



**NIRB File No.: 22YN004**  
NPC File No.: 149652

March 7, 2022

Loïc Sanchez  
Université de Montpellier  
28 Rue de l'école normale  
Montpellier Occitanie 34090 France

Sent via email: [loic.sanchez.ls@gmail.com](mailto:loic.sanchez.ls@gmail.com)

**Re: Notice of Screening for Université de Montpellier's "Shift-eDNA" Project Proposal**

Dear Loïc Sanchez:

On February 1, 2022, the Nunavut Impact Review Board (NIRB) received a referral to screen the Université de Montpellier's "Shift-eDNA" project proposal from the Nunavut Planning Commission (Commission), with an accompanying positive conformity determination with the North Baffin Regional Land Use Plan. 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 s. 87 of the *Nunavut Planning and Project Assessment Act*, S.C. 2013, c. 14, s. 2 (*NuPPAA*), the NIRB has commenced screening this project proposal and has assigned it file number **22YN004**.

INFORMATION REQUEST

On February 3, 2022, the NIRB requested that the Proponent complete the online application form through the NIRB's public registry system and ensure, pursuant to s. 144(1) of the *NuPPAA*, that sufficient information is provided to determine the scope of the project activities being proposed and commence screening.

Following a preliminary completeness check of the proposal as submitted on February 15, 2022, by the Proponent, the NIRB determined that the proposal did not contain the necessary information for the NIRB to carry out its screening and on February 18, 2022, requested that the Proponent provide the Board with the additional information in order to carry out the screening of the project proposal. On February 23, 2022, the NIRB received the required information and commenced the screening pursuant to Part 3 of the *NuPPAA*.

## PROJECT OVERVIEW

### **Project Scope:**

All documents received and pertaining to this project proposal can be accessed from the NIRB's online public registry at [www.nirb.ca/project/125655](http://www.nirb.ca/project/125655).

<b>Project:</b>	Shift-eDNA
<b>Region:</b>	North and South Baffin Regions
<b>Location:</b>	Sailing through North and South Baffin, with potential stops in Grise Fiord, Pond Inlet, Clyde River, Qikiqtarjuaq, Pangnirtung, and Iqaluit, with a second vessel sailing from the Northwest Territories to Ellesmere Island.
<b>Summary of Project Description:</b>	The Proponent intends to survey marine fish communities by sampling for DNA in coastal waters, in order to detect early species arrivals due to climate change.
<b>Project Proposed Timeline:</b>	<i>Vagabond</i> sailboat to sail in early September An inflatable catamaran to sail in June from Sachs Harbour NWT and arrive in Nunavut as soon as the weather and winds allow.

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

- Use of the 15 meter sailboat *Vagabond* with 4 crew to take seawater water samples at approximately 10 locations between Grise Fiord and Hudson Strait;
  - Potential stops in Grise Fiord, Pond Inlet, Clyde River, Qikiqtarjuaq, Pangnirtung, and Iqaluit;
  - Use of up to 4,500 Liters of gasoline;
  - Use of water acquired at communities or streams en route;
  - Solid waste to be disposed of at community stops or carried out of Nunavut for disposal; and
  - Human waste to be disposed of in communities or disposed at sea;
- Use of 7 meter inflatable catamaran with 3 crew to sail from Sachs Harbour NWT to take seawater samples at approximately 6 locations around Ellesmere Island and then, ice conditions allowing, to proceed to Greenland;
  - Use of water acquired at streams en route;
  - Solid waste to be carried out of Nunavut; and
  - Human waste to be burned on land or at disposed at sea.

### ***Inclusion or Exclusion of Scoping List***

At this time, 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

All documents received can be accessed from the NIRB's online public registry at [www.nirb.ca/project/125655](http://www.nirb.ca/project/125655) and include:

- *Commission Referral and Conformity Determination*
- *Commission Application and Questionnaire*
- *NIRB's Online Application*
- *Project Description*

The NIRB will copy you on screening process related correspondence and upload related documents to the NIRB's online registry for public access. The NIRB may request additional information at any time during the process.

The NIRB is copying parties and municipalities potentially affected by Université de Montpellier's project proposal with this letter, and we invite interested parties to comment directly to the NIRB by **March 17, 2022**.

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.

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 your comments to the NIRB via email at [info@nirb.ca](mailto: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/125655](http://www.nirb.ca/project/125655).

If you have any questions or require clarification, feel free to contact the undersigned at (867) 983-4622 or [motokiak@nirb.ca](mailto:motokiak@nirb.ca).

Sincerely,



Mia Otokiak  
Junior Technical Advisor  
Nunavut Impact Review Board

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

Enclosures (4): Public Notice of Screening (English, and Inuktitut)  
Comment Forms (English, and Inuktitut)

cc: Distribution List  
Carson Gillis, Nunavut Tunngavik Inc.  
Jorgen Aitaok, Nunavut Tunngavik Inc.  
Stephen Williamson-Bathory, Qikiqtani Inuit Association  
Jared Ottenhof, Qikiqtani Inuit Association  
Joel Fortier, Qikiqtani Inuit Association  
Agnes Simonfalvy, Government of Nunavut – Department of Economic Development & Transportation  
Amy Robinson, Government of Nunavut – Department of Environment  
Mosha Cote, Nunavut Research Institute  
Lisa Pirie-Dominix, Canadian Wildlife Services  
Tracey McCaie, Crown – Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada  
Veronique D'Amours-Gauthier, 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. Université de Montpellier (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.: 149652) and the NIRB (Online Application Form, February 23, 2022). 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 ensure that water extraction from any fish-bearing waterbody is done with appropriate care and caution. Small lakes or streams should not be used for water withdrawal unless approved by the appropriate authorizing agency.
7. The Proponent shall ensure that no disturbance of the stream bed, lakebed or the banks of any definable watercourse be permitted, except where deemed necessary for maintaining project-specific operational commitments or approved by a responsible authority in cases of spill management.
8. 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

9. 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.

### Wildlife – General

10. 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.
11. 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.
12. The Proponent shall not hunt or fish, unless proper Nunavut authorizations have been acquired.

### **Migratory Birds and Raptors Disturbance**

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, where practicable, coordinate with other vessels to minimize simultaneous vessel traffic in critical wildlife habitat areas allowing the wildlife to continue to use the habitat undisturbed (e.g. Navy Board Inlet, Lancaster Sound, Milne Inlet, Bellot Strait).
16. The Proponent shall ensure that noise be kept to a minimum and shall refrain from making sharp or loud noises, blowing horns or whistles and shall maintain constant engine noise levels.
17. The Proponent shall not visit cliffs used by nesting and breeding birds during the late afternoon or early evening hours during the months of August and September.
18. The Proponent shall report all incidents, injuries or sightings of marine mammals to the appropriate authorizing agencies.

### **Other**

19. 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.
20. The Proponent shall ensure that project activities do not interfere with Inuit wildlife harvesting or traditional land use activities.
21. The Proponent should, to the extent possible, hire local people and access local services where possible.