

August 9, 2024

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**Sent VIA Email: [info@nirb.ca](mailto:info@nirb.ca)**

**Re: Development of Standard Impact Assessment Guidelines**


Hello Cassel,

The Government of Nunavut (GN) would like to thank the Nunavut Impact Review Board (NIRB) for the opportunity to provide comments on the Board's Revised Draft Standard Impact Statement Guidelines.

The GN has reviewed the revised draft guidelines and related documents and has eight (8) comments to share with the Board, attached to this letter.

The GN appreciates participating in the development of these guidelines and related procedural documents. Should there be any concerns or need for follow-up, please feel free to contact me at [jbuller@gov.nu.ca](mailto:jbuller@gov.nu.ca).

Qujannamiik,

  
Justin Buller

Justin Buller  
Interim Avatiliriniq Coordinator  
Government of Nunavut

GN-01: Definitions and Terms	
Department	Environment
Organization	Government of Nunavut
Subject/Topic	Definition of Cumulative Impact
References	1. Nunavut Impact Review Board, Revised Draft Standard Guidelines for the Preparation of an Impact Statement, Definitions and Terms, p. 7 (April 2024).
CONCERNS	
The definition of cumulative impacts in the Revised Draft Standard Guidelines for the Preparation of an Impact Statement could be worded to include both direct and indirect impacts, to ensure consistency with the overall definition of impacts.	
REQUESTS / RECOMMENDATIONS	
<p>The GN suggests for the Nunavut Impact Review Board's consideration, to modify the definition of 'cumulative impacts' as described on page 7. Proposed text that may be added is <b>bolded in green</b>:</p> <p><i>Cumulative Impact - refer to the accumulation of <b>both direct and indirect</b> impacts caused by past, existing, proposed, and reasonably foreseeable projects, including activities associated with the proposed project.</i></p>	
ADDITIONAL COMMENTS	
N/A	

GN-02: Definitions and Terms	
Department	Environment
Organization	Government of Nunavut

<b>Subject/Topic</b>	Definition of Inuktut or Inuktitut
<b>References</b>	1. Nunavut Impact Review Board, Revised Draft Standard Guidelines for the Preparation of an Impact Statement, Definitions and Terms, p. 8 (April 2024).
<b>CONCERNS</b>	
The definition of 'Inuktut' or 'Inuktitut' in the Revised Draft Standard Guidelines for the Preparation of an Impact Statement appears to be a duplication of the definition of 'Inuit.'	
<b>REQUESTS / RECOMMENDATIONS</b>	
The GN recommends that the Nunavut Impact Review Board update the definition of 'Inuktut' or 'Inuktitut.'	
<b>ADDITIONAL COMMENTS</b>	
N/A	

<b>GN-03: Definitions and Terms</b>	
<b>Department</b>	Environment
<b>Organization</b>	Government of Nunavut
<b>Subject/Topic</b>	Missing Citation / Reference
<b>References</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Nunavut Impact Review Board, Revised Draft Standard Guidelines for the Preparation of an Impact Statement, Definitions and Terms, p. 9 (April 2024).</li> <li>2. Nunavut Impact Review Board, Revised Draft Standard Guidelines for the Preparation of an Impact Statement, Definitions and Terms, p. 48 (April 2024).</li> </ol>
<b>CONCERNS</b>	

In the Definitions section on page 9, the citation listed with the definition for ‘reasonably foreseeable future development’ as ‘(NIRB, 2007)’ is not included in the reference list.

Additionally, Section 4.4.5.5 refers to an engagement guidance document on the Nunavut Impact Review Board’s website. As the link does not redirect to a specific guide, it is unclear what document is being referred to, or if it is meant to redirect the reader to Appendix C of the document.

#### REQUESTS / RECOMMENDATIONS

The GN recommends that the Nunavut Impact Review Board include this citation in the reference list.

The GN recommends that the Nunavut Impact Review Board clarify the reference to the engagement guidance document referred to in Section 4.4.5.5 and include an opportunity for parties to review the document if this has not already occurred.

#### ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

N/A

#### GN-04: Definitions and Terms

<b>Department</b>	Environment
<b>Organization</b>	Government of Nunavut
<b>Subject/Topic</b>	Definitions
<b>References</b>	1. Nunavut Impact Review Board, Revised Draft Standard Guidelines for the Preparation of an Impact Statement, Definitions and Terms, p. 29 (April 2024).
<b>CONCERNS</b>	
The term ‘adaptive management’ is referenced and defined within the guidelines but is not included in the Definitions section.	
<b>REQUESTS / RECOMMENDATIONS</b>	

1. Nunavut Impact Review Board, Revised Draft Standard Guidelines for the Preparation of an Impact Statement, Definitions and Terms, p. 29 (April 2024).

#### CONCERNS

The term ‘adaptive management’ is referenced and defined within the guidelines but is not included in the Definitions section.

#### REQUESTS / RECOMMENDATIONS

As the precautionary principle is included in the Definitions section of the guidelines, the GN suggests, for the Board's consideration to also include the term 'adaptive management.' Page 62 of the guidelines defines 'adaptive management' as:

*"...a systematic and ongoing process for continually improving environmental management processes (including mitigation measures and monitoring programs) by adjusting actions to reflect the monitoring data and the effectiveness of measures taken to minimize adverse impacts."*

#### ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

N/A

#### GN-05: Definitions and Terms

##### Department

Environment

##### Organization

Government of Nunavut

##### Subject/Topic

Submission Requirements – Maps

##### References

1. Nunavut Impact Review Board, Revised Draft Standard Guidelines for the Preparation of an Impact Statement, 4.1 Submission Requirements, Table 2 (April 2024).

#### CONCERNS

Additional detail for the maps that proponents are required to submit may provide regulators, responsible authorities and intervenors with enhanced information in order to better review and understand the potential impacts from a proposed project on valued components.

The GN also notes that the page numbers for Section 4 appear to restart at 1, unlike other sections of the document.

#### REQUESTS / RECOMMENDATIONS

The GN recommends that Table 2 be updated to include the following information:

- Maps should be provided by the proponent in low and high resolution; and,

- Proponents should provide the Geographic Information System (GIS) layers for their projects, including the project footprint and main project elements.

Having this additional information will help support the GN's review of projects, particularly in conceptualizing cumulative effects in Nunavut. However, the GN acknowledges that high-resolution file formats may impact the ability for community members to access mapping information due to the file sizes and download speeds. As such, the GN additionally recommends the guidelines also require that proponents include low-resolution maps.

The GN recommends the NIRB update the page numbering in Section 4 and the remainder of the document so that it continues from the preceding section.

#### ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

N/A

#### GN-06: Missing Information

##### Department

Environment

##### Organization

Government of Nunavut

##### Subject/Topic

Appendix A: Draft Conformity Table

##### References

1. Nunavut Impact Review Board, Revised Draft Standard Guidelines for the Preparation of an Impact Statement, Appendix A, p. 71 (April 2024).

#### CONCERNS

The draft conformity table under Appendix A appears to be missing.

#### REQUESTS / RECOMMENDATIONS

The GN recommends that the Nunavut Impact Review Board update Appendix A to include a draft conformity table.

#### ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

N/A

GN-07: Climate Change	
Department	Environment
Organization	Government of Nunavut
Subject/Topic	Engagement with the Climate Change Secretariat
References	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. <a href="https://www.climatechangenunavut.ca/en/content/climate-change-secretariat">https://www.climatechangenunavut.ca/en/content/climate-change-secretariat</a></li><li>2. The Main Estimates, 2023-2024. Government of Nunavut, 2023.</li><li>3. <a href="https://www.gov.nu.ca/en/environment-and-wildlife/climate-change-secretariat">https://www.gov.nu.ca/en/environment-and-wildlife/climate-change-secretariat</a></li><li>4. Ikummatiit (The Government of Nunavut Energy Strategy) – 2007</li><li>5. Upagiaqtavut Setting the Course – 2011</li><li>6. Nunavut Impact Review Board, Revised Draft Standard Guidelines for the Preparation of an Impact Statement, April 2024, (Section 4.4.5.3), p. 78.</li></ol>
CONCERNS	
<p>The Climate Change secretariat (CCS) was created by the GN in 2016 to coordinate and develop the GN's efforts on climate change. Proponents are required to discuss their project's alignment with current and future territorial guidance, regulations, or legislation<sup>6</sup> and should be required to engage with the CCS as part of their efforts. NIRB should also know when and what is to be communicated between proponents and CCS as part of its review and monitoring process.</p> <p>The GN's Climate Change Secretariat is responsible for the coordination and development of Nunavut's energy strategy to address our collective dependence on imported fuels. The Climate Change Secretariat is also responsible for energy and climate change mitigation awareness. This work is aimed at increasing the adoption of energy conservation practices, reducing energy waste, improving understanding of energy use, and reducing greenhouse gas emissions. The goal is to foster a "conservation ethic" among Nunavummiut that builds on traditional Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit (IQ) principles and leads to measurable reductions in Nunavut's energy consumption, energy costs, and continued reliance on fossil fuels<sup>1,2,3</sup>.</p>	

CCS is also tasked with implementing and developing climate change and energy strategies. Currently, Upagiatavut - the Government of Nunavut's climate change adaptation strategy, the Pan-Territorial Adaptation Strategy, and the clean energy related aspects of Ikummatiit - the Government of Nunavut's energy strategy, relay Nunavut's commitments on climate change adaptation and mitigation<sup>4,5</sup>.

The Mitigation Section focuses on greenhouse gas reduction and tracking, energy conservation, and supporting alternative energy development in the territory, to reduce Nunavut's reliance on diesel<sup>1,2,3</sup>.

## REQUESTS / RECOMMENDATIONS

The GN is requesting language be added (see proposed additions in **green**) to section 4.4.5.3 (Climate Change) to require proponents to consult the GN's Climate Change Secretariat when preparing impact statement guidelines.

*"Climate change (Section 4.4.5.3)*

### **a) Identifying Project Contributions to Climate Change**

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In assessing the impacts of the proposed Project, the Impact Statement must include a discussion on the Project's GHG emissions and impacts to **Nunavut and** Canada's climate change mitigation efforts. Proponents are responsible for ensuring compliance with legislation, requirements, and targets related to climate change that may exist or arise from applicable authorizing agencies, such as Environment and Climate Change Canada **and the Government of Nunavut. In conducting technical assessments, Proponents shall follow guidance from applicable authorizing agencies, such as Environment and Climate Change Canada. In addition, proponents shall engage applicable territorial-level bodies such as the Government of Nunavut's Climate Change Secretariat (CCS) in the Department of Environment.**

The discussion shall include:

- Alignment with Greenhouse Gas (GHG) legislation, policies, and regulations;
- Contributions to federal / territorial (as available) emissions reduction efforts;
- Quantification of net Greenhouse Gas emissions, to account for emissions related to land-use change;
- Positive and negative impacts on carbon sinks;
- An upstream GHG assessment (when required under relevant emissions reductions efforts, targets or climate change legislation, policies, and regulations);
- A net-zero plan (when required under relevant emissions reductions efforts, targets or climate change legislation, policies and regulations);
- Proposed mitigation measures, including an evaluation of best available technologies and environmental practices as well as offsetting options, and;

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reporting criteria and proposed reporting schedules with the applicable authorizing agencies and territorial bodies such as the GN's CCS.</li> </ul>
<b>ADDITIONAL COMMENTS</b>
N/A

GN-08: Human Health and Environmental Risk Assessment	
<b>Department</b>	Health
<b>Organization</b>	Government of Nunavut
<b>Subject/Topic</b>	Human Health and Environmental Risk Assessment
<b>References</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Nunavut Impact Review Board, Revised Draft Standard Guidelines for the Preparation of an Impact Statement, April 2024, (Section 4.5.3), p. 96.</li> </ol>
CONCERNS	
<p>Through its role in the delivery of health and social services in the territory, the GN could be one of the relevant parties helping identify determinants of health for the assessment that meet the needs of the potentially impacted communities. The GN believes that stronger outcomes will result from proponents working closely with local community organizations and Designated Inuit Associations, as well as territorial and federal authorities.</p>	
REQUESTS / RECOMMENDATIONS	
<p>The Government of Nunavut recommends that the Nunavut Impact Review Board consider the following revisions to Section 4.5.3 (additions in <b>green</b>, deletions in <del>strike through</del>):</p> <p>Proponents should work with communities and <b>relevant</b> applicable local organizations, Designated Inuit Associations, <b>and territorial</b> and <del>Health Canada</del> <b>federal authorities</b> to identify appropriate determinants of health. Proponents shall <b>consider available territorial and Health Canada guidance</b> <del>also engage Health Canada to ensure mandatory health requirements are met and</del> <b>resources, as applicable, to confirm current</b> <del>they have the most up-to-date best practices and guidance.</del></p>	

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS
N/A