



NIRB File No.: 25YN018

NIRB Public Registry Link: www.nirb.ca/project/126170

NPC File No.: 150660

April 29, 2025

Michelle Kamula
501 University Cres
Winnipeg, MB
R3T – 2N2

Sent via email: michelle.kamula@dfo-mpo.gc.ca

Re: Notice of Screening for Fisheries and Oceans Canada 's “Physiological Response of Soft-shell Clam *Mya truncata* to Spring Microalgal Blooms” Project Proposal

Dear Michelle Kamula:

The Nunavut Impact Review Board (NIRB) received a referral to screen Fisheries and Oceans Canada 's “Physiological Response of Soft-shell Clam *Mya truncata* to Spring Microalgal Blooms” project proposal from:

- The Nunavut Planning Commission on March 13, 2025, noting outside the area of an applicable regional land use plan,
- The NIRB received a complete application on April 15, 2025, and assigned it file number **25YN018** - please reference this file number in all future related correspondence.

The NIRB has commenced screening the project proposal pursuant to the *Nunavut Agreement* and *Nunavut Planning and Project Assessment Act*¹ and by copy of this letter, **invites interested parties and municipalities potentially affected by the proposal to comment directly to the Nunavut Impact Review Board.**

SCOPE OF PROPOSED PROJECT

Location	Qikiqtarjuaq, Nunavut, Qikiqtani region,
Objective	The Proponent intends to conduct baseline studies about how clams respond to microalgal blooms of sea ice algae in the springtime and to phytoplankton in the summer before the deep seaport is erected and before drastic changes of the climate change affect the population and its natural habitat.
Timeline	May 15 to October 25, 2025, seasonal

¹ Article 12, Sections 12.4.1 and 12.4.4 of the *Agreement between the Inuit of the Nunavut Settlement Area and Her Majesty the Queen in right of Canada (Nunavut Agreement)* and s. 87 of the *Nunavut Planning and Project Assessment Act*, S.C. 2013, c. 14, s. 2 (NuPPAA)

According to the project proposal, the scope of the project includes the following undertakings, works or activities:

- Collect 200 clams at four different stations by hand or a SCUBA diver digging the clams underwater,
- Go to the four sample stations on a snowmobile in the springtime and by boat in the summertime,
- Collect sea ice and water samples to investigate the algae,
- Collect one core ice sample to assess the physical ice conditions including temperature and conductivity to characterize water column properties,
- Collect water samples from the surface, middle, and the bottom using a pump and Niskin bottles.

Inclusion or Exclusion of Scoping List

The NIRB has identified no additional works or activities in relation to the project proposal. As a result, the NIRB will proceed with screening the project based on the scope as described above.

REQUEST FOR COMMENTS

Documents received and describing the proposal can be accessed from the NIRB's online public registry at www.nirb.ca/project/126170 and include:

- *NIRB Application;*
- *NPC Conformity Determination and Application;*
- *Project Overview;*
- *DFO Letter HTO Regarding Project Proposal;*
- *Nattivak HTA Letter of Support;*
- *Waste Management Plan.*

The NIRB may request additional information at any time during the process.

By copy of this letter, the NIRB is inviting interested parties and municipalities potentially affected by the project proposal to comment directly to the NIRB by **May 9, 2025**.

The NIRB would like parties to provide comments regarding:

- Whether the project proposal is likely to arouse significant public concern; and if so, why;
- Whether the project proposal is likely to cause significant adverse eco-systemic or socio-economic effects; and if so, why;
- Whether the project proposal is likely to cause significant adverse impacts on wildlife habitat or Inuit harvest activities; and if so, why;
- Whether the project proposal is of a type where the potential adverse effects are highly predictable and mitigable with known technology, (and providing any recommended mitigation measures); and
- Any matter of importance to the Party related to the project proposal including if a Review is required any additional factors that should be considered as part of that process.

Please note that *proposed* project-specific terms and conditions, should the project proceed, have been attached for consideration and comment ([Appendix A](#)).

CONTACT INFORMATION

Please send comments to the NIRB via email at info@nirb.ca, via fax at (867) 983-2594 or via the individual project dashboard for this assessment on the NIRB's online public registry at www.nirb.ca/project/126170. Questions should be directed to the undersigned at (867) 983 - 4618 or rqammaniq@nirb.ca.

Sincerely,



Robby Qammaniq
Impact Assessment Officer
Nunavut Impact Review Board

Attachments: Appendix A: *Proposed* Project Specific Terms and Conditions

Enclosures (3): Public Notice of Screening (English)
Comment Forms (English, and Inuktitut)

cc: Distribution List
Jared Ottenhof, Qikiqtani Inuit Association
Conor Goddard, Qikiqtani Inuit Association
Joel Fortier, Qikiqtani Inuit Association
Assol Kubeisinova, Qikiqtani Inuit Association
Dustin Fredlund, Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated
Carson Gills, Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated
Jorgan Aitaok, Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated
William Patch, Community and Government Services – Government of Nunavut
Randy Mercer, Community and Government Services – Government of Nunavut
Ken Wasylshen, Community and Government Services – Government of Nunavut
Oliver Forbes-Bouillon, Community and Government Services – Government of Nunavut
Caroline Whittle, Culture and Heritage – Government of Nunavut
Sylvie LeBlanc, Culture and Heritage – Government of Nunavut
Diane Lapierre, Economic Development and Transportation – Government of Nunavut
Mosha Cote, Nunavut Research Institute
Tracey McCaie, Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada
Jose Audet-Lecouffe, Fisheries and Oceans Canada

Appendix A: Proposed Project Specific Terms and Conditions

The following is a list of project-specific terms and conditions which, should the project proceed, may be recommended to be attached to any approval.

General

1. Fisheries and Oceans Canada (the Proponent) shall maintain a copy of the Project Terms and Conditions at the site of operation at all times and make it accessible to enforcement officers upon request.
2. The Proponent shall operate in accordance with all commitments stated in correspondence provided to the Nunavut Planning Commission (NPC File No.:150660), and the NIRB (Online Application Form, April 15, 2025). This information should be accessible to enforcement officers upon request.
3. The Proponent shall operate the site in accordance with all applicable Acts, Regulations and Guidelines.
4. The Proponent shall ensure that it meets the standards and/or limits as set out in the authorizing agencies' permits or licences as required for this project.
5. The Proponent shall ensure that all personnel, staff and contractors are adequately trained prior to commencement of all project activities, and shall be made aware of all operational plans, management plans, guidelines and Proponent commitments relating to the project.

Water courses/Water bodies (including fresh and marine waters)

6. The Proponent shall not deposit, nor permit the deposit of any fuel, chemicals, wastes (including wastewater) or sediment into any water body. The Proponent should have in place an Emergency Spill Response Plan that is approved by the appropriate authorizing agency(ies).

Waste Management

7. The Proponent shall manage all hazardous and non-hazardous waste including food, domestic wastes, debris and petroleum-based chemicals (e.g., greases, gasoline, glycol-based antifreeze) in such a manner to avoid release into the environment and access to wildlife at all times until disposed of appropriately or at an approved facility.

Fuel and Chemical Storage

8. The Proponent shall have a Spill Contingency Plan in place at all fuel storage or transfer locations and shall ensure that appropriate spill response equipment and clean-up materials (e.g., shovels, pumps, barrels, drip pans, and absorbents) are readily available.

Wildlife – General

9. The Proponent shall not substantially alter or damage or destroy any wildlife habitat in conducting this operation unless otherwise authorized by the appropriate authorizing agencies.

10. The Proponent shall not chase, weary, harass or molest wildlife. This includes persistently circling, chasing, hovering over, pursuing or in any other way harass wildlife, or disturbing large groups of animals.
11. The Proponent shall not hunt or fish, unless proper Nunavut authorizations have been acquired.

Migratory Birds and Raptors Disturbance

12. The Proponent shall carry out all phases of the project in a manner that protects migratory birds and avoids harming, killing or disturbing migratory birds or destroying, disturbing or taking their nests or eggs. In this regard, the Proponent shall take into account Environment and Climate Change Canada's *Avoidance Guidelines*. The Proponent's actions in applying the *Avoidance Guidelines* shall be in compliance with the *Migratory Birds Convention Act, 1994* and with the *Species at Risk Act*.
13. The Proponent shall avoid the seaward site of seabird colonies and areas used by flocks of migrating waterfowl, a minimum distance away on the recommendation of the appropriate authorizing agencies.
14. The Proponent shall not pursue seabirds or waterbirds swimming on the water surface and shall avoid concentrations of these birds if encountered on the water.

Marine-based Activities

15. The Proponent shall not attempt to intersect or interfere with the movements of marine mammals. This includes ensuring that there are no wake zones within 250 metres and a minimum of 100 metre no go zone around marine mammals. Strategic positioning of vessels ahead of the path being traveled by mobile mammals and waiting for the mammals to pass is also prohibited.
16. The Proponent shall maintain a distance of 100 metres if a Polar Bear is encountered on land or ice while conducting activities from a zodiac or other small craft; all interaction with Polar Bears should be avoided if possible.
17. The Proponent shall suspend all project activities should any dead fish or wildlife (both marine and terrestrial), or any injured wildlife be observed during any works or activities in and around the marine waters. Activities may only be resumed on the recommendation of the authorizing agencies.
18. The Proponent shall report all incidents, injuries or sightings of marine mammals to the appropriate authorizing agencies.

Other

19. The Proponent should engage with local residents regarding planned activities in the area and should solicit available Inuit Qaujimaningit and information regarding current recreational and traditional usage of the project area which may inform project activities. Posting of translated public notices and direct engagement with potentially interested groups and individuals prior to undertaking project activities is strongly encouraged.
20. The Proponent should consult with local residents regarding their activities in the area and solicit available Inuit Qaujimaningit and information that can inform project activities.

21. The Proponent shall ensure that project activities do not interfere with Inuit wildlife harvesting or traditional land use activities.
22. The Proponent should, to the extent possible, hire local people and access local services where possible.