



NIRB File No.: 26YN022  
NIRB Public Registry link:  
[www.nirb.ca/project/126349](http://www.nirb.ca/project/126349)  
NPC File No.: 151035

April 9, 2026

To: The Honourable Joanne Thompson  
Minister of Fisheries  
House of Commons  
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6

Sent via email: [joanne.thompson@parl.gc.ca](mailto:joanne.thompson@parl.gc.ca),

Re: **Screening Decision for Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO)'s "ECWG Bowhead Whale Photo Identification and Biopsy Sampling" Project Proposal, Qikiqtani Region**

Dear Honourable Minister:

On February 12, 2026, the Nunavut Impact Review Board (NIRB or Board) received a referral pursuant to the Nunavut Agreement and *NuPPAA* to conduct a screening<sup>1</sup> of Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO)'s "ECWG Bowhead Whale Photo Identification and Biopsy Sampling" project proposal and after completing the required process, the NIRB determined<sup>2</sup> that **a review of the project is not required** and recommended specific terms and conditions<sup>3</sup>.

The attached Screening Decision Report provides the regulatory framework, scope of proposal and Board's assessment process, public engagement, factors relevant for the determining significance of impacts, and recommended project-specific terms and conditions. Additional information on the project can be viewed on the NIRB's public registry at the link at the top of this letter.

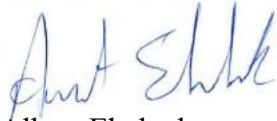
The NIRB look forward to receiving a response from the Minister, and any questions on the Board's assessment process or the Screening Decision Report can be directed to the NIRB's Director, Operations, Tara Arko at (867) 983-4611 or [tarko@nirb.ca](mailto:tarko@nirb.ca).

1 Pursuant to 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 section 87 of the *Nunavut Planning and Project Assessment Act (NuPPAA)*

2 Pursuant to s. 92(1)(a) of the *NuPPAA*

3 Pursuant to s. 92(2)(a) of the *NuPPAA*

Sincerely,



Albert Ehloak

*Acting* Chairperson

Nunavut Impact Review Board

Enclosure (1): Screening Decision Report, NIRB File No.: 26YN022 (April 9, 2026)

cc: Regulators  
Julie Dabrusin, Minister of Environment and Climate Change Canada  
Jose Audet-Lecouffe, Fisheries and Oceans Canada  
Lisa Pirie, Canadian Wildlife Service  
Brent Young, Fisheries and Oceans Canada