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Building Nunavut Together
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August 20, 2020

Karen Costello
Executive Director
Nunavut Impact Review Board
P.O Box 1360, Cambridge Bay, NU X0B 0C0
Sent VIA email: info@nirb.ca

RE: NIRB file no. 17SN034 - Update on Government of Nunavut works undertaken related to the Final Report and Recommendations for the Strategic Environmental Assessment for Baffin Bay and Davis Strait

Dear Ms. Costello:

On behalf of the Government of Nunavut (GN), I thank the Nunavut Impact Review Board (NIRB) for its successful completion of the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) for Baffin Bay and Davis Strait. As requested, we are providing an update on work in progress at the GN relating to the Strategic Environmental Assessment in Baffin Bay and Davis Strait.

While the Government of Canada (GOC) currently has authority over the management of offshore petroleum resources, the GN has significant interest in all matters respecting sustainable development in and around Nunavut, from environmental, socio-economic, cultural, and other vantage points. Furthermore, in August 2019, the *Nunavut Lands and Resources Devolution Agreement in Principle (AIP)* was signed by the Government of Canada, the Government of Nunavut, and Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated, and highlights a commitment from the three parties to cooperate and coordinate with respect to oil and gas management, administration and development.

The Final Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Report is transparent in acknowledging the input and position of the GN and other parties with respect to the various issues raised during the review. The Final SEA Report provides a foundation from which to move forward as the GN and other stakeholders strive to ensure that the potential benefits of oil and gas development can be fully realized for Nunavummiut, while impacts are avoided or mitigated.



Update on Government of Nunavut Work:

Directly relevant to the NIRB recommendations for additional work as detailed in the Final SEA Report, the GN is currently undertaking the following:

- An ongoing study of naturally occurring oil seeps in the marine environment, at Scott Inlet in Baffin Bay
- A research program on coastlines, the Nunavut Coastal Resource Inventory (NCRI). Some studies having been completed for communities in the Baffin Bay and Davis Strait area (Iqaluit, Pangnirtung, Qikiqtarjuaq, and Clyde River) and additional research ongoing (<https://www.gov.nu.ca/environment/information/nunavut-coastal-resource-inventory>)
- Developing Oil and Gas priorities and a Policy Statement for Nunavut
- Negotiating devolution with the Government of Canada and Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated, as guided by the *Nunavut Lands and Resources Devolution Agreement in Principle*, which is expected to lead to changes in the management, decision-making and sharing of resource revenues with respect to oil and gas development
- Participating in the 5-year review of the moratorium with CIRNAC and the Nunavut Inuit organizations
- Analyzing the SEA Report and a prioritizing of the NIRB's recommendations; the GN drafted a report for consideration and discussion at the 5-year review of the moratorium table, which includes an analysis of the final SEA Report, suggested prioritization of the NIRB's recommendations as well as a proposed action plan for priority items

The completion of NIRB's Final Recommendations is dependent on the participation of all relevant partners, and available budget and resourcing, particularly from the federal government. The roles and responsibilities of the GN, the federal government, Inuit organizations, Nunavut's Institutions of Public Government (IPGs), communities and other stakeholders in addressing each of the NIRB recommendations has yet to be confirmed.



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The GN looks forward to ongoing discussions between interested parties to clarify the respective roles and responsibilities in implementing the NIRB's final recommendations. The GN acknowledges the contribution from Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada, providing funds and resources for these ongoing implementation discussions, as well as organizing these meetings directly or through the NIRB. Further, we anticipate the GOC to fund key research needed to fill the gaps identified by the NIRB and other stakeholders during the Strategic Environmental Assessment for Baffin Bay and Davis Strait.

The GN thanks the NIRB for the opportunity to provide an update on works undertaken in relation to the Final SEA Report. Should you have any questions regarding any of the GN initiatives, or this letter, please contact me directly.

Best Regards,

Qujannamiik,

Annie Cyr-Parent

ACyr-parent@gov.nu.ca

Senior Advisor, Petroleum Resources

Department of economic development and transportation

Government of Nunavut