

News Release

For Immediate Release

Tallurutiup Imanga/Lancaster Sound in High Arctic to be Canada's Largest Protected Area

Canada, Nunavut, and Qikiqtani Inuit Association agree on a final boundary for Canada's largest national marine conservation area in Tallurutiup Imanga/Lancaster Sound in Canada's North

August 14, 2017

Pond Inlet, Nunavut

Canada's North is a vast area of pristine ocean and land that has been part of the traditional Inuit homeland since time immemorial. It is also home to a rich abundance of whales, polar bears, and migrating birds. Climate change and human activity are affecting the landscape and the traditional way of life in the Arctic, and humanity has a duty to protect them.

Today, Minister of Environment and Climate Change and Minister responsible for Parks Canada, Catherine McKenna, along with Joe Savikataaq, Nunavut's Minister of Environment, and Mr. P.J. Akeeagok, President of the Qikiqtani Inuit Association, announced an agreement on the final boundary of a national marine conservation area (NMCA) in Tallurutiup Imanga/Lancaster Sound.

A section of Tallurutiup Imanga/Lancaster Sound twice the size of Nova Scotia will be protected, making it the largest marine conservation area in Canada.

Today's announcement is the culmination of years of tireless work by Nunavut Inuit and different levels of government. In partnership with the Qikiqtani Inuit Association and the Government of Nunavut, the Government of Canada is taking a significant step to create a legacy for future generations. The protection of Tallurutiup Imanga/Lancaster Sound as a national marine conservation area is a model of collaboration and a shared accomplishment. This agreement launches the negotiation of an Inuit Impact Benefit Agreement (IIBA) that will provide long lasting benefits for Inuit who have deep roots in the region. The agreement also confirms a moratorium on future offshore oil and gas exploration and development.

This conservation area will protect Inuit harvesting rights guaranteed under the Nunavut agreement and ensure the protection of species at risk.

The Government of Canada is committed to expanding its network of protected areas and protecting Canada's biodiversity. The agreed boundary of Tallurutiup Imanga/Lancaster Sound will contribute approximately two per cent on an interim basis towards the government of Canada's commitment to protect five percent of Canada's marine areas by 2017. Upon the signing of the Inuit Impact Benefit Agreement, this conservation area will contribute greatly towards Canada's international commitments to the United Nations Convention on biological diversity.

Tallurutiup Imanga/Lancaster Sound is teeming with life. The cold arctic waters foster birds, fish, and whales, forming one of the most unique ecosystems in the world; one that is both awe-inspiring and has sustained Inuit for thousands of years. The region is a place where the vibrant culture and well-being of Inuit are strongly tied to the land and sea.

Today marks a critical and important step towards the protection of this area for future generations.

Quotes

"Protecting this area is critically important. Like most of the Arctic, the region is threatened by climate change. Rising temperatures and melting sea ice are shrinking habitats, and putting vulnerable sea life under pressure. Inuit, who for millennia relied on these species for food, clothing, and shelter, have found their livelihoods endangered and their futures at risk.



Parks Canada
Parcs Canada



ᑭᑭᑭᑭᑭᑭ ᑭᑭᑭᑭᑭᑭ ᑭᑭᑭᑭᑭᑭᑭᑭᑭᑭ
Qikiqtani Inuit Association



Sima Sahar Zerehi
Director of Communications
Qikiqtani Inuit Association
867-975-8413
867-222-5079
1-800-667-2742
szerehi@qia.ca

Hayward Harris
Department of Environment
Government of Nunavut
867-975-7769
hharris@gov.nu.ca



Parks Canada
Parcs Canada



ᖃᕈᕐᕋᕐ ᕈᕋᕐ ᕐᕋᕐᕋᕐ
Qikiqtani Inuit Association

