

SUBMISSION TO THE
NUNAVUT WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT BOARD
FOR

Information:

Decision: X

Issue: Interpretation of point #4 of the ‘Five-point narwhal quota carry-over rule’

Background:

On March 28, 2017, the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) accepted the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board's (NWMB, or Board) decision concerning implementation of the Flexible Quota System and Tag Transfer Policy Phase II components of the Integrated Fisheries Management Plan for Narwhal in the Nunavut Settlement Area.

This flexible quota system allows for the carryover of unused TAH to be used in the subsequent hunting season, or to borrow from the following years' TAH for use in the current hunting season. A DFO science advisory process was held in October 2014 to provide peer-reviewed science advice on the sustainability of the flexible quota system for narwhal. The advice states that such a management approach is sustainable as long as the total hunting mortality over the five year period does not exceed five times the annual sustainable harvest recommendations.

The Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board (QWB), Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated (NTI) and Inuit support the flex quota system as it provides each narwhal harvesting community with an opportunity to maximize their harvest by allowing any unused tags to be carried forward to the following harvest season and to be transferred between communities that harvest from the same mixed stocks.

The Flexible quota system identifies that “*the system resets to zero whenever the TAH for a MU is modified by the NWMB (i.e. unused quota in a MU prior to the TAH modification cannot be carried-over into the subsequent harvest season under the "new" TAH)*” (number 4 of the ‘Five-point narwhal quota carry-over rule’ (TAB x). This policy rule was reviewed and discussed by Nunavut co-management organizations during a conference call held December 15, 2017¹. In particular, for TAHs that are modified upwards (i.e. increases), should the carry-over be reset to zero, or was the intention of this policy provision to reset the carry-over to zero for those stocks where the TAH was modified downwards (i.e.

¹ Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board, Kitikmeot Regional Wildlife Board, Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated, Nunavut Wildlife Management Board, Department of Fisheries & Oceans Canada

TAH decrease) to effect a conservation purpose. There was agreement from all organizations that resetting the carry-over to zero in situations where the TAH is modified upwards, there is no conservation purpose being effected by resetting unused quota (i.e. the carry-over), and therefore this policy rule should be modified accordingly.

A Narwhal Allocation Workshop was held in Rankin Inlet, February 6-7, 2018 to discuss the possible community harvest allocation scenarios resulting from recent modifications to two high Arctic Baffin Bay narwhal stocks. There was broad support among participants² to interpret point #4 of the 'Five-point narwhal quota carry-over rule' as only applying in cases where a TAH has been modified downwards, i.e. the TAH has been reduced, and would not apply in situations where the TAH was modified upwards.

Recognizing that the Board approved the broader *Narwhal Flexible Quota System and Tag Transfer Policy Phase II* (of which the 5 point rule is a component), as per its discretion identified in section 5.2.34 (d)(i) of the Nunavut Agreement, on behalf of the organizations identified below, DFO is requesting the above-described interpretation of point #4 of the 'Five-point narwhal quota carry-over rule' be applied to the applicable high Arctic narwhal stocks.

Submitted by:

Resource Management, Central & Arctic Region, Fisheries & Oceans Canada
Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board, XX
Kitikmeot Regional Wildlife Board, XX
Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated, XX

Date: April 16, 2018

² Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board, Kitikmeot Regional Wildlife Board, , Ikajutit HTO, Ekaluktutiak HTA, Gjoa Haven HTA, Hall Beach HTA, Igloolik HTO, Amaruq HTO, Kurtairojuark HTO, Pangnirtung HTO, Mittimatalik HTO, Nativak HTO, Resolute Bay HTO, Spence Bay HTO, Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated, Nunavut Wildlife Management Board, Department of Fisheries & Oceans Canada

