

The Inuvialuit-Inupiat Polar Bear Management Agreement:

*Community-driven management of a species across
an international border*

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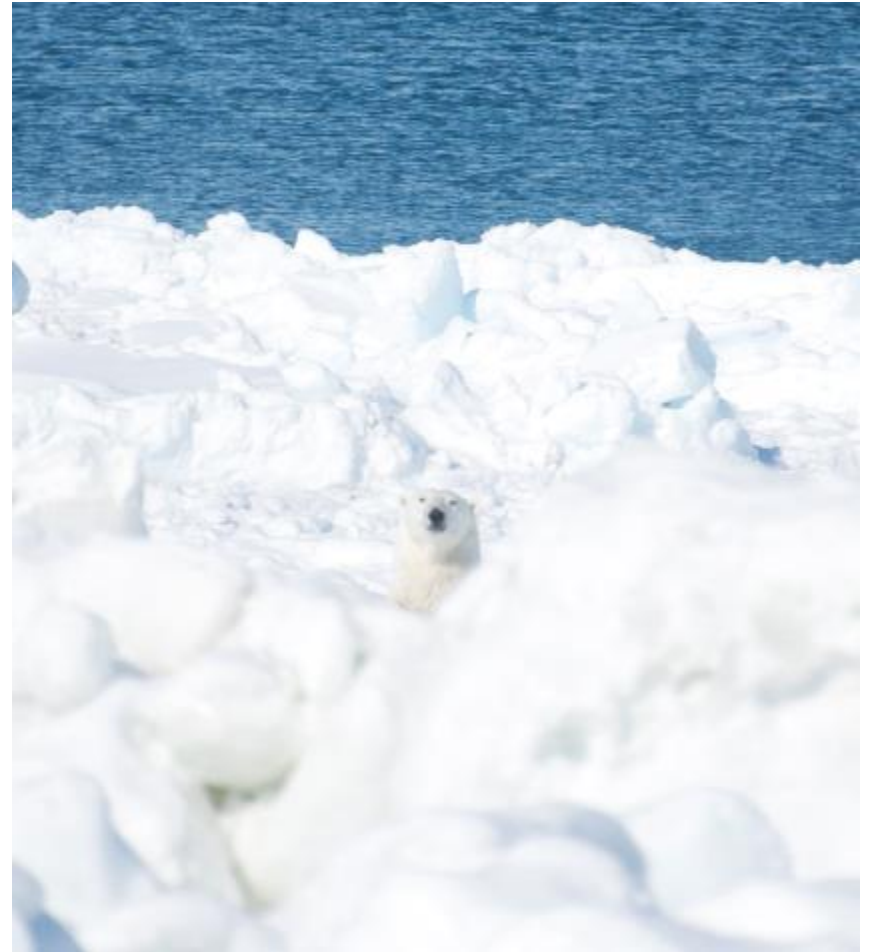
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Outline

- Inuvialuit Region
- Southern Beaufort Sea
- Beginnings of the Agreement
- Highlights
- Working with Inupiat
- Success of Agreement



Inuvialuit Settlement Region



Beaufort Sea



Southern Beaufort Sea Subpopulation

Start of the I-I Agreement

- Former IGC Chair Andy Carpenter in a meeting with the Inupiat on Porcupine caribou matters
- Significant interest in Inuvialuit management of polar bear
- Realized an Agreement on the shared population in the Beaufort Sea would be beneficial for Inuvialuit and Inupiat



Working with Inupiat

- Inuvialuit have operated under a polar bear management system for over 40 years
 - Strictly enforced quotas
 - Mandatory harvest sampling
 - Legislated protection for females with cubs and bears in dens
- Inupiat have few regulated restrictions on their harvesting, but recognized the need for coordinated management approach

Start of the I-I Agreement

- In August 1985 IGC representatives met with Inupiat in Alaska
- Memorandum of Understanding drafted in September 1986
 - Established a Joint Commission and Technical Committee
- Joint Commission charged with developing a Management Plan for polar bears in the Beaufort Sea

Start of the I-I Agreement

- Draft Management Plan developed March 1987
 - Adopted by Inupiat and Inuvialuit late 1987
- I-I Agreement formally signed in January 1988
- The first management agreement developed by the users
 - Unprecedented at that time



Reaffirmation of the I-I Agreement



- 10 year review clause built into the Agreement
- Reviews and amendments to the Agreement occurred in 2000 and 2011

Highlights of Agreement

- Objectives:
 - Maintain healthy viable populations
 - Manage polar bear on a sustainable yield basis
 - Provide increased protection for females
 - Minimize detrimental effects of human activities
 - Identify research priorities
 - Make recommendations for research and management

Highlights of Agreement

- All bears in dens or constructing dens are protected
- All members of a family group are protected
- Hunting seasons based on traditional knowledge principles
- Accepted annual harvest levels determined by the Joint Commission in consultation with Technical Advisory Committee
- Use of aircraft for hunting is prohibited

Highlights of Agreement

- Minimum data to be collected is specified
- Annual exchange of harvest information and research plans



Success of the Agreement

- Inupiat have voluntary limits on their harvesting through the I-I Agreement
- Compliance with voluntary measures is high
- Continuing to improve harvest sampling regime
- I-I Agreement has been in place for 26 years



Success of Agreement

- Both the US and Canadian governments have officially endorsed the Agreement
- Awarded US Fish & Wildlife Service Commendation Award for the work of the Joint Commission



Success of Agreement

- I-I Agreement was truly innovative for its time
 - One of the proudest accomplishments of first IGC Chair Andy Carpenter
- Served as a model for more recent agreements on polar bears between the US and Russia, as well as Canada and Greenland
- Also served as the basis for Joint Agreement with neighboring territory of Nunavut within Canada

Success of Agreement

- Continues to strengthen linkages between Inuvialuit and Inupiat and has led to other collaborations
 - I-I Beluga Whale Management Committee (2000)
 - Have done some preliminary exploration of possibilities for a more ecosystem-based approach for management in the Beaufort Sea

Thank you

