

sustainable yield has been reached, tags are provided each year to the Hunters' and Trappers' Organizations or Associations or Committees (HTO). This group in conjunction with members of the community, decides how many tags to allocate to sport hunting and how many are to be used by local hunters. Sport hunting is not administered separately from other polar bear harvesting. It should be noted that some communities may hold quota tags for several separate populations, but tags can be used only for the populations for which the tags are issued (GNWT).

Harvest of Polar Bears and Sport Hunting

The hunting of polar bears is an important part of the culture and economy of indigenous peoples of the Arctic (PBSG 1995). A hunting season was first imposed in Canada in 1935. Hunting opportunities were restricted to

Native people in 1949, with quotas for polar bears introduced in 1967. The harvest of polar bears was almost 700 in 1967/68, but dropped dramatically with the introduction of quotas. In the 1978/79 season, the largest increase occurred when the quota was increased by 12 percent (Lee et al. 1994). Since 1991, quotas have undergone major adjustments, mainly downward.

In the NWT, the indigenous people in a settlement may authorize the sale of a permit from the quota to a non-resident hunter. These hunts are subject to certain restrictions: the hunt must be conducted under Canadian jurisdiction and guided by a Native hunter; transportation during the hunt must be by dog sled; the tags must come from the community quota; and tags from unsuccessful sport hunts may not be used again. Sport hunters typically select trophy animals, usually large

adult males. Table 1 shows that in 1993/94, 79 percent of polar bears taken as sport-hunting trophies were male. It also summarizes the number of sport hunts that occurred in the different populations in the NWT for the last two harvest seasons. Sport hunting for polar bears began in the NWT in 1969/70 with three hunts and gradually increased (GNWT). The average over the last five seasons was 55 as summarized by the Service in Table 2. The maximum number of sport hunts in any one year was 83 which occurred in the 1987/88 season. The success rate varied from 30 percent in 1979/80 to 91 percent in 1985/86 (Lee et al. 1994) and has averaged about 79 percent over the past five seasons. The number of quota tags used for sport hunting compared to the total known kill in the NWT averaged 10.9 percent annually over the last five seasons.

TABLE 1.—STATISTICS FOR POLAR BEAR SPORT HUNTING IN THE NWT FOR POPULATIONS IDENTIFIED AS SOUTHERN BEAUFORT SEA (SB), NORTHERN BEAUFORT SEA (NB), QUEEN ELIZABETH ISLANDS (QE), PARRY CHANNEL (PC), BAFFIN BAY (BB), GULF OF BOOTHIA (GB), AND FOXE BASIN (FB)

Population	1993/94 season			1992/93 season	
	No. killed (No. not successful)	Percent of total	Percent male	No. killed (No. not successful)	Percent of total
SB	3 (3)	9.7	67	1 (0)	2.7
NB	2 (3)	8.1	100	1 (1)	5.4
QE	0 (1)	1.6	1 (0)	2.7
PC	26 (2)	45.2	85	22 (2)	64.9
BB	5 (0)	8.1	80	2 (1)	8.1
GB	7 (3)	16.1	86	4 (1)	13.5
FB	5 (2)	11.3	40	0 (1)	2.7
Total	48 (14)	79	31 (6)

TABLE 2.—SUMMARY OF SPORT HUNT KILLS IN NWT

Season	Total sports hunt	No. killed (percent success)	Known total kill in NWT	Percent total sport hunt to known kill in NWT
1989/90	60	48 (80)	537	11.2
1990/91	66	50 (76)	490	13.5
1991/92	48	39 (81)	549	8.7
1992/93	37	31 (84)	506	7.3
1993/94	62	48 (77)	432	14.4
Average	55	43 (79)	503	10.9

There is substantial economic return to the community from sport hunts. The potential value of the "actual hunt cost" in 1993/94 in Parry Channel for one polar bear was \$18,500 (US) with 80 percent of the money staying in the community. However, only a few communities currently take part in sport hunts as it reduces hunting

opportunities for local hunters (GNWT) and requires responsibilities in dealing with non-Native clients.

Polar bear sport hunts for non-residents are usually arranged through an agent or broker. In general, the agent or broker contacts the community's Hunters' and Trappers' Organization or Associations or Committees (HTO) to

arrange for the hunt including the acquisition of a hunting license and tag for the hunter. If the community has not already decided what portion of its quota, if any, to designate for sport hunters, the HTO representative presents all requests for sport-hunt tags at a community meeting. The community decides on the number of