



News Release

Western Hudson Bay Polar Bear Quota Increased

IQALUIT, Nunavut (October 28, 2011) – The polar bear quota for the 2011-2012 harvest year is increasing from 8 to 21 bears for the Western Hudson Bay subpopulation which includes the area around the communities of Arviat, Baker Lake, Whale Cove, Rankin Inlet and Chesterfield Inlet.

The Honourable Daniel Shewchuk, Minister of Environment, today announced that he has accepted the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board (NWMB) decision to increase the Total Allowable Harvest (TAH) for polar bear in the Western Hudson Bay subpopulation.

“In Nunavut, we have seen remarkable recovery of our polar bear populations since their historic lows in the 1970’s,” said Minister Shewchuk. “This is because our management system is designed to respond and adapt to new information, and takes into account both scientific and Inuit traditional knowledge.”

The recommendation to increase the quota was put forward by the Department of Environment following extensive consultations with the affected communities and the Kivalliq Regional Wildlife Organization. While previous scientific population estimates suggested declining numbers for polar bears in Western Hudson Bay, Inuit knowledge and observations indicate an increasing trend in this subpopulation.

Results from the aerial survey population study conducted in 2010 and 2011 will be taken to the affected communities for consultation this winter. Once a new population estimate is available, the Department will work with wildlife co-management partners to assess and develop recommendations for long-term Total Allowable Harvest for this subpopulation.

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(See Backgrounder: 2011 Polar Bear Harvest Increase)

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