



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

# MARINE PLANNING STRATEGY TARGETED SURVEY 2024 FOR LOCAL EXPERTS FROM NUNAVIK COMMUNITIES

*Report from the  
Nunavik Marine Region Planning Commission  
September 2024*





# BACKGROUND

The **Nunavik Marine Region Planning Commission (NMRPC)** is an institution of public government created under the Nunavik Inuit Land Claims Agreement (NILCA). The NILCA tasks the NMRPC with developing a Marine Use Plan to guide and direct resource use and development in the Nunavik Marine Region. The Nunavik Marine Region is all the salt waters and islands offshore of Nunavik (Fig 1).

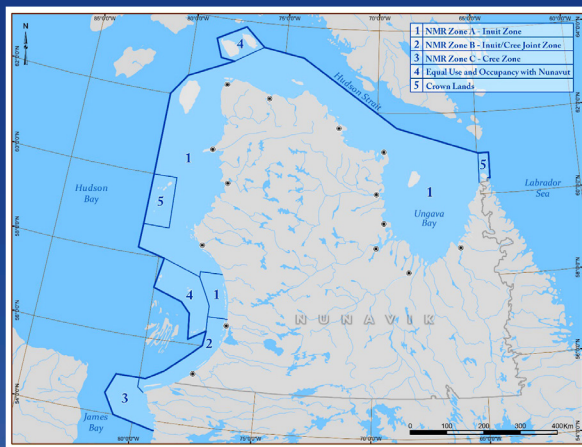


Fig 1: The Nunavik Marine Region.



To support the creation of the **Marine Use Plan**, we are undertaking several steps to connect with Nunavimmiut and develop a shared vision for marine planning (Fig 2). We conducted a Community Tour from January to March 2023 to introduce the NMRPC to communities and hear their opinions, experiences, and concerns about the Nunavik Marine Region. The tour visited Chisasibi, Whapmagoostui, and 12 of the 14 Nunavik communities – Ivujivik and Kuujuaq were missed due to weather and time constraints, respectively.

During the Community Tour we asked people their opinions on their preferred methods of engagement and how to effectively incorporate feedback into the work of the NMRPC. We used comments from the Community Tour to create a Targeted Survey for experts in the marine environment; a Public Survey for all Nunavik Inuit, Nunavimmiut, and others interested in the NMR; and an Organization Survey for other planning partners. The feedback from the surveys will be used to inform our next step in the process: the Marine Planning Strategy.



Fig 2: Actions to inform development of the Marine Use Plan for the NMR.

# THE MARINE PLANNING STRATEGY TARGETED SURVEY

We delivered the Targeted Survey in-person in all Nunavik communities, including Whapmagoostui, and Chisasibi between January and May 2024. On average, we spent two days in each community. We spent more or less time in each community depending on flights and weather as well how quickly we were able to connect with people to complete the survey.

The survey was bilingual with all information provided in English and Inuktitut.

Respondents were provided with the option of completing the survey on paper or online. NMRPC staff and consultants were available to answer questions for those who completed the survey onsite. Respondents were permitted to complete surveys offsite, if preferred. An interpreter was present in each community to enable communication in both English and Inuktitut.

2024 SURVEY DATES	COMMUNITY
January 20-21	Kangiqsualujuaq
January 22-23	Aupaluk
January 24-25	Kangirsuk
January 26-28	Tasiujaq
January 31-February 2	Kuujjuaraapik
February 13-15	Salluit
February 14	Umiujaq
February 15-16	Inukjuak
February 16-17	Puvirnituaq
February 17-18	Akulivik
February 19-20	Kangiqsujuaq
March 5-7	Ivujivik
March 8	Quaqtaq
April 3-5	Chisasibi
May 13-16	Kuujuaq

Table 1: Dates of community visits for delivering the Marine Planning Strategy Targeted Survey.

## PARTICIPANTS

Before arriving in each community, we contacted the local hunters, fishers, and trappers association, or Local Nunavimmi Umajulivijiit Katujiqatigininga (LNUK). We invited LNUK Board members to complete the survey and asked them if there were other people with an in-depth knowledge about the Nunavik Marine Region who they recommended take the survey. We also posted invitations to knowledge holders and active users of the Nunavik Marine Region on the NMRPC Facebook and community pages. To determine individuals' eligibility for the survey we asked people a few questions about their experience on the saltwater and the islands and contacted the LNUK (or another key contact familiar with the local community) to confirm that the potential respondent was a good fit. In some cases, people eligible to take the survey were not interested in participating. Reasons included timing conflicts and personal matters.

A total of 204 people from across Nunavik completed the Targeted Survey. More than one quarter (27%) of the respondents were between the ages of 36 and 45 and more than a third (35%) were between 46 and 65 years old. Elders ages 66 and older were relatively well represented (17%), and there were very few youths included in the survey (4% under 25 years old). This may be the result of the criteria used to identify and select respondents, specifically asking for referrals of knowledge holders and active users of the marine region.



# VALUES AND GOALS

Values for the NMRPC were developed at an internal workshop with Board members and staff. During discussions, four themes were adopted as draft values of the NMRPC. The group worked to ensure Inuktitut terms were selected that would capture the spirit of each value and identified goals to go along with each.



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 Healthy People and Community  
 Peuples et communauté sains

## NUNAQQATIGIINNIQ

The people of Nunavik are defined by their relationships with each other.

*Healthy People and Community:*

- Promote and protect culture, language, tradition, places of importance, and the uniqueness of Nunavik communities and their institutions.
- Foster community growth by being open, welcoming, and inclusive.



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 Healthy Economy  
 Économie saine

## PIVAALLIQATIGIINNIQ/MAKITANIQ

The people of Nunavik grow and prosper together.

*Healthy Economy:*

- Economic opportunities and meeting the needs of the community contribute to the wellbeing of Nunavimmiut.
- Infrastructure, including transportation and communication, contribute to the aspirations and wellbeing of Nunavimmiut.
- A healthy economy that not only meets, but exceeds, the basic needs of Nunavimmiut (housing, healthcare, justice, social services, food security).



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 Healthy Environment and Healthy Ecosystems  
 Environnement et écosystèmes sains

## NUNAMIINGAAQNIQ

The people of Nunavik, their way of life comes from the land and their relationship with the land.

*Healthy Environment and Healthy Ecosystems:*

- Promote and support traditional economies, alternative energy, and ecofriendly practices for the holistic wellbeing of Nunavimmiut and Nunavik.
- Consider the sustainability of the environment and the integrity of ecosystems in all plans and activities.



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 Integrity & Inclusion  
 Intégration et inclusivité

## KATUJJIQATIGIINNIQ

Working together and collaboratively to find ways forward.

*Integrity & Inclusion:*

- Nunavimmiut and planning partners feel included and are engaged in the planning process, the implementation of the plan, validation of results, and the measuring of success.

Through the survey, we asked people if they felt the NMRPC's internal values and goals were appropriate for marine planning. Here's what we heard:

- **97% of those who took the survey agreed that the NMRPC's values and goals are well suited to guide the work of the Planning Commission in developing a Marine Use Plan.**
- Nunavik communities need to work together and cooperate to implement these values. Success will rely on ongoing communication between people, communities, and organizations.
- Sharing is an important part of Inuit life that should continue.
- It is important that knowledge, skills, and language be passed on to younger generations. Elders' knowledge should be shared through hands-on learning.
- The relationship between Inuit, the land, and wildlife must be preserved. Inuit are part of the natural world and have a duty to respect and care for the lands and waters.
- It is hard to maintain traditional practices and values under existing hunting and fishing regulations.

- There is a need for better social services. Goals should support improved housing, food security, and transport.
- The high cost of living is a concern and could be reflected in goals that aim to create more job opportunities in communities.
- There is garbage being left on the land and in the waters, and there is pollution from mining and development activities. People have seen changes in land use over time: traditional berry picking areas have been destroyed, nesting waterfowl are disturbed by helicopters and thin ice after ice-breaking and late season shipping can be dangerous.





## KATUJJIQATIGIINNIQ

### Working together & collaboratively to find ways forward.

People were asked for their opinions about different ways of coming together to work on the Marine Use Plan for the Nunavik Marine Region. The most popular choice was to have the NMRPC visit each community and meet in-person through a community organization or at an open house. People also suggested that one-on-one meetings with individuals would be a good option. Fewer people wanted to see regional workshops or a large-scale conference attended by representatives from all communities.

When not meeting in-person with the NMRPC, people said that local radio was the best way to receive information and updates about planning in the Nunavik Marine Region, followed by posting content on social media. People said that email and a fillable form on the NMRPC website would be the best ways for community members to share their thoughts and opinions with the Planning Commission.

In the survey, we told people that the NMRPC was considering creating community or regional advisory groups to provide their advice and expertise on topics relevant to the Nunavik Marine Region. This news was well received!

- 109 elders and active users said that they would be interested in participating
- 141 people nominated elders
- 127 people nominated harvesters or other active users of the Nunavik Marine Region
- 106 people nominated youth who they felt could make a valuable contribution

Many of the nominated individuals were recommended by multiple people, and some fit into more than one category (for example, elders who are also active harvesters). Seventeen people from 11 communities said they would be interested in participating in an advisory group and were nominated by three or more community members. The Planning Commission will be able to confidently assemble a list of potential advisory committee members to represent Nunavimmiut interests.

## NUNAQQATIGIINNIQ

The people of Nunavik are defined by their relationships with each other.

Almost everyone that took the survey agreed that spending time on the waters and islands of the Nunavik Marine Region helps keep them active, and that the land provides their family with healthy food and clean, safe drinking water. People also spoke about the benefits of country food in maintaining a healthy and active lifestyle:

- People who spend time outdoors don't seem to age as quickly and don't seem to get sick as often.
- Stress seems to disappear or get better when spending time on the land.
- Problems seem more manageable after being on the land.

Over half of the people that took the survey said they had noticed changes in the health and well-being of Nunavimmiut in the past 10-25 years. People expressed concern about the impacts of infections like tuberculosis, Covid-19, and flus along with rising rates of cancer, diabetes, heart conditions, and high blood pressure. People spoke about the benefits of traditional activities, practices, and country foods, and acknowledged improvements in health care and services in recent years.

It was voiced that spending time on the waters and islands of the Nunavik Marine Region supports healthy people and healthy communities through preserving traditions, culture, and language. People said that passing down knowledge about the land and wildlife along with values, morals, and ways of thinking are important traditional components in the lives of Inuit. It was shared that hands-on learning can lead to happier, more fulfilled lives and can enforce bonds with family members and friends.



People said that time on the land and on the water provides opportunities for youth to learn from elders, to make memories, and to reconnect with family and loved ones who have passed on. When provided with a list of goods and services that could be provided, people said that traditional education opportunities would be the most beneficial for Inuit.

People responding to the Targeted Survey felt that traditional hunting and fishing locations were the most important type of cultural site, followed by historical landmarks and places and family camp sites.

# NUNAMIINGAAQNIQ

## The way of life for the people of Nunavik comes from the land and their relationship with the land.

We asked those taking the Targeted Survey about the time they spend on the ocean and islands in the Nunavik Marine Region. Here is what they said:

- Over 75% of people in the Targeted Survey group are active harvesters.
- Over half (60%) said that they or their close family members often harvest animals or plants on both the islands and from the sea.
- Arctic char, ducks and geese, eggs, belugas, and seals are the most commonly harvested (Fig 3).
- Most use products harvested from the Nunavik Marine Region, including meat, fish, fur, shells, marine plants, bones, stones, etc.
- Most enjoy weekend trips by boat to the islands and go out in the marine environment as often as they can.
- Most enjoy the coastline near their homes.
- 41% spend time on the islands, along the coast, and/or on the waters of the Nunavik Marine Region weekly at certain times of year and 30% go daily at certain times of year.
- Far more people use the ocean and islands in the summer months than in the spring and fall. Fewer people spend time in the marine region during winter.
- Almost everybody agreed that they would spend more time in the marine region if they could. People don't go out more often because of the cost of fuel, their health, or lack of access to equipment.

### WHAT ARE YOUR FAVORITE THINGS TO HARVEST FROM THE ISLANDS OR THE MARINE AREA?

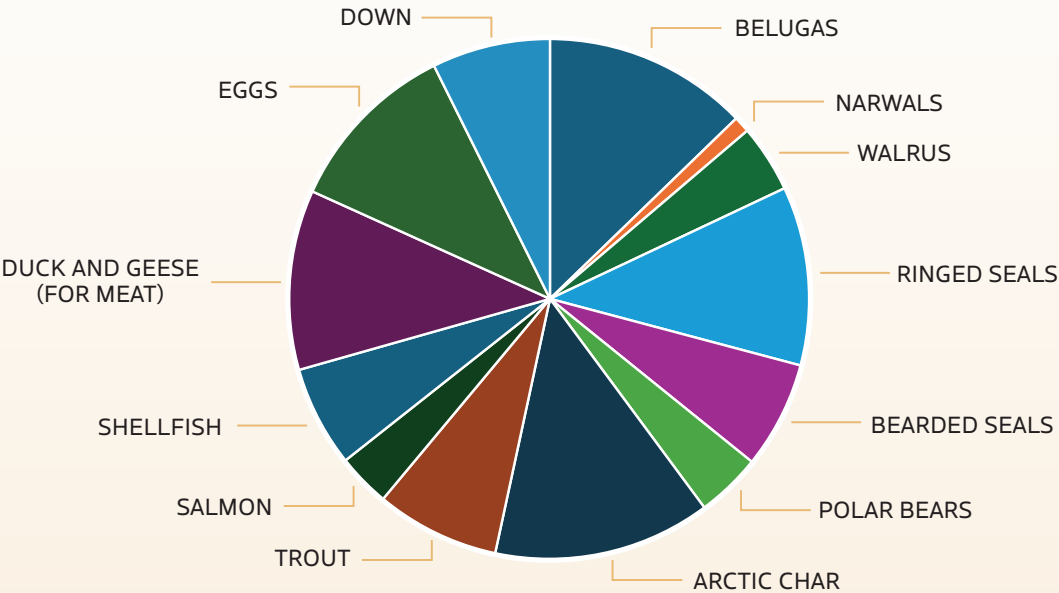


Fig 3: Preferred harvest within the Nunavik Marine Region. A bigger piece of the circle indicates a stronger preference.



We asked people about the types of changes they have seen in the environment in recent years. In addition to warmer weather and changes in snow, people have seen the following:

- Changes in winds and ocean currents.
- Ocean warming, ice-breaking, and open-water shipping affecting ice conditions and animal migrations.
- New animals, insects, or bacteria.
- Wildlife in new areas.
- Wildlife habitat, such as nesting areas or home grounds, being disturbed.
- Changes in the distribution of plants and berries.
- Garbage on the coast and in the water.
- Contaminated rivers leading to the ocean.

People felt that fish, waterfowl, and marine mammals were some of the most important areas for further learning. Most people agreed that learning should be shared in-person through organizations in the community. People also saw value in sharing results on websites or distributing reports by email.

We gave people a list of activities that could occur within the Nunavik Marine Region and asked them which concerned them the most. Here is what we heard:

- The most concern was with oil and gas and with mining.
- There was moderate concern about both fishing and shipping.
- Tourism was the least concerning option.

Most people said they are concerned with the ongoing use of fossil fuels, like gas and coal. Half of the people that participated in the survey felt that more should be done to promote the use of alternative energy and agreed that big companies or organizations should move to alternative energy. There was far more support for solar power than for wind or tidal power.



## PIVAALLIQATIGIINNIQ/MAKITANIQ

**The people of Nunavik and the Nunavik Marine Region grow and prosper together.**

People that responded to the Targeted Survey said that fisheries and education were creating jobs and generating income for Nunavimmiut and agreed that they would like to see more of both.

At present, people felt that mining and Inuit organizations are providing Inuit with opportunities. People were keen to see an increase in the sale of arts and crafts, hunting, tourism, and Inuit businesses moving forward.

When asked about the main challenges for Inuit securing employment and earning money in the marine area and islands of the Nunavik Marine Region, people spoke about lack of opportunities for receiving formal education and job-specific training. It was noted that self-employment can be difficult given the high cost of purchasing and maintaining equipment and getting the proper licences.

People said that changing priorities and a loss of culture were some of their biggest concerns around shipping, mining, and other types of industrial activities. When asked if mining

and oil extraction is necessary for economic growth in Nunavik, half of the people said it was necessary and the other half said it was not. People agreed that the oil and gas and mining sectors were among the most harmful in the Nunavik Marine Region and were concerned about Inuit not receiving benefits. Half of the people that took the survey felt that industrial shipping was a problem for the following reasons:

- Waters may be polluted through fuel spills and by dumping of sewage and bilgewater.
- Shipping can disturb wildlife migrations and affect the distribution of wildlife.
- Ice-breaking can result in unstable ice and force changes in travel routes.

Most people said that cruise ship activity was increasing. Many people said that shipping companies often don't employ Inuit and that cruise ships often pass by communities without landing. People spoke about the potential benefits to communities if tourists purchased local arts and crafts, hired guides or outfitters, rented equipment, or participated in showings of Inuit games and traditional clothing.

Activities associated with fishing and parks were considered some of the least harmful occurring in the Nunavik Marine Region. Almost everyone agreed that most of the fish caught in the region are sold within Nunavik, while some are sold to other provinces or territories within Canada and a few are sold internationally. People confirmed that they would like to see more done to create inshore and offshore fishing opportunities for Nunavimmiut.



## WHAT'S NEXT?

We will use the results of the Targeted Survey to help us prepare a draft Marine Planning Strategy balancing environmental, social, cultural, and economic priorities in the Nunavik Marine Region. The strategy will outline high-level priorities as well as detailed objectives and policies that can be used to measure progress towards reaching our goals. The Planning Commission can meet these goals by conducting our work in ways that are inclusive and meaningful, and by undertaking activities that are in-line with the priorities identified by Nunavimmiut. We will engage our planning partners, including Nunavimmiut, stakeholders, and government, on the draft strategy.

Once we have worked together to develop a clear Marine Planning Strategy, we will use it to direct our efforts to develop and implement a Marine Use Plan (Fig 2) that reflects the needs and desires of Nunavimmiut.





