

INUIALUIT-INUPIAT POLAR BEAR MANAGEMENT AGREEMENT IN THE SOUTHERN BEAUFORT SEA

**FEBRUARY 2-4, 2018
RANGE STATES MEETING OF THE PARTIES TO
THE 1973 AGREEMENT ON THE CONSERVATION OF POLAR BEARS
FAIRBANKS, ALASKA**

Taqulik Hepa, Director
Department of Wildlife Management, North Slope Borough
Larry Carpenter, Chair
Wildlife Management Advisory Council (NWT)



Founders and Past Commissioners of the I-I Agreement Established in 1988



Andy Carpenter



Benjamin P. Nageak

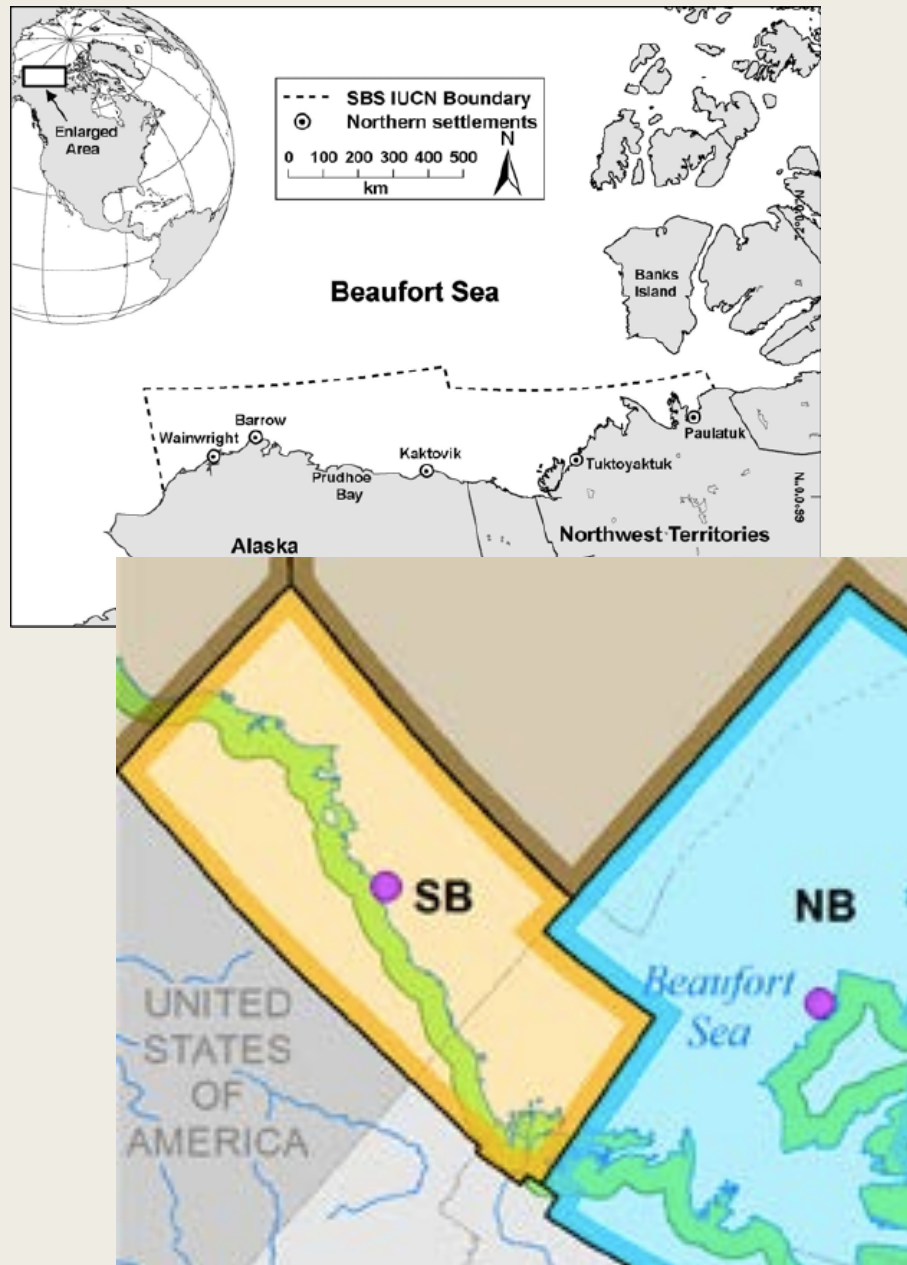
*Also recognizing the efforts and
commitment of Nelson Green, Nolan
Solomon, Larry Carpenter, Charles D. N.
Brower , Harry Brower*

Start of the I-I Agreement

- MOU finalized Fall 1986
- Draft Management Plan – March 1987
- I-I Agreement formally signed – January 1988
- First of it's kind
- 10 year review clause



1988 Inuvialuit-Inupiat Polar Bear Management Agreement



- Southern Beaufort Sea bears: shared population between U. S. and Canada
- Parties involved:
- *Inuvialuit Game Council*
- *North Slope Borough Fish and Game Management Committee*
- *Native User-to-User Agreement*
- *Management of polar bears*
- *International Agreement on Conservation of Polar Bears*
- *Cooperation in research and management*

Governance

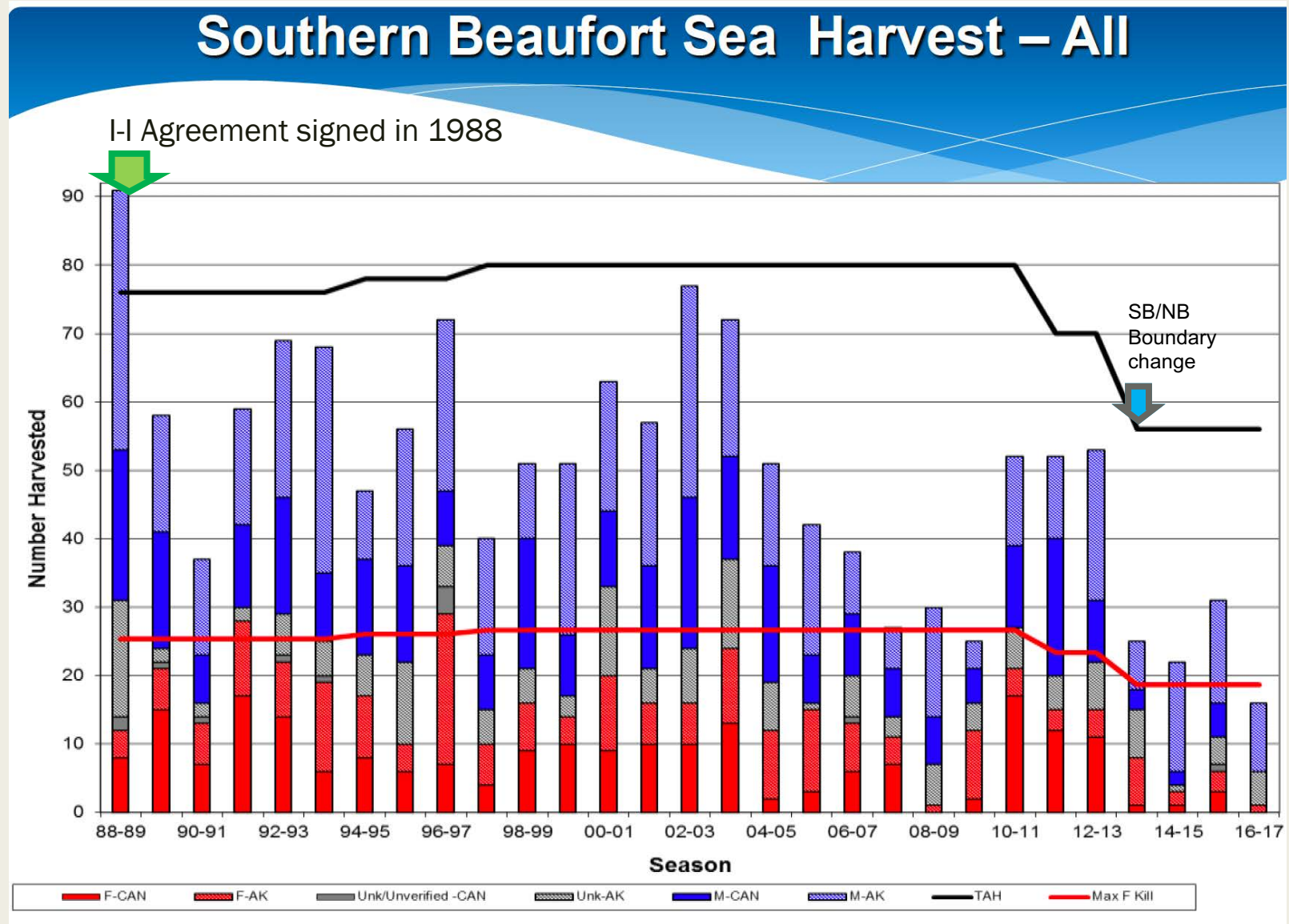
- Joint Commissioners are appointed by each party.
- *IGC: John Lucas Jr, Charles A. Gruben*
- *NSB: Taqulik Hepa, Enoch Oktollik*
- Technical Advisors appointed and invited by the Joint Commissioners.
- 30th Anniversary in 2018



Highlights of the I-I Polar Bear Management Agreement

- Both parties commit to:
- *Annual quotas based upon best available information;*
- *Maintain viable populations;*
- *Manage polar bears on a sustainable yield basis;*
- *Protection of females and cubs and of denning bears;*
- *Encourage collection and use of traditional and scientific knowledge;*
- *Participation in harvest monitoring program and collection of specimens;*
- *Identify research priorities;*
- *Annual meetings to share information on research and management of SBS population.*

Successful Results



Success of the Agreement

- Support from Federal and Territorial and State
- Awarded US Fish and Wildlife Service Commendation Award



Key Recommendations from 2017

- The Commissioners would like to stress that their top priority for research is to get an updated, reliable population estimate of the South Beaufort Polar Bear population.
- Reiterate the recommendations from 2009-2016 for federal, territorial, regional and local advisors to jointly develop a 5-year research plan to present at the next I-I meeting. The top priority for this plan is to get an updated estimate of the Beaufort Sea polar bear population. There will be no change in quota until there a reliable population estimate for the South Beaufort provided through this process.
- Recommend NOAA, USGS, USFWS, ENR, Yukon Environment collaboratively pursue an instrument-based survey of South and North Beaufort Sea polar bears for 2019. TEK and community input should be consistently incorporated in the survey design.
- Recommend to the U.S.- Russia Bilateral Commissioners and their Scientific Working Group that the I-I Polar Bear Joint Commissioners be part of the discussion regarding the Chukchi Sea polar bear management boundary.

Best Practices

- Sharing of information prior to release to public
- Inuvialuit and Inupiat are not “general public”
- Not treat TK as simply anecdotal
- TK Experts consulted throughout research process
- Collaboration and cooperation
- Sharing of samples
- Moratorium on deployment of collars on polar bears

Model for Others

- Served as model of other user-to-user agreements
- Continued collaboration between Inuvialuit and Inupiat
- Inuvialuit – Inupiat Beluga Whale Management Committee



Closing Remarks

- 30 years of effective co-management
- Traditional Knowledge and science guided process
- *Open communication for true co-management*
- Continue recognition and support of this Agreement
- The hunting of polar bears is essential to the well-being Inuvialuit and Inupiat.



Quyanainni!!

Quyanaqpak!!

