



Fisheries and Oceans
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Deputy Minister

Sous-ministre

June 2, 2025

Deputy Minister Pauloosie Suvega
Department of Environment, Government of Nunavut
Titiqakuvia 1000, Stn 1320
Iqaluit, Nunavut
X0A 0H0

Dear Deputy Minister Suvega:

Thank you for your letter dated February 26, 2025, further communicating the Government of Nunavut's (GN) conditions for supporting the establishment of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) by Ministerial Order in Qikiqtait and Sarvarjuaq. I am pleased to hear that the Working Group continues its important discussions on how to address the GN's concerns on the application of small enclosed bays as described in Chapter 1, Definitions and Interpretation, of the *Nunavut Lands and Resources Devolution Agreement*.

Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) has reviewed the GN's proposed solutions and agrees to collaborate with GN on the following:

1. The legal boundary descriptions to be referenced in the Qikiqtait and Sarvarjuaq MPA Ministerial Orders exclude small enclosed bays as defined under the Nunavut Devolution Agreement. DFO confirms that the proposed MPAs do not include the sea ice, water column, seabed, and subsurface located outside of the MPA boundaries.
2. DFO collaborated with the GN to develop joint language to be recommended for inclusion in the Qikiqtait and Sarvarjuaq Regulatory Impact Analysis Statements for the *Canada Gazette*, Part II. This addressed the GN's concerns regarding the risk of prejudicing its position toward interpreting/applying the definition of small enclosed bays as defined in the Nunavut Devolution Agreement.
3. DFO is willing to participate in a process, should one be established, to develop guiding principles or criteria on how to interpret and apply the definition of small enclosed bays—respecting the authorities of both the GN and the Government of Canada.

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4. If necessary, changes to the maps and legal boundary descriptions of the Qikiqtait and Sarvarjuaq MPAs may be pursued, and the Ministerial Orders may, where appropriate, be amended during the period of the Orders.
5. To address proposals five and six of your letter, DFO will collaborate with the GN when identifying the proposed boundaries for long-term protection in Qikiqtait and Sarvarjuaq through Governor-in-Council regulations under the *Oceans Act*.

As we continue to work toward the proposed solutions above, we look forward to receiving confirmation of your support for the establishment of the Qikiqtait and Sarvarjuaq Ministerial Order MPAs as proposed in the *Canada Gazette*, Part I, on December 21, 2024.

As was communicated on February 21, 2025, DFO would be pleased to discuss the GN's request for developing Memoranda of Understanding for long-term protection in collaboration with the Qikiqtani Inuit Association. As a first step, Thomas Hoggarth, Executive Director of Marine Conservation, has reached out to Naomi Pudluk to start the conversation.

Yours sincerely,



Annette Gibbons

c.c.: Richard Paton, Assistant Executive Director, Marine & Wildlife,
Qikiqtani Inuit Association
Anna Fowler, GN Deputy Minister, Executive and Intergovernmental Affairs
Kristie Cronin, GN Deputy Minister, Economic Development and Transportation
Daniel Shewchuk, Chair Person, Nunavut Wildlife Management Board
Dionne Filiatrault, Executive Director, Nunavut Impact Review Board
Sharon Ehaloak, Executive Director, Nunavut Planning Commission
Tom Isaac, Senior Counsel, CIRNAC
Lauren Candlish, DFO