

A written submission on beluga management 2020-2022

Quaqtaq Utarqiuvingmiut LNUK committee

1. Change in sightings of beluga?

We seem to be seeing more females with calves.

2. Quaqtaq knowledge

Extensive Quaqtaq Inuit knowledge was collected by Trent University by Miss. Kaitlin Breton-Honeyman

3. Community preference

Quaqtamiut prefer to hunt beluga more in the spring (June) due to the fact that at this time of the year, they are drying the meat and fermenting the fat and skin.

They also retain large amounts of fat to ferment walrus fins in a later hunt in July.

We would prefer to have no quota.

We also prefer to harvest grey mature whales because the skin and meat is more tender.

Hunting only white whales causes the killing of pregnant females and should not be a required practice.

We prefer that there is no opening and closing of the hunt since we are opportunistic hunters.

We have always hunted in the Ungava Bay in the spring May-July

And we have occasionally harvested whales in July-September in the Diana Bay and Hudson Strait areas.

The fall hunt is in the vicinity of the community if not in front of the community.

Management objective for the Eastern Hudson Bay stock.

There is not enough research in the Nastapoka estuary to determine how the whale stock there is affected today.

Total allowable take.

The growing human population in Nunavik dictates that we cannot continue to harvest the same number of whales for the years to come and expect to have a good food security for the population.

Time frame

There should be no time frame.

Harvest season dates

We would like to hunt whales at any time of the year.

A NQL to limit the number of beluga harvested from any 1 group.

It will be extremely difficult to regulate this since hunters are not always congregated in the same hunting zone.

Besides, how will we know that the pod we see was the one that was harvested from by the group of hunters before us?

The opening of Nastapoka and Little whale river

It is contradictory to open these areas that are the reason for a call for a beluga management plan.

If they are opened, then the beluga hunt must not be regulated in the marine zones of Nunavik.

Biopsy darting

Biopsy darting should not be practiced on beluga since there are enough whales harvested to obtain sufficient data.

Increase the amount of payment for samples, it is still less costly for the DFO than going out just to obtain samples by darting.

Enforcement

Very often, there is no enforcement officers on site, if this issue is important, how come there is no presence?

The isolated hunting areas have no officers on site.

Social problems.

Social problems are present due to policies made by the federal government on beluga hunting.

Establishment of hunt areas.

The establishment of hunt areas creates logistical issues for the hunters and is an unsafe practice for the hunters who are caught in rough seas and ice packed areas.

This practice must cease.

Financial compensation.

There is no financial compensation for the loss of a food source created by the decisions of the Department of fisheries and oceans.

There is no financial assistance to the hunters from far off communities going to hunting zones established by the DFO.

Excerpts from the Marine mammals regulations website.

Scientific name: Delphinapterus leucas

Taxonomy: Mammals (marine)

SARA Status: No Status

COSEWIC Status: Endangered

Region: Nunavut and Quebec, Arctic and Atlantic Oceans

With its pure white skin and prominent and bulging forehead, the beluga whale is easy to identify. In fact, beluga even means 'the white one' in Russian. The Ungava Bay population of Beluga whales experienced a dramatic decline at the end of the 19th and early 20th

centuries, caused for the most part by the excessive commercial whaling. Although commercial hunting all but ceased by 1950, beluga numbers have not shown any signs of recovery. At the present time, the Ungava Bay population of beluga whales is thought to number less than 100.

COSEWIC Reason for Designation: All signs indicate that the population residing in Ungava Bay is very small and may be extirpated. However, it is difficult to definitively conclude that they have been extirpated because beluga from other populations may visit Ungava Bay. Hunting caused the population decline and continues in Ungava Bay, posing a threat to any remaining beluga.

Beluga Whale Western Hudson Bay population

Scientific Name: *Delphinapterus leucas*

Taxonomy Group: Mammals

COSEWIC Range: Nunavut, Manitoba, Ontario, Arctic Ocean, Atlantic Ocean

COSEWIC Assessment Date and Status Change: May 2004

COSEWIC Status: Special Concern

COSEWIC Status Criteria:

COSEWIC Reason for Designation: The population appears to be relatively abundant, although it has not been surveyed for 15 years and may consist of more than one population. The population is subject to substantial removals by hunting in parts of its range, and is potentially threatened by shipping and hydroelectric dams.

COSEWIC History of Status Designation: The Western Hudson Bay population (original) was designated Not at Risk in April 1993. In May 2004, the structure of the population was redefined: the Southeast Baffin Island animals (formerly part of the Southeast Baffin Island-Cumberland Sound population) were included as part of the Western Hudson Bay population. The Western Hudson Bay population was designated Special Concern in May 2004.

SARA Status: No schedule, No Status

Date of Listing (yyyy-mm-dd):

No schedule - No Status

Individuals of this species may be protected under Schedule 1 under another name; for more information see Schedule 1, the A-Z Species List, or if applicable, the Related Species table below.

Please note that this information is provided for general information purposes only. For the most up to date and accurate list of species listed under the Species at Risk Act, please see the Justice Laws Website.

Beluga Whale Eastern Hudson Bay population

Scientific Name: *Delphinapterus leucas*

Taxonomy Group: Mammals

COSEWIC Range: Nunavut, Quebec, Arctic Ocean, Atlantic Ocean

COSEWIC Assessment Date and Status Change: May 2004

COSEWIC Status: Endangered

COSEWIC Status Criteria: A2d; C1; E

COSEWIC Reason for Designation: The population was reduced by at least 50% and continues to decline. Overhunting continues throughout its summer and migratory range. Mathematical models predict that it will likely disappear under present hunting levels in less than 10 to 15 years. Concerns have been expressed about habitat degradation of estuaries by hydroelectric projects, and by small vessel traffic disturbance.

COSEWIC History of Status Designation: Designated Threatened in April 1988. Status re-examined and designated Endangered in May 2004.

SARA Status: No schedule, No Status

Date of Listing (yyyy-mm-dd):

