Polar Bear as a Resource: An Overview

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Inuit Subsistence

No animal holds as significant a place in Canadian Inuit culture as the polar bear (Ursus maritimus; Inuktitut: *nanuk*). This prominence is evidenced by the fact that, with Inuit, polar bear are the other chief predator in the arctic marine environment, sharing that environment with man, until the introduction of firearms, on virtually an equal basis. It is no surprise, therefore, that *nanuk* was a central figure in Inuit cosmology (see Boas 1888) and retains considerable symbolism for Inuit and non-Inuit, albeit for often different reasons, today.

Inuit have hunted polar bears as an element of their overall set of ecological relations for millennia with this hunting (see Nelson 1970; Robbe 1975; Wenzel 1981) being conducted for spiritual-cultural reasons and to contribute to the traditional food economy. The contribution made by polar bears to the food economy of Nunavut Inuit is fairly well known (see Donaldson 1988; Wenzel 1991: 82), but the degree to which *nanuk* retains ideological importance is much less understood (but see Sandell and Sandell 1996 regarding East Greenland).

Despite this last aspect remaining an important unknown, polar bear retain significance as a subsistence resource throughout Nunavut and other Inuit regions. However, as the Inuit subsistence environment has changed - from one defined by the application of knowledge and energy in the pursuit of food to one requiring a spectrum of resources, including money, in order to hunt – the subsistence role of polar bear in this system has also changed. Among the parameters of this new system are a very different spatial and demographic arrangement from just fifty years ago, the incorporation of Inuit into a “globalized” political-economic situation, and the necessary assumption of obligations negotiated in the absence of Inuit.

In sum, *nanuk*, after nearly four millennia in which its cultural and economic importance was much as that recorded by Boas, today has assumed a role, through the activity of outfitted sport hunting, in the livelihoods of Inuit that may be larger then at any time in the past. This change is the product of a process that began for polar bears and Inuit around 1800 and which accelerated following the 1983 E.U. sealskin boycott (Wenzel 1991). Thus, it is useful to review this evolution, albeit briefly, in order to historically locate the present iteration of the Inuit-bear relationship in the social and economic context of the Northwest Territories-Nunavut.

The Commoditization of Polar Bear: circa 1850-1970

As European (and, later, American) interest in the Canadian Arctic moved beyond geographic exploration to the exploitation of resources, this new focus eventually brought another dimension to the relationship between Inuit and polar bears. Through most of the

19th century, non-Inuit focused on the commercial exploitation of bowhead whales (Balaena mysticetus). However, after ca. 1890, as these large whales were reduced in numbers, other species, - such as walrus and narwhal for their ivory – began to be hunted to supplement whale revenues. And polar bear, already sometimes killed for protection and recreation by the whalers, became part of this commerce. Indeed, as the profit margin of whaling fell, some ships' owners and captains sold places to huntsmen interested in shooting, among other game, polar bears for sport (see Ross 1985).

By the beginning of the last century, the bowhead populations of the Eastern Arctic had become so greatly reduced that furs and ivory not only supplanted whaling as foci of northern commerce, but also changed its nature. The crux of this change centered on the fact that, because Europeans were present in the North only in low numbers, efficient exploitation of these species could only be accomplished by Inuit, who already possessed the knowledge, skill, and energy to do so. Thus, a new economic dynamic based on Inuit trading furs and ivory for imported European goods emerged.

Polar bears, while an element of this relationship, were for a considerable time only a minor item of trade, mainly because of the limitations of traditional Inuit technologies. However, by the 1940s bears, following the availability of more modern firearms to Inuit, clearly become more prominent in the northern fur trade. For example, fur records from the Hudson's Bay Company post at Clyde River (Wenzel n.d.) show virtually no bear entries until 1943, the year after an American military weather station was established adjacent to the HBC. But, from that year forward, the annual HBC trade inventory includes increasing numbers of polar bears, with as many as 55 being taken in trade at Clyde by the mid-1960s.

While polar bear had by at least the 1940s become an item of some economic value in Inuit-European commerce, polar bear sport hunting, at least in any organized form, developed much more slowly. While it is undoubtedly the case that Mounties, HBC employees and other non-Inuit may have hunted the occasional bear, there is no evidence of recreational hunting being conducted in any organized fashion.

Again, unpublished records (RCMP 1969) from Clyde River are useful. They refer to only one "sport hunt" as occurring between 1955 and 1970 and that by an American military officer visiting the U.S. Coast Guard station at Cape Christian near Clyde. Moreover, from 1969, the year of the aforementioned hunt, until 1983, it would appear that only four polar bear sport hunts (DSD 2000) occurred in the whole of the Baffin Bay polar bear region. Archival data (ibid.) mirror a similar situation regarding recreational hunting for polar bear in the Lancaster Sound area, noting only one contracted hunt before the 1980s. It must also be mentioned that because prior to 1969-70, when a quota-tag system was introduced as a formal aspect of polar management (see Lentfer 1974), only HBC, RCMP and fur auction records provide a general means for tracking polar bear harvesting by Inuit and others. Thus, statements about polar bear hunting, especially as organized recreation, before ca.1970 should be viewed as needing further examination.

The Polar Bear Trade: 1970-1985

Between roughly the mid-1960s and the mid-1980s, several events relevant to Inuit polar bear hunting, as a specific activity and as an element within the wider framework of the then Nunavut subsistence system, occurred. The first of these was legal in its nature.

In 1973, after more then five years of intensive discussion, Canada, Norway, Denmark and the United States, joined by the then Soviet Union the following year, signed the Agreement on Conservation of Polar Bears (Lentfer 1974) which, in 1981, was made permanent by the signatories (Fikkan et al 1993). Canada, like the other signers of the agreement, assumed shared management of polar bear for conservation and sustainable use.

But Canada also recognized that it had an obligation to balance these conservation goals with the socioeconomic and cultural needs of its Inuit citizens. Among signing nations, only Canadian Inuit were provided with subsistence access to bears, through an annual quota of about 440 (see Table 1), and the right to assign a part of this quota for-profit to non-Inuit sport hunters. In contrast, Inuit-Inupiaq hunters in Greenland and Alaska were only permitted to bear hunt for subsistence (IUCN 1985).

Table 1: NWT Community Polar Bear Quotas - 1973[1]

Settlement	Quota	Zone[2]
Tuktoyaktuk	14	24
Paulatuk	11	25
Coppermine[3]	2	26
Bathurst Inlet	1	27
Cambridge Bay	10	29
Holman Island	12	
Sachs Harbour	18	30
Grise Fiord	27	31
Resolute Bay	34	
Pond Inlet	13	32
Arctic Bay	12	
Cape Christian[4]	42[5]	
Pangnirtung	8	
Frobisher Bay[3]	12	
Lake Harbour[3]	7	
Broughton Island[3]	16	
Cape Dorset	6	
Port Burwell[4]	8	
Gjoa Haven	8	33
Igloolik	16	
Hall Beach	7	
Pelly Bay	10	
Repulse Bay	16	
Spence Bay[3]	22	
Rankin Inlet	8	34
Eskimo Point[3]	10	
Whale Cove	7	
Chesterfield Inlet	5	
Southampton Island[3]	65	35
Belcher Islands[3]	15	37
TOTAL QUOTA	442	

[1] In 1973 the Northwest Territories included all of what is now Nunavut and the Inuvialuit Settlement Area of the present NWT.
[2] Designated polar bear administrative sub-divisions; community activities,

however, frequently overlapped zones.
[3] These communities are now, respectively, Kugluktuk, Iqaluit, Kimmirut, Qikiqtarjuak, Taloyoak, Salliq, and Sanikiluaq.
[4] Cape Christian and Port Burwell no longer exist as administrative or habitation sites; after 1976, Cape Christian area renamed Clyde River.
[5] Clyde's annual quota was increased to 45 animals ca.1976 and remained at that number until ca.1986.

This early quota system was based on historic, mainly HBC, records of polar bear hides traded at various locations over the preceding several decades. This information was then averaged to establish a maximum harvest level for each of the Inuit communities in the then Northwest Territories. Any community with an approved local quota was, in turn, free to allocate a portion of its quota for sale to sport hunters. However, as will be discussed, such activity was almost non-existent in the NWT during this period.

The ACPB, and its associated quota, was at most a partial affector of the relationship between Inuit and polar bears. At least as important were specific spatio-demographic and economic changes that occurred during this time.

By about 1965, following the near-complete centralization of local Inuit populations into regional centers, hunters found their spatial relationship to traditional resources considerably altered. As a partial result of this changed pattern of settlement in relation to resources, Inuit began to incorporate increasingly expensive imported tools into their hunting inventory. The most notable, and noticed, of these was the snowmobile, which rapidly displaced dog traction as the mode of transport for winter terrestrial and marine hunting (see Wenzel 1991 for a discussion of this technological shift).

The rapidity of this technological incorporation in the late 1960s to early 1970s is illustrated by data from Clyde River and Resolute Bay. At Clyde, the first Inuit-owned snowmobile appeared in 1964 and seven years later all but 10 of the 42 hunters in the community had mechanized, and, by 1980, no Clyde hunter was dependent on dogs (Wenzel 1991). Similarly, by 1976, there was just one active dogteam in the Resolute area and this was at the distant outpost camp of Kuganiuk, located at Creswell Bay, Somerset Island (Kemp et al 1978).

The changed spatial demography of Nunavut hunters *vis è vis* their wildlife base that made new modes of transport critical also had the effect of making the money needed to acquire these tools a subsistence factor. In this regard, two other changes, one substantial and the second initially less so, enlarged the subsistence role of polar bear for Inuit and laid the ground commoditization of the species.

The most important of these was that by the mid-1960s, formerly undervalued northern products, like sealskins and polar bear hides, became attractive to external markets. Beginning in 1963, prices for ringed sealskins grew from about Can$1.00 at that time to nearly $20.00 by 1980 (see Jelliss 1978).

A similar market-price trend affected the value of polar bear, especially around the mid-1970s (Smith and Jonkel 1975a, b; Smith and Stirling 1976). At the start of the 1970s, hides typically were purchased at $35.00-$50.00 per foot (Anonymous HBC Manager 1972). By 1975, however, at the height of overseas demand from Japan and, to a lesser degree, (West) Germany, polar bear hides sometimes commanded as much as $200.00 per foot (Wenzel

n.d.) and trade became an increasingly important aspect of polar bear hunting. However, by 1980, the auction price of a polar bear stabilized at about half the mid-1970s level (generally $75.00-$100.00 per foot, depending on a hide's condition and when during the year it was traded).

Non-Inuit interest in furs that formerly had found only a limited, if any, market provided Inuit with access to much of the money hunters needed to obtain and operate the technologies that, after centralization, had become important to efficient harvesting. Thus, where the average amount of money earned by Clyde hunters from combined seal and polar bear sales ca. 1972 was slightly less than $1,400.00, in 1980 this combined average was almost $2,500.00, or about a 80 per cent increase (Wenzel 1991). Moreover, those few hunters who enjoyed multiple polar bear kills in a year (several had two and two men three) earned as much as $4,000-6,000 (Wenzel n.d.).

However, as, first, polar bear prices began their decline in the late 1970s to the more modest levels paid earlier in the decade and, then, in 1982-83, the market for sealskins collapsed, Inuit found themselves in a precarious resource situation. (At about this time, the sale of raw narwhal ivory also came under temporary market embargo [Harper 1984].) They still remained in established communities distant from most important food resources and, thus, still technology dependent for consistent access to these resources. But, because of external market changes for their formerly most valuable wild exports, the ability of to obtain the money needed for these tools through the sale of byproducts from food hunting (sealskins, narwhal ivory) was considerably weakened. Finally, this condition was at least somewhat affected by the fact that the ACPB quota meant that Inuit could not increase the volume of their harvest to compensate for depressed prices for polar bear hides.

The Contemporary Sport Hunt: 1985-2000

The fact that the ACPB from its beginning included a sport hunt proviso for Canadian Inuit (a "Native-guided polar bear sport hunt" [Fikkan et al 1993: 100]) suggests that some interest existed in such activity as early as the mid-1970s. However, as the data (DSD 2000) that are available show, polar bear sport hunting appears to have developed only slowly during the 1970s in several (but not all) areas of the NWT and, even in the early 1980s was far from extensive. As such, sport hunting typically accounted for only a few animals in each region relative to the local quotas.

Rather, what these data (Table 2) indicate is that Inuit participation in sport hunting was, except in a few community areas, minimal. Also shown is that significant growth in the sport hunt began in 1982-83 and correlates almost exactly with the collapse of the sealskin economy across the NWT.

By the mid-1980s, non-Inuit hunting of polar bear began to take on increasing significance, both as a percentage of the quotas allotted to communities and in economic terms. This increase, occurring shortly after the demise of the world sealskin market, suggests that sport hunting was a response to the economic impact of that event on Inuit subsistence hunters, rather than simply a desire on the part of Inuit to suddenly "go commercial".

To understand this, it is useful to ask why what is seen today as the most monetarily rationale use of local polar bear quotas, or at least part of these quotas, by communities did not emerge before the mid-1980s. Again, a number of factors appear to bear on this.

The most direct is that before the mid-1980s few of the communities in the NWT/Nunavut were reliably accessible via air transportation. Thus, it was virtually impossible for sport hunters (and other visitors) to reach and depart communities with some expectation of regularity. Government of Nunavut data (DSD 2000) show the one exception before the early to mid-1980s was the Mackenzie Delta-Beaufort Sea region of the then unified Northwest Territories. Here, expectations of an oil and gas economic boom prompted improved transportation services throughout the area before many other parts of Nunavut/NWT. And these same data (see Table 3) show that it was in this region that polar bear sport hunting developed earliest and has maintained continuity.

Table 2: Annual Polar Bear Quota and Sport Harvest, 1970-2000[1]

Year	Communities	Annual Quota	Sport Hunt	AQ/SH [%]
1970	30	442	4	0.09
1971	29	"		0.0
1972	"	"	7	1.5
1973	"	"	5	1.1
1974	"	"	3	0.6
1975	"	"	0	0.0
1976	"	445[2]	5	1.1
1977	"	"	3	0.7
1978	"	"	6	1.3
1979	"	"	4	0.9
10YR Subtotal	**29**	**4432**	**37**	**0.8**
1980	"	445	3	0.7
1981	"	"	7	1.5
1982	"	"	17	3.8
1983	"	"	22	4.9
1984	"	"	32	7.2
1985	"	"	22	4.9
1986	"	427[3]	38	9.0
1987	"	"	56	13.1
1988	"	"	54	12.6
1989	"	"	56	13.1
10YR Subtotal	**29**	**4418**	**307**	**7.1**
1990[4]	"	427[4]	44	10.3
1991	"	"	50	11.7
1992	"	"	34	7.9
1993	"	"	32	7.5
1994	"	"	49	11.5
1995	"	"	86	20.1
1996	"	"	84	19.7
1997	"	"	92	21.5
1998	25[5]	400	63	15.7
1999	"	"	75	18.7
2000	"	"	65	16.2
90-00 Subtotal	**25**	**4616**	**674**	**14.6**
31YR TOTAL	**------**	**13,466**	**1,018**	**7.6**

[1] Source: DSD 2000.
[2] Circa 1976, the annual quota at Clyde River was raised from 42 to 45 animals.
[3] In 1986, the annual quota at Clyde River was reduced from 45 to 21 bears and that of Qikiqtaarjuak (formerly Broughton Island) raised from 16 to 21 (see Davis 1999).
[4] From about 1990, Territorial authorities responsible for polar bear management instituted a "flexible quota system"; in the absence of exact annual quota information for each community, the annual figure(s) provided should be viewed as being of the 'best guess' variety.
[5] In 1999, the annual quotas (see Table 1) of the communities of Tuktoyaktuk, Paulatuk, Holman Island and

Sachs Harbour were transferred from Nunavut to the Northwest Territories, with a consequent reduction from 427 to 400 in the annual quota of Nunavut.

Table 3: NWT-Nunavut Polar Bear Population Area[1] and Sport Hunts, 1970-2000

Year	**Population Area, Annual Quota & Sport Harvest [2,3]**										
	SH [15]	WH [25]	MC [43]	DS [35]	BB [58]	LS[4] [86]	FB [115]	SB [25]	NB [30]	GB [10]	VM ?
1970						1			3		
1971											
1972									7		
1973					3				2		
1974					1				2		
1975											
1976								5			
1977								1	2		
1978								1	4		1
1979									4		
1970-1979=37					**4**	**1**		**7**	**24**		**1**
1980				1					2		
1981				4			1		2		
1982				5		4	1		4		3
1983					1	4	2		8		7
1984				6	4	8		1	6		7
1985				6	1	10		1	3		1
1986[6]				5	2	15	4	1	8		3
1987				6	2	19	4	3	9	2	11
1988				4	4	15	8	1	8	3	11
1989				7	2	18	7	3	8	2	9
1980-1989=307				**44**	**16**	**93**	**27**	**10**	**58**	**7**	**52**
1990				7	3	18	4	1	5	2	4
1991			2	3	2	24	7	1	2	1	8
1992					7	21	1	1	3	1	
1993					4	20	4		1	3	
1994					5	25	7	3	2	7	
1995			5	3	9	27	11	14	12	5	
1996			8	7	15	28	3	9	8	6	
1997		2	16		8	28	3	19	12	4	
1998		3	12		6	27		7	3	5	
1999		2	9		7	28	3	16	6	4	
2000			13	2	12	28	2			4	4
1990-2000=674		**7**	**65**	**22**	**78**	**274**	**45**	**71**	**54**	**42**	**16**
TOTAL=1,018		**7**	**65**	**66**	**99**	**368**	**82**	**88**	**145**	**49**	**69**

Source: DSD 2000.

[1] The area designations are those presently used to identify distinct polar bear population groupings; these are, respectively, Southern Hudson Bay, Western Hudson Bay, McClintock Channel, Davis Strait, Baffin Bay, Lancaster Sound, Foxe Basin, Southern Beaufort Sea, Northern Beaufort Sea, Gulf of Boothia and Viscount Melville Sound. (N.B. The polar bear zones shown in Table 1 are in many cases today divided into several population areas [i.e., Zone 32, formerly all of Baffin Island, is now divided between Areas BB, FB, DS and LS; likewise Grise Fiord's annual quota is split between three areas: Norwegian Bay, Kane Basin and Lancaster Sound].).

[2] Annual population area quotas shown (BB/58) have been derived from the sum of the quotas of those communities hunting each area.

[3] Population areas may show considerable variation in annual level of sport hunt activity; such change may relate to the "flexible quota" system adopted for management and conservation in the 1990s, or because the biological data suggest the need to reduce or halt harvesting.

[4] Subsumed here under Lancaster Sound are the Norwegian Bay and Kane Basin areas, both of which are used exclusively by Grise Fiord.

The most important action affecting the growth of sport polar bear hunting in Nunavut-Northwest Territories, especially in the Baffin and Kitikmeot regions, came in the late 1980s. The collapse of the sealskin sector of the subsistence economy, coupled with the interruption of narwhal ivory sales, severely disrupted the flow of monetary income available to hunters from wildlife products. As a deliberate effort to alleviate this impact, Territorial authorities identified tourism, to include sport hunting and fishing, as one mechanism for providing non-wage sector income and, thus, enhance local community economic development.

As a consequence, several programs for the training and certification of guides, followed shortly for community-based outfitters, were developed by the Department of Economic Development and Tourism (ED&T) and even incorporated, albeit briefly, into the curriculum of Arctic College. In addition, the Territorial Government, through ED&T, and Inuit business organizations, like Nunasi Corp., provided start-up funding for sport hunt development. Finally, and perhaps most important with regard to the shape of the industry as it functions in Nunavut today, contacts with southern big game hunt wholesalers expanded.

As attractive economically (see Economic Analysis section) as sport hunting was or may be, its expansion, even after the sealskin price crash, was slow in many areas. Again Clyde River offers an example. There, intense community discussion was conducted for nearly two years before a majority of the Hunters and Trappers Organization members (and the community) agreed to allocate a part (two tags) of Clyde's annual quota of 21 bears (see Davis 1999) to visiting sport hunters. While such reticence was not necessarily the case in every community, it does underscore how deliberate the decision by Inuit in some communities to accept sport hunting was. In fact, as will be discussed, a minority of Inuit was found during the course of the present research to still object to sport hunting.

While government programs, local economic necessity and incidental improvements in access to Nunavut all have been important to the growth of the polar bear sport hunting industry in the North and the South, the satisfaction visiting hunters achieve in obtaining trophies is also critical. The fact that a German, Mexican or American hunter may pay upward of US$20,000.00 in itself means that the probability of success must be high. As Tables 4 and 5 show, success has been the norm.

In addition, perception of what is a "trophy" is also important (see Jones 1999), if less predictable. Interviews with southern hunters who have pursued polar bear in Nunavut or the Northwest Territories make it clear that at one level a polar bear, because of its rarity of place in the average sport hunter's display room, meets the meaning of the term.

However, size is also a trophy factor, with larger, especially male, animals most desired. Thus, communities (and wholesalers) whose customers report such success are favored. Clyde River, the year after an American hunter brought home a 3.4m (11 foot, 2 inch) trophy, was requested as the preferred hunt destination by more than a hundred sportsmen seeking polar bear bookings (Canada North Outfitting, Personal Communication).

Aside from these positives, one factor has had negative effect on the polar bear sport hunt industry. This is the United State's Marine Mammal Protection Act, or MMPA. The MMPA, like the Endangered Species Act, dates from the early 1970s. However, unlike the Endangered Species Act, it is applied only to marine mammals. In general terms the MMPA

bars the importation of virtually all raw and processed items from pinnipedia, cetacea and other marine mammals, the last including polar bear.

Table 4: Percent of Polar Bear Sport Hunt Success in Four Population Areas

YEAR	LANCASTER SD	McCLINTOCK CH.	W. HUDSON BAY	S.BEAUFORT SEA
1993/94	89%	No Sport Hunt	No Sport Hunt	50%
1994/95	87%	71%	No Sport Hunt	74%
1995/96	87%	73%	No Sport Hunt	43%
1996/97	96%	100%	No Sport Hunt	73%
1997/98	93%	75%	100%	50%
1998/99	87%	56%	100%	84%
1999/00	93%	93%	100%	89%

Source: DSD 2001

Table 5: Successful vs. All Sport Hunts in Four Population Areas

YEAR	LANCASTER SD	McCLINTOCK CH.	W. HUDSON BAY	S.BEAUFORT SEA
1993/94	25:28	No Sport Hunt	No Sport Hunt	3:6
1994/95	27:31	5:7	No Sport Hunt	14:19
1995/96	28:32	8:11	No Sport Hunt	9:21
1996/97	28:29	16:16	No Sport Hunt	19:26
1997/98	26:28	12:16	2:2	7:14
1998/99	28:32	9:16	3:3	16:19
1999/00	29:31	13:14	2:2	8:9

Source: DSD 2001

As such, the act includes polar bears whether as raw or tanned hides, teeth and claws, even as jewellery or art, meat or other manufactured polar bear products, such as salmon or trout flies. However, polar bears from certain Canadian populations have been or are presently MMPA exempt (see Table 6).

Although polar bear are not officially considered endangered, not least because of the conservation effect of the International Agreement on Polar Bears, the MMPA has affected the sport hunt industry. This is because uncertainties exist about the reliability of the data pertaining to the biological sustainability of some polar bear populations. Thus, the MMPA has blocked the import of polar bear trophies taken from Canadian populations about which data concerns exist. And, because the majority of the hunt clientele that comes to Nunavut seeking trophy polar bear is from the United States, the MMPA impedes what has become an important element in the maintenance of subsistence activities by some hunters and to the larger development the hunt brings to communities.

Table 7: Current MMPA Status of Nunavut-NWT[1] Polar Bear Populations[2]

APPROVED POPULATIONS	AFFECTED COMMUNITIES
Lancaster Sound	Arctic Bay, Grise Fiord, Resolute Bay
No. Beaufort Sea	Holman, Paulatuk, Sachs Harbour, Kugluktuk
Norwegian Bay	Grise Fiord
So. Beaufort Sea	Aklavik, Inuvik, Paulatuk, Tuktoyaktuk
Viscount Melville Sd.	Cambridge Bay, Holman

W. Hudson Bay	Arviat, Baker Lake, Chesterfield Inlet, Rankin Inlet, Whale Cove
BLOCKED POPULATIONS	AFFECTED COMMUNITIES
Baffin Bay	Qikiqtaarjuak, Clyde River, Pond Inlet
Kane Basin	Grise Fiord
Davis Strait	Iqaluit, Pangnirtung, Kimmirut
Foxe Basin	Cape Dorset, Igloolik, Kimmirut, Repulse Bay, Hall Beach, Chesterfield Inlet
So. Hudson Bay	Sanikilluaq
McClintock Channel	Taloyoak, Gjoa Haven, Cambridge Bay
Gulf of Boothia	Taloyoak, Kuugaruk, Igloolik, Hall Beach, Repulse Bay

[1] Aklavik, Holman, Sachs Harbour, Inuvik and Paulatuk are with the political jurisdiction of the Northwest Territories.
[2] MMPA "delisting" of a population does not prohibit polar bear hunting by Americans or other sportsmen, only the importation into the U.S. of hides or other items from prohibited populations. Also, some populations are MMPA blocked because data about other (non-Canadian) exploitation is uncertain (i.e., Greenland hunting of Baffin Bay and Kane Basin).

Thus, the present situation in Nunavut is that polar bear sport hunting offers the opportunity for individual Inuit and communities to obtain considerably larger sums of scarce money than is currently possible through the more traditional sale of furs. As a business, the sport hunt is fairly recent in its development, having been affected by earlier logistic difficulties and by a reticence on the part of Inuit to participate in its development. Since 1985, improvements in the North's transportation and accommodation infrastructure have allowed non-Inuit relatively easy access to Nunavut.

More relevant, however, to the emergence of sport hunting as an industry was the impact of the European Union sealskin boycott, which is still ongoing, on the monetary well being of Inuit living and working outside the wage sector of the economy. This event precipitated both a government strategy of economic development and a cultural acceptance by Inuit of what was seen (and to a degree still is viewed), most notably by Inuit, to be a highly non-traditional use of polar bear.

For all this history, the reality of the Nunavut sport hunt today is that, for some Inuit, especially those for whom harvesting is the occupation, the income provided through guiding visitor-hunters is an important (for some an essential) subsistence resource. For others, it is a business, one of the few that can be indigenous to *Nunavummi*. However, underlying both these functional aspects of the contemporary sport hunt, polar bear remain a cultural resource for all Inuit.