HTO does not agree with the idea of listing the polar bear because the number of bears is increasing. They are not concerned about the population.
- Jackie said that he thinks that each community in all three regions of Nunavut will have the same response. All three regions have elders.
- There were very few bears back in the 1940s and 1950s. Tommy said that their fathers have told them that there were fewer polar bears when the fathers were growing up. Jackie said that in Coral Harbour, where he is originally from, they had some polar bears but not that many. People used to have to share polar bears skins and use the skin very carefully as it was rare. Jackie said that polar bear skins were so scarce that when his father traded in Chesterfield Inlet, people used to want skins from Coral Harbour. It's a different story now.
- The polar bear population is increasing. There are a lot of polar bears now. Older Inuit know that the polar bear population has increased over the years. Jackie said that though he is not a scientist, he has seen many, many polar bears. Polar bears are seen everywhere now, even 30-40 km inland in summer.

- Participants said that they don't believe that the population is decreasing. Cecile said her grandfather used to tell her not to believe that the polar bear population was decreasing.
- Polar bears are scary now. Stanley said that kids today are not allowed to go far, whereas when he grew up kids used to walk anywhere they wanted. When Whale Cove first existed, people used to camp out on the islands in tents with no fear of polar bears. It's not the case now. Cecile said that Inuit are worried not about the polar bear, but about themselves.
- Cecile said that her grandfather told her that when Inuit are prohibited from hunting the polar bear, polar bears will come into town.
- Maybe there will be more polar bears in the High Arctic when the ice melts.
- Jackie said that he believes in global warming but not in the decreasing population of polar bears. He said the only glacier he knows near Coral Harbour has melted.
- Even without sea ice, polar bears can still catch seals all summer. Tommy said that bears can be seen just floating in the water in the middle of nowhere in Hudson Bay. Lewis said he has seen polar bears kill seals in the summer. He believes the sea ice business is just another ridiculous excuse. He said polar bears are going to adapt to global warming. Perhaps polar bears will get skinnier because of global warming, but they will not starve. Stanley said that, as an example, polar bears in zoos have adapted to the zoo.
- Lewis said that perhaps polar bears are getting skinnier because it's getting warmer and they don't need as much fat to keep warm.
- Stanley said that, on the other hand, if climate change is going to kill off all the polar bears anyway, perhaps Inuit should just keep harvesting.
- The subpopulation boundaries shouldn't be relied upon so much. Lewis said he doesn't agree with the separation of subpopulations. Polar bears go back and forth all the time; they do not follow the boundaries. He said that Western Hudson Bay (WHB) and Southern Hudson Bay (SHB) subpopulations are the same. The WHB subpopulation is only said to be declining because of this subpopulation distinction. Roy said that WHB bears go between SHB and Foxe Basin up to the Wager Bay area. But Lewis said he thinks bears do not go beyond Chesterfield Inlet. For example, he said Coral Harbour harvesters do not get bears tagged around Churchill.
- Jackie said that maybe polar bears are moving from WHB to areas in the Baffin. He has heard that there are more bears in the Qikiqtarjuaq area now. When he worked for the DEW lines in the 1960s, there were not many bears. People in that area now need polar bear monitors in order to go camping.
- The scientists are not doing an accurate job with their counts. When biologists count polar bears, they can miss counting those polar bears that are in their dens. When cubs finally separate from their mother, they can be missed (not counted) too.
- Jackie said that chasing polar bears by helicopter causes hearing loss in the bears. The bears can then use only their sense of smell to hunt. They are also not scared off by

rifle shots anymore because they don't hear them. Instead they keep coming toward humans until they smell them.

- Jackie said that studies should be done in polar bear denning areas, like near Coral Harbour.
- Tranquilized animals are inedible. Elders would like to eat polar bear meat. Polar bear meat could also help a lot of families as food is expensive at the store. But Inuit do not want to eat bears with chemicals still in their system.
- Inuit are taught by their parents not to disrespect any animal. They are told that the animal will pay back if disrespected.
- Lewis said that limiting harvest quotas as has been done for WHB just leads to killing of polar bears for no reason. Inuit should just be given tags and then there is a reason for the killing of polar bears. He said he would like to see some polar bear tags given this fall.
- Jackie said that the only people to be blamed are the government. Ever since the quota system was introduced, Inuit started following the government's rules about harvesting rather than their own rules.
- Lewis said it doesn't make sense that with the quota system, people are allowed to harvest only so many polar bears per year. Before Inuit harvested any polar bears that were seen. Now there are more polar bears than ever before. It is not right that harvesting is restricted.
- Lewis said he thinks the NLCA may allow Inuit harvesting of polar bears even without quotas.
- Jackie said that Inuit are going to continue hunting species regardless of SARA. Other species, e.g. wolves, eat lots of animals that Inuit hunt. If Inuit are not allowed to hunt, these species should be not allowed to be predators as well.
- Sophie said that she misses eating polar bear meat and has not had any for 2-3 years.
- If people are so concerned about polar bears, they should consider the polar bears that are kept in zoos.

## **Whale Cove—Public Meeting**

### **Consultation on the Proposed Listing of the Polar Bear as a species of Special Concern under the federal *Species at Risk Act***

April 6, 2009 at 7:00 pm  
Hamlet Council Chambers, Whale Cove, NU

#### *Present*

- Members of the public: approximately 18 people
- Stanley Adjuk, Chairperson, Issatik HTO
- Jackie Napayok, Issatik HTO
- Lewis Voisey, Issatik HTO
- Roy Kriterionluk, Issatik HTO
- Sophie Igviksaq, Issatik HTO
- John Ayaruaq, Interpreter

#### *Consultation Support*

- Gabriel Nirlungayuk, Nunavut Tunngavik Inc

#### *Consultation Team*

- Heather Main, Canadian Wildlife Service, Iqaluit
- Claudine Vallerand, Canadian Wildlife Service, Iqaluit

#### *Discussion*

- The polar bear population is not decreasing, it is increasing. One participant said that there were no polar bears around when he moved to Whale Cove in 1961. In the 1970s, the polar bears started to come around. In Whale Cove, Rankin Inlet, Arviat and maybe Churchill there are lots of polar bears right now. Those who think the population is decreasing need to spend 1-2 weeks on the land near Whale Cove in the fall time to understand.
- One participant said he saw about 40 different polar bears per day when he was in Churchill for two weeks last fall.
- Inuit are more afraid of polar bears than ever before. One participant told a story of her sister in Chesterfield Inlet encountering a polar bear face to face. Polar bears are very fierce.
- People's property is also threatened by polar bears. For example, snowmobiles have been destroyed.
- A show of hands indicated that 18 participants (all of those present at the time) don't agree with the polar bear being put on SARA. They said that there are too many polar bears and they are not concerned about polar bears.
- The polar bears in this area have moved further north and maybe that's why they think they're decreasing. Polar bears are moving.

- Polar bears move back and forth between Western Hudson Bay (WHB) and Southern Hudson Bay (SHB) subpopulations. This is why the subpopulation can appear to decrease in WHB and can be very stable and healthy in SHB.
- Maybe polar bears are eating too many seals now. Ever since oil exploration occurred in Hudson Bay (around 1984), the seal population has been decreased. The seal population was almost destroyed by that.
- One participant said that Churchill is the reason that polar bears are decreasing. For example, sports hunters harvest caribou down near Churchill. But if the caribou population decreases, Inuit will be blamed. It seems that the rich sports hunters are the ones controlling everything.
- Inuit are not causing the polar bears to decline.
- One participant said that in the presentation, only scrawny, dirty bears are shown in an attempt to demonstrate to Inuit that bears are starving. The healthy bears should be shown.
- Polar bears are very scrawny now, whereas they used to be fat and healthy.
- If any species is going to be added to SARA, Inuit should be consulted first.
- Inuit in Nunavut may be left with no more polar bears to hunt due to overharvesting in Greenland, if nobody is going to enforce quotas in Greenland.
- The federal government should be up here to help Inuit, not to enforce rules on what Inuit can or cannot do. But sometimes it seems that they are more worried about the polar bear and other species than about Inuit. This can make Inuit very angry and there have been instances of confrontation.
- One participant said that maybe the guides in Churchill that make money from the tourists seeing polar bears will not be happy if the population decreases. But he thinks that maybe Greenpeace is bribing the people in Churchill to say that the polar bear population is decreasing.
- This report should be given to the government as well so they will know what Inuit think about polar bears. Elders put effort into their words and this shouldn't go to waste.

### Research

- The chasing of polar bears by helicopter should stop. This activity scares polar bears and causes hearing loss. The bears are then not scared off by rifle shots. It also affects their hunting because they cannot hear seals come up in their holes. This activity and tranquilization are why polar bears are very scrawny now. The polar bear and all species should be respected.
- The way that scientists take the ears off the polar bears is also not right.
- The presence of chemicals in polar bear meat makes it inedible. Since the early 1980s, there have been a lot of animals being tranquilized, especially polar bears. This practice should stop.

- One participant said he doesn't think that scientists know about the number of seals or how to find out the number of seals. He doesn't think anybody will ever find out what's happening with seals.
- Right now the CWS researchers are just doing an estimate. They have never told Inuit an exact number of polar bears. Improvement is needed.
- Inuit should be involved in scientific studies so that they can pass on the information about how studies are done to their fellow Inuit. Ever since the polar bear population started increasing, Inuit have not been involved in studies. Inuit haven't heard about how the studies are conducted—for example, the study that was done last year. Maybe this is why Inuit are so against the science.
- Inuit need to be heard too. They should be listened to as they are telling the truth. Scientists have been known to make mistakes and later admit that they were wrong.
- There are lots of times when scientists don't know what they are doing up here. You would not see Inuit going south to count southern wildlife, because they probably wouldn't even know where to start.

#### Quotas

- When the quota system was introduced in the 1970s, Inuit were not happy about it. Then the quota cut this past year led to an unhappy period in Hudson Bay. Inuit are unhappy with this mistreatment from the government. Inuit are not to be blamed yet are suffering from this. IQ has not told Inuit to not harvest polar bears.
- Inuit get very angry when the skin from a defense kill gets taken away.
- Yet in some part of the world people are making money from putting polar bears in zoos while the polar bears suffer. In Churchill they hold polar bears for tourists to see. In some parts of Nunavut people are making money from sports hunts. This should not be allowed if Inuit here in this region are not allowed to harvest polar bears even for consumption and for domestic use.
- One participant said that women were shocked that there were no quotas in Whale Cove anymore.
- One participant said that when they heard about the quota cut, people figured the new number was per community. It was something else when they realized that the quota number was actually going to be split between three communities.
- One participant said that he grew up eating polar meat and is still craving for meat. But last year no polar bear was harvested. He said it seems like starvation.
- The enforcement of hunting bans for any species on Inuit is not right.
- Jackie (HTO Director) said that if Inuit are told to follow harvesting quotas for a certain species, the other wildlife species that kill off that species should be considered as well. For example, wolves that predate caribou or killer whales that kill a lot of sea mammals.

- When quotas were introduced more polar bears were actually killed than before. For example, before the quota system Inuit were harvesting around 25-30 bears in this region. The quota introduced was 75, so Inuit harvested 75 as they thought they had to meet the quota. Somebody made a mistake.

#### Inuit Qaujimaqatugangit (IQ)

- IQ taught Inuit never to overharvest animals. No meat was ever wasted. Inuit had to respect wildlife in order to survive, because they relied on them for food.
- IQ was not written down as law in black and white. It was all in people's heads.
- Inuit don't have the funding to document IQ, so it's a struggle to get IQ considered.
- The government today says that it is using IQ, but this is not the case. Not even half of IQ is being used.
- IQ is useful, but sometimes even Inuit don't use their ancestor's knowledge. For example, sometimes people kill an animal and then don't use the meat. This is not an Inuk practice. There are not many harvesters left that still practice IQ.
- IQ says that animals have cycles; they will disappear and then come back. That could be what is happening with the polar bear right now. Each generation is trying to be concerned about something that is very new to us.
- IQ says that any animal that disappears will eventually return. But this is not necessarily true today. All of the other places that the animals go to have to be considered as well—e.g. caribou migrate through Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and the Northwest Territories as well as Nunavut. There should be something set up between the federal government and Inuit to deal with these issues.
- IQ says that when the number of a species is too great, the species will die off by themselves, but scientists don't seem to agree. The participant said that, for example, back in 1975 on Coates Island, his father used to kill many caribou, saying that the number would get too great and they would die off. But the government made this killing of caribou illegal.

## **Coral Harbour—HTO Directors Meeting**

### **Consultation on the Proposed Listing of the Polar Bear as a species of Special Concern under the federal *Species at Risk Act***

April 14, 2009 at 2:00 pm  
Aiviit HTO Office, Coral Harbour, NU

#### *Present*

- Noah Kadlak, Chairperson, Aiviit HTO
- Willie Nakoolak, Secretary-Treasurer, Aiviit HTO
- Charlie Angotealuk, Director, Aiviit HTO
- Daniel Shimout, Director, Aiviit HTO
- Moses Nakoolak, Director, Aiviit HTO
- Mike Emiktowt, Director, Aiviit HTO
- Noah Nakoolak, Manager, Aiviit HTO
- Kyle Wood, Conservation Officer, Government of Nunavut
- John Ayaruaq, Interpreter

#### *Consultation Support*

- None

#### *Consultation Team*

- Heather Main, Canadian Wildlife Service, Iqaluit
- Claudine Vallerand, Canadian Wildlife Service, Iqaluit

#### *Discussion*

- Several of the HTO Directors said that they do not support the listing right now. This is because Inuit know the land and know that there are many polar bears. They are not concerned about the polar bear population at all. One participant said that he doesn't think polar bears will be endangered for another 100 years.
- There are lots of polar bears when people go camping. There are a lot of tracks. Charlie said that he has noticed more bears every year when camping in the summer near town. Noah K. said he saw 10 bears and 25 cubs on Bell Peninsula. If there were that many just in a small area, there must be many more elsewhere.
- One participant said that polar bears eat walrus and eggs so he is not worried about them with respect to climate change. On Southampton Island there are two bird sanctuaries so there are lots of eggs.
- People try not to kill the bears they encounter when camping but sometimes there is no choice.
- Charlie said that he understands the concerns about climate change, and agrees that climate change would have a lot to do with what's happening with the polar bear population. But he does not agree with the way that polar bear research is being carried out.

- Charlie said that not just the polar bear is affected by climate change. Other species are affected as well, for example, seals and walrus. Birds are being seen that had never been seen before. There are some birds that are not seen as much anymore. They are not necessarily declining in number; it could just be a change in migration.
- One participant said he does not agree with collaring and tranquilizing of bears, after which the meat cannot be eaten for 45 days.
- Daniel said that he thinks that the polar bears up near Coral Harbour are healthier as they haven't been tranquilized yet as they have been in Churchill. The bears in Churchill are unhealthy, skinny and too lazy to hunt. They eat garbage instead.
- Noah K. said that scientists do their studies when the bears are swimming in the ocean or hunting somewhere, not when they're on the ice. Thus they do not see a lot of bears and the counts are not accurate. For example, scientists did research around 2006 or 2007 in September/October. It would be better if they did their studies in March/April when the sea ice is frozen, the bears are mating and every female and her cubs are out of their dens. Willie also said that scientists should do research in March/April/May when there is ice, if they are so concerned about climate change and polar bears. Then they could survey all the way to the floe edge, instead of only surveying the shoreline and seeing only 50% of the population. Charlie said that there are bears that stay out on the water or ice all year round and do not touch land at all.
- Charlie said he does not like the tagging of polar bears. However, if scientists must study the bears they should do surveys in all different seasons, many times throughout the year. Polar bears roam around at any time of year, especially in the summer. They should not just study once a year in the winter. In the winter, mothers are in dens with cubs.
- Charlie said he would be interested to learn more about how the scientists do their counts.
- If it is information from this inaccurate type of study that is considered in the COSEWIC assessment, then the assessment is not accurate.
- Participants said they understood that Inuit harvesting rights would be protected if the bear was listed. However, participants wondered about whether the listing would affect import and export of polar bear parts or sports hunting.
- Inuit know more about the land than the scientists. IQ is the same as an education.
- Noah K. said that he is not sure if IQ is being considered. At the Wildlife Symposium in Rankin Inlet in March, there was supposed to be gathering of IQ but instead it was mostly presentations from scientists and organizations. The focus groups on issues didn't work out very well. He felt that the participants didn't get to give enough input.
- Researchers say that IQ is always involved when they do research. Willie said that IQ is involved during the process but it does not show in the end. IQ is not used in the end; it is not one of the options for decision-making.

## **Coral Harbour—Public Meeting**

### **Consultation on the Proposed Listing of the Polar Bear as a species of Special Concern under the federal *Species at Risk Act***

April 14, 2009 at 7:00 pm  
Community Hall, Coral Harbour, NU

#### *Present*

- Members of the public: approximately 30 people
- Noah Kadlak, Chairperson, Aiviit HTO
- Willie Nakoolak, Secretary-Treasurer, Aiviit HTO
- Noah Nakoolak, Manager, Aiviit HTO
- John Ayaruaq, Interpreter

#### *Consultation Support*

- Michel Akkuardjuk, Kivalliq Wildlife Board

#### *Consultation Team*

- Heather Main, Canadian Wildlife Service, Iqaluit
- Claudine Vallerand, Canadian Wildlife Service, Iqaluit

#### *Discussion*

- Noah (HTO Chair) said he does not support the listing and that the HTO does not support the listing. He is worried that the listing would affect the sale of polar bear parts domestically and internationally or would affect Inuit harvesting.
- Participants said that the polar bear should not be put on SARA.
- COSEWIC should look into other species before the polar bear.
- Participants said that they do not agree that the polar bear population is decreasing. The polar bear population has increased around Coral Harbour. The population of polar bears in the area is high. They know as hunters who go out on the land that the number of polar bears in the COSEWIC report is not accurate at all. There are more polar bears than reported in the COSEWIC report.
- At Cape Dyer (DEW site), there are a lot of polar bears. There were 30-35 polar bears in a 2-3 miles radius area. They need to have 10-15 polar bear monitors for 24 hours a day. The polar bears climb up the mountains sometimes to cool off. It's scary to work there.
- There are lots of bears in the summertime at Wager Bay. The polar bear population decreased when they were doing seismic studies there but now they are returning back. Wager Bay is in Foxe Basin and it seems that polar bear biologists always exclude Wager Bay.
- Sometimes polar bears go hungry, and then they come to communities and scare Inuit.

- Climate change is not going to affect the polar bear because the climate is still very cold.
- According to IQ, polar bears are not a species at risk. IQ says that when any species is overpopulated, they tend to die off or move on. Any species that is overpopulated can become very dangerous.
- Polar bears are not idle. They continuously move to other places.
- One participant said that he thinks critical habitat designation would be impossible for the polar bear. When the ice forms from Southampton Island to the mainland, polar bears can go anywhere. Another participant said that protecting critical habitat in the north is not the same as in the south. In the north, there are no sanctuaries for wildlife (except birds). Polar bears move all over the islands, the ice, etc. They cannot be controlled or penned up in one critical area.
- Inuit always said that species that decrease in number will rebound after a few years.
- One participant said that IQ says that there are no declines in populations of any species. He believes in IQ over scientific information.
- Inuit are not causing the polar bear population to decline.
- It seems that no one is considering the effect of ships that come through Hudson Strait and Foxe Basin to the communities, e.g. ships for mining companies, barges. There are also the shrimp trawlers in the Baffin Bay area. The ships are very loud and sometimes this makes the seals disappear. Polar bears are always moving around, they will move and follow seals to other areas. It is the ship activities that should be blamed. Sound moves a long way in the water.
- Noise pollution in general should be taken into consideration.
- There was a question about whether the USA influences Canada's species at risk process. One participant said that he thinks the US listing of the polar bear as Threatened influenced the government to start imposing regulations in the north.
- There was a question about whether COSEWIC has dialogues with other countries about species at risk, and whether there are international members on COSEWIC.
- It's very difficult when proposals are made to list species under SARA, because ever since the political agenda started in the 1950s or 1960s, things have been imposed on Inuit.

### Research

- One participant asked whether, if there was a proper count done in Foxe Basin, it would help to convince people that the polar bear does not have to be listed.
- One participant said that he agrees with the 2300 estimate for the Foxe Basin subpopulation.
- When biologists started tranquilizing bears, Inuit had no idea that tranquilized bears were not fit for human consumption. It is only today that Inuit have heard this from

other scientists around the world. Back then Inuit were too timid to understand what was happening.

- One participant said that bears that have been collared sometimes die off by themselves. Polar bears are also inedible when they have been tranquilized. He is against the handling of wildlife by scientists.
- Noah (HTO Chair) said that he is not satisfied with the COSEWIC report because they used scientific research done at the wrong time of year. Scientists often do studies when there is no ice and polar bears are moving around. They should do research all year round or at least when there is sea ice on Hudson Bay. They also say in the report that Foxe Basin is data deficient. The research/report should be re-done before COSEWIC proposes a listing.
- The biologists should be here year round to get accurate information. There should be full-time resident biologists in each area. That way they would get more help from the local community as well.
- One participant said that COSEWIC should not consider the polar bear as 'at risk' before getting more information. It is hard to count a little bear in the big ocean.
- Researchers only come for a few weeks at a time. If Inuit did the research themselves, the COSEWIC status report would be a lot different.
- It is possible for the HTO to conduct its own research on polar bears. They can ask for funding from the NWMB.
- One participant said that it's frustrating that research work is kept away for so long before consultations. He thinks that maybe when consultations start decisions have already been made. He remembers back in 1984, Mitch Taylor presented a graphical chart which was not based on actual fieldwork as the study wasn't yet in full swing. That was offensive.
- There was a question about whether it was possible, after the consultations, for COSEWIC to put the polar bear in the Data Deficient category instead.

#### Consultations

- There was a question about whether the opinions given in the consultations were really going to matter as to whether the polar bear is listed or not.
- There are always public hearings about polar bears held by various organizations. The information gathered should be considered more and combined.
- COSEWIC should consider the public input gathered during consultations in their status report.
- The IQ from symposium and organizations, etc. is included but it's not enough. It is not the full IQ.
- One participant said that for a proper consultation, he would like American scientists who think the population is decreasing to be present here. There are a number of issues he would like to address with them. He cannot agree that polar bears are declining in number.

- If a COSEWIC member came up here they would get a good view of the situation. It varies between communities.
- There was a question about why consultations haven't occurred on species that are already listed under SARA.
- There should have been more advance notice given for the consultation, e.g. months before.
- One participant said that someone should ensure that people in Coral Harbour who are not attending the consultation should be given the information on the listing and notified about the response forms.

#### Quotas

- There were a lot of people who didn't want to sign the NLCA because the quota system had already been introduced and they believed Inuit were going to be losing their rights. But Inuit were told that if the NLCA was signed, Inuit would be able to continue to harvest polar bears.
- With respect to the lack of quotas or enforcement in northern Quebec and Greenland, Inuit in Nunavut were in the same situation before quotas were introduced. Polar bears were never killed off.
- They don't have quotas in Greenland and Quebec and polar bears move to those places from the Foxe Basin subpopulation.
- Sports hunters are allowed to hunt with bow and arrow and harpoons, yet Inuit are forbidden to do so.
- American scientists say that the number of polar bears is decreasing, yet American hunters come here for sports hunting. Do they know how many American hunters come here?

## **Repulse Bay—HTO Directors Meeting**

### **Consultation on the Proposed Listing of the Polar Bear as a species of Special Concern under the federal *Species at Risk Act***

April 15, 2009 at 2:00 pm

Arviq HTO Office, Repulse Bay, NU

#### *Present*

- Michel Akkuardjuk, Chairperson, Arviq HTO
- Mary Tuktudjuk, Vice-Chair, Arviq HTO
- Peter Mannik, Director, Arviq HTO
- Joe Nanordluk, Director, Arviq HTO
- Romeo Kopak, Director, Arviq HTO
- John Ivalutanar, Director, Arviq HTO
- Louis Angotingoar, Director, Arviq HTO
- John Ayaruaq, Interpreter

#### *Consultation Support*

- Michel Akkuardjuk, Kivalliq Wildlife Board

#### *Consultation Team*

- Heather Main, Canadian Wildlife Service, Iqaluit
- Claudine Vallerand, Canadian Wildlife Service, Iqaluit

#### *Discussion*

- The directors said that they are not in favour of COSEWIC's recommendation to list the polar bear.
- The directors said that they cannot say that the polar bear population is declining. They think the population is increasing. Back in 1980 and before then there were no polar bears. John said that when he was a child it was rare to see a polar bear harvested. Just recently they have increased a lot in number. Today, if people were still allowed to hunt without quotas, they would be able to catch lots of polar bears.
- Joe said he doesn't agree with COSEWIC's idea that the number of polar bears is declining. He doesn't agree because polar bears are coming into communities. Perhaps they are attracted to the dump and garbage.
- There are hardly any polar bears in mid-winter, but in the spring time there will be lots of polar bears around. It seems that they appear in the spring time when it's warm. People have to keep an eye out when camping because there are too many polar bears.
- When there are few of a species, they tend to fear humans. But polar bears are not afraid of humans anymore. They are no longer running away from humans.

- Michel said that it seems COSEWIC is focusing on the Western Hudson Bay (WHB) subpopulation but he thinks polar bears have just moved away from WHB.
- The ringed seal population near Repulse Bay, in Foxe Basin and the Gulf of Boothia, is very healthy. There doesn't seem to be any effect on the polar bear with respect to the seal population, because the seals are so abundant.
- The directors said they don't agree that climate change will affect polar bears.
- Michel said that he doesn't believe that climate change is happening in the region. In fact, it's very cold. There are lot more polar bears when it's warmer in the spring.
- Inuit ancestors used to say that it's normal for the ice to be different every year. Sometimes the ice is around all summer and sometimes it is not.
- Joe said that scientists only do estimates when they count polar bears. He asked whether the coloured numbers on polar bears represent actual numbers or just estimates.
- Joe said that he has twice witnessed numbered polar bears (that have been tranquilized) that when harvested are found to be dying because they were very skinny. He said he's sure there are unreported incidents of scientists accidentally killing polar bears, maybe because the anesthetic is too strong.
- There was a question about what the effects of a Management Plan would be.
- There was a question about why there is a moratorium on hunting in M'Clintock Channel when the population of polar bears there is increasing.
- Before the introduction of quotas, Inuit used to be able to harvest any polar bear they saw. They harvested for them to eat or for dog food.

## **Repulse Bay—Public Meeting**

### **Consultation on the Proposed Listing of the Polar Bear as a species of Special Concern under the federal *Species at Risk Act***

April 15, 2009 at 7:00 pm  
Tusarvik School, Repulse Bay, NU

#### *Present*

- Members of the public: approximately 9 people
- Michel Akkuardjuk, Chairperson, Arviq HTO
- Mary Tukudjuk, Vice-Chair, Arviq HTO
- Peter Mannik, Director, Arviq HTO
- Romeo Kopak, Director, Arviq HTO
- John Ivalutanar, Director, Arviq HTO
- John Ayaruaq, Interpreter

#### *Consultation Support*

- Michel Akkuardjuk, Kivalliq Wildlife Board

#### *Consultation Team*

- Heather Main, Canadian Wildlife Service, Iqaluit
- Claudine Vallerand, Canadian Wildlife Service, Iqaluit

#### *Discussion*

- Participants said that they do not agree with putting the polar bear on SARA right now, not even as Special Concern.
- One participant said that Inuit want to continue to hunt their own species and not put any species on SARA.
- Inuit don't seem to be concerned about what white people are concerned about. Maybe it is a cultural difference.

#### Number of bears

- Many participants said that the situation is very clear—it's the direct opposite of what COSEWIC says. In Repulse Bay the polar bear population is increasing, although they are told that it is decreasing. A lot more polar bears are seen now, especially in the summer time. There are too many polar bears now. There are many different polar bears down at the floe edge in the spring. One participant said that he saw 17 polar bears catching seals in one little inlet. He thinks there must have been lots more in the surroundings that weren't seen.
- In all of Foxe Basin the polar bear population is increasing.
- In 1965/1970 there were no polar bears in the area. Two participants said they never used to see any polar bears when they were younger. They used to camp without a rifle. There were no problems with polar bears in the 1960s and 1970s.

### Danger from polar bears

- Many participants talked about how polar bears are very scary and dangerous. Polar bear behavior has changed. They are not afraid of humans, bangers, or even rifle shots anymore. Now people are afraid to go camping or to go just outside the community without a rifle. People have to stay in the community now. This is heard from other communities as well. People have to keep an eye out, especially in the summer. One woman said she wanted to stay at her cabin for longer but had to return because there were polar bears looking in through the windows. When camping, people have to kill bears in defence. In the summer 7 bears had to be killed for defence. One participant said that once when he went camping, he was lucky he had a dog as it's the only reason he's still alive. Another participant said he has had to chase polar bears around barefoot. One participant said that at the floe edge in the spring, he is afraid to go to sleep. A polar bear monitor is needed at all times. One participant told stories of polar bear attacks in Wager Bay.
- Polar bears are one of the smartest animals. They can approach people without their knowledge. This is why Inuit are afraid of them.
- Inuit should be put on SARA because polar bears are bothering them so much.
- Property like tents and cabins are being destroyed by polar bears. Near Repulse Bay two tents were destroyed by polar bears.
- There is no longer any point in making dried fish because it's just eaten by polar bears. Food can't be cached anymore because polar bears will eat it. Caches are used for good reason, in order to eat in the winter. Now food has to be brought in to the community. Caches never used to be disturbed.
- Polar bears are coming into communities now.

### Movement of bears

- Polar bears move and Inuit know it. Parents used to say that polar bears are not idle. The polar bear population can decrease and they can seem to disappear some years but they will come back eventually.
- One participant said that there is still a lot of ice in Western Hudson Bay so he doesn't think that is the reason for polar bear decline. Churchill is a good example. There used to be a lot of bears in Churchill. Now they seem to have disappeared because there is no more garbage and feeding by the American military. All polar bears are moving northwards.
- The polar bears that came from Churchill don't know how to hunt. They are scrawny and rely on garbage. When they saw buildings, they knew there was garbage so they came. The elders don't want to hunt them because they are very unhealthy animals.

### Climate change

- Three participants said they don't think climate change is going to be the main factor to affect polar bears. Polar bears still survive in zoos and in warmer places. They don't really rely on the ice. Polar bears are able hunters in the open sea. The ice will

go out in July/August as it has for centuries. There is no change for polar bears because they are hunters that can kill anything, e.g. walrus and bearded seals.

- One participant said he doesn't believe that climate change is happening because it is still very cold.
- Polar bears can fall asleep on the ice and then move to colder or warmer areas where they feel more comfortable.

### Research

- COSEWIC says the Foxe Basin subpopulation is 'unknown' but Repulse Bay is included in that subpopulation and the number of polar bears around Repulse Bay is known to be increasing. This should be fixed.
- There was a question about whether studies have been done in Foxe Basin. There was another question about when the counts in Foxe Basin and Davis Strait subpopulations will start so that they will no longer be 'unknown'.
- When bears are handled and tranquilized, they become aggressive and unafraid.
- One participant said that he found a dead polar bear that had been tagged and had starved on one of the islands. It was killed by a scientist due to handling. He doesn't like to see any animals tranquilized for studies. Another participant said he has seen some skinny polar bears that have been tranquilized. But perhaps they were naturally sick—polar bears do die naturally of illness sometimes. Both scrawny and healthy polar bears are seen when boating or ski-dooing.
- One participant said he thinks the study that was done in Western Hudson Bay was very inaccurate. He said scientists do counts in a rush just to say that the polar bear is decreasing in number.

### Inuk involvement

- Inuit are telling the truth and telling what they know. Inuit should be listened to as they know more than scientists about polar bears even if they don't have diplomas. If there are going to be studies done in Foxe Basin, Inuit should be involved.
- There was a question about whether there are Inuit on COSEWIC. One participant said he would like to see an Inuk really involved in COSEWIC.

### Seals

- One participant said that there used to be a lot of harp seals and now it seems that they are declining in number.
- One participant said that there is still an abundance of seals near Repulse Bay. It isn't right to say that they're decreasing in all communities just because the people of Arviat said their seals were decreasing in number.

### International

- One participant said that he is concerned about harvesting in Greenland and Alaska happening without the knowledge of people in Nunavut. He thinks that the two

countries should be included in the SARA stuff, not just Canada. He wondered who is responsible for Greenland—is it the USA or Denmark.

- One participant asked whether Alaska has polar bears or other species. The participant said that Alaska has never been mentioned during any consultations as it's not part of Canada.

#### Quotas

- One participant talked about how even if the polar bear is listed, Inuit are still protected by the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement. But he said it's impossible to harvest polar bears if the quotas are used up or the hunting season is over. He hasn't killed any polar bears in defence.
- When the quotas were cut down to a limited number the polar bears seemed to know and there were more than ever at that time.

## **Chesterfield Inlet—HTO Directors Meeting**

### **Consultation on the Proposed Listing of the Polar Bear as a species of Special Concern under the federal *Species at Risk Act***

April 16, 2009 at 2:00 pm

Aqigiq HTO Office, Chesterfield Inlet, NU

#### *Present*

- Leo Mimialik, Chairperson, Aqigiq HTO
- Lorraine Ipkarnerk, Vice-Chair, Aqigiq HTO
- Alice Kreealak, Secretary-Treasurer, Aqigiq HTO
- Leonie Mimialik, Director, Aqigiq HTO
- Lukie Sammurtok, Director, Aqigiq HTO
- Georgina Ipkarnerk, Director, Aqigiq HTO
- Jimmy Krako, Director, Aqigiq HTO
- Peter Kattegatsiak, Conservation Officer, Government of Nunavut
- John Ayaruaq, Interpreter

#### *Consultation Support*

- Michel Akkuardjuk, Kivalliq Wildlife Board

#### *Consultation Team*

- Heather Main, Canadian Wildlife Service, Iqaluit
- Claudine Vallerand, Canadian Wildlife Service, Iqaluit

#### *Discussion*

- The directors said that they do not want the polar bear listed under SARA, because the population is not decreasing.
- If polar bears were actually decreasing, there wouldn't be all the bears in Churchill for the tourists to go see.
- There are too many polar bears now. There are now lots of bears in the fall and spring time. Leo said that when he was a child it was rare for a polar bear to be harvested. Leonie said that when she was a child, they didn't worry about polar bears when camping.
- People can't take children out anymore because of polar bears. They can't enjoy camping anymore. There is a danger of polar bears killing humans. It is dangerous in Chesterfield Inlet from May to September.
- When the ice is not yet formed, polar bears bother people in the communities.
- Alice said that polar bears are going everywhere now; they go to places they have never been before e.g. Deline, NWT, because of climate change.
- Property, e.g. cabins, is being destroyed by polar bears. Property is expensive and is not compensated by the government with the exact same property that was destroyed.

- Science seems to label certain numbers of bears in Alaska, Greenland, Nunavut, etc. But polar bears move on ice, land, and water searching for food. They don't follow borders. For example, there are lots of polar bears in Sanikiluaq because they are going there from Churchill.
- Animals seem to move on. They disappear for a while but they tend to come back.
- Leo said he blames the people in Greenland and northern Quebec who don't have quotas. He believes they harvest a lot of polar bears. Until they introduce quotas to these areas, putting the polar bear on SARA won't help because polar bears move around between areas. In WHB quotas have been decreased and yet people in Greenland and northern Quebec are doing whatever they want. Jimmy also said that all countries and areas should have quotas. Quebec is also part of Canada, so they should have quotas.
- Inuit have tried to follow the quota system ever since it was introduced. Scientific knowledge is used in setting the quota system. They may be wrong with the quota system but they still don't listen to Inuit input.
- Leo said that because polar bears move back and forth, he wants scientists to do a thorough study in each community and Greenland and Northern Quebec as well. Scientists sometimes do not do thorough studies and this is why they believe the population of polar bears is decreasing.
- There should be research everywhere that there are bears to find out about them.
- Leonie said she doesn't think the scientists come up with accurate numbers because they use too many estimates when counting. COSEWIC and lawmakers should come up here and go out with Inuit harvesters to actually see the polar bears population themselves.
- There was a question about how long scientists stay in a community when they are assessing a species.
- There was a question about why the recovery document for a Special Concern species is called a "management" plan if quotas will not be affected by a Special Concern listing.
- Although Inuit have their land claims rights, they cannot hunt because there are not enough quotas. In Western Hudson Bay there aren't any quotas because they think the population is decreasing.
- Chesterfield Inlet has high unemployment yet in Churchill people are making money from having tourists come to see the polar bears.
- Leo said that at the NWMB meeting in Arviat, there were elders with IQ present. The NWMB tried to use IQ but in the end they relied on the scientific information. He was not satisfied with this. It seems that science will always be considered on top on IQ.
- Leo said that one of the reasons animals are dying off is that chemicals and gases like the ones used in wars are coming to the region.

- Inuit do not eat or harvest the small birds that are listed under SARA.
- Chesterfield Inlet has grizzly bears now. They are from the tree line. There never used to be grizzlies. Like polar bears, they are also destroying cabins.

## **Chesterfield Inlet—Public Meeting**

### **Consultation on the Proposed Listing of the Polar Bear as a species of Special Concern under the federal *Species at Risk Act***

April 16, 2009 at 7:00 pm  
Community Hall, Chesterfield Inlet, NU

#### *Present*

- Members of the public: 3 people
- Leo Mimialik, Chairperson, Aqigiq HTO
- John Ayaruaq, Interpreter

#### *Consultation Support*

- Michel Akkuardjuk, Kivalliq Wildlife Board

#### *Consultation Team*

- Heather Main, Canadian Wildlife Service, Iqaluit
- Claudine Vallerand, Canadian Wildlife Service, Iqaluit

#### *Discussion*

- Participants said that the polar bear can't be put under SARA as Inuit know there are too many polar bears. They are not concerned about polar bears. It can't be said that they are disappearing or declining because they are increasing in number. This needs to be understood. Inuit are saying the same thing everywhere in the Arctic. They completely disagree with COSEWIC.
- One participant said that they get tired of hearing about the decline in the polar bear population when in fact it is the opposite. When Inuit hear about species on SARA, they tend to think the opposite.
- The polar bear population has increased so much that Inuit are afraid to go camping or to enjoy a picnic on the islands. They are scared when collecting eggs.
- Inuit are taken advantage of by the polar bears. Inuit like to pick eggs but polar bears are eating eggs down at the islands before Inuit can get them.
- Polar bears are very fierce and dangerous. Inuit are afraid of them.
- Many tourists come to Wager Bay and they need an Inuk polar bear monitor because there are so many bears. White people say that the number of polar bears is decreasing and yet they need polar bear monitors for their safety. The tourists never tell the government that there are lots of polar bears in Wager Bay.
- The COSEWIC report says that the Foxe Basin subpopulation is unknown when in fact Inuit know that there are a lot of polar bears.
- There are lots of seals but polar bears don't eat only ringed seals, they also eat bearded seals, walrus, whales, etc. down at the salt water.

- Polar bears are very capable and smart. They can hunt seal in the open sea.
- COSEWIC is saying that bears belong in certain locations but Inuit know that polar bears have no boundaries. They move around on land, water, and ice continuously in search of food. Bears move between countries, e.g. from Alaska to Canada. Kivalliq polar bears travel back and forth to northern Quebec. Bears from Chesterfield to Churchill move to find habitat with an abundance of food.
- One participant said that he and many other people in Nunavut are against the tranquilization of polar bears by scientists. People, particularly elders, are craving for polar bear meat, which is a very delicious meat. But after tranquilization the meat is inedible. People are afraid to eat it.
- There was a question about whether mining companies do their own assessments to study the ecosystem. There are lots of species that rely on the ecosystem in the Arctic, in the Kivalliq. Since animals rely on plants, do they ever study plants?
- There was a question about whether Inuit are involved when scientists do their research, e.g. on caribou.
- Sometimes scientists don't know what they are doing when they study the polar bear. They don't understand polar bear behaviour.
- Inuit have a lot more knowledge than the scientists because Inuit live in the Arctic, even though Inuit do not have written knowledge. The scientists have everything written down so are believed more e.g. by COSEWIC. Inuit are never believed even though they know the animals best. If COSEWIC saw it on paper then they would believe it. COSEWIC just relies on information. They have never lived in Inuit land and they don't know the environment.
- Though they are not animal activists Inuit respect wildlife because they eat it.
- Even if people in Chesterfield Inlet say they do not think the polar bear should be listed, the scientists will end up saying and doing the opposite. These consultations are being done because the scientists think the polar bears are decreasing in number.
- One participant said that when the issue is brought to the NWMB and the Minister to discuss, he expects they'll decide that the polar bear should not be harvested anymore. He does not think Inuit will be believed as they do not write things down.
- One participant thought quotas should be increased because the polar bear is not declining in number. That way, once all of the quotas were used, they would believe the population is decreasing because of overharvesting.
- Leo (HTO Chair) said that although SARA doesn't affect harvesting rights under the NLCA, he doesn't think Inuit have any rights under the NLCA. An example is the lack of quotas in WHB this year. Guides in Churchill get lots of money from tourists going there just to see the bears. Yet they say the bears are declining in number and Inuit can't even hunt polar bears. The government seems to be taking advantage of Inuit.

- A quota system should be imposed on Greenland and northern Quebec in order to stabilize the polar bear population, because they are the ones killing off polar bears. There should be an agreement about the quota system. This should be dealt with first.
- One participant said he was glad that their opinions were being reported.
- People in Chesterfield Inlet tend to believe everything they are told so if they are told that a species is at risk, they will believe it.
- One participant said that they already know about SARA as they have been told about it before. He doesn't need to hear about it anymore.

***Appendix C. HTO Response Forms and Letters Received***

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## HTO Response Form

## Polar Bears

### Proposed Listing as a Species of Special Concern

HTO name: IKajutit  
Hunter's & Trappers Organization

Community: Arctic Bay

**The HTO's position/opinion on the proposed listing of Polar Bear as Special Concern:**

- The HTO Directors support the listing of Polar Bear as Special Concern
- The HTO Directors do not support the listing of Polar Bear as Special Concern
- The HTO Directors are indifferent to the listing of Polar Bear as Special Concern

**What are your reasons for this position?**

There are too many Polar Bears in our  
environment at the moment

You are also recommended to draft a letter if you wish your HTO's views to be reported verbatim. The letter should tell us your formal position (supports, does not support, or indifferent) and any other comments, concerns or information that should be considered in listing Polar Bears as Special Concern.

If you did not include a letter with this form, will you be sending one?  Yes  No

If yes, when can we expect to receive it? \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: [Handwritten Signature] Date: February 17, 2009

Title: Chairperson HTO

Please send this form and/or your letter to:	
Fax:	867-975-4645
Mail:	Species at Risk Biologist, Canadian Wildlife Service Box 1714, Iqaluit, NU, X0A 0H0
E-mail:	Heather.Main@ec.gc.ca
Please send your response to us by <b>March 31, 2009</b> .	

March 30 2009

Heather Main  
Canadian Wildlife Service  
Box 1714, Qimugjuk Bldg 969  
Iqaluit, Nunavut X0A 0H0

Ph (867) 975 4748  
Fax (867) 975 4645  
Email heather.main@ec.gc.ca

### Listing of Polar Bear as Special Concern

Thank you for giving us and more so for the people of Grise Fiord, a chance to express our concerns on COSEWIC's assessment of the Polar Bear as a species of Special Concern in Canada.

We concur and agree that the key points for this consultation are:

- Under SARA there is no requirement for harvest restrictions, quotas, tags or any other changes to harvesting practices if a species is listed as Special Concern,
- The main obligation is development of a national management plan for a Special Concern species,
- Development of the SARA management plan requires consultation with communities, and the plan must be approved by the NWMB.

The meetings both with the HTO and the public on February 18 2009 was very constructive and meaningful. What came out from these meetings was quite clear. To this effect, HTO does not support the proposed listing of the Polar Bear as a species of Special Concern.

Without repeating what had actually been said per vatum and depicted in your notes, both at the HTO and Public Meetings, Iviq HTO's overall position on your summary of notes is that they were fairly accurate. However, there seems to be too much of an emphasis on compensation. HTO will not substitute Inuit hunting rights and responsible management for compensation of money. It is no secret that there are economic benefits on the harvest of Polar Bear by the local people. Listing the PB as Special Concern would in fact be a "beginning of an end" of few benefits that Inuit has an option on in a very responsible way.

We want to thank-you and all the agencies concerned with the PB for giving us a chance to voice our concerns and look at the facts. Trusting our position will be respected, we remain.

Marty Kuluguqtuq  
Secretary Treasurer  
Iviq Hunters and Trappers Organization  
Grise Fiord

Environment  
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Canada

# HTO Response Form

## Polar Bears

### Proposed Listing as a Species of Special Concern

HTO name: AIVIIQ HTOCommunity: CAPE DORSET
**The HTO's position/opinion on the proposed listing of Polar Bear as Special Concern:**

- The HTO Directors support the listing of Polar Bear as Special Concern
- The HTO Directors do not support the listing of Polar Bear as Special Concern
- The HTO Directors are indifferent to the listing of Polar Bear as Special Concern

**What are your reasons for this position?**

LOTS OF BEARS RIGHT NOW.

MORE BEARS SPOTTED EACH YEAR.

You are also recommended to draft a letter if you wish your HTO's views to be reported verbatim. The letter should tell us your formal position (supports, does not support, or indifferent) and any other comments, concerns or information that should be considered in listing Polar Bears as Special Concern.

If you did not include a letter with this form, will you be sending one?  Yes  No

If yes, when can we expect to receive it? \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: [Handwritten Signature]Date: MAR. 18/09Title: SEC. TRÉS.

Please send this form and/or your letter to:

Fax: 867-975-4645

Mail: Species at Risk Biologist, Canadian Wildlife Service  
Box 1714, Iqaluit, NU, X0A 0H0

E-mail: Heather.Main@ec.gc.ca

Please send your response to us by **March 31, 2009.**



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## HTO Response Form

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# Polar Bears

## Proposed Listing as a Species of Special Concern

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HTO name: *Aiviq HTO*

Community: *Cape Dorset*

**The HTO's position/opinion on the proposed listing of Polar Bear as Special Concern:**

- The HTO Directors support the listing of Polar Bear as Special Concern
- The HTO Directors do not support the listing of Polar Bear as Special Concern
- The HTO Directors are indifferent to the listing of Polar Bear as Special Concern

**What are your reasons for this position?**

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You are also recommended to draft a letter if you wish your HTO's views to be reported verbatim. The letter should tell us your formal position (supports, does not support, or indifferent) and any other comments, concerns or information that should be considered in listing Polar Bears as Special Concern.

If you did not include a letter with this form, will you be sending one?  Yes  No

If yes, when can we expect to receive it? \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature:** *Josie Sharkey*

**Date:** *June 24/09*

**Title:** \_\_\_\_\_

Please send this form and/or your letter to:	
Fax:	<b>867-975-4645</b>
Mail:	<b>Species at Risk Biologist, Canadian Wildlife Service Box 1714, Iqaluit, NU, X0A 0H0</b>
E-mail:	<b>Heather.Main@ec.gc.ca</b>
Please send your response to us by <b>June 26, 2009.</b>	



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## HTO Response Form

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# Polar Bears

## Proposed Listing as a Species of Special Concern

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HTO name: *Aiviq HTO*

Community: *Cape Dorset*

**The HTO's position/opinion on the proposed listing of Polar Bear as Special Concern:**

- The HTO Directors support the listing of Polar Bear as Special Concern
- The HTO Directors do not support the listing of Polar Bear as Special Concern
- The HTO Directors are indifferent to the listing of Polar Bear as Special Concern

**What are your reasons for this position?**

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You are also recommended to draft a letter if you wish your HTO's views to be reported verbatim. The letter should tell us your formal position (supports, does not support, or indifferent) and any other comments, concerns or information that should be considered in listing Polar Bears as Special Concern.

If you did not include a letter with this form, will you be sending one?  Yes  No

If yes, when can we expect to receive it? \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature:** *Adamie Nuna*

**Date:** *June 24/09*

**Title:** \_\_\_\_\_

Please send this form and/or your letter to:

Fax: **867-975-4645**

Mail: **Species at Risk Biologist, Canadian Wildlife Service  
Box 1714, Iqaluit, NU, X0A 0H0**

E-mail: **Heather.Main@ec.gc.ca**

Please send your response to us by **June 26, 2009.**



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## HTO Response Form

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# Polar Bears

## Proposed Listing as a Species of Special Concern

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HTO name: *Aiviq HTO*

Community: *Cape Dorset*

**The HTO's position/opinion on the proposed listing of Polar Bear as Special Concern:**

- The HTO Directors support the listing of Polar Bear as Special Concern
- The HTO Directors do not support the listing of Polar Bear as Special Concern
- The HTO Directors are indifferent to the listing of Polar Bear as Special Concern

**What are your reasons for this position?**

*We do not want you to be concerned about the polar bears. There are too many polar bears now in Cape Dorset. Before there were hardly any polar bears. Now there are lots of polar bears everywhere not just in Cape Dorset. Before, we would only see their paw prints only once in a long while.*

You are also recommended to draft a letter if you wish your HTO's views to be reported verbatim. The letter should tell us your formal position (supports, does not support, or indifferent) and any other comments, concerns or information that should be considered in listing Polar Bears as Special Concern.

If you did not include a letter with this form, will you be sending one?  Yes  No

If yes, when can we expect to receive it? \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature:** *Negeoseak Peter*

**Date:** *June 24, 2009*

**Title:** \_\_\_\_\_

Please send this form and/or your letter to:

Fax: **867-975-4645**

Mail: **Species at Risk Biologist, Canadian Wildlife Service  
Box 1714, Iqaluit, NU, X0A 0H0**

E-mail: **Heather.Main@ec.gc.ca**

Please send your response to us by **June 26, 2009.**

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## HTO Response Form

## Polar Bears

### Proposed Listing as a Species of Special Concern

HTO name: Hall Beach Hunters & Trappers AssociationCommunity: Hall Beach
**The HTO's position/opinion on the proposed listing of Polar Bear as Special Concern:**

- The HTO Directors support the listing of Polar Bear as Special Concern
- The HTO Directors do not support the listing of Polar Bear as Special Concern
- The HTO Directors are indifferent to the listing of Polar Bear as Special Concern

**What are your reasons for this position?**

There are concerns about the effects of research methods, e.g. clipping of nails on Polar Bears. Clipping the nails affects their hunting ways and the Polar Bears gets really skinny.

You are also recommended to draft a letter if you wish your HTO's views to be reported verbatim. The letter should tell us your formal position (supports, does not support, or indifferent) and any other comments, concerns or information that should be considered in listing Polar Bears as Special Concern.

If you did not include a letter with this form, will you be sending one?  Yes  No

If yes, when can we expect to receive it? \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: [Handwritten Signature]Date: March 5 09

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Please send this form and/or your letter to:

Fax: 867-975-4645

Mail: Species at Risk Biologist, Canadian Wildlife Service  
Box 1714, Iqaluit, NU, X0A 0H0

E-mail: Heather.Main@ec.gc.ca

Please send your response to us by **March 31, 2009.**

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## HTO Response Form

## Polar Bears

### Proposed Listing as a Species of Special Concern

HTO name: SANIKILUAQ HUNTER-TRAPPERCommunity: SANIKILUAQ, NU

The HTO's position/opinion on the proposed listing of Polar Bear as Special Concern:

- The HTO Directors support the listing of Polar Bear as Special Concern
- The HTO Directors do not support the listing of Polar Bear as Special Concern
- The HTO Directors are indifferent to the listing of Polar Bear as Special Concern

What are your reasons for this position?

REASON AT BOARD LEVEL AND  
PUBLIC MEETINGS

You are also recommended to draft a letter if you wish your HTO's views to be reported verbatim. The letter should tell us your formal position (supports, does not support, or indifferent) and any other comments, concerns or information that should be considered in listing Polar Bears as Special Concern.

If you did not include a letter with this form, will you be sending one?  Yes  No

If yes, when can we expect to receive it? \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: J. ARAGUINADate: July 2/09Title: Chairman

Please send this form and/or your letter to:

Fax: **867-975-4645**Mail: **Species at Risk Biologist, Canadian Wildlife Service**  
**Box 1714, Iqaluit, NU, X0A 0H0**E-mail: **Heather.Main@ec.gc.ca**

Please send your response to us by **June 26, 2009**.

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## HTO Response Form

## Polar Bears

### Proposed Listing as a Species of Special Concern

HTO name: MayukalikCommunity: Kimmirut
**The HTO's position/opinion on the proposed listing of Polar Bear as Special Concern:**

- The HTO Directors support the listing of Polar Bear as Special Concern
- The HTO Directors do not support the listing of Polar Bear as Special Concern
- The HTO Directors are indifferent to the listing of Polar Bear as Special Concern

**What are your reasons for this position?**

There seem to be more polar bear around Hi's area

You are also recommended to draft a letter if you wish your HTO's views to be reported verbatim. The letter should tell us your formal position (supports, does not support, or indifferent) and any other comments, concerns or information that should be considered in listing Polar Bears as Special Concern.

If you did not include a letter with this form, will you be sending one?  Yes  No

If yes, when can we expect to receive it? Feb, 19, 2009

Signature: [Signature] Date: Feb

Title: Conservation Officer

Please send this form and/or your letter to:  
 Fax: 867-975-4645  
 Mail: Species at Risk Biologist, Canadian Wildlife Service  
 Box 1714, Iqaluit, NU, X0A 0H0  
 E-mail: Heather.Main@ec.gc.ca

Please send your response to us by <<DEADLINE>>





07-28-09; 04:28PM;

; 1-867-982-5912 # 3/ 3

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We want to hear from you.  
Please fax this form to  
**867-873-6776**

## Polar Bears

### Proposed Listing as a Species of Special Concern

#### Hunters and Trappers Committee Response Form

#### Kugluktuk Hunters & Trappers Committee

Please tell us what the HTO position/opinion is on the proposed listing of polar bear as a species of Special Concern under the federal *Species at Risk Act*.

#### The HTO's position/opinion on the proposed listing of Polar Bear as Special Concern:

- The Kugluktuk Hunters & Trappers Organization Directors support the listing of Polar Bear as Special Concern
- The Kugluktuk Hunters & Trappers Organization Directors do not support the listing of Polar Bear as Special Concern
- The Kugluktuk Hunters & Trappers Organization Directors are indifferent to the listing of Polar Bear as Special Concern

If you did not include a letter with this form, will you be sending one?  Yes  No

When can we expect to receive it? \_\_\_\_\_

- Tell us your formal position (supports, does not support, or indifferent) and any other comments, concerns or information that should be considered in listing Polar Bears as a species of Special Concern under the Species at Risk Act.

Please forward your letters to: **Species at Risk Biologist, Canadian Wildlife Service**  
PO Box 2310, Yellowknife, NT X1A 2P7

Please send this form or your letter by 29 May 2009 so that we can include it in a consultation report to the NWMB and to the Minister of Environment.

Signature: 

Date: July 28/09

Title: ASSISTANT MANAGER

**Canada**



We want to hear from you. Please fax this form to 867-873-6776

# Polar Bears

## Proposed Listing as a Species of Special Concern

### Hunters and Trappers Committee Response Form

#### Ekaluktutiak Hunters & Trappers Committee

Please tell us what the HTO position/opinion is on the proposed listing of polar bear as a species of Special Concern under the federal *Species at Risk Act*.

**The HTO's position/opinion on the proposed listing of Polar Bear as Special Concern:**

The Ekaluktutiak Hunters & Trappers Organization Directors support the listing of Polar Bear as Special Concern

The Ekaluktutiak Hunters & Trappers Organization Directors do not support the listing of Polar Bear as Special Concern

The Ekaluktutiak Hunters & Trappers Organization Directors are indifferent to the listing of Polar Bear as Special Concern

If you did not include a letter with this form, will you be sending one?  Yes  No

When can we expect to receive it? \_\_\_\_\_

- Tell us your formal position (supports, does not support, or indifferent) and any other comments, concerns or information that should be considered in listing Polar Bears as a species of Special Concern under the Species at Risk Act.

Please forward your letters to: **Species at Risk Biologist, Canadian Wildlife Service**  
PO Box 2310, Yellowknife, NT X1A 2P7

Please send this form or your letter by 29 May 2009 so that we can include it in a consultation report to the NWMB and to the Minister of Environment.

Signature: [Handwritten Signature]

Date: June 10 09

Title: Chairman EHTO



Lucassie Nakoolak  
President  
Spence Bay Hunters and Trappers Association  
P.O. Box 20  
Taloyoak, Nunavut  
XOB 1B0  
**Phone 867 561-5066**

January 30, 2009

**FAXED**

Donna Mulders  
Environment Canada  
Prairie and Northern Region  
5204-50th Avenue Suite 301  
Yellowknife, NT  
XIA 1E2

**Re: Proposed Listing of Polar Bears on "Species at Risk Act"**

Dear Donna,

This letter is in response to your letter dated January 26, 2009 in regards to "Species at Risk" Consultation on Proposed Listing of the Polar Bear.

Board of Directors of Spence Bay Hunters and Trappers Association had a meeting and your letter was tabled and discussed. We are **not in favor** of listing the Polar Bear as "Species at Risk Act" for a number of reasons:

- so called scientific information is outdated and being used to determine how many bears can be harvested.
- Inuit Traditional Knowledge regarding the Polar Bears not being taken seriously when it comes to Polar Bear management.
- present Polar Bear management plan is based on inaccurate, outdated scientific study of Polar Bears.
- Polar Bear population increased and threat to humans out on the land.
- polar bear meat is staple diet of Inuit and culturally important to harvest Polar Bears.

These are some of the reasons why we as board of directors do not want to put the Polar Bears in the Species at Risk Act. Other reasons can be obtained from the general public of Taloyoak.

We are formally inviting you to meet with Spence Bay Hunters and Trappers Association and hold a public meeting on Monday, April 6, 2009. We also want representatives from Nunavut Wildlife Management Board, Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated, Department of Fisheries and Oceans, Department of Environment to be included as observers to hear Inuit of Taloyoak concerns regarding Polar Bears. Look forward to a positive response in regards to our request.

Sincerely,

Lucassie Nakoolak  
President; Spence Bay Hunters and Trappers Association

cc. NWMB, NTI, DFO, Dept. of Environment

We want to hear from you.  
Please fax this form to  
**867-873-6776**

## Polar Bears

### Proposed Listing as a Species of Special Concern

#### Hunters and Trappers Committee Response Form

#### Kurairojuark Hunters & Trappers Committee

Please tell us what the HTO position/opinion is on the proposed listing of polar bear as a species of Special Concern under the federal *Species at Risk Act*.

#### The HTO's position/opinion on the proposed listing of Polar Bear as Special Concern:

- The Kurairojuark Hunters & Trappers Organization Directors support the listing of Polar Bear as Special Concern
- The Kurairojuark Hunters & Trappers Organization Directors do not support the listing of Polar Bear as Special Concern
- The Kurairojuark Hunters & Trappers Organization Directors are indifferent to the listing of Polar Bear as Special Concern

If you did not include a letter with this form, will you be sending one?  Yes  No

When can we expect to receive it? Between July 6-10, 2009

- Tell us your formal position (supports, does not support, or indifferent) and any other comments, concerns or information that should be considered in listing Polar Bears as a species of Special Concern under the Species at Risk Act.

Please forward your letters to: **Species at Risk Biologist, Canadian Wildlife Service**  
PO Box 2310, Yellowknife, NT X1A 2P7

Please send this form or your letter by **29 May 2009** so that we can include it in a consultation report to the NWMB and to the Minister of Environment.

Signature: 

Date: July 2, 2009

Title: Chairperson

**Canada**



We want to hear from you. Please fax this form to 867-975-4645

# Polar Bears

## Proposed Listing as a Species of Special Concern

Would the Kangiqtinig HTO like CWS to visit Rankin Inlet, NU to talk about the proposed listing of Polar Bears?  Yes  No

If your answer is YES:

Is March 31, 2009 a good date to meet?  Yes  No

• HTO Directors Meeting – afternoon  Yes  No

• Public Meeting – evening  Yes  No

If this date does not work, please suggest other possible dates:

Once we get your response, we will call you to make arrangements for the meeting.

If your answer is NO:

Do you have enough information to make a decision on your position/opinion on the proposed listing of polar bear as Special Concern?  Yes  No

**The HTO's position/opinion on the proposed listing of Polar Bear as Special Concern:**

The Kangiqtinig HTO Directors support the listing of Polar Bear as Special Concern

The Kangiqtinig HTO Directors do not support the listing of Polar Bear as Special Concern

The Kangiqtinig HTO Directors are indifferent to the listing of Polar Bear as Special

If you did not include a letter with this form, will you be sending one?  Yes  No

When can we expect to receive it? \_\_\_\_\_

- Tell us your formal position (supports, does not support, or indifferent) and any other comments, concerns or information that should be considered in listing Polar Bears as Special Concern

Please forward your letters to: Species at Risk Biologist, Canadian Wildlife Service  
Box 1714, Iqaluit, NU X0A 0H0

Please send this form or your letter by May 1, 2009 so that we can include it in a consultation report to the NWMB and to the Minister of Environment.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: April 23, 09

Title: Manager KHTO



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## HTO Response Form

## Polar Bears

### Proposed Listing as a Species of Special Concern

HTO name: Arviat Hunters + Trappers OrganizationCommunity: Arviat
**The HTO's position/opinion on the proposed listing of Polar Bear as Special Concern:**

- The HTO Directors support the listing of Polar Bear as Special Concern
- The HTO Directors do not support the listing of Polar Bear as Special Concern
- The HTO Directors are indifferent to the listing of Polar Bear as Special Concern

**What are your reasons for this position?**

Arviat residents and HTO are not satisfied with  
COSEWIC finalized assessment and update status  
report on the polar bear in Canada.

You are also recommended to draft a letter if you wish your HTO's views to be reported verbatim. The letter should tell us your formal position (supports, does not support, or indifferent) and any other comments, concerns or information that should be considered in listing Polar Bears as Special Concern.

If you did not include a letter with this form, will you be sending one?  Yes  No

If yes, when can we expect to receive it? \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: [Signature]Date: April 08, 2009Title: Arviat HTO President

Fax:

Please send this form and/or your letter to:

867-975-4645

Mail:

Species at Risk Biologist, Canadian Wildlife Service

Box 1714, Iqaluit, NU, X0A 0H0

E-mail:

Heather.Main@ec.gc.ca

Please send your response to us by **May 15, 2009**.

PowerPoint Presentation...Key Points from the COSEWIC Status report

*Western Hudson Bay Research* shows spring breakup shifted from late June to late May. Not true, breakup is anywhere from late June to early July with the earliest being June 18.

COSEWIC Assessment and Update Status Report on the Polar Bear

Page 28, section 6. 1, Food Availability...*some evidence that ringed seal population has been reduced by climate warming.*

Hunters have been reporting there are more ringed seals being sighted around Nunaala - old HBC post on Manitoba/Nunavut border. About the same time more killer whales and harp seals are being sighted off the coast of Arviat. Because of this the ringed seals may have moved further south as elders have always been saying that species will periodically relocate to other areas for different reasons. Another possible factor is the annual cod-fish derby held during May long weekend. Because of the prizes many locals do enter the derby and unfortunately could result with an unknown number of cod- fish that are too small not being released back to the bay. Current number of fish may now not be enough to sustain ringed seal population around Arviat.

Page 45, section 7.10, Western Hudson Bay...*present for several years near Arviat, from September to December, but have recently increased in number according to ATK, especially in September.*

Bears have always been sighted on the beach, close to or on the reefs off the McConnell River area during whale hunting periods in August. They are known to feed on the odd carcasses that wash up on the beach and there have been sightings of bears with cubs when locals are berry picking south of Arviat. Once main caribou harvesting starts in August and September, polar bears are being sighted digging up meat caches in areas 35 miles inland south of McConnell River, to 35 miles inland northwest of Arviat.

Page 46, *In summer of 2007,...mark-recapture survey...during the summer as suggested by ATK.*

The timing of the survey was when bears are not that mobile and would have avoided being in the direct sun as much as possible, Local assistant reported being told that the number of bears he had seen in the bay off the coast were not to be included and that only bears actually on the beach or land were to be concentrated on. Assistant also reported that the survey was not complete from Seal River to Chesterfield Inlet as intended. Mitch Taylor, biologist, mentioned he had to hurry back because of an upcoming trip to Alaska and was happy with what data they had collected up to that point. Team did not survey coastal area from Arviat to Kuuluk (river roughly 75 -80 miles south). Hunters that do overnight at or close to Nunaala have been reporting that there are usually more bears during evenings and nights when it's cooler. Mark-recapture report lists 2.5 bears over the few days of the survey. Compare timing since on Remembrance Day 2008, 12 bears were seen within 3 miles, from the rock island south of the airport to the point of Arviat, and 8 were seen within 2 miles between closet point of Sentry Island and Qikiqtaaryuk, long point located north of Arviat, Unknown if any were seen from east of Arviat up to Qikiqtaaryuk that same day but that is a possible total of 20 bears within an overall distance of 15 miles. ATK may have been misunderstood and were just trying to report that more bears are being sighted during summer.

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## HTO Response Form

## Polar Bears

### Proposed Listing as a Species of Special Concern

HTO name: Issatik Hunters & Trappers

Organization \_\_\_\_\_

Community: Whale Cove, NU XOC QTO
**The HTO's position/opinion on the proposed listing of Polar Bear as Special Concern:**

- The HTO Directors support the listing of Polar Bear as Special Concern
- The HTO Directors do not support the listing of Polar Bear as Special Concern
- The HTO Directors are indifferent to the listing of Polar Bear as Special Concern

**What are your reasons for this position?**

The Board feels the WHB Polar bear population is not declining, in fact there are more bears sighted every year.

You are also recommended to draft a letter if you wish your HTO's views to be reported verbatim. The letter should tell us your formal position (supports, does not support, or indifferent) and any other comments, concerns or information that should be considered in listing Polar Bears as Special Concern.

If you did not include a letter with this form, will you be sending one?  Yes  No

If yes, when can we expect to receive it? \_\_\_\_\_

Signature:  Date: June 4-09

Title: President H.T.O.

Please send this form and/or your letter to:

Fax: **867-975-4645**

Mail: **Species at Risk Biologist, Canadian Wildlife Service  
Box 1714, Iqaluit, NU, X0A 0H0**

E-mail: **Heather.Main@ec.gc.ca**

Please send your response to us by **May 15, 2009.**



# HTO Response Form

## Polar Bears Proposed Listing as a Species of Special Concern

HTO name: ARVIO HTO

Community: REPULSE BAY

**The HTO's position/opinion on the proposed listing of Polar Bear as Special Concern:**

The HTO Directors support the listing of Polar Bear as Special Concern

The HTO Directors do not support the listing of Polar Bear as Special Concern

The HTO Directors are indifferent to the listing of Polar Bear as Special Concern

**What are your reasons for this position?**

We think the Polar Bear is not endangered in Nunavut.

You are also recommended to draft a letter if you wish your HTO's views to be reported verbatim. The letter should tell us your formal position (supports, does not support, or indifferent) and any other comments, concerns or information that should be considered in listing Polar Bears as Special Concern.

If you did not include a letter with this form, will you be sending one?  Yes  No

If yes, when can we expect to receive it? \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: Mitchell Akkoodil

Date: June 8 2009

Title: CHAIR

Please send this form and/or your letter to:

Fax: 867-975-4645

Mail: Species at Risk Biologist, Canadian Wildlife Service  
Box 1714, Iqaluit, NU, X0A 0H0

E-mail: Heather.Main@ec.gc.ca

Please send your response to us by **June 26, 2009.**



# HTO Response Form

## Polar Bears Proposed Listing as a Species of Special Concern

HTO name: ARVIO

Community: Repulse Bay N.U.

The HTO's position/opinion on the proposed listing of Polar Bear as Special Concern:

- The HTO Directors support the listing of Polar Bear as Special Concern
- The HTO Directors do not support the listing of Polar Bear as Special Concern
- The HTO Directors are indifferent to the listing of Polar Bear as Special Concern

What are your reasons for this position?

BECAUSE THERE USE TO BE LESS  
POLAR BEARS, BUT NOW YOU CAN SEE  
POLAR BEARS EVERY SUMMER ON THE  
THE CAMP SIDE, AND AT CAMPING SITE YOU  
COULD SEE POLAR BEAR.

You are also recommended to draft a letter if you wish your HTO's views to be reported verbatim. The letter should tell us your formal position (supports, does not support, or indifferent) and any other comments, concerns or information that should be considered in listing Polar Bears as Special Concern.

If you did not include a letter with this form, will you be sending one?  Yes  No

If yes, when can we expect to receive it? \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: [Signature] Date: June 16, 09,

Title: HTO Member

Please send this form and/or your letter to:

Fax: 867-975-4645

Mail: Species at Risk Biologist, Canadian Wildlife Service  
Box 1714, Iqaluit, NU, X0A 0H0

E-mail: Heather.Main@ec.gc.ca

Please send your response to us by June 25, 2009



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# HTO Response Form

## Polar Bears

### Proposed Listing as a Species of Special Concern

HTO name: Ainig

Community: Repulse Bay

The HTO's position/opinion on the proposed listing of Polar Bear as Special Concern:

The HTO Directors support the listing of Polar Bear as Special Concern

The HTO Directors do not support the listing of Polar Bear as Special Concern

The HTO Directors are indifferent to the listing of Polar Bear as Special Concern

What are your reasons for this position?

There more polar bear come in to town show  
up

You are also recommended to draft a letter if you wish your HTO's views to be reported verbatim. The letter should tell us your formal position (supports, does not support, or indifferent) and any other comments, concerns or information that should be considered in listing Polar Bears as Special Concern.

If you did not include a letter with this form, will you be sending one?  Yes  No

If yes, when can we expect to receive it? \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: [Signature]

Date: June 19 2009

Title: HTO Board member

Please send this form and/or your letter to:

Fax: 867-975-4645

Mail: Species at Risk Biologist, Canadian Wildlife Service  
Box 1714, Iqaluit, NU X0A 0H0

E-mail: Heather.Mann@ec.gc.ca

Please send your response to us by June 26, 2009



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# HTO Response Form

## Polar Bears

### Proposed Listing as a Species of Special Concern

HTO name: ARVIQ HTO

Community: Repulse Bay Nu XDC-DHO

The HTO's position/opinion on the proposed listing of Polar Bear as Special Concern:

The HTO Directors support the listing of Polar Bear as Special Concern

The HTO Directors do not support the listing of Polar Bear as Special Concern

The HTO Directors are indifferent to the listing of Polar Bear as Special Concern

What are your reasons for this position?

None. No concern of Polar Bear in the region.

You are also recommended to draft a letter if you wish your HTO's views to be reported verbatim. The letter should tell us your formal position (supports, does not support, or indifferent) and any other comments, concerns or information that should be considered in listing Polar Bears as Special Concern.

If you did not include a letter with this form, will you be sending one?  Yes  No  
If yes, when can we expect to receive it? \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: Peter Mannif Date: June 16, 09

Title: Board member

Please send this form and/or your letter to:

Fax: 867-975-4645

Mail: Species at Risk Biologist, Canadian Wildlife Service  
Box 1714, Iqaluit, NU X0A 0H0

E-mail: Heather.Mannif@ec.gc.ca

Please send your response to us by **June 26, 2009**



# HTO Response Form

## Polar Bears Proposed Listing as a Species of Special Concern

HTO name: Arviq  
Community: Repulse Bay

The HTO's position/opinion on the proposed listing of Polar Bear as Special Concern:

The HTO Directors support the listing of Polar Bear as Special Concern

The HTO Directors do not support the listing of Polar Bear as Special Concern

The HTO Directors are indifferent to the listing of Polar Bear as Special Concern

What are your reasons for this position?

Just because the Americans are thinking that the Polar Bears are less now than before and of the Global Warming we are not Americans. We are from Canada!!!

You are also recommended to draft a letter if you wish your HTO's views to be reported verbatim. The letter should tell us your formal position (supports, does not support, or indifferent) and any other comments, concerns or information that should be considered in listing Polar Bears as Special Concern.

If you did not include a letter with this form, will you be sending one?  Yes  No

If yes, when can we expect to receive it? \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: [Signature] Date: Jun-16-09

Title: HTO

Please send this form and/or your letter to:

Fax: 867-975-4645

Mail: Species at Risk Biologist, Canadian Wildlife Service  
Box 1714, Iqaluit, NU X0A 0H0

E-mail: Heather.Mah@ec.gc.ca

Please send your response to us by June 25, 2009



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# HTO Response Form

## Polar Bears Proposed Listing as a Species of Special Concern

HTO name: Arviq

Community: Repulse Bay

The HTO's position/opinion on the proposed listing of Polar Bear as Special Concern:

- The HTO Directors support the listing of Polar Bear as Special Concern
- The HTO Directors do not support the listing of Polar Bear as Special Concern
- The HTO Directors are indifferent to the listing of Polar Bear as Special Concern

What are your reasons for this position?

There is more bears now

You are also recommended to draft a letter if you wish your HTO's views to be reported verbatim. The letter should tell us your formal position (supports, does not support, or indifferent) and any other comments, concerns or information that should be considered in listing Polar Bears as Special Concern.

If you did not include a letter with this form, will you be sending one?  Yes  No

If yes, when can we expect to receive it? \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: [Handwritten Signature]

Date: June 16 2009

Title: H.T.O. Board member

Please send this form and/or your letter to:

Fax: 867-975-2643

Mail: Species at Risk Biologist, Canadian Wildlife Service  
Box 1714, Iqaluit, NU X0A 0H0

E-mail: Heather.Main@ec.gc.ca

Please send your response to us by June 26, 2009.



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## HTO Response Form

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# Polar Bears

## Proposed Listing as a Species of Special Concern

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HTO name: *Arviq HTO*

Community: *Repulse Bay NU*

**The HTO's position/opinion on the proposed listing of Polar Bear as Special Concern:**

- The HTO Directors support the listing of Polar Bear as Special Concern
- The HTO Directors do not support the listing of Polar Bear as Special Concern
- The HTO Directors are indifferent to the listing of Polar Bear as Special Concern

**What are your reasons for this position?**

*I am not concerned about them, they are getting more and more in Nunavut they are not getting endangered.*

You are also recommended to draft a letter if you wish your HTO's views to be reported verbatim. The letter should tell us your formal position (supports, does not support, or indifferent) and any other comments, concerns or information that should be considered in listing Polar Bears as Special Concern.

If you did not include a letter with this form, will you be sending one?  Yes  No

If yes, when can we expect to receive it? \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature:** *Mary Tuktudjuk*

**Date:** *June 16/09*

**Title:** *Vice-Chair*

Please send this form and/or your letter to:

Fax: **867-975-4645**

Mail: **Species at Risk Biologist, Canadian Wildlife Service  
Box 1714, Iqaluit, NU, X0A 0H0**

E-mail: **Heather.Main@ec.gc.ca**

Please send your response to us by **June 26, 2009.**



We want to hear from you  
Please fax this form to  
867-975-4645

# Polar Bears

## Proposed Listing as a Species of Special Concern

Would the Baker Lake HTA like CWS to visit Baker Lake to talk about the proposed listing of Polar Bears?  Yes  No

**If your answer is YES:**

Is April 16, 2009 a good date to meet?  Yes  No

- HTO Directors Meeting – afternoon 2pm  Yes  No
- Public Meeting – evening 7pm  Yes  No

If this date does not work, please suggest other possible dates:

Once we get your response, we will call you to make arrangements for the meeting.

**If your answer is NO:**

Do you have enough information to make a decision on your position/opinion on the proposed listing of polar bear as Special Concern?  Yes  No

**The HTO's position/opinion on the proposed listing of Polar Bear as Special Concern:**

- The Baker Lake HTA Directors support the listing of Polar Bear as Special Concern
- The Baker Lake HTA Directors do not support the listing of Polar Bear as Special Concern
- Baker Lake HTA Directors are indifferent to the listing of Polar Bear as Special Concern

If you did not include a letter with this form, will you be sending one?  Yes  No

When can we expect to receive it? \_\_\_\_\_

- Tell us your formal position (supports, does not support, or indifferent) and any other comments, concerns or information that should be considered in listing Polar Bears as Special Concern

Please forward your letters to: **Species at Risk Biologist**, Canadian Wildlife Service  
Box 1714, Iqaluit, NU X0A 0H0

Please send this form or your letter by April 31, 2009 so that we can include it in a consultation report to the NWMB and to the Minister of Environment.

Signature: *[Handwritten Signature]*

Date: Mar 18 2009

Title: Secretary Manager



***Appendix D. Public Response Forms and Letters Received***

**Main,Heather [Iqa]**

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**From:** Malachi Arreak  
**Sent:** Monday, February 16, 2009 11:01 AM  
**To:** Main,Heather [Iqa]  
**Subject:** Comments Re: Polar Bears in Baffin Bay  
**Importance:** High  
**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Red

Good afternoon/evening;

It was a pleasure to meet you and to find out that you are related to John Main. I could have submitted this via written submissions, but nowadays, email seems to be taken at face value. I have several years of experience in the management issues related to wildlife in Nunavut, having been one of the inaugural members of the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board from 1994-1998, and I have been involved in local and regional Inuit organizations whereby Inuit have had agreed to disagree with the scientific academia.

With the introduction aside, I have several comments regarding the matter of the Baffin Bay Polar Bear population and its status. Firstly, with respect to the software and its estimate of population numbers; if the scientists are off even by 2%, this can translate to more than 70 bears over a eight year period in just one management zone.

Secondly, why do scientists insist that polar bears stick to one zone? That is like saying that humans only have one leg and therefore cannot walk to where they want to go? There is a lot of inter-zone immigration and emigration. That has to be an issue that scientists ought to look at; why I mention this is because Inuit could use the newest DNA sampling arrows to identify all the bears that they see throughout the year, and not just in the six weeks that researchers do their studies.

Thirdly, there seems to be more and more animal rights activists in the Government of Canada bureaucracy; Inuit are starting to no longer trust any scientists as we know they all have ulterior motives for protecting the animals that they study. We perceive that it is only due to international pressure that CWS and the Dept. of Environment is now working to deal with the Polar Bear issue. The Government ought to be protecting its people and not kowtowing to animal rights groups like WWF, PETA, Greenpeace and all their ilk just because of the misinformation that is floating around. "An Arctic Tale" is the grossest piece of misinformation around... CWS ought to condemn this video as being propoganda and disney-perspective misinformation yet Americans and ignorant Canadians believe these lies.

Finally; CWS should install several online cameras in strategic high places where Polar bears pass by, such as Devon Island; Bylot Island; Cape Serle and other places that are within close proximity to the landfast ice edge and where polar bears are known to use as travel routes. If remote sensing is an option, there should be detailed shots of Baffin Bay every other week, to see if we can count bears via satellite pictures in those areas that most humans cannot reach and where the majority of bears inhabit, especially the pack ice.

Anyways, I couldn't send this as our internet was down for most of the weekend, so I saved the message to send today.

Malachi Arreak



# Community Response Form

## Polar Bears

### Proposed Listing as a Species of Special Concern

Your community: GRISE FIORID Nunavut

Your name (optional): KAVANOW KIGUKTAK

Your organization (optional): ~~None~~ Employed and hunter.

#### 1. What is your opinion on the listing of the Polar Bear as Special Concern?

- The Polar Bear should be listed as Special Concern.
- The Polar Bear should not be listed as Special Concern.
- I am indifferent to the listing of the Polar Bear as Special Concern.

#### 2. What are your reasons for this opinion?

I dont see any reason to be  
concern, we have healthy Population  
of Polar Bears up here.

#### 3. What do you feel are the potential impacts of listing the Polar Bear as Special Concern?

None

#### 4. Do you have any other information or concerns that the Minister should consider in making a decision on the listing of the Polar Bear?

~~None~~. The minister should listen to  
Inuit first then make decision.



# Community Response Form

## Polar Bears

### Proposed Listing as a Species of Special Concern

Your community: GRISE FIOR

Your name (optional): Mary Kulugugtuq

Your organization (optional): Qutsitumint Outfitting (HTO)

#### 1. What is your opinion on the listing of the Polar Bear as Special Concern?

- The Polar Bear should be listed as Special Concern.
- The Polar Bear should not be listed as Special Concern.
- I am indifferent to the listing of the Polar Bear as Special Concern.

#### 2. What are your reasons for this opinion?

We manage our PB's very well over the last several years. We consistently and increasingly see PB's coming into town and out on the ice and sea. There is not enough data to convince me to put PB as Special Concern. Information that is presented is out of date.

#### 3. What do you feel are the potential impacts of listing the Polar Bear as Special Concern?

That my diet may be in jeopardy. My traditional ways of hunting that has been in practice for years and years by my ancestors and the future well being of my children will have a negative impact on their diet and tradition. Local economy is in jeopardy as well through Sport Hunts.

#### 4. Do you have any other information or concerns that the Minister should consider in making a decision on the listing of the Polar Bear?

We manage our PB's very well. They are sustainable and not only PB's but all animals in the north normally rebound on their own. I'm most afraid of the Minister making a decision without sufficient information.

Environment  
CanadaEnvironnement  
Canada

# Community Response Form

## Polar Bears

### Proposed Listing as a Species of Special Concern

Your community: Grise Fiord

Your name (optional): \_\_\_\_\_

Your organization (optional): \_\_\_\_\_

#### 1. What is your opinion on the listing of the Polar Bear as Special Concern?

- The Polar Bear should be listed as Special Concern.
- The Polar Bear should not be listed as Special Concern.
- I am indifferent to the listing of the Polar Bear as Special Concern.

#### 2. What are your reasons for this opinion?

We do not see the need for  
special concern yet, but in the  
future <sup>maybe</sup> by global warming.  
We need to be included when decisions  
are made.

#### 3. What do you feel are the potential impacts of listing the Polar Bear as Special Concern?

Can not comment on this.

#### 4. Do you have any other information or concerns that the Minister should consider in making a decision on the listing of the Polar Bear?

Visit Grise Fiord first or live in a  
place where there are bears and  
find out for yourself.



## Community Response Form

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# Polar Bears

## Proposed Listing as a Species of Special Concern

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Your community: [Grise Fiord](#)

Your name (optional): [Aksakjuk Ningiuk](#)

Your organization (optional): [HTO Director](#)

### 1. What is your opinion on the listing of the Polar Bear as Special Concern?

- The Polar Bear should be listed as Special Concern.
- The Polar Bear should not be listed as Special Concern.
- I am indifferent to the listing of the Polar Bear as Special Concern.

### 2. What are your reasons for this opinion?

*Polar Bear researchers have not studied the polar bear around the year 2009, they only studied them a long time ago. For sure polar bear numbers have changed dramatically and more research and counting is needed before they decide about the status.*

### 3. What do you feel are the potential impacts of listing the Polar Bear as Special Concern?

*The impacts like future global warming and disappearing of the ice are not true here. There will always be ice, even if there was no more ice, polar bears can survive even if it's all water or all land because they can live anywhere.*

### 4. Do you have any other information or concerns that the Minister should consider in making a decision on the listing of the Polar Bear?

*First get all the information from the Inuit who live in the polar bear areas because if you only get information from the researchers and polar bear counters you will not get the proper results. They are here only for a month sometimes researching and every year polar bears populations are different, sometimes more polar bears and sometimes fewer.*

**Main,Heather [Iqa]**

---

**From:** Uiviru Tapaungai  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 05, 2009 1:03 PM  
**To:** Main,Heather [Iqa]  
**Subject:** My Concern

Hello Heather,

I attend the public meeting in Cape Dorset on March 10 and I received paper to write something on if I have anything in mind. I can't understand the dilect therefore I'm e-mailing you.

Well my biggest concern is the ice breaker. I beleive if the ice would last longer if it melts or breaks naturally. Better chance for survivor for polar bears.

I hope this is what you want to hear.

Uiviru

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Tell the whole story with photos, right from your Messenger window. [Learn how!](#)



Environment Canada  
Environnement Canada

## Community Response Form

### Polar Bears

#### Proposed Listing as a Species of Special Concern

Your community: IGLOOLIKI NUNAVUT, CANADA'S ARCTIC

Your name (optional): FRANCIS PIUGATTUK

Your organization (optional): HUNTER

#### 1. What is your opinion on the listing of the Polar Bear as Special Concern?

The Polar Bear should be listed as Special Concern.

The Polar Bear should not be listed as Special Concern.

I am indifferent to the listing of the Polar Bear as Special Concern.

#### 2. What are your reasons for this opinion?

Traditional knowledge along with modern scientific studies show that most populations are stable or even decreasing. Increasing

#### 3. What do you feel are the potential impacts of listing the Polar Bear as Special Concern?

They would become extinct due to over population, they would become nuisance creatures and be killed + left as "waste", and eventually they would eat themselves out of house and home.

#### 4. Do you have any other information or concerns that the Minister should consider in making a decision on the listing of the Polar Bear?

Quotas should be increased in the short term (next 2-3 yrs) to cull the numbers since there are now too many bears and they are in the brink of overpopulation. Listing the polar bear as a special concern would be detrimental for all of Canada's Polar Bear populations.



Environment  
Canada

Environnement  
Canada

# Community Response Form

## Polar Bears

### Proposed Listing as a Species of Special Concern

Your community: IGLOOLIK NUNAVUT

Your name (optional): \_\_\_\_\_

Your organization (optional): \_\_\_\_\_

#### 1. What is your opinion on the listing of the Polar Bear as Special Concern?

- The Polar Bear should be listed as Special Concern.
- The Polar Bear should not be listed as Special Concern.
- I am indifferent to the listing of the Polar Bear as Special Concern.

#### 2. What are your reasons for this opinion?

There are so many more bears than before that's why Igloolik is always over the quota before hunting season.

#### 3. What do you feel are the potential impacts of listing the Polar Bear as Special Concern?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

#### 4. Do you have any other information or concerns that the Minister should consider in making a decision on the listing of the Polar Bear?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



Environment Canada  
Environnement Canada

## Community Response Form

### Polar Bears

#### Proposed Listing as a Species of Special Concern

Your community: Igloolik, NU.

Your name (optional): Pauli

Your organization (optional): \_\_\_\_\_

#### 1. What is your opinion on the listing of the Polar Bear as Special Concern?

- The Polar Bear should be listed as Special Concern.
- The Polar Bear should not be listed as Special Concern.
- I am indifferent to the listing of the Polar Bear as Special Concern.

#### 2. What are your reasons for this opinion?

A. Polar Bears' are cunning as any human-being, when and if they do realize that they are not being challenge by their present's, any space they roam is their's For the taking. Furthermore, if there is a cache of meat, by reaching it and standing their ground indicati's that, by trying to reclaim the meat by any-means is space invasion. Next page →

#### 3. What do you feel are the potential impacts of listing the Polar Bear as Special Concern?

There is an impact on Polar Bears already, if they are listed as Special Concern - when they encounter humans, they will start to utilize their present's. Maverick as they might, given any opportunity, they will monopolize every chance.

#### 4. Do you have any other information or concerns that the Minister should consider in making a decision on the listing of the Polar Bear?

A. Many acknowledgements' to all professor's and professional's, and highly educated in their own right, on the contrary; We (Inuit) have lived in same environmental conditions as those species, please hear are concerns' also.

- 2.
- B. They can kill anything that is less fortunate creatures', (even animal right's activist) when it means survival.
- C. The reasoning of this assessment status report is conjured-up from scientific method to politically estimate the forecasted future of this species. 2008 COSEWIC, 'Other potential limiting factors include intra-specific predation, pollution, especially that associated with offshore development of hydrocarbon reserves and increased ship traffic.' This aspect to some extent, is foreign to us (Inuit), as to Polar Bears.
- D. This report indicate's that, bears' in Foxe Basin are increasing, while other areas are slightly declining. This will evalve, because Polar Bears' are transient, not stationary animals.
- 4.
- B. You are making a decision on behalf of Canada, not Greenland's jurisdiction, it may be lack of regulation on their behalf. Do Canadians' have to pay because of Greenland repercussions.

Environment  
CanadaEnvironnement  
Canada

## Community Response Form

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# Polar Bears

## Proposed Listing as a Species of Special Concern

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Your community: \_\_\_\_\_

Your name (optional): \_\_\_\_\_

Your organization (optional): \_\_\_\_\_

### 1. What is your opinion on the listing of the Polar Bear as Special Concern?

- The Polar Bear should be listed as Special Concern.
- The Polar Bear should not be listed as Special Concern.
- I am indifferent to the listing of the Polar Bear as Special Concern.

### 2. What are your reasons for this opinion?

*My thoughts based on Inuit knowledge are that if all animals are used properly they can't become endangered. However, based on Inuit sayings and considering these [the wish to place bears on the endangered list] to not be acceptable and therefore as per Inuit knowledge they are the kinds of things that cause decline.*

### 3. What do you feel are the potential impacts of listing the Polar Bear as Special Concern?

*It is my feeling that because helicopters and skidoos are around bears their hearing gets damaged and therefore they lose their fear and start coming to people because they have been damaged by helicopters.*

### 4. Do you have any other information or concerns that the Minister should consider in making a decision on the listing of the Polar Bear?

*Also based on Inuit knowledge because there are now too many bears they will start dying out even though there is the attempt to place them in protection it will not be possible to do anything about their dying out.*



## Community Response Form

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# Polar Bears

## Proposed Listing as a Species of Special Concern

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Your community: *Igloodik*

Your name (optional): *Arsene Ivalu*

Your organization (optional): *Inullarik Society*

### 1. What is your opinion on the listing of the Polar Bear as Special Concern?

- The Polar Bear should be listed as Special Concern.
- The Polar Bear should not be listed as Special Concern.
- I am indifferent to the listing of the Polar Bear as Special Concern.

### 2. What are your reasons for this opinion?

*There are now too many bears around Igloodik. As there are too many of them now they even come into the community because they no longer have any fear of people and because they are hungry even I could end up being eaten.*

### 3. What do you feel are the potential impacts of listing the Polar Bear as Special Concern?

*The excess increase in bears has made it dangerous to be in tents in the summer as they are naturally fearsome and they also now know that there is food around communities. We now have to constantly be on the watch as bears are frightening.*

### 4. Do you have any other information or concerns that the Minister should consider in making a decision on the listing of the Polar Bear?

*Inuit know the animals of the land they live in. Animals do not remain in one location as they depend on the land for their food and go where they can feed. Stop tranquilizing bears because you are causing them to lose their sense and they are losing their natural sense of fear.*

*(continued from previous form)*

*Arsene Ivalu March 30, 2009*

*The single sheet is too short so I'm making an addition.  
I'm raising my concern regarding the movement of bears and their loss of fear.  
Animals move to where there is food as that is their nature.*

*I have the concern that there is the intent by whites to wipe out us Inuit by stealth. Bears are frightening as they are naturally fearsome and are able to attack humans. There is the desire to extremely increase their numbers so therefore there is the attempt to place them as endangered. As bears have nothing that they fear it is being shown that their lives are considered more precious than that of Inuit. It is being shown that a bear's life is more precious than that of an Inuk's life. Know that when animals become too numerous they contract disease and start dying out, this might be caused by what they are eating.*

*Also know that there will always be bears and that when bears are frightening a community they will be killed. When a bear comes upon food it will keep on coming back until their source of food is gone. We Inuit know this as this is our land and should be listened to regarding animals.*

Environment  
CanadaEnvironnement  
Canada

## Community Response Form

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# Polar Bears

## Proposed Listing as a Species of Special Concern

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Your community: *Igloodik/ Arctic Bay*

Your name (optional): *Dominic Angutimarik*

Your organization (optional): \_\_\_\_\_

### 1. What is your opinion on the listing of the Polar Bear as Special Concern?

- The Polar Bear should be listed as Special Concern.
- The Polar Bear should not be listed as Special Concern.
- I am indifferent to the listing of the Polar Bear as Special Concern.

### 2. What are your reasons for this opinion?

*As there are now so many bears they are now a danger to humans. Bears now come into communities and if a hunter were to break down and had to start walking home there is the danger that that they could be attacked by a bear as bears are dangerous.*

### 3. What do you feel are the potential impacts of listing the Polar Bear as Special Concern?

### 4. Do you have any other information or concerns that the Minister should consider in making a decision on the listing of the Polar Bear?

*Food caches which are intended for human food are being eaten by bears. There are quite a number of concerns regarding bears.*

Environment  
CanadaEnvironnement  
Canada

## Community Response Form

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# Polar Bears

## Proposed Listing as a Species of Special Concern

---

Your community: *Igloodik*

Your name (optional): *David Angutirjuaq*

Your organization (optional): *Individual*

### 1. What is your opinion on the listing of the Polar Bear as Special Concern?

- The Polar Bear should be listed as Special Concern.
- The Polar Bear should not be listed as Special Concern.
- I am indifferent to the listing of the Polar Bear as Special Concern.

### 2. What are your reasons for this opinion?

*I arrived in Igloodik when there was not a large bear population in 1945. We have food caches outside our community. We are no longer able to have food caches as our caches are being eaten by bears because there is now a large bear population around Igloodik.*

### 3. What do you feel are the potential impacts of listing the Polar Bear as Special Concern?

*I worry about people and when they are out hunting bears now get to where they are camped. People are now in danger of being attacked. This past winter a tethered team of dogs was wiped out when they were attacked by a bear.*

### 4. Do you have any other information or concerns that the Minister should consider in making a decision on the listing of the Polar Bear?

*When animals of all kinds become too numerous they lose their natural sense of fear. Bears are now less fearful than they used to be and they even come into communities. I also think that bears are even crossing from one community area to another.*



## Community Response Form

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# Polar Bears

## Proposed Listing as a Species of Special Concern

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Your community: *Igloodik*

Your name (optional): *Daniel Qanatsiaq*

Your organization (optional): \_\_\_\_\_

### 1. What is your opinion on the listing of the Polar Bear as Special Concern?

- The Polar Bear should be listed as Special Concern.
- The Polar Bear should not be listed as Special Concern.
- I am indifferent to the listing of the Polar Bear as Special Concern.

### 2. What are your reasons for this opinion?

*Bears have become too fierce therefore both bears and people are now in danger. Bears are in danger because of over population and lack food and environment. There are now too many that they have become dangerous to themselves and to humans.*

### 3. What do you feel are the potential impacts of listing the Polar Bear as Special Concern?

*They will start dying, they will attack each other, they will starve and they will become a danger to people and they will start coming into towns more.*

### 4. Do you have any other information or concerns that the Minister should consider in making a decision on the listing of the Polar Bear?

*You have placed them in the endangered situation by not allowing them to be killed. They have become endangered because there are now too many of them therefore they come into communities. We Inuit that we are fearful for them if they become too abundant and are now in danger to themselves, their environment, and if they do not have the space to be as they have been they will have lost their natural way of being.*

*(Continued from previous form)*

*2) Based on that I'm now able to say that you are the ones who have caused bears to be in danger by trying too hard to increase their numbers. They are becoming very numerous where in the land of the Inuit and also they if they start being in clusters it will not be acceptable at all because there will be too many of them. They will not all be able to live and that could be a cause of their decline if you are going to try to overly protect them. You say that there are not a lot of them. Bears that were not here are now here and there will be more coming and if there are too many together they will lose their sense and they will lose their nature as bears. They will start dying out, and we are not capable of saving even one when that happens; maybe, we will be able to keep one or two alive.*

*We can use caribou as an example when their numbers greatly increased around Iglulik and then they started dying off due to disease; the same thing can happen to bears.*

*Continuation of what I want to say on bears because the single sheet is not enough and I would like what I have written to be read with a mind to understanding them. You give long statements so listen to what I have to say.*

*From the time that I was a child I have seen bears every year and they have always been hunted. I caught my first bear when I was 8 years old and ever since then I've periodically caught bears.*

*Back then when there weren't regulations we caught mothers and cubs together and we did not decrease the number of bears. Despite that there were times when there were more bears even though we were catching what we wanted.*

*Thank you, Qanatsiaq*

Madeleine Redfern, P.O. Box 2323, Iqaluit, NU, X0A 0H0  
Tel: (867) 979-1167 Fax: (867) 979-3238 Email: madinuk@hotmail.com

OPEN LETTER

Honourable Jim Prentice  
Minister of the Environment  
Les Terrasses de la Chaudiere  
North Tower, 28<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Gatineau, Quebec,  
K1A 0H3

Parliament Hill Fax: 613-947-9475  
Department Fax: 819-956-8382

Tuesday May 18th, 2009

Re: Dept. of Environment Community Consultation(s)

Dear Minister Prentice,

I recently attended your department's community consultation in Iqaluit on April 23, 2009 regarding the possibility of listing polar bears as 'special concern' under the Species at Risk Act (SARA).

I deeply regret, I have to inform you, this 'consultation' meeting was one of the worst I've ever attended in my life – and I attend a lot of community consultation meetings. To date, I've been extremely impressed with your balanced approach on the issue of polar bears and truly appreciate your support of our polar bear wildlife management systems.

You should know that the information provided by your department to the community was so cursory and superficial as to be effectively meaningless. The written documentation consisted of copies of the slide presentations, a summary of COSEWIC assessment and Update Status Summary Report along with only one copy of the full COSEWIC Assessment and Update Status Report in English and Inuktitut. When I went to pick up the latter, one of the meeting organizers tried to prevent me from taking this document making the assumption that I would not read it. Only when I explained to this woman, that 'I would read the document' she permitted me to take a copy of the full report. It was clear that the one copy of the full Report in each language was merely for 'show' and there was no genuine effort to provide our community with all the relevant and pertinent information for consumption.

In my opinion, I did not think the summary report properly reflected the full report, inasmuch as there appeared to be some serious misinterpretation and/or misrepresentation of the information. The summary report states the names of the authors, so I checked with the authors and found out that they did not write the summary report. Furthermore

in their opinion, the summary report selectively emphasizes some aspects and/or ignores or de-emphasizes other aspects of their full report. If the full status report authors are credited, why was the summary not written by the authors or reviewed by them first before the summary report was used for community consultations? It is also highly questionable and unethical to expect the community to make a decision based on the apparently biased information contained in the summary document.

I asked the DoE facilitator why there weren't any technicians on climate change and polar bears at this meeting, since the COSEWIC decision is based on technical research. It was explained to me that COSEWIC does not do the research, rather COSEWIC reviews existing research – which I already knew and understood. As you are aware, the science on both issues is complex and there are many different research methods, models and theories on each. There is no consensus in the western science communities on either subject matter.

The community is not given the opportunity to question or challenge the researchers directly on their research methods, models, theories or conclusions. Rather, the community is asked and expected to accept this information, despite the fact that the participants know that there are significant and fundamental problems with the western science on polar bears.

The facilitator explained that aboriginal and Inuit traditional knowledge was reviewed and used by COSEWIC's decision. Simply stating this and providing a list of such, i.e. 'personal communications with respect elders and hunters; Inuit Qaujimaningit Nunarnut – Gjoa Haven HTO (2005), etc., without providing the information itself, e.g. list of elders' and hunters' names along with their personal communications or reports or explanation of how or which traditional knowledge was considered and how much weight it is given, is disingenuous – to say the least. You should know that the report was limited to the fraction of the traditional knowledge already archived. Yet, no attempt was made to update Inuit knowledge on polar bears for the status report nor did the 'polar bear round-table' meeting adequately consider information held by local people.

Even I, who am well informed on wildlife issues in Nunavut (Nunavut Land Claim Agreement rights, hunting IQ, legislation, politics – both locally, regionally, territorially, nationally and internationally) couldn't make an informed decision on this issue. I also did not have the benefit of knowing or hearing what the Government of Nunavut and/or Nunavut Tunngavik Inc. and/or any other wildlife management organization's views on this issue. I would have found this helpful and useful – as these institutions have the resources to do more in depth research on these issues to develop their own institutional positions on the particular matter.

Furthermore, I was told that the GN chose not to attend this particular community consultation, since they would be doing their own community consultation. This fractured approach in community consultation on the same issue or matter is seriously problematic, on many fronts, including the duplication of effort and resources by two different level of governments and that the community is expected to participate twice.

Many community members are simply tired and frustrated by consultation meetings that feel like a sham. They know full well that they are not being provided enough information, let alone correct information, nor are the technicians and/or appropriate institutions along with the appropriate bureaucrats and/or politicians in attendance to provide full spectrum of institutional positions and/or answer the community members' questions.

Furthermore, the communities know from past experience that their comments and concerns won't be used, considered or incorporated in the final decision. In fact, many community members believe that the government has a desired predetermined outcome and that the government only conducts these consultations because they are a legal requirement and that no matter what the community members' say will not change the government desired outcome.

When the community is being asked whether it supports or rejects COSEWIC's decision to list polar bear as 'special concern' under SARA, then common sense, decency and respect dictates that the community must be provided the same information that was provided to COSEWIC – not merely a simplified overview of COSEWIC's decision.

There is absolutely no way COSEWIC could make an informed or justifiable decision to list polar bears as special concern based on what the community was provided at this consultation meeting. Yet, this is exactly what your department was asking and expecting the community to do!

Your department's facilitator repeatedly told Inuit that the listing of polar bear as special concern under SARA would NOT affect their harvesting rights. This is not entirely correct as SARAs may have the potential to seriously limit and restrict Inuit harvesting. I checked and consulted with polar bear experts if this statement was true and they agreed with me that statement is incorrect. It is unacceptable and unethical to not fully inform or worse yet misinform people about their constitutionally protected rights under their land claim. Inuit have the right to know the full implications of such a listing and whether in their opinion it is justified and necessary.

You may simply not be aware of the approach your department is taking with the Nunavut community consultations on whether to support or reject COSEWIC's recommendation to list polar bear as special concern under SARA.

I respectfully request that you review what was provided to the community at this consultation meeting and determine for yourself, whether you, yourself and/or COSEWIC or your department would be able to make an informed decision on the information and documentation provided to my community or any Nunavut community. If you agree that your department's consultative approach is problematic and troublesome, then the community consultation meeting should be re-done in a way that is both respectful and meaningful.

Good conservation is based on openness, transparency, trust and cooperation. It is the lasting relationships built thereon that will achieve our mutual goals and objectives.

Yours respectfully,

Madeleine Redfern

cc. Honourable Daniel Shewchuk, Minister of Environment, Government of Nunavut  
Honourable Leona Aglukkaq, Nunavut Member of Parliament  
Eva Arriak, Premier of Nunavut  
Mary Simon, President, Inuit Tapirisat Kanatami  
Paul Kaludjak, President, Nunavut Tunngavik Inc.  
Thomassie Alikatuqtuq, President, Qikiqtani Inuit Association  
Jeffrey Hutchings, Chair, COSEWIC  
Harry Flaherty, Acting Chair, Nunavut Wildlife Management Board  
Richard Connelly, Executive Director, Nunavut Wildlife Inuit Secretariat  
Raymond Ningeocheak, Wildlife Policy Advisory Committee  
Joannie Ikkidluak, Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board  
Attima Hadlari, Chair, Kitikmeot Hunters and Trappers' Association  
David Aksawnee, Chair, Keewatin Wildlife Federation  
Joshua Kango, Chair, Amarok Hunters' and Trappers' Organization  
All Nunavut HTO Chairs

Note: Letter translated and also circulated in Inuktitut



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## Community Response Form

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# Polar Bears

## Proposed Listing as a Species of Special Concern

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Your community: *Kimmirut*

Your name (optional): \_\_\_\_\_

Your organization (optional): \_\_\_\_\_

### 1. What is your opinion on the listing of the Polar Bear as Special Concern?

- The Polar Bear should be listed as Special Concern.
- The Polar Bear should not be listed as Special Concern.
- I am indifferent to the listing of the Polar Bear as Special Concern.

### 2. What are your reasons for this opinion?

*There are many polar bears in Nunavut.*

### 3. What do you feel are the potential impacts of listing the Polar Bear as Special Concern?

### 4. Do you have any other information or concerns that the Minister should consider in making a decision on the listing of the Polar Bear?



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# Polar Bears

## Proposed Listing as a Species of Special Concern

### Community Response Form

Your community: Kugluktuk, Nunavut.

Your name (optional): \_\_\_\_\_

Your organization (optional): \_\_\_\_\_

#### 1. What is your opinion on the listing of the Polar Bear as Special Concern?

- The Polar Bear should be listed as Special Concern.
- The Polar Bear should not be listed as Special Concern.
- I am indifferent to the listing of the Polar Bear as Special Concern.

#### 2. What are your reasons for this opinion?

So the polar bears don't become extinct.  
Once the polar bears are gone - the seals will  
increase in numbers (overpopulate)  
and then the fish will disappear.  
 \* I know we don't get polar bear - but our sea life  
will be impacted! \*

#### 3. What do you feel are the potential impacts of listing the Polar Bear as Special Concern?

- so younger generations can <sup>continue</sup> hunt polar bears  
- so seals don't overpopulate  
- so we don't get no more fish

#### 4. Do you have any other information or concerns that the Minister should consider in making a decision on the listing of the Polar Bear?

please?  
Your consideration will be greatly appreciated.  
THX

\*question: If the seals are declining - what  
about putting it there too? I thought green bears  
watched the seals? How H got low



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# Polar Bears

## Proposed Listing as a Species of Special Concern

### Community Response Form

Your community: Cambridge Bay, NU

Your name (optional): Paul Emingak

Your organization (optional): Kitikmeot Inuit Association

#### 1. What is your opinion on the listing of the Polar Bear as Special Concern?

- The Polar Bear should be listed as Special Concern.
- The Polar Bear should not be listed as Special Concern.
- I am indifferent to the listing of the Polar Bear as Special Concern.

#### 2. What are your reasons for this opinion?

I believe there needs to be more consultations and study why there is a decline in populations in whole of Nunavut and other regions.

#### 3. What do you feel are the potential impacts of listing the Polar Bear as Special Concern?

Climate Change - late freezing of ice  
This is not only a Canadian concern as well globally.

#### 4. Do you have any other information or concerns that the Minister should consider in making a decision on the listing of the Polar Bear?

Minister should take into serious consideration of Inuit Traditional Knowledge (ITK) before any decision is made.



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## Community Response Form

# Polar Bears

## Proposed Listing as a Species of Special Concern

Your community: \_\_\_\_\_

Your name (optional): \_\_\_\_\_

Your organization (optional): \_\_\_\_\_

### 1. What is your opinion on the listing of the Polar Bear as Special Concern?

- The Polar Bear should be listed as Special Concern.
- The Polar Bear should not be listed as Special Concern.
- I am indifferent to the listing of the Polar Bear as Special Concern.

### 2. What are your reasons for this opinion?

*Right now the Polar Bears are not at Risk, for they live in the same place we live in, but the Ships and Planes' traffic scare them away, they travel and the elders should be consulted, the only way they can diminish in numbers is when they are scared away to another place.*

### 3. What do you feel are the potential impacts of listing the Polar Bear as Special Concern?

*They tranquilized the Polar Bears here at our land. When they wake up they realize that, and then they move away from where they were, because they do not want that to happen to them again, and they move on leaving their hunting area looking for another hunting ground.*

### 4. Do you have any other information or concerns that the Minister should consider in making a decision on the listing of the Polar Bear?

*Any species can be harmed by pollution, or oil spills, because pollution is continually coming in through the air, they can be harmful and dangerous to our health, or they can make you physically sick, Inuit of Nunavut know this.*



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## Community Response Form

### Polar Bears

#### Proposed Listing as a Species of Special Concern

Your community: WHALE COVE

Your name (optional): ROBERT ENUAPIK

Your organization (optional): Hunter.

#### 1. What is your opinion on the listing of the Polar Bear as Special Concern?

- The Polar Bear should be listed as Special Concern.
- The Polar Bear should not be listed as Special Concern.
- I am indifferent to the listing of the Polar Bear as Special Concern.

#### 2. What are your reasons for this opinion?

THE REASON IS THE STUDY ON THE  
POLAR BEAR AT THE WESTERN HUDSON BAY IS  
THERE IS NO STUDY YEARLY.

#### 3. What do you feel are the potential impacts of listing the Polar Bear as Special Concern?

WRONGFUL STUDIES FOR THE  
WESTERN HUDSON BAY COAST.

#### 4. Do you have any other information or concerns that the Minister should consider in making a decision on the listing of the Polar Bear?

TELL THEM TO DO A BETTER  
STUDY BETWEEN CHURCHILL ARVIAT,  
WHALE COVE, AND KANKUKE ON  
THE LAND & SEA.



# Community Response Form

## Polar Bears

### Proposed Listing as a Species of Special Concern

Your community: CORAL HARBOUR

Your name (optional): concerned hunter/citizen

Your organization (optional): Supporter/Hunter

#### 1. What is your opinion on the listing of the Polar Bear as Special Concern?

- The Polar Bear should be listed as Special Concern.
- The Polar Bear should not be listed as Special Concern.
- I am indifferent to the listing of the Polar Bear as Special Concern.

#### 2. What are your reasons for this opinion?

A vast area in Nunavut according to COSEWIC chart has not totally been accounted for. More input should be considered in order to have a positive output. (Data)

#### 3. What do you feel are the potential impacts of listing the Polar Bear as Special Concern?

When country population, time & year is very inefficient (fall country).

#### 4. Do you have any other information or concerns that the Minister should consider in making a decision on the listing of the Polar Bear?

Have a field worker in each subpopulation area year round in order to hand in a proper accounted population. Polar Bears roam more in end of February to end of March into June. Strict hefty fines to Oil ships that spill onto sea/ice in Northern atmosphere.



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## Community Response Form

### Polar Bears

#### Proposed Listing as a Species of Special Concern

Your community: CORAL HARBOUR

Your name (optional): RONNIE NINGEONGAN

Your organization (optional): NONE

#### 1. What is your opinion on the listing of the Polar Bear as Special Concern?

- The Polar Bear should be listed as Special Concern.
- The Polar Bear should not be listed as Special Concern.
- I am indifferent to the listing of the Polar Bear as Special Concern.

#### 2. What are your reasons for this opinion?

With the declination of polar sea ice  
the polar bears are at risk. It's safe to  
say that they are on thin ice. It's sad,  
but it's true with global warming.

#### 3. What do you feel are the potential impacts of listing the Polar Bear as Special Concern?

- Global warming / climate change
- Thinning of polar sea ice
- Overhunting
- Perhaps dangerous chemicals going into their system.

#### 4. Do you have any other information or concerns that the Minister should consider in making a decision on the listing of the Polar Bear?

Listen to the experts who are stating that  
the ice is thinning rapidly. The Scientists  
use Satellite Imagery to determine the thinning  
of the ice and should be decided constructively.

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## Community Response Form

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# Polar Bears

## Proposed Listing as a Species of Special Concern

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Your community: [Repulse Bay](#)

Your name (optional): [Mary Tuktudjuk](#)

Your organization (optional): [Arviq Hunters and Trappers Organization](#)

### 1. What is your opinion on the listing of the Polar Bear as Special Concern?

- The Polar Bear should be listed as Special Concern.
- The Polar Bear should not be listed as Special Concern.
- I am indifferent to the listing of the Polar Bear as Special Concern.

### 2. What are your reasons for this opinion?

*In Repulse Bay there are more and more bears and there are many bears that come in to town in the spring and summer. They don't seem to be endangered in Repulse Bay and when they come to communities and to Repulse Bay people always have to watch.*

### 3. What do you feel are the potential impacts of listing the Polar Bear as Special Concern?

*Here in Nunavut, I don't think they're endangered. The seals and the polar bears aren't endangered yet in Repulse Bay.*

### 4. Do you have any other information or concerns that the Minister should consider in making a decision on the listing of the Polar Bear?

*They aren't endangered in Nunavut but we heard about them being endangered in Manitoba. I'd like you go know that in Nunavut bears are probably increasing; that probably doesn't make too much sense. I wrote so I'm thankful.*

***Appendix E. Organizations- Letters Received***



**Appendix F. Schedule of consultations in other regions**

<b>Region</b>	<b>Status of consultations</b>	<b>Communities/ Organizations consulted</b>	<b>Dates</b>
NWT	Community consultations complete; consultation report in preparation for submission to WMAC-NWT for decision	Inuvik, Aklavik, Tuktoyaktuk, Ulukhaktok, Paulatuk, Sachs Harbour	February 2009
Manitoba	Complete; report in preparation	Churchill, Shamattawa FN, York Factory FN, Fox Lake FN, Wapusk National Park Management Board	April & June 2009
Quebec	Complete with Nunavik communities; met with Cris Trappers Association and they are consulting with their communities; report in preparation (to be shared with Hunting, Fishing and Trapping Coordination Committee and the Nunavik Marine Region Wildlife Board)	Inukjuak, Ivujivik, Kangirsujuaq, Kangirsuq, Akulivik, Salluit, Quaqtuq, Kangiqsualujjuaq, Cris Trappers Association	March & June 2009
Ontario	Ongoing	Six Cree First Nations: Fort Severn, Weenusk, Attawapiskat, Kashechewan, Fort Albany, Moose Cree	June & September 2009
Yukon	Complete; WMAC-North Slope to be asked for decision	Wildlife Management Advisory Council (North Slope), Yukon Environment	March 2009
Newfoundland and Labrador	To be completed	- Four consultations in Goose Bay: Metis, Innu, Inuit, and the Torngat Wildlife Management Board - Five community consultations	August 2009