



The Minerals Authority
Greenland Self-Government
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Environmental assessment connected to the exploration and exploitation of oil and natural gas (hydrocarbons) in the Baffin Bay off North West Greenland.

We hereby forward our contribution from the Inuit Circumpolar Council-Greenland (ICC) as a response regarding the hearing in question.

As an introductory comment we want to emphasize that we like KNAPK want to express out dissatisfaction regarding the brief time span given for the hearing process, and in that connection we urge the government to allow more time in the future for preparing a response of such comprehensive and most important projects.

In addition we want to express our concord with other hearing statements from other stakeholders and at the same emphasize the fact, that the area of the Bay in question being the focus at this hearing process must definitely be described as a most vulnerable nature resort.

The interest of the marine area between the northern parts of Greenland and Canada justly is immensely visible these years. The reason for that being that sufficient knowledge and data regarding the extent and the quantity of the supply of mammals from this marine area are non-existing, even though it is explicit knowledge that the area has an invaluable importance both here in Greenland and on the other side of the Baffin Bay in Canada. These conditions have also been thoroughly described in the hearing proposal.

Amongst other reasons we have therefore in a collaboration agreement between ICC-Canada and ICC-Greenland established a Joint Commission by January 2016 in order to initiate the drafting of proposals for a future management of a sustainable management of the North Water.

The Commission as its first task has been travelling in the northernmost parts of Canada (Nunavut) and Greenland to the Upernavik district, and they have at various locations performed local hearings. Based on the findings their first report is being finalized just around this time, and their full report is scheduled to be released early 2017.

The Commission is focusing on the importance of the basics for its work first and foremost be based on statements and thoughts among the people living in the coastal areas, and whose existence is dependent on the living resources, and thus their expressions and wishes form the fundamental basis for a presentation of recommendations.

There are different incentives for using this method; first of all the people inhabiting the coastal villages live from the fisheries and the hunt and in case of the waters around them being directly affected by environmental damaging incidents they may consequently themselves be directly hit, and secondly: in case of this area of the Bay close to their native soil being polluted this will not only have consequences for the Greenlandic part of the Bay area, but in the same way for the Canadian Bay areas, where our kinsmen are living and have their home.

In other words an incident of pollution will be transboundary, and thus pose a threat against our kinsmen, who are dependent on the living resources.

The position that our political leadership during the past years have been expressing about a more cautious approach to oil exploration projects in our offshore areas, and on top of that their aspirations of an intermediate slowdown of all exploration activities offshore is worth supporting. At the ICC we basically agree with this position, and the same time we support the endeavors of satisfying the need of an industrial development, which includes an environmentally safe resource development.

We wish to recommend intensely that the authorities in their continuation of these initiatives adopt more detailed hearing project rounds, and furthermore as a minimum ensure the participation among our fellow citizens living the northernmost areas of the country.

In the ICC we have not had the opportunity to undertake an extensive evaluation of the comprehensive material during this round of hearings. Due to that fact our response primarily has its foundation in our basic principles.

Last, but not least we have with our hearing statement the wish to emphasize the importance of the Bay area in question and its importance to the people and their livelihood in the most northern part of our country.

We remain with the hope that we will continue as participants in the work and thus also during the future hearing rounds.

Yours sincerely

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President