



April 29, 2010

Mr. Adrian Boyd
Nunavut Planning Commission
P.O. Box 2101
Cambridge Bay, Nunavut
X0B 0C0

RE: DFO information on Important Areas for the Nunavut Land Use Plan

Dear Mr. Boyd,

Thank you for the opportunity for Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) to attend the workshop you hosted in Ottawa on March 29 and 30th to discuss the latest progress on the Nunavut Land Use Plan (the Plan). DFO would like to take this opportunity to follow-up on your request during that workshop that DFO provide additional information on important areas for fish and marine mammals for inclusion into the Plan. As discussed during the workshop, DFO has three primary suggestions for areas that may warrant special mention in the Plan as detailed below:

Marine Areas with Higher Biological Activity: Previously, DFO provided a map of "hot spots" or areas of higher biological activity in the marine environment that was compiled from the work of multiple scientists working directly with marine mammals, fishes, birds and/or other marine life. As you know, this map is in the process of being updated to take more recent data into account and should be available within the next few weeks. DFO will provide this updated map to the Planning Commission as soon as it is available. DFO is not currently recommending that the areas identified in the current or soon to be updated hot spot map be deemed "no development". Rather, DFO recommends that these areas be identified in the plan as areas of higher known biological activity that may be subject to additional scrutiny and/or restrictions during the impact assessment or regulatory review processes.

Habitat for Unique Species: DFO considered whether there were habitats for unique fish or marine mammal species in the Nunavut Settlement Area that may warrant special consideration under the land use plan. At this time, DFO is recommending that the following three known lakes on southern Baffin Island containing Atlantic Cod be identified as important since the presence of this species in a lake environment is currently thought to be unique globally.

Ogac Lake, Baffin Island, Nunavut (62°52'N, 67°21'W)
Qasigialiminiq, Baffin Island, Nunavut (65°48'N, 68°10'W)
Tariujarusiq, Baffin Island, Nunavut (65°33'N, 67°25'W)

Much like for the marine areas, DFO is not recommending that these areas be designated no development but rather that the lakes and an associated 1000m buffer be identified to indicate that these areas may be subject to additional scrutiny and/or restrictions during the impact assessment and regulatory review processes.

Page 2....

Habitats supporting Important Subsistence or Commercial Fisheries: DFO is also willing to consider the designation of habitats which support subsistence or commercial fisheries important to Inuit for limited protection against specific types of work or activities which could adversely affect the viability of these fisheries. However, DFO would seek input from the communities and their associated Hunter Trapper Organization/ Association to determine which waterbodies (or parts thereof) would be best suited for this designation. As such DFO would like to discuss the possibility of a question on this subject being raised at the community consultations that the NPC is planning later this year.

Finally, DFO would like to ensure that it is clear in the Plan that designating a specific area does not indicate that other areas are not also important or subject to regulatory requirements. DFO has a number of regulatory tools such as the habitat protection provisions of the *Fisheries Act* and the prohibitions under the *Species at Risk Act* which apply regardless of the designation of the area in the Land Use Plan. These tools ensure the protection of fish, marine mammals and their habitats including Species at Risk even if these areas are not identified in the plan. Further, DFO has a number of program areas such as Fisheries and Aquaculture Management, Science, and Oceans which are continuing work which will refine or expand upon the information provided above. As this new information becomes available, DFO will make it available to the Nunavut Planning Commission to ensure it can be incorporated into the plan where relevant.

Again, DFO appreciates having the opportunity to further our discussions on the Nunavut Land Use Plan. Please contact Tania Gordanier by telephone at 613-998-3783 or by e-mail at Tania.gordanier@dfo-mpo.gc.ca should you have any additional questions or comments.

Regards,



Eric Kan
Area Director, Eastern Arctic Area