



# CIRNAC Comments to NIRB

Re: Notice of Screening for Canadian Museum of Nature's "Arctic Kelp Forests and Seaweed Biodiversity in Cambridge Bay" Project Proposal



Nunavut Regional Office  
 918 Sivumugiaq Street  
 Iqaluit, NU, X0A 3H0

Your file - Votre référence  
 26YN007  
 Our file - Notre référence  
 GCdocs# 147333013

June 2, 2026

Francis Emingak  
 Screening Officer  
 Nunavut Impact Review Board  
 P.O. Box 1360  
 Cambridge Bay, NU, X0B 0C0  
 via NIRB public registry

**Re: Notice of Screening and Comment Request for Canadian Museum of Nature’s “Arctic Kelp Forests and Seaweed Biodiversity in Cambridge Bay” Project Proposal**

Dear Francis Emingak,

On May 12, 2026, the Nunavut Impact Review Board (NIRB) invited parties to comment on Canadian Museum of Nature’s “Arctic Kelp Forests and Seaweed Biodiversity in Cambridge Bay” project proposal. Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada (CIRNAC) appreciates the opportunity to provide comments and offers the responses below as it pertains to the NIRB’s request:

**Any matter of importance to the Party related to the project proposal**

**CIRNAC #1: Shoreline Hydrocarbon Contamination Risks**

The proposed project requires 1,100 L of gasoline: 500 L stored in 25 plastic jerry cans for small boat operations and 600 L stored in three metal drums for the 33-foot research vessel R/V Blue Nanook. The application identifies significant gasoline use for both small boats and the R/V Blue Nanook, but does not describe fuel staging locations, transfer procedures, spill response measures, or secondary containment requirements. This presents an environmental concern, as manual fuel transfer and shoreline storage without containment increase the risk of accidental releases. Hydrocarbon spills can contaminate soils, groundwater, and adjacent waterbodies, while Arctic conditions significantly slow petroleum biodegradation. CIRNAC recommends that the Proponent consider:

- Submitting a site-specific spill contingency plan that outlines fuel transfer protocols;
- identifying the staging and storage locations for all fuel containers on land and/or at shore access points; and
- maintaining spill response kits and using drip trays or secondary containment during fuel storage and transfer activities.



## **CIRNAC #2: Specimen Preservation Chemicals**

The application indicates that seaweed and benthic invertebrate specimens will be collected and brought back to the lab for study and identification, but identifies hazardous material and chemical use as 'none.' The application does not clarify whether any preservatives, reagents, solvents, or other laboratory chemicals will be used for sample preservation, transport, sorting, or identification. CIRNAC recommends that the Proponent clarify whether any such substances will be used, provide quantities/container types if applicable, maintain Safety Data Sheets on site, and describe containment, storage, and backhaul/disposal procedures for any chemical products and wastes.

## **CIRNAC #3: Municipal Solid Waste Management**

The application indicates that no waste will be generated, while the waste management sections provide no waste data / indicate that information is unavailable. The Project proposes 4 personnel on site for 21 days and associated marine research activities. CIRNAC recommends that the Proponent identify anticipated domestic and project-related waste streams, including packaging and scientific consumables, and confirm how all wastes will be handled, stored, and disposed of through Canadian High Arctic Research Station (CHARS) and/or municipal waste management systems, as applicable.

## **CIRNAC #4: Consultation with Interested Parties**

CIRNAC recommends that the Proponent continue engaging with the Hamlet of Cambridge Bay, the Ekaluktutiak Hunters & Trappers Organization, and any other relevant organizations and individuals regarding its project proposal. As part of these consultation activities, several issues should be considered, including but not limited to:

- Incorporation of Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit and community knowledge in project activities;
- Mitigation measures to prevent any disturbance to wildlife and the environment;
- Mitigation measures to prevent disturbance to sites of cultural, archaeological, and/or environmental significance;
- The experience of community members who may participate in traditional harvesting activities within or in close proximity to the project area;
- Training and employment opportunities for Inuit and community members;
- Procurement opportunities for local and Inuit-owned businesses; and
- Regular updates on the status of project activities.

CIRNAC appreciates the opportunity to provide comments. Should you have any questions, please contact Muhammad Arslan by e-mail at [muhammad.arslan@rcaanc-cirnac.gc.ca](mailto:muhammad.arslan@rcaanc-cirnac.gc.ca) or David Abernethy by email at [david.abernethy@rcaanc-cirnac.gc.ca](mailto:david.abernethy@rcaanc-cirnac.gc.ca).

Sincerely,



Richard Bingley  
Manager, Impact Assessment

