



NOTICE OF SCREENING OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC COMMENT

NIRB File No.: 24VN054

Project Name: The “Sarvarjuaq Marine Protected Area by Ministerial Order” project
Proponent Name: Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO)
Project Type: Marine
Region: Qikiqtani Region
Public Registry: www.nirb.ca
Application No.: 126016
Comment Deadline: **January 27, 2025**

PROJECT SCOPE:

The proposed Sarvarjuaq Marine Protected Area (Sarvarjuaq MPA) is in the North Water (Sarvarjuaq), located at the entrance to Smith Sound, extending north in Nares Strait into Kane Basin and south into northern Baffin Bay (see map below). The Sarvarjuaq MPA includes the Canadian part of the North Water, one of the largest polynya ecosystems (80,000 km²) in the Arctic, which is designated as an Ecologically and Biologically Significant Area. The program is proposed to take place from July 2025 to July 2030. The scope of this proposed project as identified by the NIRB includes the following undertakings, works or activities:

- Inuit activities provided for under any Agreement or Act;
- Lawful activities that have occurred or were authorized to occur in the 12 months before the order comes into force, or as identified in the classes of allowed activities in the Minister’s Order;^{1,2}
- Research activities consistent with the conservation objectives of the Sarvarjuaq MPA;
- Activities carried out for purposes of public safety, national defence, national security, law enforcement or in emergency situations.

Please visit the NIRB’s public registry online at the link above and look up NIRB File No.: **24VN054** to access all project information, maps, and public comment forms.

REQUEST FOR COMMENTS

You are invited to provide the NIRB with your comments regarding whether the proposed project is:

- likely to arouse significant public concern and, if so, why;
- likely to cause significant adverse ecosystemic or socio-economic effects and, if so, why;
- likely to cause significant adverse impacts on wildlife habitat or Inuit harvest activities and, if so, why;
- a type where the potential adverse effects are highly predictable and can be prevented/managed appropriately with known technology.

Parties are also invited to recommend any specific mitigation measures they feel would be appropriate, and to bring any other matter of importance related to this project proposal to the NIRB’s attention.

CONTACT INFORMATION

The NIRB has recently launched an updated online public registry, and parties can access project information as well as submit comments directly to the NIRB via www.nirb.ca. Comments can still be submitted directly to the NIRB via email at info@nirb.ca or via fax to (867) 983-2594.

If you have any questions or require clarification regarding the proposed project or the NIRB’s screening process, please contact Leila Cai, Impact Assessment Officer toll-free at 1-866-233-3033 or lcai@nirb.ca.

¹ Per paragraph 35.1(2)(a) of the *Oceans Act*, the Minister’s Order includes a proposed list of classes of *ongoing activities* in DFO’s submission, [Project Description, on the NIRB’s online public registry](#) (Doc ID No. 352376).

² The proposed regulation in the Minister’s Order recognizes the pre-existing authorized zones in the region designated by the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization for commercial fisheries, including shrimp fishing.