Nunavik Marine Region Planning Commission
Commission d'aménagement de la région marine du Nunavik

Engagement Plan for Marine Planning in the Nunavik Marine Region

JANUARY 2026

www.nmrpc.ca

Photo Credit: Michelle Valberg



VERSION 2
PREVIOUS VERSION(S): MAY 2025

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION 2

BACKGROUND 3

NUNAVIK MARINE REGION 4

PHASES 5

- Phase 1 - Process Initiation 5
- Phase 2 - Initial Preparation and Information Gathering 6
- Phase 3 - Marine Planning Strategy 6
- Phase 4 - Marine Planning 7
- Phase 5 - Marine Use Plan 7
- Phase 6 - Implementation and Enforcement 8
- Phase 7 - Monitoring, Evaluation, and Adaptation 8

WHO THE NMRPC WILL ENGAGE WITH 9

- Nunavimmiut 9
- Indigenous Peoples and administrations with overlapping and shared rights 9
- NILCA institutions of public government 10
- Land claims organizations 10
- Government agencies 10
- Educational institutions and research initiatives 10
- Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) 11
- Industry and economic development 11
- General public 11

HOW AND WHEN THE NMRPC WILL ENGAGE 12

YOUR VIEWS AND COMMENTS 14

HOW DECISIONS ARE MADE 15

UPDATES TO THE ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY 16

GETTING INVOLVED 16

INTRODUCTION

Marine planning is a process for managing oceans spaces. It guides the right development and activities to the right places and helps people come together to act on shared priorities. Balance is key. Marine planning can support sustainable economic development as well as advance protection of the environment and culture. The outcome of marine planning is a Marine Use Plan. Ultimately, marine planning is a tool for setting a shared vision for ocean spaces now and in the future and for openly working towards that shared vision together.

It is important that all those with an interest can share their opinions and shape marine planning processes. This document provides the Nunavik Marine Region Planning Commission's (NMRPC's) plan for promoting public awareness of, and seeking input into, marine planning in the Nunavik Marine Region. The document also describes what the NMRPC will do with the feedback received and how decisions will be made.



Photo Credit: Michelle Valberg

BACKGROUND

The marine planning process in the Nunavik Marine Region was established under the Nunavik Inuit Land Claims Agreement (NILCA). This document follows the requirements for engagement as provided by the NILCA.

The NMRPC has established principles for marine planning engagement that it commits to following. It invites comments on these principles throughout the planning process and is open to adapting the principles based on feedback received.

Principles of Engagement

The NMRPC will:

- Involve people early in the marine planning process.
- Engage with interested people and organizations at the appropriate time using effective engagement methods.
- Allow sufficient time for meaningful engagement.
- Remain adaptable, recognising that different engagement methods work for different people.
- Respect the diversity of people and their lifestyles and give people a fair chance to have their voice heard.
- Remain clear about the purpose of any engagement and how you may contribute as well as communicate to you how your views have been considered within agreed timescales.
- Share documents online to support understanding of the planning process.
- Communicate clearly, avoiding jargon and acronyms as much as possible.

NUNAVIK MARINE REGION

The Nunavik Marine Region is the offshore portion of Nunavik (Figure 1). It includes saltwater and offshore islands in James Bay, Hudson Bay, Hudson Strait, and Ungava Bay. The Nunavik Marine Region contains Areas of Equal Use and Occupancy with the Inuit of Nunavut and Overlapping Interest Areas with the Crees of Eeyou Itschee. The Overlapping Interest Areas include an Inuit Zone, Cree Zone, and Joint Zone. All the islands in the Nunavik Marine Region are in the jurisdiction of the Government of Nunavut. The saltwater of the Nunavik Marine Region is divided – waters above the 60th parallel are in the jurisdiction of the Government of Nunavut, while waters below the 60th parallel are in the jurisdiction of the Government of Canada.

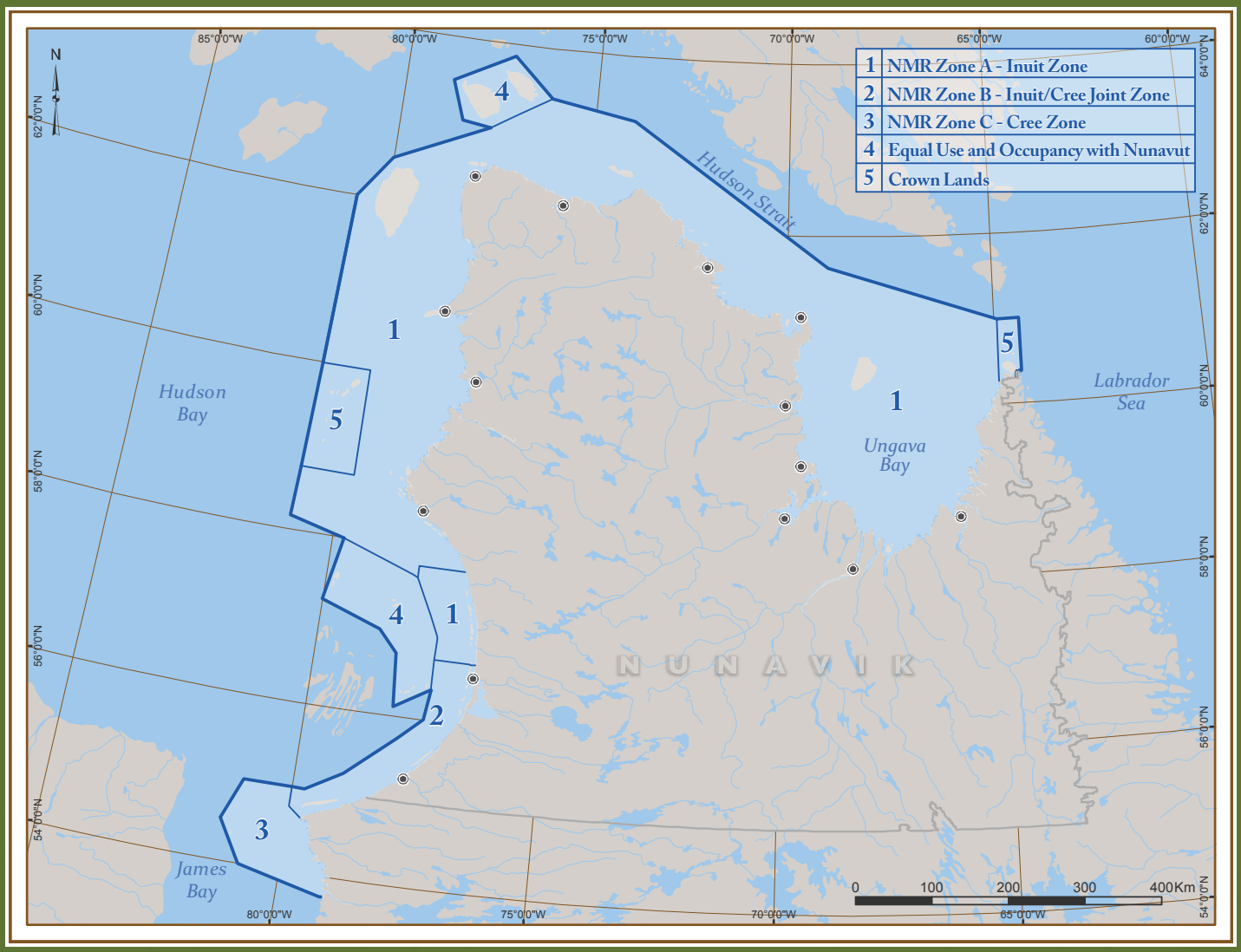


Figure 1: Nunavik Marine Region

PHASES

Management of the Nunavik Marine Region by the NMRPC can be organized into seven phases (Figure 2). The first three phases are preparing to do marine planning and are considered "pre-planning". The last four phases are doing marine planning and acting on planning outcomes. These phases repeat over time and involve marine planning, creating a plan, implementing the plan, assessing the plan, and adapting the plan to improve its effectiveness and relevance.

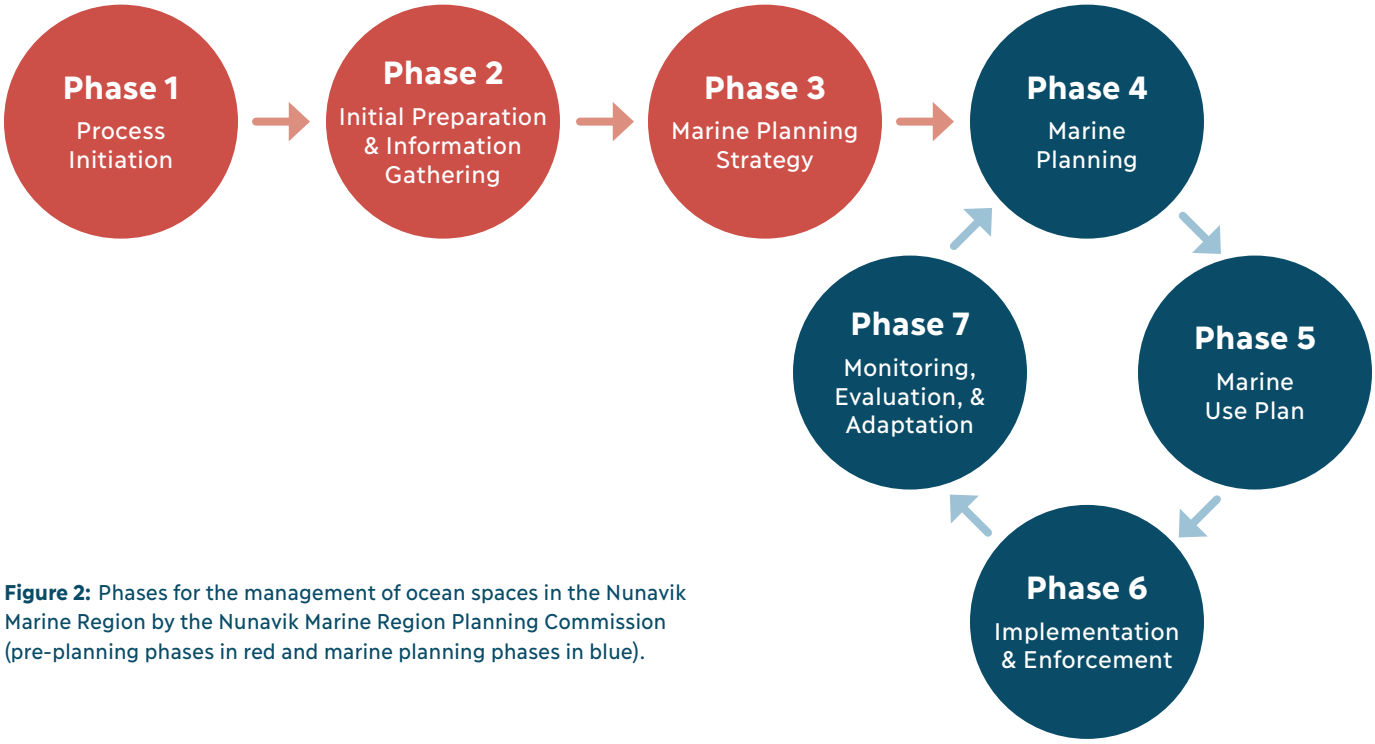


Figure 2: Phases for the management of ocean spaces in the Nunavik Marine Region by the Nunavik Marine Region Planning Commission (pre-planning phases in red and marine planning phases in blue).

Descriptions of the seven phases are provided below:

Phase 1 - Process Initiation

The NMRPC was established with the signing of the NILCA by the Government of Canada, Government of Nunavut, and Makivvik on December 1, 2006. The NILCA came into effect on June 10, 2008. The NMRPC's Board was formed in 2009 and held its first meeting in 2010.

As an institution of public government, the NMRPC is a joint management board through which Makivvik and the Governments of Canada and Nunavut co-manage land, waters, and resources, including wildlife, for the benefit of all Nunavimmiut.

> "Makivvik is the legal representative of Nunavik Inuit. It is responsible for administering Nunavik Inuit Lands as well as funds received from the Government of Canada. Nunavimmiut are individuals living in Nunavik, including Inuit and non-Inuit."

Phase 2 - Initial Preparation and Information Gathering

Data and information are the foundation of marine planning. In the Nunavik Marine Region, this involves seeking and applying knowledge from a range of sources, including Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit, local knowledge, academic literature and guidance, as well as industry and government sources. To establish baseline understanding, the NMRPC completed a data collection initiative (2011-2014), a use and occupancy map survey (2011-2016), a Nunavik Marine Region Atlas (2018-2019), and a core use areas analysis (2019-2020).

The NMRPC will enhance and update its understanding of the Nunavik Marine Region through continuous learning throughout the planning process.

Clear structures and transparent processes are key to marine planning. Between 2020 and 2024, the NMRPC filled staff vacancies, renewed and streamlined operating procedures and internal policies, updated bylaws and governance policies, and launched a range of online and digital resources, including an Open Information Portal and an NMRPC app.

Phase 3 - Marine Planning Strategy

The NMRPC is responsible for identifying broad planning policies, objectives, and goals as well as priorities regarding the conservation, development, management and use of the saltwater, islands, and resources of the Nunavik Marine Region (NILCA 6.2.2(a), 6.4.1(a)). The NMRPC drafted these elements and validated them with planning partners, including ensuring that they reflect the voices of Nunavimmiut and especially the values and needs of Nunavik Inuit. The broad planning policies, objectives, goals, and priorities form the Marine Planning Strategy. The strategy guides the creation of the Marine Use Plan for the Nunavik Marine Region. Planning principles, as provided in the NILCA, inform the strategy and the plan (NILCA 6.2.1) (Figure 3).

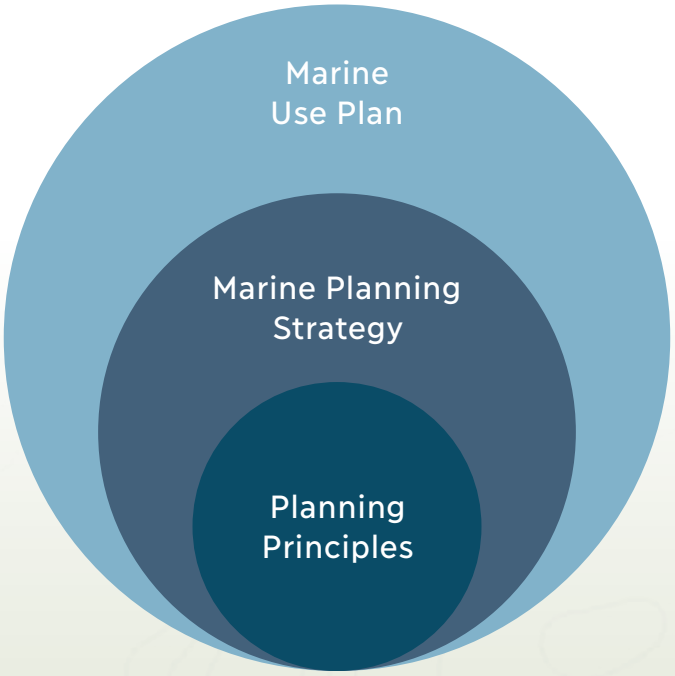


Figure 3: Nested relationship between the planning principles of the Nunavik Inuit Land Claims Agreement, Marine Planning Strategy, and Marine Use Plan for the Nunavik Marine Region.

Engagement for the co-development of the Marine Planning Strategy includes the following:

- **2023:** A community tour to introduce the NMRPC to communities and hear their opinions on the Nunavik Marine Region.
- **2024-2025:** Marine Planning Strategy Surveys to validate draft content for the strategy. Feedback received during the 2023 community tour informed development of the surveys.
  - A Targeted Survey was delivered in-person to experts in the marine environment and focused on Nunavik harvesters and elders.
  - A Public Survey was provided to all Nunavik Inuit, Nunavimmiut, and others interested in the Nunavik Marine Region.
  - An Organization Survey was shared with a broad range of agencies, including land claims organizations, industry and businesses, government, academia, and non-governmental organizations.
- **2025:** Community visits to validate draft content for the strategy in-person and to more deeply explore how Nunavimmiut want to act on opportunities, challenges, and priorities in the Nunavik Marine Region.

Phase 4 - Marine Planning

Ongoing engagement with planning partners is vital to successful marine planning. The NMRPC will work with planning partners to ensure they are part of the process throughout the Marine Planning Phase. Marine planning involves analyzing the current situation in the Nunavik Marine Region and potential futures (e.g. who is in the region, what are they doing, and where are they doing it?), exploring conflicts and compatibilities between activities, and considering how to coordinate different activities now and in the future. Draft Marine Use Plans are prepared and validated with planning partners.

Phase 5 - Marine Use Plan

Under the NILCA, the NMRPC is responsible for establishing the following within the Marine Use Plan:

- Objectives and guidelines to direct short-term and long-term resource use and development in the Nunavik Marine Region (NILCA 6.2.2(b), 6.3.1, 6.4.1(b), 6.5.1) and
- Specific planning objectives, goals, and variables for planning regions within the Nunavik Marine Region (NILCA 6.4.4(b)).

Once a satisfactory draft Marine Use Plan is ready, it will move on to the federal Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada (CIRNAC) and the Government of Nunavut Minister responsible for renewable resources. The Ministers may provide feedback that requires revisions to the draft plan. Depending on the nature of the comments, the NMRPC may add the feedback to the draft Marine Use Plan or may conduct further engagement with planning partners. Once the federal and territorial Ministers agree with the plan, it will go for approval by Cabinet and the Executive Council.

Phase 6 - Implementation and Enforcement

The NMRPC will implement the approved Marine Use Plan with its planning partners.

The NMRPC and the Governments of Canada and Nunavut have key roles as follows:

The NMRPC is responsible for:

1. Reviewing all project proposals for development and activities in the Nunavik Marine Region to determine whether they are in line with the Marine Use Plan.
2. Forwarding project proposals with its determinations and any recommendations to the appropriate federal and territorial agencies.

Federal and territorial agencies are responsible for conducting their activities and operations in accordance with the Marine Use Plan. This involves:

- Only issuing permits and authorizations for proposed developments and activities in the Nunavik Marine Region that are in line with the Marine Use Plan or only issuing permits and authorizations with terms and conditions that would bring proposed developments and activities into compliance with the plan.
- Undertaking their own work in ways that are in line with the Marine Use Plan.

The NILCA requires that the federal and territorial governments only issue permits and authorizations consistent with the Marine Use Plan. In enforcing the requirements of their permits and authorizations, federal and territorial agencies will indirectly enforce the NILCA.

Phase 7 - Monitoring, Evaluation, and Adaptation

The NMRPC will monitor the implementation of the Marine Use Plan and evaluate its success in advancing marine planning goals and objectives in the Nunavik Marine Region. The Marine Use Plan will be adapted to ensure its continued relevance.



Photo Credit: Michelle Valberg

WHO THE NMRPC WILL ENGAGE WITH

The NILCA states that the purpose of the Marine Use Plan is to protect and promote the existing and future wellbeing of residents, communities, and users of the Nunavik Marine Region, accounting for the interests of all Canadians, and to protect and, where necessary, restore the environmental integrity of the Nunavik Marine Region (NILCA 6.3.2). Marine planning in the Nunavik Marine Region is potentially relevant to a wide range of individuals, communities, organizations, governments, and industries.

The true value of marine planning is its ability to bring together a range of interests, all of which share the marine environment in some way. In coordinating different groups and facilitating discussion between them, marine planning helps different groups frame their activities and decisions in a broader context and guides everyone towards achieving shared goals.

The NMRPC is committed to communicating and engaging with this range of interests as far as practically possible. Planning partners include, but are not restricted to:

Nunavimmiut

The objective of the NILCA is to encourage self-reliance and the cultural and social wellbeing of Nunavik Inuit (NILCA 23.1.1(b)). Marine planning in the Nunavik Marine Region is a tool under the NILCA to meet this objective. Specifically, the NILCA requires that marine planning in the Nunavik Marine Region:

- Devote special attention to protecting and promoting the existing and future wellbeing of Nunavik Inuit (NILCA 6.2.1(b)),
- Account for Nunavik Inuit goals and objectives for Nunavik Inuit Lands (NILCA 6.8.2),
- Consider cultural factors and priorities (NILCA 6.2.3 (c), 6.3.1(h)), and
- Address the tradition of Nunavik Inuit oral communication and decision-making (NILCA 6.4.18(a)).

Under the NILCA, the primary purpose of Nunavik Inuit Lands, which include the Nunavik Marine Region, is to support Nunavik Inuit's economic self-sufficiency in a way that is consistent with their social and cultural needs and aspirations (NILCA 9.1). In harmony with this, the NILCA requires that the Marine Use Plan reflect the priorities and values of residents (NILCA 6.2.1(c)). The NMRPC recognizes that those living in Nunavik, both Inuit and non-Inuit, have invaluable perspectives and that their involvement in the marine planning process is essential. The NMRPC is providing opportunities for Nunavimmiut to engage in ways that are timely and culturally appropriate.

Indigenous Peoples and administrations with overlapping and/or shared rights.

The NMRPC is working with other agencies, including indigenous governments and other institutions of public government, to ensure that existing commitments and agreements regarding overlapping interests and shared rights are respected. For example, the NMRPC is working jointly and equally with the Eeyou Marine Region Planning Commission in the Joint Zone of the Overlapping Interests Areas (NILCA Article 28).

NILCA institutions of public government

In addition to the NMRPC, the other institutions of public government under the NILCA include the Nunavik Marine Region Impact Review Board and the Nunavik Marine Region Wildlife Board. The NMRPC's work is complementary to their work and the Commission will continue to engage with them to ensure that processes are streamlined and coordinated (NILCA 6.2.1(f), 6.8.1, 5.2.3 (j), 5.2.4(b), 5.2.6).

Land claims organizations

Inuit Nunangat is the Inuit homeland in Canada. It includes Nunavik, the Inuvialuit Settlement Region, Nunavut, and Nunatsiavut. Large portions are co-managed by Inuit and federal, provincial, and territorial governments through land and resource management regimes established by five comprehensive Inuit-Crown land claims agreements. In addition to the NILCA, these include the Inuvialuit Final Agreement, Nunavut Agreement, James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement, and Labrador Inuit Land Claims Agreement. The NMRPC is engaging with the Inuit organizations responsible for administering these agreements, including Makivvik as the representative of Nunavik Inuit. The NMRPC is also working with a range of organizations created under and/or supporting these agreements, including those responsible for heritage and culture, education, land management, planning, impact review, and wildlife management.

In addition, the NMRPC is engaging with neighbouring land claims organizations to ensure that it considers their relevant policies and priorities.

Government agencies

The NILCA states that, based on jurisdiction, the appropriate government departments and agencies are responsible for the implementation of the Marine Use Plan, once approved (NILCA 6.1.2, 6.5.9). The Nunavik Marine Region is in the jurisdictions of the Governments of Canada and Nunavut, and the NMRPC will work closely with their staff to put the plan into action. As highlighted by the NILCA, an effective planning process requires the active participation of the Governments of Canada and Nunavut (NILCA 6.2.1(g)). It is key that they contribute to the creation of the Marine Use Plan to support robust content and a commitment to the plan. The NMRPC recognizes that the Nunavik Marine Region is used and valued by other government agencies and the people they represent, including provincial, territorial, and Indigenous governments as well as regional and local governments inside and outside of Nunavik. The NMRPC will maintain ongoing and open dialogue with relevant authorities to ensure the Marine Use Plan reflects their voices.

Educational institutions and research initiatives

Universities, governments, industry, and others have conducted extensive research in the Arctic. It is expected that these groups will be key contributors throughout the marine planning process. The sharing of data, knowledge, and information relevant to the Nunavik Marine Region will support development of an informed Marine Use Plan.

Non-governmental organizations (NGOs)

NGOs will play an important role in the creation of the Marine Use Plan for the Nunavik Marine Region. Organizations such as the Inuit Circumpolar Council, Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, and the Paukuutit Inuit Women of Canada bring invaluable Inuit perspectives. Existing marine partnerships, such as the Tasiujaqiuaqmiut Sheewetaganopoi Consortium, foster cross-jurisdictional and cross-cultural communication and collaboration as well as provide established and trusted means to engage with a broad range of planning partners.

Industry and economic development

There are many operations from a range of sectors that make use of marine resources in the Nunavik Marine Region, such as fisheries, shipping, and tourism. Engagement with the full range of industries operating in the Nunavik Marine Region will be essential throughout the planning process and the NMRPC aims to benefit from their knowledge and experience. The NILCA requires that the Marine Use Plan provides for development and use of the Nunavik Marine Region (NILCA 6.2.1(e)) and take the following into account:

- Economic opportunities and needs (NILCA 6.2.3(a), 6.3.1(c)),
- The natural resource base and existing patterns of natural resource use (NILCA 6.3.1(b)),
- Transportation and communication services and corridors (6.3.1(d)), and
- Energy requirements, sources, and availability (6.3.1(e)).

In addition, a variety of Indigenous, local, and government agencies are working to advance economic development in the North. These groups offer real benefits to the development and implementation of the marine planning process.

General public

The NMRPC recognizes that marine planning in the Nunavik Marine Region must consider the interests of all Canadians (NILCA 6.2.1(b)). A marine use plan is for everyone with an interest in the area covered by the plan. The NMRPC will create opportunities on an ongoing basis for the public to add value to its work and contribute to the overall engagement process.

The NILCA states that the NMRPC must make best efforts to coordinate the discharge of its powers, functions and duties with adjacent institutions (NILCA 6.4.21). The NMRPC will continually identify and engage new stakeholders and interested individuals throughout the marine planning process. If you or your organization would like to get involved, please contact us (admin@nmrpc.ca).

HOW AND WHEN THE NMRPC WILL ENGAGE

Engagement has been taking place since 2023 to ensure that planning partners are involved as early as possible. The NMRPC will continue to keep all planning partners informed on marine planning in the Nunavik Marine Region to support transparency throughout the process.

A range of methods will be used to engage and communicate with stakeholders:

- In-person conferences and workshops
- Webinars
- Online updates via the NMRPC website (nmrpc.ca), Open Information Portal (OIP), and app (NMRPConnect)
- One-on-one meetings
- NMRPC attendance at planning partner meetings
- Surveys
- Newsletters
- Advisory groups
- Social media such as Facebook and Instagram

Table 1 sets out the schedule and methods for engagement. A mix of communication channels will be used to support inclusive engagement and encourage broad participation.

Table 1: Nunavik Marine Region Planning Commission (NMRPC) Engagement schedule and methods

Planning Output / Engagement	Purpose/Topics	Timing
Community Tour: Early Engagement	• Visit Nunavik communities and Chisasibi to introduce NMRPC and hear Nunavik communities' opinions on the Nunavik Marine Region.	Winter 2023
Marine Planning Strategy Surveys	• Engage with planning partners to validate draft content for the Marine Planning Strategy and to learn about priorities, opportunities, and challenges in the Nunavik Marine Region. • Learn how Nunavimmiut prefer to engage. • Results of Targeted Survey shared with survey respondents by email and/or mail and posted online. • Results of Public and Organization Surveys shared online.	Targeted Survey: Winter-Spring 2024 Public Survey: Fall 2024-Spring 2025 Organization Survey: Spring-Summer 2025

Planning Output / Engagement	Purpose/Topics	Timing
Community Tour: Wellbeing Workshops	• Visit Nunavik communities and Chisasibi to validate content for the Marine Planning Strategy; learn about priorities, opportunities, and challenges in the Nunavik Marine Region; and discuss what promoting wellbeing means to Nunavimmiut. • Outcomes of tour shared online.	Winter-Spring 2025
Marine Planning Forum	• Host presentations and foster dialogue between planning partners to facilitate identification of shared interests and potential conflicts within the Nunavik Marine Region.	Winter 2026
Marine Planning Strategy	• Update document using feedback received and submit to NMRPC Board for approval. • Post draft Marine Planning Strategy for review and comment.	Summer 2026
Engagement on First Draft Marine Use Plan	• Post first draft Marine Use Plan for review and comment. • Host events to engage planning partners on the developing plan.	Spring 2027
Engagement on Second Draft Marine Use Plan	• Post second draft Marine Use Plan for review and comment. • Host events to engage planning partners on the developing plan.	Winter 2028
Engagement on Third Draft Marine Use Plan	• Post third draft Marine Use Plan for review and comment. • Host events to engage planning partners on the developing plan.	Winter 2029
Public Hearings on Final Draft Plan	• Visit Nunavik Inuit communities to hold public hearings on final draft plan.	Winter 2030
Seek approval of draft Marine Use Plan	• Submit draft plan and written report of public hearings to the Governments of Canada and Nunavut. • Make the draft plan available to the public, as submitted.	Fall 2030
Revise draft Marine Use Plan	• As necessary, revise draft plan based on written reasons from the Governments of Canada and Nunavut.	
Marine Use Plan Adoption and Implementation	• Alert planning partners of the adoption and publication of the Marine Use Plan and any supporting documents. • Make the adopted Marine Use Plan available to the public.	
Monitoring and Assessment	• Conduct implementation and monitoring as established within marine planning process.	From date of Marine Use Plan adoption onwards



Photo Credit: Michelle Valberg

YOUR VIEWS AND COMMENTS

All feedback received during engagement will be considered and will inform decision-making. The NMRPC will provide general responses to the views shared as it understands that this is fundamental to the success of the marine planning process and is part of our duty to maintain transparency. Our responses will be shared using different tools, such as the NMRPC website and app, newsletters, and social media. Where appropriate, the NMRPC will also produce a summary of engagement activities. Throughout the planning process, the NMRPC will provide updates on its progress and highlight where planning partners have shaped outcomes.

The NMRPC will acknowledge where different views were balanced, trade offs were required, and where constraints may have prevented desired changes. Feedback may not always result in changes to a draft plan for a range of reasons, such as legal issues or overriding factors. All should understand that any plan is unlikely to satisfy everyone and some degree of compromise may be required.

It is important to highlight that the NMRPC is conducting engagement to enable creation of a relevant and effective plan and that its priority is to create a document that reflects the guidance received during engagement.

HOW DECISIONS ARE MADE

The NMRPC has a governance structure for the planning process that supports informed, transparent decision-making (Figure 4). As a first step, ongoing engagement is conducted by NMRPC staff to understand the full range of interests and priorities in the Nunavik Marine Region. Next, staff develop recommendations that reflect the feedback received during engagement. A range of information informs the work of staff, including Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit and local, academic, industry, and government knowledge. Next, the NMRPC Board provides decisions in response to the recommendations presented by staff. To remain accountable, the NMRPC then reports back to planning partners through various channels, including, but not limited to, new or revised drafts for public review and comment, presentations to advisory groups, and online updates and presentations.

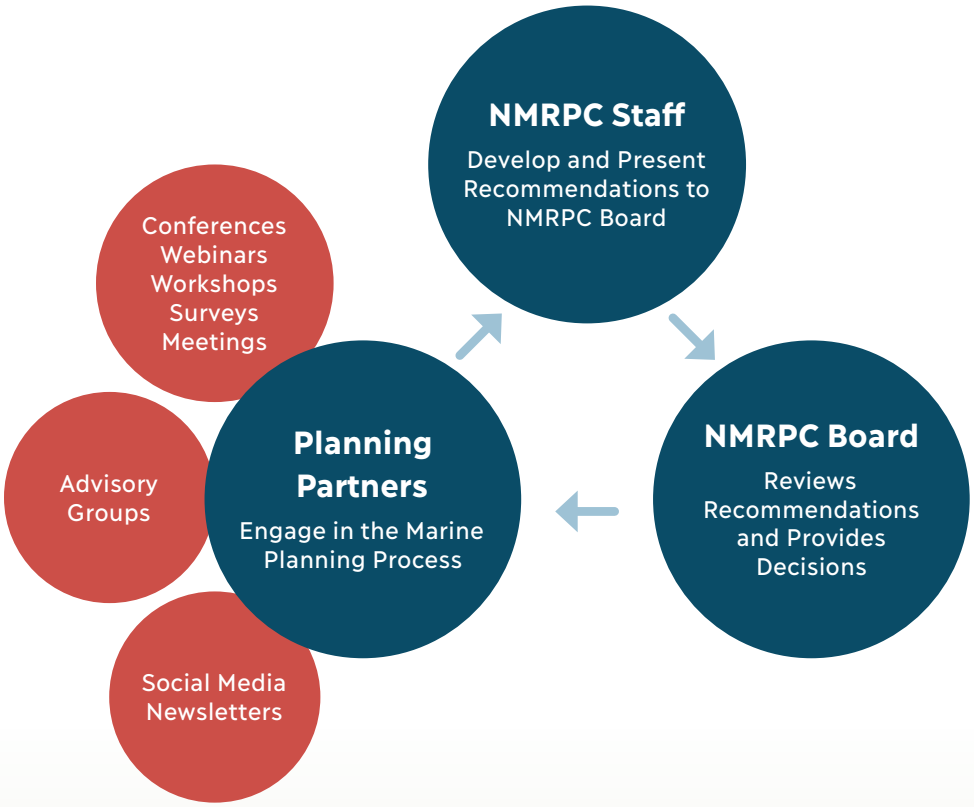


Figure 4: Nunavik Marine Region Planning Commission (NMRPC) governance structure.

All planning partners are part of the decision-making process. It is recognized that Makivvik will play a key role as the representative body for Nunavik Inuit and a signatory to the NILCA. The NMRPC is currently exploring the creation of advisory groups and will seek input from planning partners as the process unfolds.

UPDATES TO THE ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

Marine planning is dynamic and evolving in nature. As the NMRPC moves through the process, it is possible that changes may be made to the content of this document to reflect the views of planning partners and to ensure their full participation in achieving the overall aims of marine planning. Any significant revisions to the document will be reviewed by the NMRPC Board and shared with planning partners.

GETTING INVOLVED

If you would like to engage in the marine planning process in the Nunavik Marine Region, download the NMRPC app, follow the NMRPC on Facebook or Instagram, visit the NMRPC Open Information Portal, or contact the NMRPC at admin@nmrpc.ca.

The provisions of the Nunavik Inuit Land Claims Agreement (NILCA) take precedence over any other informa-tion or interpretations provided herein. In the event of any conflict, the provisions of the NILCA shall prevail.

Marine planning in the Nunavik Marine Region does not limit the rights of Nunavik Inuit beneficiaries as protected under the NILCA, James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement, or Constitution Act.



Photo Credit: Michelle Valberg



Nunavik Marine Region Planning Commission

Commission d'aménagement de la région marine du Nunavik

www.nmrpc.ca