

Submission to the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board

February 26, 2025

FOR

Information :

Decision: X

Issue: To seek approval from the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board (NWMB) for the establishment of a Marine Protected Area (MPA) by Ministerial Order under the *Oceans Act* in Sarvarjuaq.

Background:

(a) How the issue relates to the NWMB mandate;

The establishment of a conservation area is directly related to the protection of wildlife and wildlife habitat under the *Nunavut Agreement*, and a portion of the conservation area is located within the Nunavut Settlement Area.

(b) Why the issue is being presented;

Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) is seeking NWMB approval for the establishment of a marine conservation area in Sarvarjuaq through the designation of a Marine Protected Area by Ministerial Order (or "Order") under the *Oceans Act*, s35.1(2). This issue is pursuant to articles 5.2.34(a), 9.3.2, 15.2.1, and 15.3.4 of the *Nunavut Agreement*:

- Section 5.2.34(a): *"approve the establishment, disestablishment, and changes to boundaries of Conservation Areas, related to management and protection of wildlife and wildlife habitat."*
- Section 9.3.2: *"The establishment, disestablishment or changing of the boundaries of Conservation Areas related to management and protection of wildlife habitat shall be subject to the approval of the NWMB pursuant to Sub-section 5.2.34(a). Conservation Areas shall be co-managed by Government and the DIO as provided in Section 9.3.7."*
- Section 15.2.1: *"If a Park or Conservation Area is established and that Park or Conservation Area partially extends beyond the marine areas, Article 8 or 9, as the case requires, shall apply to that entire Park or Conservation Area."*
- Section 15.3.4: *"Government shall seek the advice of the NWMB with respect to any wildlife management decisions in Zones I and II which would affect the substance and value of Inuit harvesting rights and opportunities within the marine areas of the Nunavut Settlement Area. The NWMB shall provide relevant information to Government that would assist in wildlife management beyond the marine areas of the Nunavut Settlement Area."*

(c) The key facts and circumstances relating to the issue; and

Sarvarjuaq (the Canadian portion of the North Water Polynya) is a marine area located in northern Baffin Bay, between Canada's Arctic Archipelago and Greenland. A portion of the proposed Sarvarjuaq MPA is located within the Nunavut Settlement Area. Other areas of the proposed MPA fall outside of the Nunavut Settlement Area.

Sea ice originating from the north, in the Lincoln Sea, is pushed south through the narrow channels of Nares Strait by strong winds and currents. This sea ice gets forced into the narrowest choke points of the strait, most often just south of Kane Basin in Smith Sound, creating an ice bridge. The passage of sea ice is then blocked by the ice bridge(s) creating the North Water Polynya, an area of open water (or very thin ice) in northern Baffin Bay. The polynya supports a rich diversity of marine life, including phytoplankton,

zooplankton, fish, seabirds, and marine mammals. Its open waters and high productivity provide abundant food resources, making it an important feeding ground for various species.

The initial boundaries of the proposed Sarvarjuaq MPA were based on an evaluation conducted by Fisheries and Oceans Canada in 2011 to identify Ecologically and Biologically Significant Areas throughout Canada's Arctic. The boundaries were further refined in collaboration with the Qikiqtani Inuit Association (QIA).

Protection under a Ministerial Order MPA would freeze the footprint of activities in the area, for a period of up to five years. This would mean that activities that have lawfully occurred in the area over the 12 months prior to designation (or that were authorized by a federal or territorial permit, licence, or some other form of express authorization to occur but have not yet taken place) would be allowed to continue for the duration of the Order. For the duration of the Ministerial Order, no new human activities, other than Inuit activities provided for in the *Nunavut Agreement*, exempted foreign activities, marine scientific research, and activities carried out for purposes of public safety, national defence, national security or law, or in response to emergency situations, provided for under subsection 35.1(3) of the *Oceans Act*, would be allowed to occur in the area following this proposed designation.

DFO has consulted with adjacent communities, the Qikiqtani Inuit Association (QIA), the Government of Nunavut, stakeholders and other federal departments to identify existing and authorized (i.e., ongoing) activities in the proposed Sarvarjuaq MPA.

The proposed Order would be covered under the Qikiqtait and Sarvarjuaq Inuit Impact and Benefit Agreement (IIBA), currently being negotiated by the Government of Canada and QIA.

(d) The estimated time required to orally present the issue (excluding questions/discussion).

DFO and QIA will deliver a 30-minute PowerPoint presentation (enclosed) that provides an overview of the proposal to establish a Ministerial Order in Sarvarjuaq.

Consultation:

(a) The means of consultation;

In October 2023, January 2024, May 2024 and June 2024 the Qikiqtait and Sarvarjuaq Working Group, represented by DFO, and QIA with the communities of Arctic Bay, Clyde River, Grise Fiord, Pond Inlet, Qikiqtarjuaq and Resolute Bay. The Government of Nunavut participated in the consultations as observers. Afternoon meetings were held with the Hunters and Trappers Associations and Hamlet Councils, and evening meetings were open for the public.

During the first round of community visits in October 2023 and January 2024, the consultations focused on introducing the proposed Sarvarjuaq MPA, as well as discussing short and long-term protection goals and their associated timelines. A major focal point of the presentation was introducing the MPA's draft conservation objectives for discussion and distributing community surveys.

In May and June 2024 the in-depth details regarding the regulations of marine protected areas by Ministerial Order were explained. There was also an overview of economic activities or potential activities for the area and what activities we have documented as occurring within the proposed Sarvarjuaq MPA. This information was presented to the Hamlet Council, Hunter and Trapper Association and the public of all consulted communities.

Similarly, in May and June 2024 the Working Group visited the six adjacent communities for a second round of consultations. During this round of consultations, details of the regulatory intent for the proposed Marine Protected Area by Ministerial Order were explained. This included an overview of the economic activities or potential activities for the area and what activities have been documented as

occurring within the proposed Sarvarjuaq MPA. The boundaries for the proposed MPA were also reviewed in detail.

Following the consultations, in September 2024, a “What We Heard” Report was circulated to each of the six Hunters and Trappers Associations, and Hamlet Councils summarizing the feedback received during these consultations.

In July 2024 letters were sent to industry and other stakeholders introducing Sarvarjuaq and proposing marine protection in the region using a Ministerial Order MPA. DFO requested information about ongoing activities in the region and invited stakeholders to comment on the proposal for a Ministerial Order MPA in Sarvarjuaq. Stakeholder groups included territorial stakeholders, environmental non-government organizations (ENGOS), fishing industry, shipping industry, cruise ship industry, oil and gas and mining industries, tour operators, and academia. In October 2024 a second round of letters were sent to stakeholders and industry to share proposed regulations for the Sarvarjuaq Study Area and to seek any comments or feedback.

DFO provided an update to the NWMB at its October 31, 2024 quarterly meeting to notify that a submission and presentation would be made for their approval in February 2025.

DFO submitted a proposal to the Nunavut Planning Commission (NPC) for conformity determination on November 6 2024, on November 13 NPC accepted the proposal for review. On November 15, 2024 NPC referred the proposal to the Nunavut Impact Review Board (NIRB) for further screening and public comment period.

DFO presented to the Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board (QWB) on the proposal on November 27, 2024 providing information on the community support letters received and notifying the Board that DFO would be seeking their endorsement. DFO will continue to engage the QWB on this site.

(b) A list of the organizations consulted and an estimate of the number of individuals consulted, including members of the public; and

Table 1. List of community organizations in October 2023 and January 2024, May 2024 and June 2024, and estimated number of individuals. All meetings were in person and individuals represent adult participants.

Date	Community Group	Estimated Number of Individuals
First Round of Consultations (October 2023 and January 2024)		
Oct 24, 2023.	Mittimatalik Hunters and Trappers Association Pond Inlet Hamlet Council	7
Oct 24, 2023.	Pond Inlet community	39
Oct 25, 2023.	Nangmoutaq Hunters and Trappers Association Clyde River Hamlet Council	7
Oct 25, 2023.	Clyde River community	56
Oct 26, 2023.	Qikiqtarjuaq Hunters and Trappers Association Qikiqtarjuaq Hamlet Council	11
Oct 26, 2023.	Qikiqtarjuaq Community	Cancelled due to weather
Jan 15, 2024.	Resolute Bay Hunters and Trappers Association Resolute Bay Hamlet Council	14
Jan 15, 2024.	Resolute Bay community	9
Jan 17, 2024.	Ikajutit Hunters and Trappers Association Arctic Bay Hamlet Council	14
Jan 17, 2024.	Arctic Bay community	41
Jan 18, 2024.	Iviq Hunters and Trappers Association Grise Fiord Hamlet Council	5
Jan 18, 2024.	Grise Fiord community	12
Second Round of Consultations (May 2024 and June 2024)		
May 13, 2023.	Mittimatalik Hunters and Trappers Association	12

	Pond Inlet Hamlet Council	
May 13, 2023.	Pond Inlet community	14
May 15, 2023.	Nangmoutaq Hunters and Trappers Association Clyde River Hamlet Council	8
May 15, 2023.	Clyde River community	11
May 16, 2023.	Qikiqtarjuaq Hunters and Trappers Association Qikiqtarjuaq Hamlet Council	13
May 16, 2023.	Qikiqtarjuaq Community	33
June 4, 2024.	Ikajutit Hunters and Trappers Association Arctic Bay Hamlet Council	10
June 4, 2024.	Arctic Bay community	11
June 5, 2024.	Resolute Bay Hunters and Trappers Association Resolute Bay Hamlet Council	9
June 5, 2024.	Resolute Bay community	3
June 6, 2024.	Iviq Hunters and Trappers Association Grise Fiord Hamlet Council	8
June 6, 2024.	Grise Fiord community	8

Stakeholders in Nunavut were engaged through letters distributed by emails. Stakeholders were identified with assistance from the Government of Nunavut and the Qikiqtani Inuit Association. The stakeholders engaged in this process included the following: the Nunavut Marine Conservation Target Steering Committee (represented by Environment and Climate Change Canada [ECCC], PC, Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada [CIRNAC], Transport Canada, DFO, the Government of Nunavut Department of Environment, and Nunavut Tunngavik Inc.), Nunavut Water Board, and Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board. Industry and non-government organizations included the Canadian Marine Advisory Council, Nunavut Eastern Arctic Shipping Inc., Shipping Federation of Canada, Woodward Group of Companies, Nunavut Fisheries Association, relevant stakeholders within the Eastern Arctic Groundfish Stakeholder Advisory Committee, Northern Shrimp Advisory Committee, Oceans North Canada and Greenland, World Wildlife Fund-Canada (WWF-Canada), Canadian Wildlife Federation, Ecology Action Centre, Association of Arctic Expedition Cruise Operators, Northwest Territories and Nunavut Chamber of Mines, Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers, Black Feather, Travel Nunavut, Atii (Let's go) Tourism, Arctic Kingdom, ArcticNet, Ice, Climate and Environment Laboratory, Nunavut Research Institute, Arctic Security Consultants, Canadian High Arctic Research Station, Polar Continental Shelf Program, Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, Inuit Circumpolar Council Canada, Greenlandic Institute of Natural Resources, Fishers and Hunters Association in Greenland and Greenland and the Government of Greenland.

(c) A summary of the results, including any responses or accommodations to issues, concerns, etc. raised during the consultations.

Community interest in protecting Sarvarjuaq is based largely on the area's ecological importance and significance to Inuit (past, present and future). Communities are interested in learning more about the research that is occurring in Sarvarjuaq and the surrounding area, primarily its animals and habitats, climate change impacts, future economic. Communities were in favour of the Ministerial Order MPA, and indicated the importance of Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit, community input and decision-making in future decisions associated with long-term protection. Across all communities, there was an interest in working together with Greenlandic communities to discuss common concerns and learn about other communities priorities. See the enclosed "Consultation and Engagement Summary" and "What We Heard" documents for additional details.

Key take-aways from individual community consultations include:

- **Arctic Bay:** Comments highlighted that narwhal and bowhead whales travel to the proposed Sarvarjuaq MPA when the ice has formed elsewhere. There was concerns that if protection did not

occur that mining in the area may be allowed in the future. Concerns were also raised about the level of vessel traffic in the area.

- **Clyde River:** Meeting participants communicated support to protect Sarvarjuaq. They voiced their desire for employment opportunities arising from the development of the proposed Sarvarjuaq MPA.
- **Grise Fiord:** The community was interested to hear information about the collaborative activities between governments and researchers from Canada and Greenland. Community members expressed worry for the risk of industrial accidents in the Sarvarjuaq area and the desire to benefit from economic activities occurring in the area.
- **Pond Inlet:** Pond Inlet community members were generally supportive for protecting of Sarvarjuaq by a Ministerial Order MPA. They were concerned that the summer habitat to local populations of narwhal and beluga was disturbed due to industrial activity and highlighted the importance of protecting their overwintering habitat in the Sarvarjuaq area.
- **Qikiqtarjuaq:** Qikiqtarjuaq community members detailed how the wildlife in the Sarvarjuaq area travel by ice and breed in that area, therefore the ecosystem activities that take place in Sarvarjuaq impact their community. There was concern voiced about vessel traffic and the potential for oil spills in the Sarvarjuaq area and surrounding areas.
- **Resolute Bay:** Resolute Bay community members pointed out additional areas outside of the proposed boundaries they desire to be protected in the future. Discussions included questions about some of the threats to Sarvarjuaq including how climate change is affecting the area. Participants also talked about the familial connections between Canada and Greenland in communities adjacent to the area and their use of the area for harvesting. There were concerns about increased ice melt in the area and how vessel traffic may negatively impact this area.

Following in-person consultations with the communities of Arctic Bay, Qikiqtarjuaq, Clyde River, Grise Fiord, Pond Inlet and Resolute Bay, letters in support of the proposal were received from the HTAs and hamlet councils of all six communities. The Government of Nunavut also provides a letter in support of a Ministerial Order MPA in Sarvarjuaq.

Baffin Fisheries Coalition requested a meeting with DFO to gather further information about the Ministerial Order MPA regulations and the potential impact on the Nunavut commercial fisheries. Once DFO clarified that all ongoing commercial fisheries active in Sarvarjuaq would be allowed to continue for up to 5 years, Baffin Fisheries Coalition had no further concerns.

DFO sent notifications to partners, the six Hunters and Trappers Associations and the six Hamlet Councils, as well as stakeholders in advance of pre-publication of the proposed new regulation in Canada Gazette, Part I. This 30-day public comment period opened during December and closed in January.

Recommendation:

DFO is recommending that NWMB approves the establishment of a Marine Protected Area by Ministerial Order under the *Oceans Act* in Sarvarjuaq. A decision is requested by April 1, 2025.

Prepared by:

Lauren Candlish, Arctic Region – Fisheries and Oceans Canada, Marine Planning and Conservation Program

Date:

February 26, 2025.

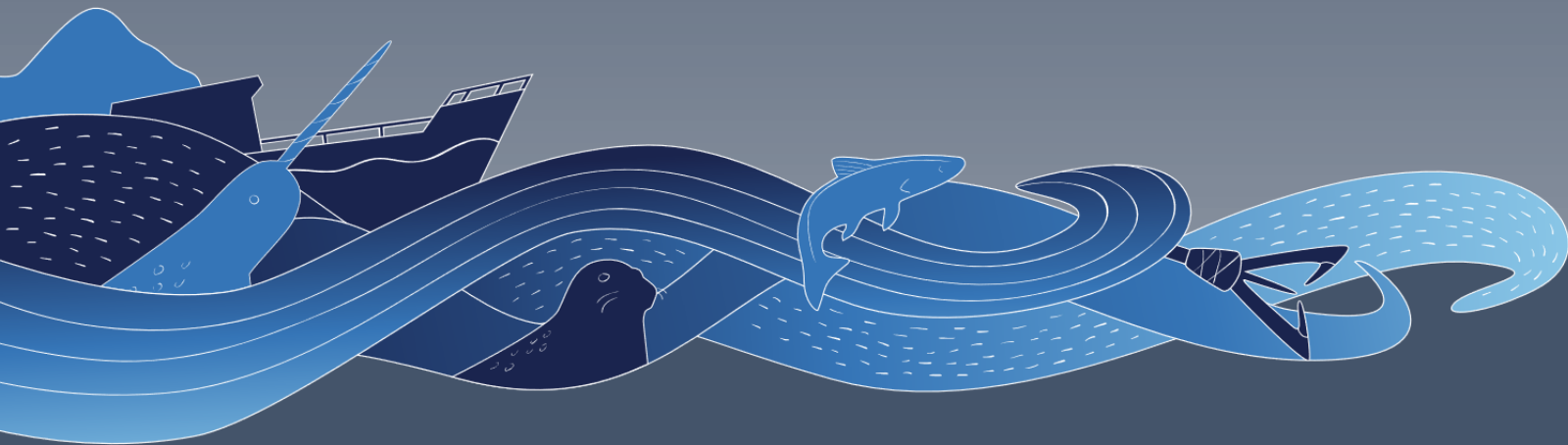


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Proposal to Establish Ministerial Order Marine Protected Areas under the *Oceans Act* in Qikiqtait and Sarvarjuaq

Presentation to the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board
February 26, 2025



Canada 

Purpose

DFO is seeking NWMB's approval to establish Ministerial Order Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) in Qikiqtait and Sarvarjuaq under the *Oceans Act*, which will be consistent with the Nunavut Agreement, s9.3.2



Sarvarjuaq

- Sarvarjuaq is located in northern Baffin Bay.
- Narrow channels help ice bridges form between Canada and Greenland, creating one of the largest recurring polynyas in the Arctic, the North Water Polynya.
- The polynya supports a large variety of marine life, including algae, fish, seabirds, and marine mammals.
- Sarvarjuaq is an important overwintering habitat and calving area, supporting the species harvested by communities throughout the Qikiqtani Region and beyond.
- The ice bridge has also been a method of travel for Inuit, connecting Canada and Greenland.



Proposed Ministerial Order MPA

- A Ministerial Order MPA freezes the footprint of ongoing activities in an area for a period of up to 5 years.
- This means that activities that are occurring, or are authorized to occur, in the year leading up to establishment are allowed to continue, but no new activities would be allowed for the duration of the Order.
- A joint Inuit Impact and Benefit Agreement (IIBA) for the proposed MPAs is being negotiated between the Government of Canada and QIA.
- The proposed MPAs would protect these vulnerable areas while partners consider long-term management and conservation needs for Qikiqtait and Sarvarjuaq, including Inuit Protected and Conserved Areas for both sites.

Proposed Ministerial Order MPA (cont)

Activities listed below would be allowed within the proposed Qikiqtait and Sarvarjuaq MPAs:

- Inuit activities provided for in the *Nunavut Agreement*
- All ongoing activities taking place 1 year prior to designation and activities that have otherwise been authorized to occur by applicable federal laws or by laws of a province/territory
- Marine scientific research
- Activities carried out for purposes of public safety, national defence, national security or law, or in response to emergency situations
- Exempted foreign activities

Classes of ongoing activities

The following have been identified as classes of ongoing activities in both Sarvarjuaq and Qikiqtait. These classes of activities will be allowed to continue under the Qikiqtait and Sarvarjuaq Ministerial Order MPAs:

- ✓ Hunting and trapping (including sport hunting)
- ✓ Fishing (including sport fishing)
- ✓ Harvesting of marine plants
- ✓ Constructing, dismantling, maintaining and repairing, and using of temporary structures on sea ice
- ✓ Marine navigation
- ✓ National defence activities carried out by the Department of National Defence
- ✓ Canadian Coast Guard activities carried out by the Canadian Coast Guard
- ✓ Tourism activities
- ✓ Recreational activities
- ✓ Educational activities
- ✓ Travel over sea ice using motorized vehicles and non-motorized methods
- ✓ Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit and community-based research activities (including stewardship activities)
- ✓ Scientific research activities
- ✓ Filming and media content development

Consultations Qikiqtait

November 2023 – April 2024:

Two rounds of in-person consultations with Sanikiluaq HTA, Sanikiluaq Hamlet Council, Arctic Eider Society, Sanikiluaq Qikiqtait Steering Committee and public of Sanikiluaq.

October 2024:

Letters in support of the Ministerial Order MPA were received from HTA, hamlet council and the Arctic Eider Society



Consultations Sarvarjuaq

October 2023 – June 2024: Two rounds of in-person consultations with the HTAs, hamlet councils and general public in Grise Fiord, Resolute Bay, Arctic Bay, Pond Inlet, Clyde River and Qikiqtarjuaq

May 2024: Newsletter distributed with consultation summary, objectives, an activities survey with return mail packaging provided and contact information

October 2024: Letters in support of the Ministerial Order MPA were received from all 6 community HTAs and hamlet councils

Stakeholder Engagement

- Stakeholders engaged were identified with assistance from the Government of Nunavut and the Qikiqtani Inuit Association.
- Letters were sent to stakeholders in English, French and Inuktitut. The first letters were distributed in July 2024. The second round of letters were sent in October 2024.
- DFO continues to be available to stakeholders as the process advances.

Nunavut Planning Commission (NPC) & Nunavut Impact Review Board (NIRB)

- DFO submitted the Qikiqtait and Sarvarjuaq proposals to the NPC for conformity determination as required under the Nunavut Planning and Project Assessment Act (NUPPAA).
- NPC referred the proposal to NIRB for further screening and a public comment period.

Pre-Publication in Canada Gazette, Part I

- DFO published its proposal to establish a new Ministerial Order MPA in Qikiqtait and Sarvarjuaq.
- The 30-day public comment period opened during December and closed in January.

Next Steps

If the NWMB approves of DFO's proposal to establish a new Ministerial Order MPA in Qikiqtait and Sarvarjuaq the next steps are:

- Signing of the IIBA between the Government of Canada and the Qikiqtani Inuit Association;
- Publication in Canada Gazette, Part II (designation of the new MPAs).

Request for Nunavut Wildlife Management Board Approval of a Ministerial Order Marine Protected Area in Sarvarjuaq

Consultation and Engagement Summary

Partnerships

Since 2019, the Government of Canada and the Qikiqtani Inuit Association (QIA) have been working together to identify options for the conservation and protection of Sarvarjuaq and other sites within the Qikiqtani Region of Nunavut. In 2021 a Qikiqtait and Sarvarjuaq Working Group (the Working Group) was created to advance the conservation and protection of the proposed Qikiqtait and Sarvarjuaq MPAs. The Qikiqtait and Sarvarjuaq Working Group consist of members from the Qikiqtani Inuit Association (QIA), Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO), Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC), Transport Canada and the Government of Nunavut. The Working Group has supported the required processes to create the two potential Marine Protected Areas by Ministerial Order. The Working Group also provided awareness and shared information with the Inuit Impact and Benefit Agreement (IIBA) negotiation table as needed, with the objective to work in parallel. Only DFO, QIA and the Government of Nunavut travelled to the communities as part of the consultations for Sarvarjuaq.

Community Consultations

Representatives of the Qikiqtait and Sarvarjuaq Working Group with members from QIA and DFO conducted two rounds of consultations from October 2023 to June 2024. The Government of Nunavut participated in the consultations as observers.

The first round of consultations occurred in Pond Inlet, Clyde River and Qikiqtarjuaq from October 24-27, 2023 and in Arctic Bay, Grise Fiord and Resolute Bay from January 16-18, 2024. During the first round of consultation meetings were held with the Hamlet Councils, Hunters and Trappers Organizations and the general public in each community. Unfortunately the public meeting in Qikiqtarjuaq scheduled for October 26 was cancelled due to bad weather. During all the meetings DFO's presentation began by introducing the proposed Sarvarjuaq MPA, as well as discussing short and long-term protection goals and their associated timelines. A major point of DFO's presentation was introducing the MPA's draft conservation objectives and hearing feedback about the objectives. In all meetings, QIA also presented on the Qikiqtani Regional Conservation Model, discussing the pillars of the model and their vision for long-term protection as an IPCA. QIA also discussed Inuit stewardship, Indigenous-led governance, infrastructure support and fisheries reconciliation. Programs for monitoring and regional governance such as the Nauttisuqtiit Program were also covered.

In general during the first round of consultations, communities were supportive of protection and expressed interest in future economic opportunities in Sarvarjuaq adjacent communities. A common theme heard across communities was a desire to learn more about Sarvarjuaq as research continues, to be updated on the progress of the assessment and long-term protection options, and the importance of Inuit-led decision-making in conservation. There was also a desire across all communities to work together with communities in Greenland to discuss priorities for long-term management.

During first round of consultations, surveys were also handed out to the community members who were present. The survey consisted of questions regarding the objectives for the proposed Sarvarjuaq MPA by

Ministerial Order and asked about the types of activities that were occurring in the area. The survey questions and a summary of the responses are included in the “What We Heard” Report.

During the first round of consultations there was a request for information to also be provided to communities through a newsletter that could be mailed to everyone who lived in the six communities. In the early spring of 2024 DFO distributed a newsletter to every PO box in all six communities. The newsletter introduced Sarvarjuaq and the history of work that has led to marine protection in the region. The newsletter also introduced Marine Protected Areas by Ministerial Order as a proposed short-term conservation tool along with Inuit Protected and Conserved Areas as QIA’s vision for long-term protection. Contact information and other opportunities for engagement were also included in the newsletter. DFO will continue to send newsletters to all six communities to provide updates on the progress for establishment.

During the first round of consultations there were also requests to hear more about the research that has been occurring in the Sarvarjuaq and surrounding areas. In February and March 2024, DFO visited all six communities to present updates on scientific research in the area. Where possible, school visits and radio presentations were also undertaken to provide information at the request of communities. The information was well received, and communities expressed that they would like to have increased involvement in research efforts moving forward.

The second round of consultations took place in Pond Inlet, Clyde River, and Qikiqtarjuaq from May 13-15 2024, and in Arctic Bay, Resolute Bay and Grise Fiord from June 3-7 2024. The second round of consultation meetings again were held with the Hamlet Councils, Hunters and Trappers Organizations and the general public in each of the six community. During these meetings DFO presented additional information regarding the proposed Marine Protected Area by Ministerial Order including a review of the progress, an in-depth overview of the Ministerial Order as a protection tool, the proposed boundaries. DFO also presented on the regulatory intent that included an overview of economic activities or potential activities for the area and what activities we have documented as occurring within the proposed Sarvarjuaq MPA. QIA presented more details about their vision of an Inuit Protected and Conserved Areas as a proposed long-term protection tool.

During the second round of consultations many community members again indicated their support for the proposed approach of establishing a Marine Protected Area by Ministerial Order. Many comments highlighted the importance of Sarvarjuaq and protecting the area. Community members detailed the abundance of wildlife observed in Sarvarjuaq, the importance of the area as a wintering and breeding habitat and the importance of Sarvarjuaq as a hunting area. Concerns were shared about the potential negative impacts of industrial activity, vessel traffic and increasing tourism on the health of the ecosystem if Sarvarjuaq were not protected. There were also comments on allowing for local economic opportunities. In general there was a lot of support indicated for protecting Sarvarjuaq, and many requests for communities to be involved in the long-term management of the area.

In September 2024 DFO distributed “What We Heard Reports” to all six communities. These reports included meeting summaries for all communities in both round of consultations, feedback received from the community and responses to questions that came up during the meetings. The reports also included results of the survey and informed the communities that DFO would be seeking Support Letters as a next step in the process toward establishment.

In October 2024 DFO received letters in support of the Ministerial Order MPA from all six community Hunters and Trappers and Hamlet Councils. The Government of Nunavut has also provided a letter of support.

Other Stakeholders

Stakeholders were identified with assistance from the Government of Nunavut and the Qikiqtani Inuit Association. The stakeholders engaged in this process included the following: the Nunavut Marine Conservation Target Steering Committee (represented by Environment and Climate Change Canada [ECCC], PC, Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada [CIRNAC], Transport Canada, DFO, the Government of Nunavut Department of Environment, and Nunavut Tunngavik Inc.), Nunavut Water Board, and Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board. Industry and non-government organizations included the Canadian Marine Advisory Council, Nunavut Eastern Arctic Shipping Inc., Shipping Federation of Canada, Woodward Group of Companies, Nunavut Fisheries Association, relevant stakeholders within the Eastern Arctic Groundfish Stakeholder Advisory Committee, Northern Shrimp Advisory Committee, Oceans North Canada and Greenland, World Wildlife Fund-Canada (WWF-Canada), Canadian Wildlife Federation, Ecology Action Centre, Association of Arctic Expedition Cruise Operators, Northwest Territories and Nunavut Chamber of Mines, Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers, Black Feather, Travel Nunavut, Atii (Let's go) Tourism, Arctic Kingdom, ArcticNet, Ice, Climate and Environment Laboratory, Nunavut Research Institute, Arctic Security Consultants, Canadian High Arctic Research Station, Polar Continental Shelf Program, Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, Inuit Circumpolar Council Canada, Greenlandic Institute of Natural Resources, Fishers and Hunters Association in Greenland and Greenland and the Government of Greenland.

DFO also engaged all implicated federal departments, including (but not limited to) ECCC, Transport Canada, Crown-Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada, Parks Canada, Natural Resources Canada, Canadian Coast Guard, Global Affairs Canada, and Department of National Defense.

In July 2024, DFO distributed letters to the identified stakeholders. These letters were provided in English, French and Inuktitut. The first letter informed stakeholders that the Qikiqtani Inuit Association, the Government of Nunavut and the Government of Canada were assessing short-term protection measures for Sarvarjuaq. The letter also introduced Marine Protected Areas by Ministerial Order as the proposed protection tool and requested feedback and information about ongoing and anticipated activities in the area. In October 2024, a second letter was distributed to stakeholders. The second letter outlined the proposed regulations for Sarvarjuaq, provided a list of the classes of ongoing activities. In the second letter, stakeholders were invited to provide comments and feedback on the proposed regulations. No feedback or comments on the proposed regulations were received.

In addition to the distribution of two stakeholder letters, DFO consulted with stakeholders further at their request. A meeting was held with Baffin Fisheries Coalition and representatives from the Government of Canada, Department of Fisheries and Oceans. Baffin Fisheries wanted more information about the proposed Sarvarjuaq MPA and if it would impact their activities in the region. DFO conducted a presentation similar to that shared during community consultations indicating that fishing would be considered one of the classes of ongoing activities and therefore the activity could continue in the proposed Sarvarjuaq MPA.

DFO provided an update to the NWMB at its October 31, 2024, quarterly meeting to notify that a submission and presentation would be made for their approval in February 2025.

DFO submitted a proposal to the Nunavut Planning Commission (NPC) for conformity determination on November 6, 2024, on November 13 NPC accepted the proposal for review. On November 18, 2024, NPC referred the proposal to the Nunavut Impact Review Board (NIRB) for further screening and public comment period.

DFO presented to the Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board (QWB) on the proposal on November 27, 2024, providing information on the community support letters received and notifying the Board that DFO would be seeking their endorsement. DFO will continue to engage the QWB on this site.

DFO sent notifications to partners, community HTAs and hamlet councils, as well as stakeholders in advance of pre-publication of the proposed new regulation in Canada Gazette, Part I. This 30-day public comment period opened during December and closed in January.

Request for Nunavut Wildlife Management Board Approval of a Ministerial Order Marine Protected Area in Sarvarjuaq

Project Description

1. Request for Approval

Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) Marine Planning and Conservation Program, is seeking approval from the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board (NWMB) to establish a marine conservation area in Sarvarjuaq through designation of a Marine Protected Area (MPA) by Ministerial Order (or “Order”) under the *Oceans Act*, s35.1(2), consistent with the Nunavut Agreement s9.3.2 (establishment of conservation areas).

2. Collaboration and Proposal for a Ministerial Order MPA under the *Oceans Act*

The Sarvarjuaq Study Area (Sarvarjuaq) surrounds the North Water Polynya which is located between Canada and Greenland in northern Baffin Bay. This region is characterized by one of the largest recurring polynyas in the Arctic, which supports high productivity and biodiversity. In March 2019, the Prime Minister of Canada, Justin Trudeau, released a joint statement with Canadian Inuit leaders that committed to working in partnership to advance the sustainable marine management and environmental protection of the region surrounding the North Water Polynya. DFO and QIA are pursuing the establishment of a Ministerial Order MPA under the *Oceans Act* in Sarvarjuaq to limit the impact of additional unforeseen stressors on the area while partners explore options for long-term protection.

This proposal for a Ministerial Order MPA in Sarvarjuaq requires the negotiation of an Inuit Impact and Benefit Agreement (IIBA) under the *Nunavut Agreement*. An IIBA between the Government of Canada and QIA is currently being negotiated and will be completed prior to establishment.

The North Water Polynya was identified by DFO in 2011 as one of the Ecologically and Biologically Significant Areas within Canada’s Arctic. In addition to supporting community interests for protection, the proposed MPA would contribute to Canada’s goal of conserving 25 per cent of its oceans by 2025, and mandate to increase Indigenous collaboration on marine conservation. Establishment of an MPA in Sarvarjuaq would advance reconciliation with Inuit through self-determination, Inuit leadership and collaboration in marine conservation stewardship.

Objectives identified for the proposed Sarvarjuaq MPA are:

- (1) To support the conservation, protection, and understanding of Sarvarjuaq (the North Water Polynya) and its unique biologically productive ecosystem that is of immense value to Inuit and Inuit culture.
- (2) To support Inuit leadership in the conservation of Sarvarjuaq to ensure the continuity of Inuit culture, values, and practices, including accumulating and passing down Inuit knowledge, as well as Inuit stewardship and governance.

Protection under a Ministerial Order MPA would freeze the footprint of activities in the area, for a period of up to five years. This would mean that activities that have lawfully occurred in the area over the 12 months prior to designation (or that were authorized by a federal or territorial permit, licence, or some other form of express authorization to occur but have not yet taken place) would be allowed to continue

for the duration of the Order. For the duration of the Ministerial Order, no new human activities, other than Inuit activities provided for in the *Nunavut Agreement*, exempted foreign activities, marine scientific research, and activities carried out for purposes of public safety, national defence, national security or law, or in response to emergency situations, provided for under subsection 35.1(3) of the *Oceans Act*, would be allowed to occur in the area following this proposed designation.

The proposed Sarvarjuaq Ministerial Order MPA would establish the boundaries and designate an MPA in the area found in the Nares Strait in Northern Baffin Bay, at the entrance to Smith Sound; extending both North and South along the international boundary between Canada and Greenland.

The proposed Sarvarjuaq Ministerial Order MPA would prohibit all human activities that disturb, damage, destroy or remove from that MPA any unique geological or archeological features or any living marine organism or any part of its habitat or is likely to do so within the designated boundaries, except the following activities:

Classes of Ongoing Activities

For the purposes of paragraph 35.1(2)(a) of the *Oceans Act*, the following classes of activities are ongoing activities in the MPA:

- Hunting and trapping (including sport hunting)
- Fishing (including sport fishing)
- Harvesting of marine plants
- Constructing, dismantling, maintaining and repairing, and using of temporary structures on sea ice
- Marine navigation
- National defence activities carried out by the Department of National Defence
- Canadian Coast Guard activities carried out by the Canadian Coast Guard
- Tourism activities
- Recreational activities
- Educational activities
- Travel over sea ice using motorized vehicles and non-motorized methods
- Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit and community-based research activities (including stewardship activities)
- Scientific research activities
- Filming and media content development

DFO has consulted with the communities of Arctic Bay, Clyde River, Grise Fiord, Pond Inlet, Resolute Bay and Qikiqtarjuaq, QIA, the Government of Nunavut, stakeholders and other federal departments to identify existing and authorized (i.e., ongoing) activities in the proposed Sarvarjuaq MPA.

Activities under the Nunavut Agreement

The proposed Order would not apply with respect to rights of Inuit as provided for under the *Nunavut Agreement*.

Public safety

Any activity carried out on behalf of His Majesty for the purpose of public safety, national defence, national security, or law enforcement, or in response to an emergency (including environmental

emergencies), would be allowed to occur within the MPA by way of the statutory exception provided under subsection 35.1(3) of the *Oceans Act*, such as emergency search and rescue, response to shipping or aircraft accidents, or national security requirements.

3. About the Area

a. Location

The proposed Sarvarjuaq MPA is found in the Nares Strait and in Northern Baffin Bay (Figure 1). The boundaries were refined in collaboration QIA. A portion of the proposed Sarvarjuaq MPA falls within the Nunavut Settlement Area (NSA). The outer portion of the proposed Sarvarjuaq MPA extends further to the southeast and runs along the boundary of Canada’s Exclusive Economic Zone. It also includes the seabed, the subsoil to a depth of five metres and the water column, including the sea ice, each of which is below the low-water line. Adjacent Canadian communities to the Sarvarjuaq region include Grise Fiord, Resolute Bay, Arctic Bay, Pond Inlet, Clyde River and Qikiqtarjuaq.

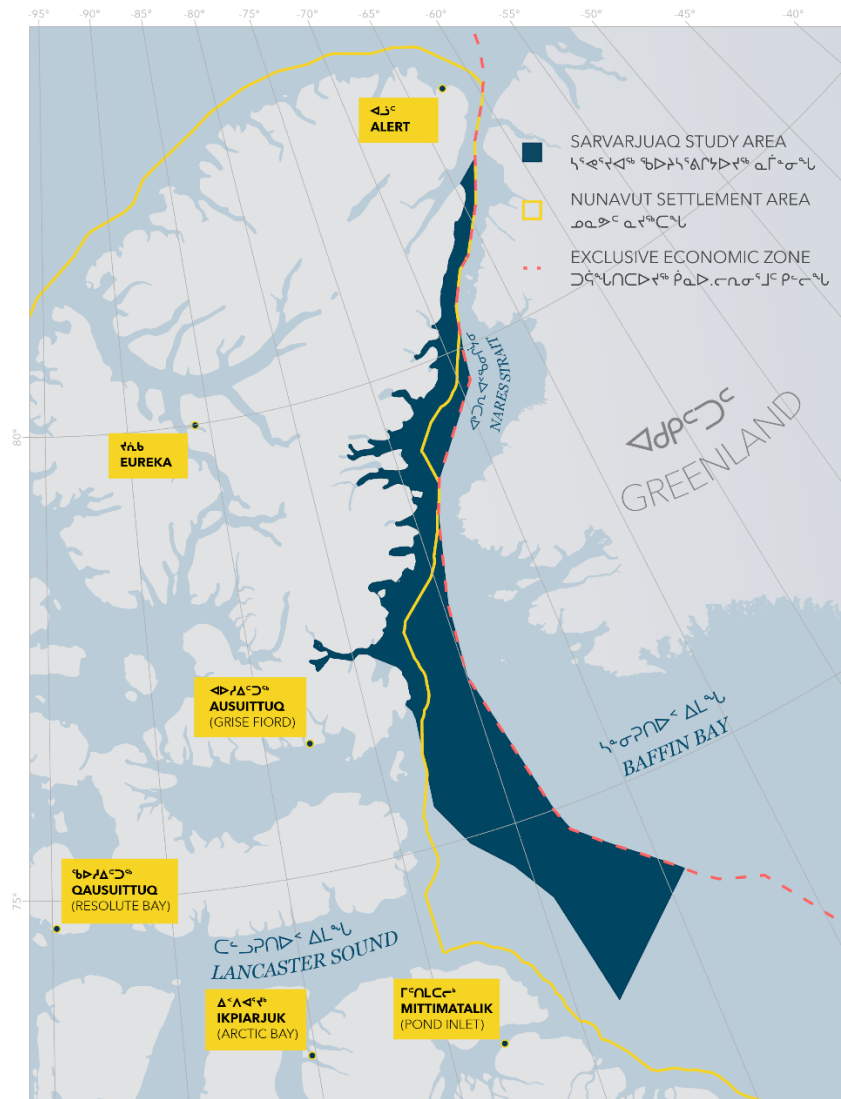


Figure 1. Map of the proposed Sarvarjuaq MPA

b. Ecological Importance

A major feature in the Sarvarjuaq area is the North Water Polynya (also known as Pikialasorsuaq), which is an area of year-round open water surrounded by sea-ice cover. The North Water Polynya is one of the largest (80,000 km²) polynyas in the Arctic, and is well known for its seasonally early and reliable productivity, as well as its high biodiversity. The polynya provides critical habitat for a number of marine mammal species, such as Atlantic walrus (*Odobenus rosmarus rosmarus*), beluga (*Delphinapterus leucas*) and bowhead whale (*Balaena mysticetus*), narwhal (*Monodon monoceros*), ringed seal (*Pusa hispida*), bearded seal (*Erignathus barbatus*), and polar bear (*Ursus maritimus*), as well as sea birds, fish and other marine life. The Sarvarjuaq area is also home to an estimated 60 million birds, including the endangered ivory gull, and the largest aggregation of dovekies/little auks on earth.

The region serves as a crucial feeding and breeding ground for many Arctic marine species. Species like seals, walrus, whales, and seabirds rely on the polynya's open waters to access food resources. Seabirds also use the coastal-fiord regions surrounding the polynya for breeding, foraging and nesting. These species often migrate long distances to reach the polynya, highlighting its importance in their life cycles.

The high biodiversity and species presence in the Sarvarjuaq region are largely attributed to a series of unique physical features in the area. These include:

- Atmospheric and oceanic circulation patterns creating dominant northerly winds and ocean currents, which push sea ice south through Nares Strait into Baffin Bay (DFO, 2021);
- Ice bridges forming in Nares Strait, Kane Basin and Smith Sound, largely due to narrow channels blocking the passage of sea ice southward, resulting in less sea ice south of Smith Sound (DFO, 2021);
- Ocean circulation patterns and upwelling mixing nutrient-rich waters, with cold Pacific water flowing south from the Arctic (along the Canadian coast) and warmer Atlantic waters coming flowing north from Davis Strait (along the Greenlandic coast) (DFO, 2021);
- Increased primary productivity due to a longer ice-free period.

Other significant biophysical features in the Sarvarjuaq Study Area that contribute to its ecological importance include; a high presence of glaciers and their subsequent freshwater runoff into the marine environment, early phytoplankton blooms providing an early source of food. In addition, the North Water Polynya is considered to be a carbon sink and is regionally important in the exchange of carbon dioxide and other gases.

The North Water Polynya has dynamic and fluctuating oceanographic features, stemming from both sea ice and icebergs from glaciers in the region. Fresh water flows and mixes into the marine environment, fed by the melting ice caps in Canada and Greenland. The effects of climate change and increased meltwater on the North Water are uncertain. Recently, the ice bridges that help in the formation of the polynya are becoming less stable and occurring with less predictability. Like many other Arctic regions, the polynya is vulnerable to the effects of climate change, such as shifts in ice cover, altered ocean currents and impacts on species that rely on it (ICCC, 2017; DFO, 2021).

Sarvarjuaq and the wider area of Pikialasorsuaq are both socially and culturally important. For millennia, this region has been home to some of the northern-most human settlements. The polynya has connected communities across Canada and Greenland (ICCC, 2017), and supported many of these settlements.

Overall, the North Water Polynya serves as a unique and vital ecosystem, supporting diverse marine life, playing a role in regional climate dynamics, and providing cultural importance to Inuit communities. It is important to understand and preserve this unique ecosystem for those who rely on the region, as well as for global climate change research and conservation efforts.

c. Socio-economic Considerations

A socio-economic analysis was completed by DFO's Policy and Economic Sector. The majority of economic activity for Sarvarjuaq falls within the categories of natural resource management and eco/cultural tourism. Activities identified through the socio-economic analysis include annual sealift operations, vessel transportation of materials from the Mary River iron ore mine, icebreaking activities, passenger and cruise ship traffic, marine research vessel activity, media and filming activities, subsistence and traditional wildlife harvesting, recreational activities, and tourism. DFO's analysis, consultation with other Federal departments, community consultations, and industry and stakeholder engagement informed the list of ongoing activities presented above.

Forecasted possible economic growth in the proposed Sarvarjuaq MPA lies within recreational and tourism activities. It is important to note that one variable in future economic development is climate change, as scientific studies have shown a reduction in ice thickness and age (DFO, 2021) could lead to greater accessibility of the Sarvarjuaq region.

Limited commercial fishing activities have taken place within the proposed Sarvarjuaq MPA. The proposed MPA overlaps with the boundaries of the North Atlantic Fishing Organization (NAFO) fishing division 0A. The NAFO Convention regulations allow Nunavut offshore license holders to harvest Greenland Halibut.

No current mineral exploration or exploitation licenses are held within the proposed Sarvarjuaq MPA. Baffinland's Mary River Mine, is currently the only operational mine in proximity to Sarvarjuaq. The mine is located a few hundred kilometers south of Sarvarjuaq, on northern Baffin Island (Baffinland, 2017). Vessel transportation of materials from the mine can route through the proposed MPA.

There is currently a moratorium on new oil and gas exploration licensing in and around Sarvarjuaq. According to the Strategic Environmental Assessment in Baffin Bay and Davis Strait (Nunavut Impact Review Board, 2019), there is currently little interest from oil and gas companies to undertake development in the region.

Currently, shipping and navigation traffic in and around the propose Sarvarjuaq MPA boundaries occurs for the purposes of general cargo, fishing, tanker, passenger ship and pleasure craft, government and icebreaking. Vessel traffic could potentially increase in the future if resource projects within mining, oil and gas were developed/approved.

Due to the preservation of natural ecosystems that are associated with a protected area, an increase in eco/cultural tourism is possible. An increase in cruise vessel visits in Nunavut and the Qikiqtani region has been observed and linked with decreasing sea ice and longer ice-free seasons. Currently, there are eight different licensed outfitters and ten different licensed tour operators in the communities of Grise Fiord, Pond Inlet, Clyde River, Resolute and Arctic Bay. These licensed outfitting and tour operators provide tourists a variety of recreational activities. An increase in recreational and tourism activities may be possible in the future if sea ice continues to decrease.

4. Consultation and Engagement

Below is a short summary of the consultations and engagements that have occurred. A more detailed description of the consultations and engagements undertaken is provided in a separate “Consultation and Engagement Summary” document and in the “What We Heard” Report, both included in this submission.

a. Partnerships

Since 2019, the Government of Canada and QIA have been working together to identify options for the conservation and protection of Sarvarjuaq and other sites within the Qikiqtani Region of Nunavut. In 2021 a Qikiqtait and Sarvarjuaq Working Group (the Working Group) was created to advance the conservation and protection of the proposed Qikiqtait and Sarvarjuaq MPAs. The Working Group includes representatives from the Government of Canada, QIA and the Government of Nunavut.

b. Consultation and Engagement

Through the Working Group DFO has been working with QIA to implement an approach to community consultations in the Qikiqtani region of Nunavut. QIA indicated that consultations should focus on the six communities in closest proximity to the proposed Sarvarjuaq MPA: Grise Fiord, Resolute Bay, Arctic Bay, Pond Inlet, Clyde River, and Qikiqtarjuaq.

The first round of consultations occurred in Pond Inlet, Clyde River and Qikiqtarjuaq from October 24-27, 2023 and in Arctic Bay, Grise Fiord and Resolute Bay from January 16-18, 2024. During the first round of consultation meetings were held with the Hamlet Councils, Hunters and Trappers Organizations and the general public in each community. Unfortunately the public meeting in Qikiqtarjuaq scheduled for October 26 was cancelled due to bad weather. During all the meetings DFO’s presentation began by introducing the proposed Sarvarjuaq MPA, as well as discussing short and long-term protection goals and their associated timelines. A major point of DFO’s presentation was introducing the MPA’s draft conservation objectives and hearing feedback about the objectives. In all meetings, QIA also presented on the Qikiqtani Regional Conservation Model, discussing the pillars of the model and their vision for long-term protection as an IPCA. QIA also discussed Inuit stewardship, Indigenous-led governance, infrastructure support and fisheries reconciliation. Programs for monitoring and regional governance such as the Nauttiqsuqtiit Program were also covered.

The second round of consultations took place in Pond Inlet, Clyde River, and Qikiqtarjuaq from May 13-15 2024, and in Arctic Bay, Resolute Bay and Grise Fiord from June 3-7 2024. The second round of consultation meetings again were held with the Hamlet Councils, Hunters and Trappers Organizations

and the general public in each of the six community. During these meetings DFO presented additional information regarding the proposed Marine Protected Area by Ministerial Order including a review of the progress, an in-depth overview of the Ministerial Order as a protection tool, the proposed boundaries. DFO also presented on the regulatory intent that included an overview of economic activities or potential activities for the area and what activities we have documented as occurring within the proposed Sarvarjuaq MPA. QIA presented more details about Inuit Protected and Conserved Areas as a proposed long-term protection tool. During these meetings, communities members expressed their support for to advance protection of Sarvarjuaq.

In September 2024, the Working Group distributed a “What We Heard” report to the six communities which summarized the feedback provided by community members during consultations. Letters in support of the proposed regulation were received from all six communities’ Hunters and Trappers Organizations and Hamlet Councils. The Government of Nunavut has also provided a letter of support.

Other Stakeholders

DFO engaged with industry and key stakeholders on the proposed Sarvarjuaq MPA by Ministerial Order in two phases. Stakeholder groups engaged in this process included, but were not limited to: the Nunavut Water Board, Nunavut Wildlife Management Board, Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board, Nunavut Tunngavik Inc., Inuit Circumpolar Council, Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, environmental non-governmental organizations (ENGOs), commercial fishing industry, shipping industry, media industry, cruise ship industry, oil and gas and mining industries, tour operators, fiber optic industry, and academia. In July 2024, a letter was sent from all parties of the Working Group seeking input on any ongoing activities currently being conducted or planned within the Sarvarjuaq Study Area. Following this first round of engagement, in October 2024, DFO engaged these same stakeholders on its proposed regulatory intent for a Ministerial Order MPA in Sarvarjuaq, seeking their input.

DFO also engaged all implicated federal departments, including (but not limited to) ECCC, Transport Canada, Crown-Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada, Parks Canada, Natural Resources Canada, Canadian Coast Guard, Global Affairs Canada, and Department of National Defense.

5. Establishment Timeline and Next Steps

If the NWMB approves DFO’s proposal to establish a Ministerial Order in Sarvarjuaq, DFO will proceed to publication of the Order in Canada Gazette, Part II, which designates the new MPA. Canada and its partners will continue to work toward long-term options for Sarvarjuaq, which includes the consideration of an Inuit Protected and Conserved Area.

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What We Heard Report: Community Consultations

Sarvarjuaq a potential Marine Protected Area by Ministerial Order



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Acknowledgement

The Qikiqtait and Sarvarjuaq Working Group would like to thank the communities of Arctic Bay, Resolute Bay, Grise Fiord, Qikiqtarjuaq, Pond Inlet and Clyde River for their time and hospitality during our community visits. We would especially like to thank the Hunters and Trappers Associations, Hamlet Council, and the general public for their participation and knowledge-sharing.

Our Team

The Qikiqtait and Sarvarjuaq Working Group consist of members from the Qikiqtani Inuit Association (QIA), Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO), Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC), Transport Canada and the Government of Nunavut. The working group has been supporting the required processes for Sarvarjuaq and Qikiqtait, to create the two potential Marine Protected Areas by Ministerial Order. Only DFO, QIA and the Government of Nunavut travelled to the communities as part of the consultations for Sarvarjuaq.

Working Group representatives who participated in the Sarvarjuaq consultations included Geneva Noble (QIA), Martha Nuyalia (QIA), Mark Pitseolak (QIA) and Joseph Pinguartuk (QIA), Bernie MacIsaac (Government of Nunavut), Laura Harris (Government of Nunavut), Justin Hack (Government of Nunavut) and Maryam Abdullahi (Government of Nunavut), Bethany Schroeder (DFO), Jesslene Jawanda (DFO), Lauren Candlish (DFO), Thomas Hoggarth (DFO), and Alasdair Beattie (DFO).

Executive Summary

Purpose

For the first round of consultations, representatives of the Qikiqtait and Sarvarjuaq Working Group, with members from Qikiqtani Inuit Association (QIA), Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO), and Government of Nunavut, conducted community meetings in Pond Inlet, Clyde River and Qikiqtarjuaq from October 24-27, 2023. The last community visits for the first round of consultations took place in Arctic Bay, Grise Fiord and Resolute Bay from January 16-18, 2024 with representatives from the same organizations and institutions in attendance. From May 13-15 2024 the second round of consultations took place in Pond Inlet, Clyde River and Qikiqtarjuaq. The final meetings took place in Arctic Bay, Resolute Bay and Grise Fiord from June 3-7 2024.

The purpose of these two rounds of consultations was to discuss the collective knowledge of the Sarvarjuaq area, the proposed approach to short-term marine conservation by Ministerial Order Marine Protected Area (MPA) under the *Oceans Act*, next steps, and also to discuss QIA's vision for an Inuit Protected and Conserved Area (IPCA). Community feedback was sought during the meetings and it was noted that support Letters of Support on the Sarvarjuaq Marine Protected Area proposal would be requested. An overarching goal was to hear what the communities think about the proposed Sarvarjuaq MPA proposal, and learn of the community's experiences, and uses, of the area.

The purpose of this report is to summarize the feedback provided by community members who attended the meetings, to provide transparency in the process, and to provide a record of the discussions and concerns shared by the community. To confirm accuracy of the information captured, this report was shared with the Hunters and Trappers and Hamlet Councils for review. After community organizations have had an opportunity to comment, these reports will be available to be shared with the public of Arctic Bay, Pond Inlet, Clyde River, Qikiqtarjuaq, Grise Fiord and Resolute Bay.

Summary of meetings

During the first round of consultations in October 2023 and January 2024, DFO conducted presentations on the proposed MPA by Ministerial Order to the Hamlet Councils and Hunters and Trappers Organizations in each community. DFO also recorded feedback, questions and concerns as well as distributed surveys to community members to gather input. The QIA presented information about their vision for an Inuit-led Protected and Conserved Areas as their proposed approach for long-term protection in Sarvarjuaq and how it can relate to the communities priorities.

From May to June 2024 DFO presented additional information regarding the proposed MPA by Ministerial Order including a review of the progress, an in-depth overview of the Ministerial Order as a protection tool and updated proposed boundaries. DFO also presented an overview of economic activities or potential activities for the area and what activities we have documented as occurring within the proposed Sarvarjuaq MPA. A summary of these activities is included in the appendices. The QIA presented more details about IPCAs as a proposed long-term protection tool.

What we heard overall

Throughout the consultation process in October 2023, January, May and June 2024, the community members in attendance were very engaged in the meetings – sharing their expertise of the area and their perspectives, voicing concerns, providing advice, and raising important questions.

There were general discussions on the proposed Sarvarjuaq MPA and its process, with community members from all six consulted communities indicating their support for the proposed approach of establishing a Marine Protected Area by Ministerial Order. There was also many comments and questions wanting to know more about the Inuit Impact Benefit Agreement and what benefits would be seen within each community. There was also interest in having more conservation or protected areas further south of the proposed Sarvarjuaq boundaries and closer to the communities.

There were many comments about how to have additional communication and increased community involvement regarding Sarvarjuaq. This included suggestions for Nunavut communities to meet and work together for the long-term management of Sarvarjuaq. There was also interest to meet with communities from Greenland to discuss the management of both the Canadian side and the Greenlandic side of the polynya. Additionally, there were also recommendations for how the Working group can share updates with communities outside of consultation meetings.

Many comments highlighted the importance of Sarvarjuaq and protecting the area. Community members detailed the abundance of wildlife observed in Sarvarjuaq, the importance of the area as a wintering and breeding habitat and the importance of Sarvarjuaq as a hunting area. Concerns were shared about the potential negative impacts of industrial activity, vessel traffic and increasing tourism on the health of the ecosystem in Sarvarjuaq. There were also comments on allowing for local economic opportunities.

In general there was a lot of support indicated for protecting Sarvarjuaq, and many requests for communities to be involved in the long-term management of the area.

Meeting Summaries

Summary of Presentations

Department of Fisheries and Oceans Canada – Marine Planning and Conservation (Bethany Schroeder and Lauren Candlish)

DFO Marine Planning and Conservation presented the proposed approach for the proposed Sarvarjuaq MPA to the Hunters and Trappers Associations, Hamlet Council and the public of each of the consulted communities October 2023 and January 2024. The presentation began by introducing the proposed Sarvarjuaq MPA, as well as discussing short and long-term protection goals and their associated timelines. In October 2023, a major focal point of the presentation was introducing the MPA's draft Conservation Objectives for discussion and distributing community surveys.

In May and June 2024 the in-depth details regarding the regulations of marine protected areas by Ministerial Order were explained. There was also an overview of economic activities or potential activities for the area and what activities we have documented as occurring within the proposed Sarvarjuaq MPA. This information was presented to the Hamlet Council, Hunter and Trapper Association and the public of all consulted communities.

Throughout the consultation process the Working Group members met with the Hamlet and Hunter and Trapper Association during the afternoon for 2-3 hours and the general public in the evening for 2-3 hours. In some cases the Hamlet or Hunter and Trapper Associations requested to attend the public meeting instead due to scheduling conflicts. During the final meetings in each community, DFO thanked community members for their participation and told the community they would be sharing additional information with the Hamlet Council and Hunters and Trappers and seeking support through a Letter of Support in the early fall of 2024.

Qikiqtani Inuit Association (Geneva Noble, Martha Nuyalia, and Joseph Pinguartuk)

In all meetings, the QIA presented on the Qikiqtani Regional Conservation Model, discussing the pillars of the model, the proposed MPA, and their vision for long-term protection as an IPCA. Major foci of the presentation were on Inuit stewardship, Indigenous-led governance, infrastructure support and fisheries reconciliation. Programs for monitoring and regional governance such as the Nauttiqsuqtiit Program were also covered.

Community Meeting Summaries

A very short summary is provided for the meetings and discussions that occurred in each of the six communities. Following these summaries is the What We Heard Overall section where there are more details of the questions and topics that were discussed across all the meetings.

Pond Inlet Meetings

On October 24 2023, 39 members of the public and 7 members of the Hunter and Trapper Association and Hamlet Council met with the Working Group. On May 13 2024, 14 members of the public and 12 members of the Hamlet Council and Hunters and Trappers gathered to share knowledge and discuss aspects of short-term and long-term marine protection of the Sarvarjuaq area.



Members of the Hamlet Council and Hunter and Trapper Association meeting with Working Group Representatives during October 2023 consultations.

Representatives of the Working Group met with the community of Pond Inlet on October 24 2023 in the Community Hall of Pond Inlet. The Working Group met with public of Pond Inlet again in May of 2024 in the Community Hall and discussed the collective knowledge of Sarvarjuaq and the proposed approach to short-term marine conservation and next steps to advance the designation of Sarvarjuaq as a Ministerial Order MPA by 2025. A total of 39 adult community members were present in October and 14 adult community members were present in May 2024.

What We Heard from Pond Inlet

Pond Inlet community members were generally supportive for protecting of Sarvarjuaq by a Ministerial Order MPA. They were concerned that the summer habitat to local populations of narwhal and beluga was disturbed due to industrial activity and highlighted the importance of protecting their overwintering habitat in the Sarvarjuaq area. Community members communicated their interest in collaborating with Canadian and Greenlandic communities to work toward protection of the North Water polynya through meetings, increased engagement with research being conducted in the area and the interest to visit the area. There was interest in limiting cruise ship activity.

Clyde River Meetings

On October 25 2023, 56 adult members of the public and 7 members of the Hunter and Trapper Association and Hamlet Council met with the Working Group. On May 15 2024, 11 adult members of the public and 8 members of the Hamlet Council and Hunter and Trapper Association gathered to exchange knowledge and discuss aspects of short-term and long-term marine protection of the Sarvarjuaq area. Inuktitut interpretation was provided by Luu Paneak.

Representatives of the Working Group met with the community of Clyde River on October 25 2023 in the Community Hall of Clyde River. The Working Group met with public of Clyde River again in May of 2024 in the Qujuaq School.



Clyde River public meeting October 2023

What We Heard from Clyde River

Meeting participants communicated support to protect Sarvarjuaq and in both October and May, they discussed the desire for the southern boundary of the proposed Sarvarjuaq MPA to extend further to be adjacent to Clyde River. There was a desire communicated for the communities in Nunavut to participate in a collaborative workshop with Greenland communities.

The Hunter and Trapper Association voiced their desire for employment opportunities arising from the development of the proposed Sarvarjuaq MPA and the QIA discussed their vision for the expansion of the Nauttisuqtiit program in the discussion for long-term management of the proposed Sarvarjuaq MPA. They also expressed interest in sending community representatives to the proposed Sarvarjuaq MPA by vessel in the future.

Qikiqtarjuaq Meetings

On October 26 2023, 11 members of the Hunter and Trapper Association and Hamlet Council met with the Working Group. On May 16 2024, 33 adult members of the public and 13 members of the Hamlet Council and Hunter and Trapper Association gathered to discuss long-term marine protection of the proposed Sarvarjuaq MPA. Inuktitut interpretation was provided by Rosemary Metuq.



Qikiqtarjuaq meeting May 2024.

What We Heard from Qikiqtarjuaq

Qikiqtarjuaq community members detailed how the wildlife in the Sarvarjuaq area travel by ice and breed in that area, therefore the ecosystem activities that take place in Sarvarjuaq impact their community.

There was concern voiced about vessel traffic and the potential for oil spills in the Sarvarjuaq area. When asked if consultations identified shipping routes, the response was that shipping will continue in the area. Future discussions on the long-term IPCA could address shipping and corridors.

Members of the Hunter and Trapper Association and the Hamlet voiced concern about materials and equipment washing ashore in Qikiqtarjuaq and expressed a desire for further information about research that is conducted adjacent to their community. Several members of the community, hamlet and Hunter and Trapper Association expressed support for the development of Sarvarjuaq as a Ministerial Order MPA and a request to be updated in regard to the progress of establishment.

Arctic Bay Meetings

Members of the public, the Hunter and Trapper Association and the Hamlet in Arctic Bay hosted Working Group members on January 17 and June 4 2024. In January, 14 members of the Hunter and Trapper Association and Hamlet were present and 41 members of the public attended the meetings. In June, 10 members of the Hunter and Trapper Association and Hamlet were present while 11 adult members of the public attended.

Inuktitut interpretation was conducted by Audrey Qamaniq and Geela Ejangiaq. The meetings were held in the Community Hall in January and the Inuujaq School in June.



Arctic Bay public meeting June 2024.

What We Heard from Arctic Bay

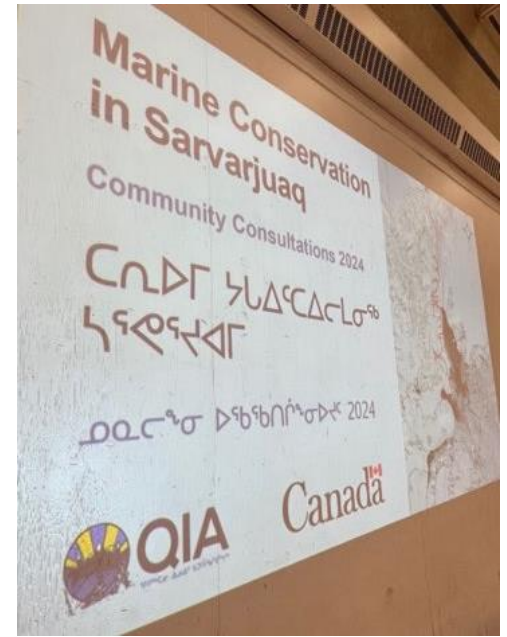
Community members in Arctic Bay requested information regarding the proposed regulations and potential benefits as well as the role of Arctic Bay as a result of developing the proposed Sarvarjuaq MPA. The QIA detailed their vision for a Regional Governance Model and expanding the Nauttisuqtiit Program and explained that the harvesting rights held by Beneficiaries of the *Nunavut Agreement* would not be impacted by the implementation of the proposed Sarvarjuaq MPA within the Nunavut Settlement Area. Comments highlighted that narwhal and bowhead whales travel to the proposed Sarvarjuaq MPA when the ice has formed elsewhere.

During the consultation meeting in June, Ikpiarjummiut voiced support for the protection of the proposed Sarvarjuaq MPA and shared concerns that if protection did not occur, some worried that mining in the area may be allowed in the future. Concerns were also raised about the level of vessel traffic in the area. Community members expressed interest in learning of future opportunities for community members to be hired in the research activities that occur in the proposed Sarvarjuaq MPA. Members of the public shared their preference for future meetings to occur in the late fall instead of the spring and summer.

Resolute Bay Meetings

The Working Group met with community members in Resolute Bay on January 14 and June 5 2024. In January, 14 members of the Hunter and Trapper Association and Hamlet attended the meeting with an additional 9 adult members of the public. In June, 9 members of the Hunter and Trapper Association and Hamlet joined the meeting with an additional 3 adult members of the public.

Inuktitut interpretation was conducted by Saroomie Manik and Susan Salluviniq. The meetings were held in the ATCO Conference Room in January and the Hamlet Gymnasium in June.



Sarvarjuaq Community Consultation presentation 2024

What We Heard from Resolute Bay

Resolute Bay community members expressed support for the protection of the proposed Sarvarjuaq MPA and pointed out additional areas outside of the proposed boundaries they desire to be protected in the future. Community members expressed interest in participating in discussions about the regulations of the area for the long-term. There was concern shared about unreported harmful activities in the area. Discussions included questions about some of the threats to Sarvarjuaq including how climate change is affecting the area. The meeting participants held a discussion about research and monitoring in the area, discussing gaps in research and how the long-term vision for an IPCA could address that. Presenters explained that there is currently a moratorium on oil and gas development in the area therefore it is not considered an ongoing activity and would not be allowed to occur in the area for up to 5 years if the Ministerial Order is established – community members expressed support for that restriction on industrial activities. During the public meeting a community member expressed a desire for long-term opportunities for vessel traffic in the area to address shipping and development needs. During the January meetings there were comments from community members expressing desire to restrict commercial fishing in the northern portion of the proposed Sarvarjuaq MPA to protect wildlife habitat. Participants also talked about the familial connections between Canada and Greenland in communities adjacent to the area and their use of the area for harvesting. There were concerns about increased ice melt in the area and how vessel traffic may negatively impact this area.

Grise Fiord Meetings

The Working Group members travelled to Grise Fiord on January 18 and June 6 2024. In January, 5 members of the Hunter and Trapper Association and Hamlet attended the meeting with an additional 12 adult members of the public. In June, 8 members of the Hunter and Trapper Association and Hamlet joined the meeting with an additional 8 adult members of the public.

Inuktitut interpretation was conducted by Jaypetee Akeeagok. The Hunter and Trapper Association and Hamlet meetings were held in the Hamlet Chambers while the public meetings were held in the Community Hall.



Grise Fiord, June 2024

What We Heard from Grise Fiord

The community raised concerns about the issue of community based capacity to participate in management structures for protected areas in general and there were a few questions regarding the management of Tallurutiup Imanga with Imaq. QIA provided some information on current governance models and the proposed Regional Governance Model. The community was interested to hear information about the collaborative activities between governments and researchers from Canada and Greenland.

Community members expressed worry for the risk of industrial accidents in the Sarvarjuaq area and the desire to benefit from economic activities occurring in the area. It was also noted that community members expressed support for protection of the proposed Sarvarjuaq MPA and want to see additional monitoring in the area however there was concern that the process was being rushed. QIA highlighted that for other protected areas, maritime situational training was offered to community members to help monitor the area.

Surveys

During the October 2023 and January 2024 first round of consultations to the 6 communities of Pond Inlet, Clyde River, Qikiqtarjuaq, Arctic Bay, Resolute Bay and Grise Fiord, surveys were handed out to community members present at the consultations, with 34 respondents in total. Unfortunately due to weather, the first public meeting in Qikiqtarjuaq was cancelled and thus surveys were not distributed in Qikiqtarjuaq. The survey consisted of three questions regarding the Conservation Objectives of the proposed Sarvarjuaq MPA by Ministerial Order.

For the first question, *‘Does this conservation objective describe a priority or a reason for you to support conservation in the area?’*, responses varied by community, but respondents generally shared comments that were supportive of the Conservation Objective. Pond Inlet residents said that they did not want shipping and other industrial activity occurring around their wildlife areas, that they supported protection because of the next generation and finding solutions, and also stated the Pond Inlet Hunter and Trapper Association needed a bigger freezer. Clyde River residents generally agreed with the Conservation Objectives, but also mentioned that they were seeing more activities such as cruise ships and yachts. Arctic Bay residents generally supported the Conservation Objectives, with people recognizing that the marine mammals they hunted overwintered in the proposed Sarvarjuaq MPA, and another being concerned that the area would become subject to increased marine traffic if not protected. Resolute Bay residents were also generally supportive, with respondents recognizing that the polynya’s open water helped the marine life they hunted, and describing conservation positively overall. Grise Fiord was also supportive of the Conservation Objectives, sharing that research helped them access and learn more about important areas, and another respondent saying that more protection was good.

For the second question, *‘Are there other words that could help you connect more to this conservation objective?’*, there were varied responses. Pond Inlet residents asked if there were websites to learn more, and said that the papers should ‘run’, wanting more information shared with the community. Clyde River respondents stated they wanted restriction or banning of cruise ships so people may connect more to the area. An Arctic Bay respondent said that they wanted to protect wildlife, sea birds, algae and fish. Community members in Resolute Bay said that areas need more study in order to have more support. A Grise Fiord respondent said ‘No. This Conservation Objective is good for us to have little to no knowledge of the area and land and ice we live in. It would be good to know what’s around us in.’

For the third question, *‘Is there anything else you would like to tell us?’* respondents had some suggestions. Pond Inlet respondents suggested that a round table be conducted in the future for engagement, and that they needed a store for equipment to sell country food. Clyde River respondents suggested that cruise ships should be banned or restricted from entering conservation areas, and asked if there was an inventory of marine mammals and ecosystems in the proposed MPA. Arctic Bay respondents stated they wanted rights maintained and not removed, and also mentioned that people use Admiralty Inlet year-round, including camping. Resolute Bay residents stated that the proposed Sarvarjuaq MPA was a wintering ground for animals and biodiversity needed to be more studied, and that icebergs go through that area, which residents use for drinking water. A Grise Fiord respondent said that, ‘With research, there is often Canadian Coast Guard vessel. The things from not only the emissions and noise contamination may keep away wildlife from their natural (untouched) habitats. The ice breakers may interfere with ice coverage, causing ocean to heat up and increase climate change effects.’

There were also eight questions that related to activities conducted either within the proposed Sarvarjuaq MPA boundaries and the Nunavut Settlement Area, or within the proposed Sarvarjuaq MPA boundaries but outside of the Nunavut Settlement Area.

1. *'Do you harvest or hunt for country food?'* 16 respondents said they did in Sarvarjuaq and the Nunavut Settlement Area, and 5 did in Sarvarjuaq but outside of the Nunavut Settlement Area.
2. *'Do you fish for your food?'*, 18 respondents said they did in Sarvarjuaq and inside the Nunavut Settlement Area, and 5 did within Sarvarjuaq but outside of the Nunavut Settlement Area.
3. *'Do you commercially fish?'*, 2 respondents said they did in Sarvarjuaq and in the Nunavut Settlement Area, and none did in Sarvarjuaq but outside the Nunavut Settlement Area.
4. *'Do you use the water for transportation, boating, canoeing or qajaq?'*, 20 respondents said they did in Sarvarjuaq and in the Nunavut Settlement Area, and 4 said they did in Sarvarjuaq but outside the Nunavut Settlement Area.
5. *'Do you use the ice for transportation, snowmobiling or dog sledding?'*, 21 respondents said they did in Sarvarjuaq and in the Nunavut Settlement Area, and 4 said they did in Sarvarjuaq but outside the Nunavut Settlement Area.
6. *'Do you use the area for recreation, camping, whale or bird watching?'*, 20 said they did in Sarvarjuaq and in the Nunavut Settlement Area, and 3 said they did in Sarvarjuaq but outside the Nunavut Settlement Area.
7. *'Do you bring tourist to the area for outfitting, guiding, or other types of tourism?'*, 6 respondents said they did in Sarvarjuaq and in the Nunavut Settlement Area, and 1 said they did in Sarvarjuaq but outside the Nunavut Settlement Area.
8. *'Do you use the area for other activities?'* some answers included, 'day trips'; 'film productions and scientific expeditions'; and several others said they don't go there because it is too far, too risky, too much open water, they don't have a machine, and it's too much fuel.

What We Heard Overall

Through the consultation meetings there was many similar questions and discussions. Below we summarized the topics that were discussed and the types of questions that were asked. Voice recordings were made during hamlet and Hunter and Trapper Association meetings with the permission of everyone present at the meetings. Members of the Working group also took notes during both the Hamlet/ Hunter and Trapper Association meetings and the public meetings. These notes and recordings helped develop this What We Heard Overall section, but not the information presented below is not word for word as it was presented in many different meetings and discussed by many different people.

General discussion on Sarvarjuaq MPA and process

- Question regarding timeline of Ministerial Order – is it guaranteed by 2025?
 - Response: Partners are working towards it, but recognize many steps must be completed first
- Question regarding upcoming federal election and how that may affect creation of MPA
 - Response: Commitments to Inuit within signed Inuit Impact and Benefit Agreements and Project Finance for Permanence will be upheld by the Government of Canada if they are finalized and implemented prior to the upcoming federal election. If these agreements are not finalized before the election, the elected government may choose not to advance these agreements and commitments promised may not be honoured by the new government. Similarly, if the Qikiqtaaluk and Sarvarjuaq study areas have not been designated by Ministerial Order regulations prior to the election, the elected government may choose not to pursue conservation measures for these areas.
- Community members' from all six communities expressed support for marine conservation in the proposed Sarvarjuaq MPA.
 - **Context:** *Formal support will be requested in the form of a letter from the Hunter and Trapper Associations and Hamlet Councils. Community members are encouraged to share their support and / or concerns with their Hunter and Trapper Association and / or Hamlet or contact DFO directly.*
- Comment on how elders in particular needs to be consulted accessibly in order for information to be shared in timely manner
- Discussions regarding protected rights secured under the Nunavut Agreement, including traditional harvesting rights
- Discussions regarding x negotiations status
- Question if enforcement will be in place once MPA is designated
 - Response: Interesting topic to discuss regarding options available for enforcement, based on community desire and jurisdictional ability.
- Question on when will the requests happen for support from Hunter and Trapper Associations and Hamlets?
 - Response: Once we finalize the What We Heard Reports, they will be distributed to all communities with time to review. During this time DFO will seek Letters of Support from Hunter and Trapper Associations and Hamlets.

Proposed Sarvarjuaq MPA Boundaries

- There were several questions regarding the boundaries of the proposed Sarvarjuaq MPA – how were they decided and if they can be extended further south?
 - Response: The QIA proposed the boundaries of the proposed Sarvarjuaq MPA as presented. There will be more discussions in the future to propose additional areas for marine protection.
- Discussions also occurred about the Devolution Agreement. Due to the Devolution Agreement small and enclosed bays are not included in the boundaries of the proposed Sarvarjuaq MPA.

Communication and Increased Community Involvement

All the suggested for increasing communication and increasing community involvement have been noted below. Certain suggestions have been implemented and others may be able to occur in the future.

- Recommendation to gather representatives from each of the consulted communities in Nunavut in person to discuss establishment and management.
- Request to send community representatives to the proposed Sarvarjuaq MPA by vessel in the future.
- Recommendation to gather consulted Nunavut communities with representatives from Greenland to discuss establishment, management and the future of Pikialasorsuaq.
- Recommendation to provide a regular newsletter to community members P.O. boxes, the Hamlets and the Hunter and Trapper Associations.
 - **Updated Response:** *A newsletter has been started with the first newsletter sent to P.O. Boxes in May 2024.*
- Request to have more updates with the results of ongoing research activity in the area.
 - **Updated Response:** *A DFO scientists visited communities in February and March 2024 to provide updates on the research occurring in Sarvarjuaq. DFO will continue to provide more information about ongoing research.*

Importance of the Sarvarjuaq area

- Many comments about wildlife using Sarvarjuaq as a breeding area and an overwintering area. The value of wildlife travelling from Sarvarjuaq closer to communities.
- Comments about community members travelling and harvesting within the proposed boundaries of Sarvarjuaq.
- There were concerns shared about the potential of oil and gas development in the area and how it would negatively impact the wildlife.
- There were many concerns shared about increased vessel activity in Sarvarjuaq and near to communities. Especially the increase in pleasure crafts and yachts as well as cruise ships.
 - **Context:** *the Ministerial Order MPA discussed at these consultations would not restrict activities as it is an ongoing activity. However, this is something a long-term MPA could look at.*
- Comments about the desire for future economic activities in the area.

Community Priorities

- Through discussions, comments and the survey responses community members indicated interest in the following support:
 - Increased employment opportunities.
 - Increased opportunities for training (i.e. monitoring training, research activities).
 - Opportunities to discuss with other communities in both Canada and Greenland about the future management of the region.
 - Opportunities to be more involved in research in Sarvarjuaq.
 - Being more involved in the discussions for long-term management of the area.

Other Points of Discussion

There were several questions and topics that would require additional conversations or were outside the scope of the protected areas conversations.

Topics that can be discussed during long-term planning for the area include:

- Benefits that the communities will receive as a result of the Inuit Impact and Benefit Agreement negotiation for the proposed Qikiqtait and Sarvarjuaq MPAs.
- The management plan and structure and how to ensure the community has capacity to navigate management of multiple protected areas.

Topics that were outside the scope of a Marine Protected Area:

- Discussions surrounding the method of narwhal aerial surveys.
- Hiring community members to join research activities in and around the Sarvarjuaq area.
- Protecting the land adjacent to the MPA.

Next Steps

The next steps to pursue establishment of a new Ministerial Order MPA will be to seek stakeholder input on the proposal, seek formal community support, complete assessments and approvals needed under the Nunavut Agreement such as conformity determination by the Nunavut Planning Commission and Nunavut Wildlife Management Board approval, and complete DFO's regulatory process. Formal letters of support will be sought from community hamlets and Hunter and Trapper Associations. Community members are encouraged to communicate their feedback on the proposal to these organizations to inform their decision. DFO will notify communities and stakeholders prior to the proposal being published online in the Canada Gazette for a 30-day public comment period, additional input can be provided at that time as well.

It is important to us that we have summarized your input on this report correctly. If you feel that we have missed any input provided during our meetings or captured information incorrectly, please reach out to DFO.ArcticMPC-ArctiquePCM.MPO@dfo-mpo.gc.ca for any required corrections.

The Qikiqtait and Sarvarjuaq Working Group would like to thank all of the community members who attended these meetings - your feedback is vital and appreciated.

Thank you!

Appendix 1. Regulatory Intent for the Proposed Sarvarjuaq MPA

Regulatory Intent for the Proposed Sarvarjuaq Marine Protected Area by Ministerial Order

I. Background and Significance

Sarvarjuaq is the Qikiqtani Inuit name for the Canadian side of the North Water Polynya. It is an ecologically significant area located in Northern Baffin Bay between Greenland and Canada. In 2011, Sarvarjuaq was designated as an Ecologically and Biologically Significant Area (EBSA) by Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) (DFO 2011, 2015). In 2013, the Inuit Circumpolar Council Greenland and Oceans North hosted a cooperative workshop called 'Pikialasorsuaq: Bridging the Bay', with participation from Canadian and Greenlandic communities, as well as researchers from both countries. From this workshop, the Pikialasorsuaq Commission was established to provide an informed Inuit vision for the future of the North Water Polynya. Their 2017 final report 'The Future of the Pikialasorsuaq', the Commission recommended Inuit led-conservation and management aimed at ensuring the long-term health of this important ecosystem.

The North Water Polynya has also been evaluated through other international processes led by Greenland and Denmark, emphasizing its unique cultural and ecological value. For instance, the polynya achieved the highest score and highest priority on the basis of the International Maritime Organization's (IMO) criteria for identifying 'Particularly Sensitive Sea Areas' (PSSA) in a national assessment of important and vulnerable marine areas in Greenland (Christensen et al. 2012, 2017). In another strategic effort to enhance area-based protection of Greenlandic biodiversity, an overview of areas of ecological and biological significance in West and South-East Greenland was prepared and published in 2016 by using the EBSA and other international criteria, to identify important areas in Greenland. The report identified 23 areas, including three within the North Water (Christensen et al. 2016).

Ecological Significance

The area is ecologically significant due to several factors:

- **Biodiversity:** The polynya supports a rich diversity of marine life, including phytoplankton, zooplankton, fish, seabirds, and marine mammals. Its open waters and high productivity provide abundant food resources, making it an important feeding ground for various species.
- **Primary Production:** The polynya experiences seasonal ice melt, creating open water areas that promote high rates of primary production. Phytoplankton blooms occur in these nutrient-rich waters, which form the base of the marine food chain and support the growth of other organisms.
- **Migration and Breeding Grounds:** Many species of birds, such as thick-billed murres, dovekies, and fulmars, rely on the North Water Polynya as a crucial stopover site during their migration. Additionally, several marine mammals, including bowhead whales, narwhals, and seals, utilize the polynya as a breeding and calving ground.
- **Climate Regulation:** The North Water Polynya influences the exchange of heat, gases, and freshwater between the ocean and atmosphere, thereby playing a role in local and regional climate dynamics. It helps regulate the formation of sea ice and influences ocean circulation patterns.

- **Traditional Knowledge:** The North Water Polynya holds significant cultural and ecological value for Inuit communities. They have traditional knowledge and sustainable practices associated with the polynya, which contributes to the conservation and preservation of its ecological significance.

Overall, the North Water Polynya serves as a unique and vital ecosystem, supporting diverse marine life, playing a role in regional climate dynamics, and providing cultural importance to Inuit communities.

Proposed Approach

Establishment of a Ministerial Order Marine Protected Area (MPA) under the *Oceans Act* has been proposed as an interim protection measure in Sarvarjuaq as a first step toward establishing long-term marine protection. While interim protection is in place, the Government of Canada will explore the options for a long-term conservation measures in the area with the Qikiqtani Inuit Association (QIA) and the Government of Nunavut. The consideration of long-term conservation measures will include an Inuit Protected and Conserved Area (IPCA).

The Ministerial Order MPA will allow the Minister of Fisheries, Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard to freeze the footprint of human activities in the area for up to five years. This will mean that no new activities will be allowed in the area following designation. Any activities that have occurred, or were authorized to occur, in the proposed Sarvarjuaq MPA during the 12 months prior to designation are considered ongoing activities and will be allowed to continue in the proposed MPA.

II. Proposed Objectives for Sarvarjuaq

Conservation objectives are broad statements that describe what species or features in the protected area should be conserved. For an MPA under the *Oceans Act* conservation objectives need to refer to protecting or conserving marine species, unique habitats, high biodiversity, and/or the ecosystem. These objectives guide the interim nature of this work and long-term objectives will be developed, in the future.

The following objectives have been proposed for Sarvarjuaq. The second statement reflects DFO's commitment to the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act Action Plan and the recommendations from the Qikiqtani Truth Commission.

- (1) To support the conservation, protection, and understanding of Sarvarjuaq (the North Water Polynya) and its unique biologically productive ecosystem that is of immense value to Inuit and Inuit culture.
- (2) To support Inuit leadership in the conservation of Sarvarjuaq to ensure the continuity of Inuit culture, values, and practices, including accumulating and passing down Inuit knowledge, as well as Inuit stewardship and governance.

III. Map and Boundaries

The proposed boundaries for Qikiqtait were put forward by QIA. These boundaries are shown in Figure 1. If established, Sarvarjuaq will be located inside and outside of the Nunavut Settlement Area, but within Canada’s Exclusive Economic Zone. The boundaries exclude Small Enclosed Bays as described in Chapter 1, Definitions and Interpretation of the Nunavut Lands and Resources Devolution Agreement signed January 18, 2024 between the Government of Canada and the Government of Nunavut and Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated.



Figure 1. A map showing the boundaries of the proposed Sarvarjuaq MPA.

IV. Prohibitions and Allowed Activities

It is prohibited in the MPA to carry out any activity that disturbs, damages, destroys or removes from the MPA any unique geological or archeological features or any living marine organism or any part of its habitat, or is likely to do so.

However some activities would be allowed to occur. Activities listed below would be able to occur if Sarvarjuaq were to become an MPA by Ministerial Order:

- All rights provided for under the *Nunavut Agreement* are respected within the boundary of the Nunavut Settlement Area
- All ongoing activities (see list below) taking place one year prior to designation or activities that have otherwise been authorized to occur by applicable federal laws or by laws of a province/territory
- Research activities consistent with the conservation objectives of the MPA
- Safety, security and emergency activities
- Laying, maintenance and repair of cables and pipelines by a foreign state

Under the *Oceans Act*, DFO would implement an MPA by Ministerial Order by prohibiting any other activities from occurring during the period of the Order, up to five years.

V. List of Ongoing Activities

Ongoing activities can continue to occur if Sarvarjuaq becomes an MPA by Ministerial Order under the *Oceans Act*. The definition of an ongoing activity is any activity that has taken place one year prior to designation, or activities that have otherwise been authorized to occur by applicable federal laws or by laws of a province/territory.

Activities occurring within the proposed Sarvarjuaq MPA boundaries have been categorized into classes of ongoing activities which will be allowed in the MPA:

- Hunting and trapping activities
- Fishing activities
- Harvesting of marine plants
- Marine navigation activities
- National defence activities carried out by the Department of National Defence
- Canadian Coast Guard activities carried out by the Canadian Coast Guard
- Tourism activities
- Recreational activities
- Educational activities
- Travel over sea ice using motorized vehicles and non-motorized methods
- Traditional Knowledge and cultural research activities
- Scientific research activities
- Filming activities
- Activities provided for and carried out in a manner not inconsistent with the Nunavut Agreement

Please let us know if you are aware of another ongoing activity that is not captured in the list above.

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Appendix 2. Documented Activities Occurring in the Proposed Sarvarjuaq MPA

Activities We Heard From Communities and Stakeholders in the Proposed Sarvarjuaq MPA

Ongoing activities can continue to occur if Sarvarjuaq becomes an MPA by Ministerial Order under the *Oceans Act*. The definition of an ongoing activity is any activity that has taken place one year prior to designation, or activities that have otherwise been authorized to occur by applicable federal laws or by laws of a province/territory.

Activities documented as occurring within the proposed Sarvarjuaq MPA boundaries have been categorized and are listed below with some examples. These were informed through community consultations and stakeholder and industry engagement.

Hunting and Trapping Activities

- Hunting is of high importance to all communities near the proposed Sarvarjuaq MPA, and Inuit from these communities hunt marine mammal and bird species for subsistence, traditional, and commercial purposes. Hunting also occurs by non-Inuit who live near the proposed Sarvarjuaq MPA. Some examples include:
 - Narwhal are hunted from the floe edge and other open water;
 - Beluga are hunted by residents of Grise Fiord during summer and fall months.
- Hunting also occurs for tourism, recreation and sport hunting. This includes guided expeditions of non-Inuit hunters for species such as polar bear, wolves, and Atlantic walrus.
- Hunting is also a part of research, monitoring and stewardship programs. Examples include:
 - The Nauttisuqtiit program shares their harvests with Elders and the community to help Inuit access country food.

Fishing Activities

- Fishing occurs for subsistence, traditional and commercial use for fish and invertebrate species. It also occurs by non-Inuit who live near the proposed Sarvarjuaq MPA.
 - Arctic Fishery Alliance works with Arctic Bay, Grise Fiord, Resolute Bay and Qikiqtarjuaq to support access and travel to harvest country foods for community food security.
 - Baffin Fisheries' Inuit commercial fishing vessels Inuksuk I and Sivulliq harvest Greenland Halibut in Baffin Bay
- Commercial fishing licenses overlap between the North Atlantic Fishing Organization (NAFO) fishing division OA and the proposed Sarvarjuaq MPA. These licenses are for Greenland Halibut (*Reinhardtius hippoglossoides*).
- Commercial shrimp fishing is authorized in the Shrimp Fishing Area, SFA0, which overlaps with the proposed Sarvarjuaq MPA boundaries.
- Fishing occurs for tourism and recreational use, including guided expeditions of non-Inuit fishers.
- Fishing is also conducted for the purposes of scientific research, with an example being:
 - Research to determine commercial fisheries potential through Arctic Fishery Alliance, in partnership with Memorial University Marine Institute, Nunavut Fisheries Association, GN and the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency.

Marine Plant Harvesting Activities

- Harvesting occurs for marine plant species for traditional and subsistence use. An example is residents of Grise Fiord harvesting kelp for consumption.

Marine Navigation Activities

- There is local vessel traffic for subsistence, traditional and/or community use, such as:
 - Boats and small motorized vessels;
 - Canoeing/qajaq or other non-motorized vessels.
- There is vessel traffic and associated activities for tourism and recreational use such as:
 - Outfitting;
 - Guided or self-guided sight-seeing expeditions;
 - Wildlife viewing;
 - Pleasure crafts, yachts and cruise ships.
- There is vessel traffic for commercial use such as:
 - Sealift/goods transportation.
- There is vessel traffic for research or monitoring, including but not limited to vessels such as:
 - CCGS Amundsen;
 - Vagabond research sailboat.
- There is also vessel traffic for National Defence, and Canadian Coast Guard activities.

Safety, Security, and Emergency Activities

- Safety, security, and emergency activities occur in the area for public safety, national defence, national security, or law enforcement. Examples include:
 - Emergency search and rescue;
 - Response to shipping or aircraft accidents;
 - National security requirements;
 - Activities carried out by the Department of National Defence;
 - Activities carried out by the Canadian Coast Guard.

Travel Over Sea Ice

- Inuit and non-Inuit use the sea ice as a method of travel in the proposed Sarvarjuaq MPA, for example:
 - Travel routes for hunting by snowmobile and motorized vehicles, including snowmobiles towing boats to floe edges to facilitate the hunts;
 - Non-motorized methods of travel such as dog-sledding, walking, snowshoeing, skiing etc.;
 - Travel routes to visit nearby communities, islands and important ecological features such as:
 - Into Baffin Bay to the floe edge for hunting purposes;
 - To some of the seven *aukkarniit* (polynyas) in the Canadian waters of Northern Baffin Bay and Davis Strait; and

Tourism and Recreational Activities

- Inuit and non-Inuit use the area for tourism and recreational activities such as:
 - Arts and culture;
 - Wildlife viewing;
 - Birdwatching;
 - Eco-tourism, cruise tourism and associated activities;
 - Dog-sledding;
 - Sport hunting;
 - Sport fishing;
 - Camping on sea ice or traveling to camp sites or cabins; and
 - Other outfitting or guided excursions.

Educational Activities

- Educational activities occur in the marine environment and over sea ice, such as outreach programs or experience based learning programs.

Research and Monitoring Activities

- Research and monitoring programs occur in the proposed Sarvarjuaq MPA from research vessels, or smaller vessels such as motorized boats, sailboats or Zodiacs, as well as research programs based on sea ice. Types of research and examples include:
 - Community-led monitoring programs such as those supported by SmartICE;
 - Nauttisuqtiit monitoring programs;
 - Academic research projects and programs supported by universities, colleges; and
 - Traditional knowledge research.

Filming Activities

- Other activities that have occurred within the proposed Sarvarjuaq MPA include filming and media content development. Activities may include:
 - Documentary film making;
 - Films by non-governmental organizations such as the World Wildlife Fund; and
 - Social media or social networking filming.



Fisheries and Oceans
Canada

Pêches et Océans
Canada

Letters of Support for the Proposed Sarvarjuaq Marine Protected Area

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September DATE, 2024
October 25, 2024

To: C. Thomas Hoggarth
Executive Director, Marine Conservation
Arctic Region
Fisheries and Oceans Canada

Richard Paton
Assistant Executive Director
Marine & Wildlife Conservation
Qikiqtani Inuit Association

RE: Designation of a new Ministerial Order Marine Protected Area in Sarvarjuaq

I am writing to express support from the Ikajutit Hunters and Trappers for the establishment of a Ministerial Order Marine Protected Area (MPA) in Sarvarjuaq. It is our understanding that a Ministerial Order MPA, will freeze the footprint of ongoing activities in the area for up to five years. This time will allow the Qikiqtani Inuit Association (QIA), Government of Canada, and Government of Nunavut to explore an Inuit Protected and Conserved Area in Sarvarjuaq that aligns with QIA's vision and Inuit interests for the region.

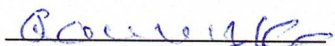
We acknowledge that the following classes of activities will be allowed in the MPA:

- Hunting and trapping activities
- Fishing activities
- Harvesting of marine plants
- Marine navigation activities
- National defence activities carried out by the Department of National Defence
- Canadian Coast Guard activities carried out by the Canadian Coast Guard
- Tourism activities
- Recreational activities
- Educational activities
- Travel over sea ice using motorized vehicles and non-motorized methods
- Traditional Knowledge and cultural research activities
- Scientific research activities
- Filming activities
- Activities provided for and carried out in a manner not inconsistent with the Nunavut Agreement

Our community will continue to be engaged during the process as to whether the area should be protected over the long term, on the boundary of the area being considered for protection, and type of protection recommended.

We look forward to working with you to advance the consideration of long-term protection in Sarvarjuaq following the establishment of the Ministerial Order MPA.

Sincerely,



Ikajutit Hunters and Trappers



HAMLET OF ARCTIC BAY
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P.O. Box 150
Arctic Bay, NU
X0A 0A0
Phone: (867) 459-5917

To: C. Thomas Hoggarth
Executive Director, Marine Conservation
Arctic Region
Fisheries and Oceans Canada

October 18, 2024

Richard Paton
Assistant Executive Director
Marine & Wildlife Conservation
Qikiqtani Inuit Association

RE: Designation of a new Ministerial Order Marine Protected Area in Sarvarjuaq

I am writing to express support from the Arctic Bay Hamlet for the establishment of a Ministerial Order Marine Protected Area (MPA) in Sarvarjuaq. It is our understanding that a Ministerial Order MPA, will freeze the footprint of ongoing activities in the area for up to five years. This time will allow the Qikiqtani Inuit Association (QIA), Government of Canada, and Government of Nunavut to explore an Inuit Protected and Conserved Area in Sarvarjuaq that aligns with QIA's vision and Inuit interests for the region.

We acknowledge that the following classes of activities will be allowed in the MPA:

- Hunting and trapping activities
- Fishing activities
- Harvesting of marine plants
- Marine navigation activities
- National defence activities carried out by the Department of National Defence
- Canadian Coast Guard activities carried out by the Canadian Coast Guard
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- Traditional Knowledge and cultural research activities
- Scientific research activities
- Filming activities
- Activities provided for and carried out in a manner not inconsistent with the Nunavut Agreement

Our community will continue to be engaged during the process as to whether the area should be protected over the long term, on the boundary of the area being considered for protection, and type of protection recommended.

We would like to remind the Department of Fisheries and Oceans that we have not heard anything about the promise made by the Federal Government and the QIA" (Part of the agreement Lancaster Sound Marine Conservations Tallurutiup Imanga area)" requesting a "small craft harbour "zone for Arctic Bay.

We look forward to working with you to advance the consideration of long-term protection in Sarvarjuaq following the establishment of the Ministerial Order MPA.

Sincerely,

O. NAQI-TARVIK
Mayor/ Arctic Bay Hamlet

October 29 2024

To: C. Thomas Hoggarth
Executive Director, Marine Conservation
Arctic Region
Fisheries and Oceans Canada

Richard Paton
Assistant Executive Director
Marine & Wildlife Conservation
Qikiqtani Inuit Association

RE: Designation of a new Ministerial Order Marine Protected Area in Sarvarjuaq

I am writing to express support from the Nangmoutaq Hunters and Trappers for the establishment of a Ministerial Order Marine Protected Area (MPA) in Sarvarjuaq. It is our understanding that a Ministerial Order MPA, will freeze the footprint of ongoing activities in the area for up to five years. This time will allow the Qikiqtani Inuit Association (QIA), Government of Canada, and Government of Nunavut to explore an Inuit Protected and Conserved Area in Sarvarjuaq that aligns with QIA's vision and Inuit interests for the region.

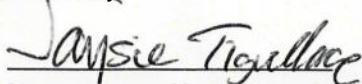
We acknowledge that the following classes of activities will be allowed in the MPA:

- Hunting and trapping activities
- Fishing activities
- Harvesting of marine plants
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- Canadian Coast Guard activities carried out by the Canadian Coast Guard
- Tourism activities
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- Traditional Knowledge and cultural research activities
- Scientific research activities
- Filming activities
- Activities provided for and carried out in a manner not inconsistent with the Nunavut Agreement

Our community will continue to be engaged during the process as to whether the area should be protected over the long term, on the boundary of the area being considered for protection, and type of protection recommended.

We look forward to working with you to advance the consideration of long-term protection in Sarvarjuaq following the establishment of the Ministerial Order MPA.

Sincerely,



Nangmoutaq Hunters and Trappers



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October 29 2024

To: C. Thomas Hoggarth
Executive Director, Marine Conservation
Arctic Region
Fisheries and Oceans Canada

Richard Paton
Assistant Executive Director
Marine & Wildlife Conservation
Qikiqtani Inuit Association

RE: Designation of a new Ministerial Order Marine Protected Area in Sarvarjuaq

I am writing to express support from the Hamlet of Iviq Hunters and Trappers for the establishment of a Ministerial Order Marine Protected Area (MPA) in Sarvarjuaq. It is our understanding that a Ministerial Order MPA, will freeze the footprint of ongoing activities in the area for up to five years. This time will allow the Qikiqtani Inuit Association (QIA), Government of Canada, and Government of Nunavut to explore an Inuit Protected and Conserved Area in Sarvarjuaq that aligns with QIA's vision and Inuit interests for the region.

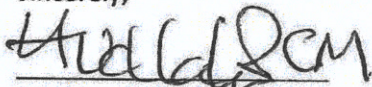
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- Fishing activities
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- Educational activities
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- Traditional Knowledge and cultural research activities
- Scientific research activities
- Filming activities
- Activities provided for and carried out in a manner not inconsistent with the Nunavut Agreement

Our community will continue to be engaged during the process as to whether the area should be protected over the long term, on the boundary of the area being considered for protection, and type of protection recommended.

We look forward to working with you to advance the consideration of long-term protection in Sarvarjuaq following the establishment of the Ministerial Order MPA.

Sincerely,



Iviq Hunters and Trappers



Hamlet of Grise Fiord
P.O. Box 77, Grise Fiord, NU
X0A 0J0

September 26, 2024

To: C. Thomas Hoggarth
Executive Director, Marine Conservation
Arctic Region
Fisheries and Oceans Canada

Richard Paton
Assistant Executive Director
Marine & Wildlife Conservation
Qikiqtani Inuit Association

RE: Designation of a new Ministerial Order Marine Protected Area in Sarvarjuaq

I am writing to express support from the Hamlet of Grise Fiord for the establishment of a Ministerial Order Marine Protected Area (MPA) in Sarvarjuaq. It is our understanding that a Ministerial Order MPA, will freeze the footprint of ongoing activities in the area for up to five years. This time will allow the Qikiqtani Inuit Association (QIA), Government of Canada, and Government of Nunavut to explore an Inuit Protected and Conserved Area in Sarvarjuaq that aligns with QIA's vision and Inuit interests for the region.

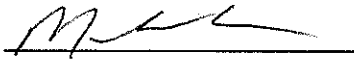
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- Filming activities
- Activities provided for and carried out in a manner not inconsistent with the Nunavut Agreement

Our community will continue to be engaged during the process as to whether the area should be protected over the long term, on the boundary of the area being considered for protection, and type of protection recommended.

We look forward to working with you to advance the consideration of long-term protection in Sarvarjuaq following the establishment of the Ministerial Order MPA.

Sincerely,



Mayor/ Grise Fiord Hamlet



Mittimatalik Hunters & Trappers Organization
P O Box 189, **Building 808-A**
Pond Inlet, Nunavut, XOA OSO
Tel: (867) 899-8856
Email: pond@baffinhto.ca

To: C. Thomas Hoggarth
Executive Director, Marine Conservation
Arctic Region
Fisheries and Oceans Canada

Richard Paton
Assistant Executive Director
Marine & Wildlife Conservation
Qikiqtani Inuit Association

RE: Designation of a new Ministerial Order Marine Protected Area in Sarvarjuaq

I am writing to express support from the Mittimatalik Hunters and Trappers for the establishment of a Ministerial Order Marine Protected Area (MPA) in Sarvarjuaq. It is our understanding that a Ministerial Order MPA, will freeze the footprint of ongoing activities in the area for up to five years. This time will allow the Qikiqtani Inuit Association (QIA), Government of Canada, and Government of Nunavut to explore an Inuit Protected and Conserved Area in Sarvarjuaq that aligns with QIA's vision and Inuit interests for the region.

We acknowledge that the following classes of activities will be allowed in the MPA:

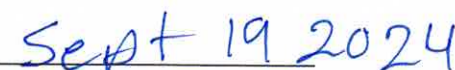
- Hunting and trapping activities
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- Canadian Coast Guard activities carried out by the Canadian Coast Guard
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- Educational activities
- Travel over sea ice using motorized vehicles and non-motorized methods
- Traditional Knowledge and cultural research activities
- Scientific research activities
- Filming activities
- Activities provided for and carried out in a manner not inconsistent with the Nunavut Agreement

Our community will continue to be engaged during the process as to whether the area should be protected over the long term, on the boundary of the area being considered for protection, and type of protection recommended.

We look forward to working with you to advance the consideration of long-term protection in Sarvarjuaq following the establishment of the Ministerial Order MPA.

Sincerely,


Mittimatalik Hunters and Trappers

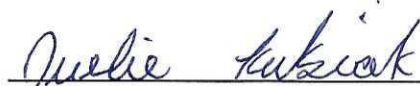

Date

- Traditional knowledge and cultural research activities
- Scientific research activities
- Filming activities
- Activities provided for and carried out in a manner not consistent with the Nunavut Agreement

Our community will continue to be engaged during the process as to whether the area should be protected over the long term, on the boundary of the area being considered for protection, and type of protection recommended.

We look forward to working with you to advance the consideration of long-term protection in Sarvarjuaq following the establishment of the Ministerial Order MPA.

Most Sincerely,



Juelie Kuksiak

Chairperson

Nattivak Hunters and Trappers Association



MUNICIPALITY OF QIKIQTARJUAQ

P. O. Box 4

Qikiqtarjuaq, NU X0A 030

Tel (867) 927-8832 Fax (867) 927-8120

October 2, 2024

To: C. Thomas Hoggarth
Executive Director, Marine Conservation
Arctic Region
Fisheries and Oceans Canada

Richard Paton
Assistant Executive Director
Marine & Wildlife Conservation
Qikiqtani Inuit Association

RE: Designation of a new Ministerial Order Marine Protected Area in Sarvarjuaq

I am writing to express support from the Qikiqtarjuaq Hamlet for the establishment of a Ministerial Order Marine Protected Area (MPA) in Sarvarjuaq. It is our understanding that a Ministerial Order MPA, will freeze the footprint of ongoing activities in the area for up to five years. This time will allow the Qikiqtani Inuit Association (QIA), Government of Canada, and Government of Nunavut to explore an Inuit Protected and Conserved Area in Sarvarjuaq that aligns with QIA's vision and Inuit interests for the region.

We acknowledge that the following classes of activities will be allowed in the MPA:

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- Scientific research activities
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- Activities provided for and carried out in a manner not inconsistent with the Nunavut Agreement

Our community will continue to be engaged during the process as to whether the area should be protected over the long term, on the boundary of the area being considered for protection, and type of protection recommended.

September ~~DATE~~, 2024

October 30-2024

To: C. Thomas Hoggarth
Executive Director, Marine Conservation
Arctic Region
Fisheries and Oceans Canada

Richard Paton
Assistant Executive Director
Marine & Wildlife Conservation
Qikiqtani Inuit Association

RE: Designation of a new Ministerial Order Marine Protected Area in Sarvarjuaq

I am writing to express support from the Resolute Bay Hunters and Trappers for the establishment of a Ministerial Order Marine Protected Area (MPA) in Sarvarjuaq. It is our understanding that a Ministerial Order MPA, will freeze the footprint of ongoing activities in the area for up to five years. This time will allow the Qikiqtani Inuit Association (QIA), Government of Canada, and Government of Nunavut to explore an Inuit Protected and Conserved Area in Sarvarjuaq that aligns with QIA's vision and Inuit interests for the region.

We acknowledge that the following classes of activities will be allowed in the MPA:

- Hunting and trapping activities
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- Filming activities
- Activities provided for and carried out in a manner not inconsistent with the Nunavut Agreement

Our community will continue to be engaged during the process as to whether the area should be protected over the long term, on the boundary of the area being considered for protection, and type of protection recommended.

We look forward to working with you to advance the consideration of long-term protection in Sarvarjuaq following the establishment of the Ministerial Order MPA.

Sincerely,



Resolute Bay Hunters and Trappers



Hamlet of Resolute Bay

P.O. Box 60
Resolute Bay, NU
X0A-0V0

Phone: (867)252-3616 Fax: (867)988-3771

Email: finclerk@resolute.ca

September 26, 2024

To: C. Thomas Hoggarth

Executive Director, Marine Conservation
Arctic Region
Fisheries and Oceans Canada

Richard Paton
Assistant Executive Director
Marine & Wildlife Conservation
Qikiqtani Inuit Association

RE: Designation of a new Ministerial Order Marine Protected Area in Sarvarjuaq

I am writing to express support from the Resolute Bay Hamlet for the establishment of a Ministerial Order Marine Protected Area (MPA) in Sarvarjuaq. It is our understanding that a Ministerial Order MPA, will freeze the footprint of ongoing activities in the area for up to five years. This time will allow the Qikiqtani Inuit Association (QIA), Government of Canada, and Government of Nunavut to explore an Inuit Protected and Conserved Area in Sarvarjuaq that aligns with QIA's vision and Inuit interests for the region.

We acknowledge that the following classes of activities will be allowed in the MPA:

- Hunting and trapping activities
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- National defence activities carried out by the Department of National Defence
- Canadian Coast Guard activities carried out by the Canadian Coast Guard



Hamlet of Resolute Bay

P.O. Box 60
Resolute Bay, NU
X0A-0V0

Phone: (867)252-3616 Fax: (867)988-3771


Email: finclerk@resolute.ca

- Tourism activities
- Recreational activities
- Educational activities
- Travel over sea ice using motorized vehicles and non-motorized methods
- Traditional Knowledge and cultural research activities
- Scientific research activities
- Filming activities
- Activities provided for and carried out in a manner not inconsistent with the Nunavut Agreement

Our community will continue to be engaged during the process as to whether the area should be protected over the long term, on the boundary of the area being considered for protection, and type of protection recommended.

We look forward to working with you to advance the consideration of long-term protection in Sarvarjuaq following the establishment of the Ministerial Order MPA.

Sincerely,

DocuSigned by:

A4A719F40DF24B2...

Mayor / Resolute Bay Hamlet