

# **Beluga Management System - Regional Rules in the Nunavik Marine Region**

prepared by DFO, edited by staff from NMRWB

This document lists regional-level management measures applicable to the beluga hunt for the 2021-2026 period in Nunavik. The regulations include a Total Allowable Take in the Eastern Hudson Bay Arc Region, and Non-Quota Limitations for Beluga harvest throughout the Nunavik Marine Region, including seasonal closures in Hudson Strait.

The Management Objective is to maintain the Eastern Hudson Bay Beluga stock (EHB) at or above 3,400 animals during the next five years.

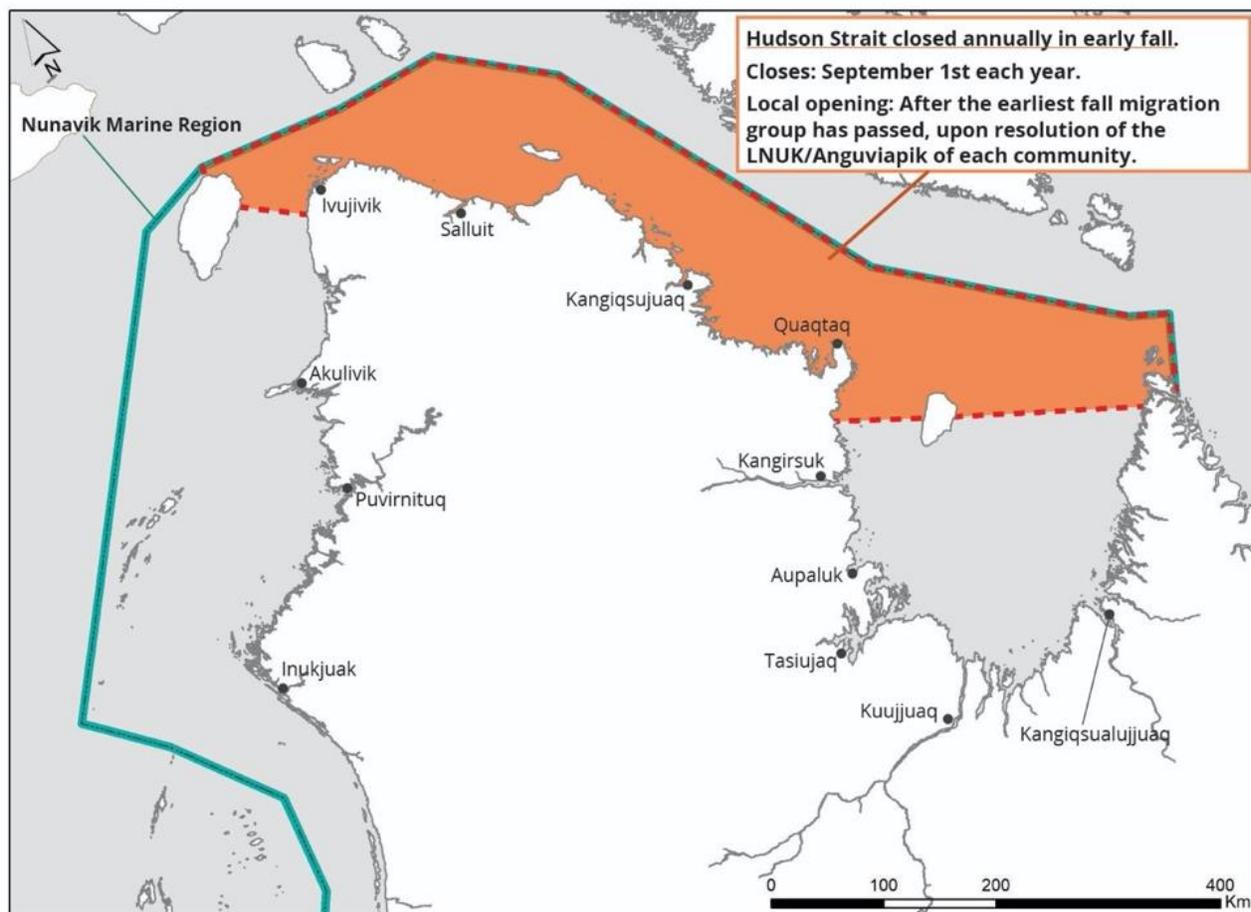
## **1. Annual Cycle**

The following season will be in effect for the duration of this Management cycle (2021-2026). It represents the maximum duration of hunting periods, and the time when management measures (such as Total Allowable Take) will reset. Opening dates may vary according to particular circumstances (like by requests from the RNUK or LNUKs) while closing dates may likewise be advanced due to requests, or factors such as reaching the TAT, or if Nunavik-wide harvest reaches level that may put the EHB stock at risk.

Hunting season is from February 1<sup>st</sup> to January 31<sup>st</sup> of the following year.

## 2. Hudson Strait Seasonal Fall Closures

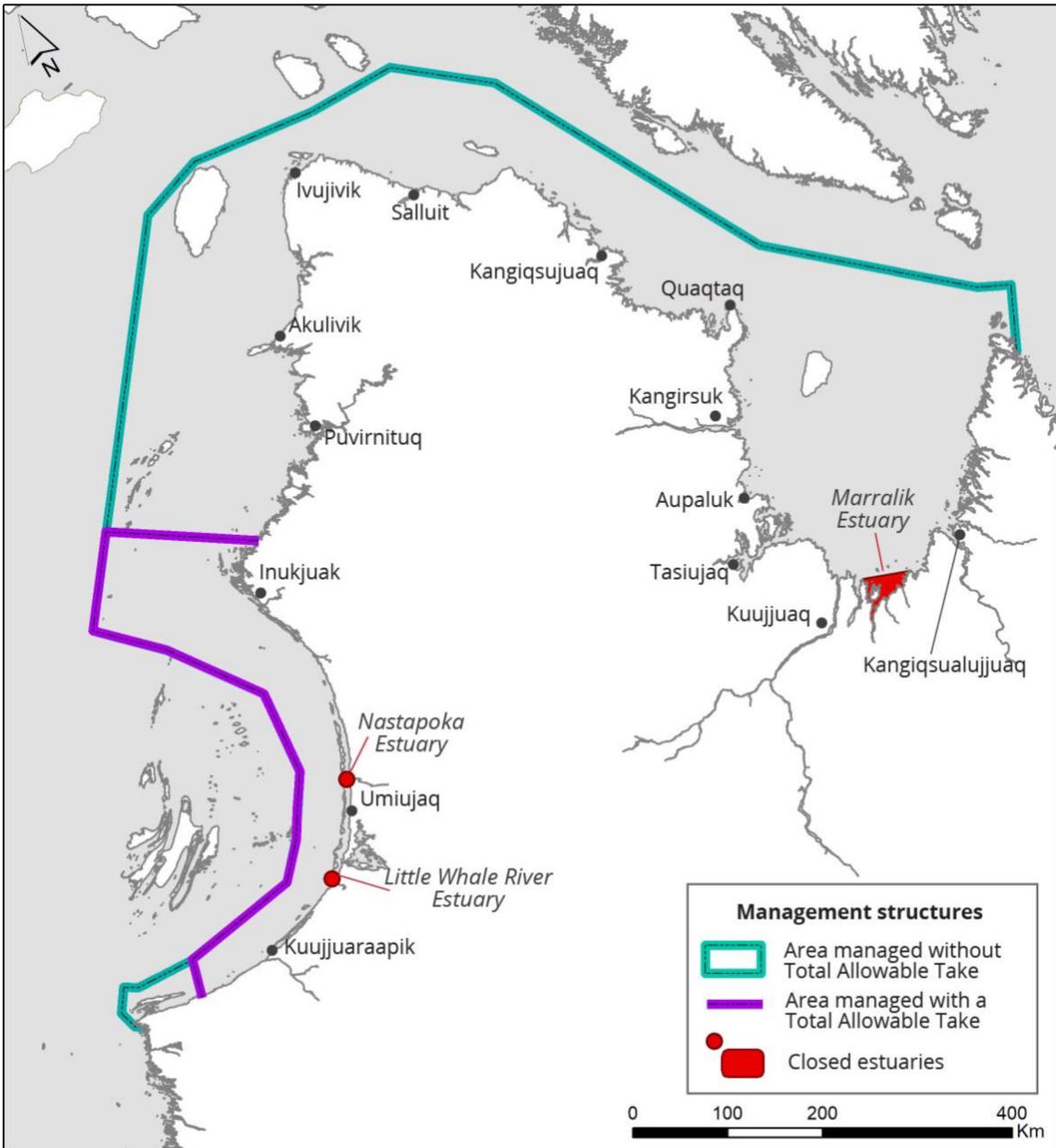
Starting on September 1<sup>st</sup> and ending on October 31<sup>st</sup>, the Hudson Strait area will be closed to protect the EHB stock during their fall migration. Harvesting can resume once the EHB beluga have passed. Local organizations can open the hunt after October 31<sup>st</sup>, based on the community knowledge of the migration patterns. Additionally, the same area will be re-closed from December 1<sup>st</sup> to January 31<sup>st</sup> of the following year.



## 3. Total Allowed Take (TAT)

There is a TAT of 20 beluga within the **Eastern Hudson Bay Arc Region**.

- Non-harvested TAT can be carried over from one year to the next up to a maximum of 5 beluga per year.
- If the TAT is exceeded in any year, the number of beluga harvested in excess of the TAT will be subtracted from the available TAT for the following year.
- This TAT applies from May 1<sup>st</sup> to November 30<sup>th</sup> of each year.
- The allocation of the TAT among the LNUKs is done by the RNUK.



#### 4. Closed Areas - Require approved Estuary Harvest plan for opening

This section applies to the Mucalic Estuary area, the Little Whale River Estuary, and the Nastapoka Estuary.

Hunting activities are prohibited in these areas but may be opened on a case by case basis upon approval of an Estuary Harvesting plan. Estuary Harvest Plans are to be submitted to the NMRWB for review and approval, and forwarded to the DFO minister for further approval.

Estuary Hunt Plans are due March 1<sup>st</sup> each year and must include following information:

- The total number of beluga to be harvested in the area per year from all communities
- A strategy to ensure compliance with the Estuary Hunt Plan;
- Strategies to mitigate noise disturbance in the estuaries;
- How the recording of harvest and taking of samples, will be addressed for the duration of the hunt plan, and who will manage this; and
- How the Estuary Hunt Plan allows for sharing access to and management of the area between adjacent communities.

Additionally, it is recommended that Estuary Hunt Plans contain details on the following:

- How cultural knowledge and traditional harvesting practices will be transmitted between knowledge holders, Elders, and youth.

## **5. Reporting and sampling**

100% reporting to Uumajuit Wardens of all beluga harvested and struck-and-lost beluga is required. Hunters who kill a beluga must provide complete harvest information no later than 48 hours after returning to their community by contacting their local Wardens.

Harvesters must take all steps necessary to obtain biological samples from all beluga harvested. Sampling kits are prepared by Makivik Corporation and distributed to every community. Makivik (Nunavik Research Center) collects the kits after the hunting seasons.

## **6. Local Management and Hunt Plans**

While there are no specific regulations or requirements, local management of beluga harvesting will be important for the success of this 5-year management system. This will help enable Nunavik to continue with a regional Management System that relies less on a Total Allowable Take. The LNUKs have the sole authority for developing Local Management and Hunt Plans for their community, which may include community bylaws. The RNUK has communicated plans to travel to communities to aid in creating hunt plans, and the NMRWB plans to provide training in the creation of bylaws.

## **7. Other Regulations, based on consultations in previous years**

- No person shall hunt a beluga calf (dark color), or an adult beluga that is accompanied by a calf.
- Nets shall be removed when not under constant surveillance.
- Other regulations regarding firearms, gear, wastage, and garbage were developed based on consultations and are available upon request.