



Procedural decision of the NMRWB in relation to the reconsideration of the 2021 Beluga Management System for the NMR, including the Inuit Zone and Joint Zone portion of the Cree/Inuit Overlap Areas

WHEREAS pursuant to Article 5 of the *Nunavik Inuit Land Claims Agreement* (“NILCA”), the Nunavik Marine Region Wildlife Board (“NMRWB”) is the main instrument of wildlife management in the Nunavik Marine Region (“NMR”) and it has the sole authority to establish, modify or remove levels of Total Allowable Take (“TAT”) and non-quota limitations (“NQL’s”) in the NMR.

WHEREAS Article 28 of the NILCA and Chapter 30 of the Eeyou Marine Region Land Claim Agreement (“EMRLCA”) provide for reciprocal arrangements between the Nunavik Inuit and the Crees of Eeyou Istchee and incorporate therein the provisions set out in the *Consolidated Agreement relating to the Cree/Inuit Offshore Overlapping Interests Area between the Crees of Eeyou Istchee and the Nunavik Inuit* (“Cree/Inuit Overlap Agreement”).

WHEREAS pursuant to section 7.3 and 4.5 of the Cree/Inuit Overlap Agreement, and 30.5 of the Eeyou Marine Region Land Claims Agreement (“EMRLCA”), the NMRWB, with the appointment of an observer by the Cree of Eeyou Istchee in the place of a Makivvik nominee to the NMRWB, has sole authority to make wildlife management decisions within the Inuit Zone.

WHEREAS pursuant to sections 28.8 of the NILCA, section 30.6 of the EMRLCA, and sections 4.4 and 7.5 of the Cree/Inuit Overlap Agreement, in the Joint Inuit/Cree Zone (“Joint Zone”), the NILCA and EMRLCA provisions shall have equal application and the NMRWB and Eeyou Marine Region Wildlife Board (“EMRWB”) have equal weight and authority. The NMRWB and the EMRWB are to sit together when making decisions or recommendations and are to render the same decisions or recommendations.

WHEREAS pursuant to article 5.6.20 and 5.6.23 of the NILCA, the NMRWB has the discretion to establish procedural requirements governing matters before it, to ensure structure, efficiency and procedural fairness in the exercise of its mandate and the making of its decisions.

WHEREAS the 5-year beluga management system of the NMRWB and the EMRWB, which was accepted in part, and varied by the Minister on November 26,

2020, is due to come to the end of its term on January 31, 2027. This beluga management system will require reconsideration and potentially changes. This reconsideration and any proposed changes will have to be the subject of a NMRWB, and for the Joint Zone, a NMRWB/EMRWB, public hearing to ensure that the participatory rights of impacted parties are accommodated and that their positions are taken into account prior to decisions being made.

WHEREAS since the Boards/Minister decisions in 2020, there has been new information, including the identification of a newly understood Belcher Islands (BEL) beluga stock, that has fundamentally changed the understanding of beluga populations and their management requirements within the NMR and area of overlap with the Eeyou Marine Region. Further, harvest monitoring and population surveys have raised concerns about stock health and abundance. As a result, reconsideration of existing measures is imperative.

WHEREAS the limited resources of the NMRWB and the EMRWB requires thoughtful preparation and clear defining of the issues to be brought to a public hearing. Clearly defining the scope and issues to be addressed at a public hearing is imperative to the efficiency of the process and effectiveness of subsequent decisions.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:

THAT the NMRWB, jointly with the EMRWB as it related to the Joint Zone of the Cree/Inuit Overlap Area, require the submission of a Request for Decision and proposal, as a prerequisite to holding a public hearing on the reconsideration and changes to the 2021 beluga management system.

THAT this Request for Decision include within it a proposal that outlines the changes recommended to the 2021 beluga management system.

THAT the Request for Decision may be authored and submitted by one or more of the co-management partners with responsibility for beluga and harvest management in the NMR/EMR. This Request for Decision and accompanying proposal may be co-authored by co-management partners. Further it may include options, areas of agreement, and areas of disagreement, without requiring consensus.

THAT that upon receipt of a Request for Decision and supporting proposal, the Board will further consider the next procedural steps in accordance with their mandate.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF the foregoing procedural decision has been reviewed by members of the NMRWB and voted up as follows:

Moved by: Zebedee Annahatak

Seconded by: Paulu Palliser

In favour: 5 Abstain: 0 Opposed: 0 Absent: 1 Vacant: 0

Date of adoption: December 11, 2025