

Inuvialuit Game Council Responses to Information Requests

Topic 1: Caribou Status

IRs to All Parties

- 1.1. Which kinds of caribou most concern you as a Party: ᚛edə/᚛ekwe´ (Bluenose West or Bluenose East barren-ground caribou), shúhtagə᚛epə´ (Northern Mountain caribou), or tᑦdzı (Boreal Woodland caribou)? Describe your main conservation concerns. (*SRRB*)

IGC is primarily concerned with the Bluenose West (BNW) caribou herd, as it is used extensively by the communities of Paulatuk, Tuktoyaktuk, Inuvik, and Aklavik, with occasional use by Inuvialuit from the communities of Sachs Harbour and Ulukhaktok.

IGC's primary conservation concerns are around differential participation in the collective co-management system, including ACCWM, to which the SRRB, and by extension, the community of Colville Lake are a part of. WMAC(NWT) has recently (December 19, 2019) written a letter that details the concerns with participation in the management system, which are shared by IGC.

Topic 2: Hunting Law

IRs to All Parties

- 2.1 Do you have concerns about regulation of caribou harvest? What are your concerns? (*SRRB*)

Yes. As stated above, IGC is concerned that Colville Lake does not follow regulations for using tags or the harvest reporting requirements that are followed by all other users of the BNW. IGC is concerned that Inuvialuit are following the management system, using tags, and subject to enforcement of this system, when harvesters from Colville Lake are not doing the same.

- 2.2 How do you ensure that Indigenous harvesters that are not from your jurisdiction respect local hunting laws? How do you deal with visiting Indigenous harvesters that violate local hunting laws? (*SRRB*)

No response.

2.3 In the North, each region has a wildlife management authority that works with communities to determine the approach to caribou conservation. Do you have concerns about the coordination of caribou hunting regulation across regions? How do you propose that these concerns be addressed? (*SRRB*)

Yes, IGC has concerns that the existing coordinating structures (ie. ACCWM) are not being respected, participated in, or adhered to. IGC would like to see better coordination within the regions to ensure that participation in this regional forum is in good faith and the boards present are meeting the requirements (harvest reporting, providing other information) and actually representing the people that they are supposed to. If Colville Lake is not represented by the SRRB, then there needs to be other way that the community is represented at the regional level and is collaborating with other Indigenous and non-Indigenous management partners. It is not appropriate for one community to refuse to work with other communities and regions for the conservation and sustainable use of this shared resource that is vital to Indigenous communities across northern NWT.

IRs to the ICG

2.8 Under the Inuvialuit Final Agreement, the IGC represents the collective Inuvialuit interest in all matters pertaining to the management of wildlife and wildlife habitat in the ISR. The IGC allocates Inuvialuit quotas among the six ISR communities. Please provide a description of the IGC's approach to working with communities and ENR in hunting regulation.

IGC, ENR, and WMAC(NWT) work collaboratively with the HTC's in each community to establish management actions, including the establishment and regulation of a total allowable harvest (TAH). WMAC(NWT) is the co-management board (Inuvialuit, ENR, CWS) that takes part in ACCWM, and IGC is involved as a non-voting member. WMAC(NWT) recommends a TAH to the Minister, in collaboration with the other co-management boards on ACCWM. Both Parties are in regular contact with the communities, WMAC(NWT) through an annual tour and the Inuvialuit representation on the board, and IGC through quarterly meetings whereby an IGC Director from each HTC is present to provide feedback, concerns, and direction from their community.

IGC discusses management issues, including the quota system and whether it is appropriate, the status of the caribou herds as informed by scientific and local and Inuvialuit Traditional Knowledge, and the importance of working with neighboring peoples to manage shared resources, including caribou.

The IGC allocates the tags received by the Inuvialuit among communities, based on needs and according to information brought forward by the Directors and HTC's to the IGC table. The IGC also discusses recommendations with WMAC(NWT) made to ENR regarding the TAH, as referenced in the December 14, 2015 and January 10, 2019 letters recommending an increased TAH based on the increased population estimates of the BNW herd.

IGC also works to promote and ensure the use of Traditional Inuvialuit Knowledge and local knowledge in management decisions, as per s.14(5) of the *Inuvialuit Final Agreement*:

14.(5) The relevant knowledge and experience of both the Inuvialuit and the scientific communities should be employed in order to achieve conservation.

Topic 3: Approaches to Wildlife Harvesting

IRs to All Parties

3.1 List three (or more) aspects of Indigenous country food systems and ways of life that most contribute to promoting caribou conservation. Do you have concerns about threats to these systems? (*SRRB*)

No Response.

3.2 How are Indigenous country food systems changing? What impacts are these changes having on caribou? (*SRRB*)

No Response.

Topic 4: Harvest Monitoring

IRs to All Parties

4.1 Harvest monitoring is recognized as a key component in effective harvest regulation. What is the most effective way to monitor caribou harvest in your experience? (*SRRB*)

IGC and IRC run the Inuvialuit Harvest Study, which is a voluntary harvest reporting program throughout the ISR. IGC and the HTC's have been working hard to promote the importance of accurate harvest reporting with high participation rates, to increase success and participation in the IHS throughout the ISR. This information informs wildlife management as it is accessible to the IGC directly and on request to WMAC(NWT). The Inuvialuit Harvest Study is the most effective way to monitor caribou in the ISR because it employs local community resource technicians (CRTs) in each community who understand their local dynamics and have established relationships with harvesters. Monthly harvest surveys are conducted in culturally appropriate ways, wherein CRTs hold open houses and conduct home visits to gather information while sharing tea and conversation. Moreover, the Inuvialuit Harvest Study has invested in technology that allows for field data collection and regular syncing to the Inuvialuit Settlement Region Platform for review and analysis. Not only does the Harvest Study provide accurate community harvest data, but it encourages local stewardship, provides employment opportunities and builds capacity at the community level for ongoing monitoring activities.

For species or herds with a total allowable harvest and tag system, ENR distributes the tags to the community HTC's according to the allocations made by the IGC. The HTC's each follow their own protocols for issuing tags to their membership. Sample kits are also provided, and some species and herds have mandatory sampling.

4.2 Over the past year, Indigenous Guardian programs have come onto the national stage as part of Indigenous environmental governance systems. What role can Guardians play in harvest monitoring? (*SRRB*)

The Inuvialuit have launched their guardian program as the Munaqsiyit Monitoring Program. Given that guardian programs have wide scopes and very diverse activities, we are in a very fortunate position of having a strong foundation upon which to develop our 'guardian' activities. As the "eyes and ears of the land" for their communities, Munaqsiyit Monitors are expected to record, report and monitor: on the land hazards, changes to the landscape, environmental trends and wildlife observations. Additionally, Munaqsiyit Monitors are considered role models of responsible Inuvialuit land/wildlife stewardship and thus embody cultural relationships of respect, reliance & appreciation of the land and wildlife in the ISR. Part of the Munaqsiyit Monitoring Program is capacity development at the community level to be meaningfully included in both natural and social science activities related to land and wildlife. Therefore, assuming that Munaqsiyit has adequate support, Inuvialuit monitors in each community will have the skills to engage in a range of activities, including but not limited to: scat and DNA sampling, population surveys, observational monitoring, local knowledge interviews/surveys, and reporting/remediation of harvest wastage. Leveraging the capacity of local communities encourages Inuvialuit stewardship, supports jobs for beneficiaries, and is an immense cost-saving opportunity for territorial and federal governments often limited by budgets that don't reflect the cost of working in the Canadian Arctic.

Topic 5: Participation, Education, Information

IRs to All Parties

5.1 Discussions among Member Boards of the Advisory Committee for Cooperation on Wildlife Management emphasize education and communication as priorities in achieving effective harvest regulation. What are your priorities for education and communication? (*SRRB*)

WMAC(NWT) is the voting member of the ACCWM, and takes the lead on education and communication activities, on which IGC is a partner. IGC is active in education regarding harvest reporting to the Inuvialuit Harvest Study.

5.2 The *Indigenous Discussion Paper and Calls to Action* presented at the 2018 North American Caribou Workshop notes that "all Indigenous people have roles to play in caribou stewardship – women, men, and those who define their gender in a more fluid way – just as caribou herds are structured according to the roles of individual animals. We all depend upon each other." Please describe the importance of gender roles for you in harvest regulation, and any concerns about inclusion. (*SRRB*)

No Response.

5.3 In its 2016 BNE Hearing Report, the SRRB found that that "there is strong consensus in the Sahtú Region that youth involvement is critical for the success of community ʔekwéʔ [caribou] conservation plans." Describe your approach to involving youth in wildlife harvesting and harvest regulation. (*SRRB*)

No Response.

5.4 What materials or websites do you recommend for review as relevant for consideration by the Parties related to the central question of the Public Listening Session? (*SRRB*)

No Response.

Topic 6: Aboriginal and Treaty Rights

IR to All Parties

6.1 All regions in the North with Comprehensive Land Claim Agreements conducted similarly designed Harvest Studies as a requirement of their claims and as an evidence base for protecting Indigenous harvesting rights. If you participated as a partner in a Harvest Study, what do you consider to be the current and future value of the study? If you are continuing to participate in Harvest Studies, are these differently designed? Are they being used differently? (*SRRB*)

No Response.