



May 30th 2014

Mr. Josepi Padlayat
Chairperson
Nunavik Marine Region Wildlife Board

Re: Public hearing – establishment of a total allowable take for the Southern Hudson Bay polar bear subpopulation – undertakings and requested material

Dear Mr. Padlayat:

This letter is in response to your May 16th 2014 letter to the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board (NWMB or Board) requesting additional material from the NWMB for consideration by the Nunavik Marine Region Wildlife Board (Nunavik Board) in its decision-making regarding the establishment of a total allowable take for the Southern Hudson Bay polar bear subpopulation. To reiterate, the Nunavik Board requested:

- 1) A list of all Nunavik representatives who attended the NWMB meeting during which the total allowable harvest for polar bears in Sanikiluaq was established; and
- 2) A description of how the NWMB considered harvesting by Nunavik Inuit when the total allowable harvest for polar bears in Sanikiluaq was established.

NWMB Decisions Regarding Southern Hudson Bay Polar Bear Harvest

As you are aware, Sanikiluaq has a total allowable harvest level of 25 polar bears from the Southern Hudson Bay subpopulation. From our archives, it is unclear when this total allowable harvest was first established. However, it is clear that Sanikiluaq’s base allocation of 25 bears was first established by the Government of Northwest Territories, and was therefore in place before the NWMB held its first meeting in 1993¹ (Appendix 1). Upon ratification of the *Nunavut Land Claims Agreement* in 1993, the total allowable harvest of 25 bears for Sanikiluaq was deemed to have been established by the NWMB².

¹ The oldest record that has been located in the NWMB’s archives shows a total allowable harvest of 25 bears in Sanikiluaq since the 1991/1992 harvest season. It is possible that this total allowable harvest predates the 1991/1992 season, but has not been confirmed by the Government of Northwest Territories.

² Nunavut Land Claims Agreement Section 5.6.4

On March 6th, 1996, the NWMB approved the polar bear Memorandum of Understanding for the Southern Hudson Bay management zone during NWMB teleconference No. 18. This Memorandum of Understanding maintained the total allowable harvest level of 25 bears in Sanikiluaq. According to the meeting minutes for NWMB Teleconference No. 18, Nunavik representatives were not present during the decision to approve the Memorandum of Understanding. However, prior to the signing of the Southern Hudson Bay 1996 Memorandum of Understanding, the Government of Northwest Territories Department of Renewable Resources hosted a "Polar Bear Management Plan for Davis Strait and Southern Hudson Bay Polar Bear Populations Workshop" in Iqaluit on May 24th – 26th 1994. Representatives from Makivik, Government of Quebec, Ontario and Newfoundland and Labrador attended this workshop (Appendix 2).

On October 6th, 2004 at NWMB in-camera meeting No. 39, the NWMB approved the current Polar Bear Management Memorandum of Understanding for the Management of the Southern Hudson Polar Bear Population. This Memorandum of Understanding again maintained the total allowable harvest level of 25 bears for Sanikiluaq. The meeting minutes indicate that a Government of Nunavut representative presented the Memorandum of Understanding to the Board and that "Members requested the status of support from the other jurisdictions sharing populations with Nunavut with regards to changes in quota". The Government of Nunavut representative responded "that there has been communications, but no formal objection to the new quotas³." According to the meeting minutes, there were no Nunavik representatives present at NWMB meeting No. 39 when the Board approved the new Memoranda of Understanding.

Between the earliest record located by NWMB staff indicating a total allowable harvest of 25 bears for Sanikiluaq for the 1991/1992 harvest season and the present date, Sanikiluaq's polar bear total allowable harvest of 25 changed only once, and was for the 2000/2001 harvest season only. In 2000/2001 the total allowable harvest was set at 13 bears. However, during that year the base allocation remained at 25 bears and was only adjusted to 13 as a result of the flex quota system in Nunavut and the overharvest of female bears in the 1999/2000 harvest season. The base allocation was restored for the 2001/2002 season and has since remained at 25.

The NWMB hopes that the information provided in this letter is helpful during the Nunavik Board's decision-making for the establishment of a total allowable take for the Southern Hudson Bay polar bear subpopulation in the Nunavik Marine Region. If you

³ It is important to note that this NWMB resolution was for more than one Polar Bear Memorandum of Understanding and that in some cases the new Memorandum of Understanding included new total allowable harvest levels.

have any questions or concerns regarding the contents of this letter, please do not hesitate to contact the NWMB.

Sincerely,



for Ben Kovic
Chairperson of the
Nunavut Wildlife Management Board

Enclosures (2)