

The Government of Nunavut participated in both Phase I and Phase II for the polar bear public hearing. There is foreseeably increased global scrutiny on Canada's polar bear management system if jurisdictions with polar bear management responsibility fail to undertake jurisdictionally appropriate management actions for polar bear conservation. The Polar Bear Management Plan for Québec, the Eeyou Marine Region and the Nunavik Marine Region recently went through the land claim decision making processes and parties should take the necessary steps to implement the plan.

We stand by statements made by staff during both phases and would like to offer the following to the directed questions under the guidance document.

1. Are the current measures being used by Inuit and Cree through traditional practices and/or laws as articulated through regional regulations like the Anguvigaq 1984 regulations and the Traditional Eeyou Hunting Laws, allowing for the maintenance of a vital, healthy polar bear population in the NMR/EMR?

Government of Nunavut response:

We recognize and appreciate the existing efforts made by Québec Inuit and Cree towards polar bear conservation. We also recognize the efforts of Nunavut harvesters to ensure that these shared subpopulations are sustainably managed for current and future generations according to the principles of conservation as agreed to in all three land claim agreements.

2. Does the current population and health status (ie. stable, increasing or decreasing) raise a conservation concern?

Government of Nunavut response:

As the main instrument for wildlife management in the Eeyou Marine Region (EMR) and Nunavik Marine Region (NMR), we feel that the Eeyou Marine Region Wildlife Board (EMRWB) and Nunavik Marine Region Wildlife Board (NMRWB) are well positioned to answer this question within their respective jurisdictions. It is important to recognize that these are shared subpopulations, and any decision made should consider impacts to rightsholders of other land claims agreements.

3. If there are conservation concerns, what measures (TAT and/or NQL, etc.) are needed to address these concerns?

Government of Nunavut response:

The Minister of Environment will consider decisions of the EMRWB and NMRWB on this matter.

4. The Anguvigaq, various Anguvigait and Makivvik say there is no need for Board/Minister-established TAT or NQLs in the NMR, that Nunavik Inuit are effectively managing polar bears in the region through their own traditional practices and regulations (1984 Regulations). Further, they want to assume responsibility for harvest monitoring using their Harvest Monitoring App. What is your party's position on this recommendation?

Government of Nunavut response:

We look forward to hearing more on this proposal with a focus on how the harvest monitoring will be reported (provincially/territorially, nationally and internationally) as users work towards the shared goal of polar bear conservation. As indicated at the hearings, we feel this is a potentially positive step forward in the implementation of the Polar Bear Management Plan for Québec, the Eeyou Marine Region and the Nunavik Marine Region.

5. If you are of the position that additional measures, on top of the measures currently in place through Nunavik Inuit traditional practices and regulation (Anguvigaq Regulation 1984), what do you believe those measures should be? And who would be responsible for implementing those additional Board/Minister-established measures?

Government of Nunavut response:

The Minister of Environment will consider the decision of the EMRWB and NMRWB on this matter. If these decisions require government regulations to implement, the Government of Nunavut has established mechanisms under the Nunavut *Wildlife Act* to implement those regulations. It is important to consider these would only apply to areas within Nunavut's jurisdiction. We feel that a coordinated approach by all three governments, the Governments of Canada, Québec, and Nunavut would be required to effectively implement any required regulatory measures.

6. What is the appropriate duration for a Board decision regarding polar bear before it should be reconsidered?

Government of Nunavut response:

We believe that in fulfilling their roles and responsibilities under their respective land claim agreements, both wildlife boards will review all the information before them when rendering a decision. We trust that the boards will conduct their reviews as necessary and as new information is brought forward for decision (Polar Bear Management Plan for Québec, the Eeyou Marine Region and the Nunavik Marine Region Objective 2)

7. During the Phase 1 and 2 hearings, we heard that reporting all harvests and defense-of-life-and-property kills, along with periodic population surveys, is essential for the Boards, harvesters, and regulators to adapt to changing circumstances in a timely manner. Who should be responsible for gathering this information? Who should it be shared with?

How often do you think this information should be gathered and shared?

Government of Nunavut response:

Within Nunavut, all human caused polar bear mortalities are required under legislation to be reported. We include this information in our annual harvest report which is publicly available and posted on our website. This information is used by wildlife managers within the territory as well as outside entities, including the Government of Canada who work to fulfill their national and international requirements. We trust that the reporting mechanisms within Québec, the EMR and NMR will be similarly shared (Polar Bear Management Plan for Québec, the Eeyou Marine Region and the Nunavik Marine Region Objectives 3 & 4).