

News Release



For Immediate Release

Nunavut, Greenland Launch Joint Study of Kane Basin Polar Bears

IQALUIT, Nunavut (April 24, 2012) - A study of the Kane Basin polar bear sub-population began April 23, 2012 in collaboration with the Greenland Institute of Natural Resources.

The Kane Basin (KB) polar bear sub-population is a small population that is managed jointly by Nunavut and Greenland. Researchers have recently concluded community consultations, and support for the study is high. Data from a study conducted between 1993 and 1997 suggest that the population may be declining, but there is a need for more up to date information.

"I am very pleased to announce this collaborative effort that will help us better understand and sustainably manage this shared polar bear population," said the Honourable James Arreak, Minister of Environment.

Greenland Minister Ane Hansen agrees with Minister Arreak. "Throughout the study we will be reporting our progress and will release the findings of the study at its completion," Minister Hansen said.

Both Ministers are committed to keeping Nunavummiut and Kalaallit engaged and informed. The planned 3-year study is part of the management strategy set out by the Canada-Greenland Joint commission, in accordance with the Canada-Greenland Memorandum of Understanding signed in 2009.

The study will investigate the population size and status by means of a non-invasive genetic mark-recapture method. The project is timed to coincide with similar research occurring this fall in the neighboring Baffin Bay subpopulation. In addition to genetic mark-recapture work, researchers will collect data from a small number of collared and ear-tagged bears in Kane Basin to determine the geographic range of the subpopulation.

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