

People of the ice bridge: The future of the Pikialasorsuaq

IUCN Canada

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Stephanie Meakin, ICC Canada

FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND NEXT STEPS FROM THE PIKIALASORSUAQ COMMISSION

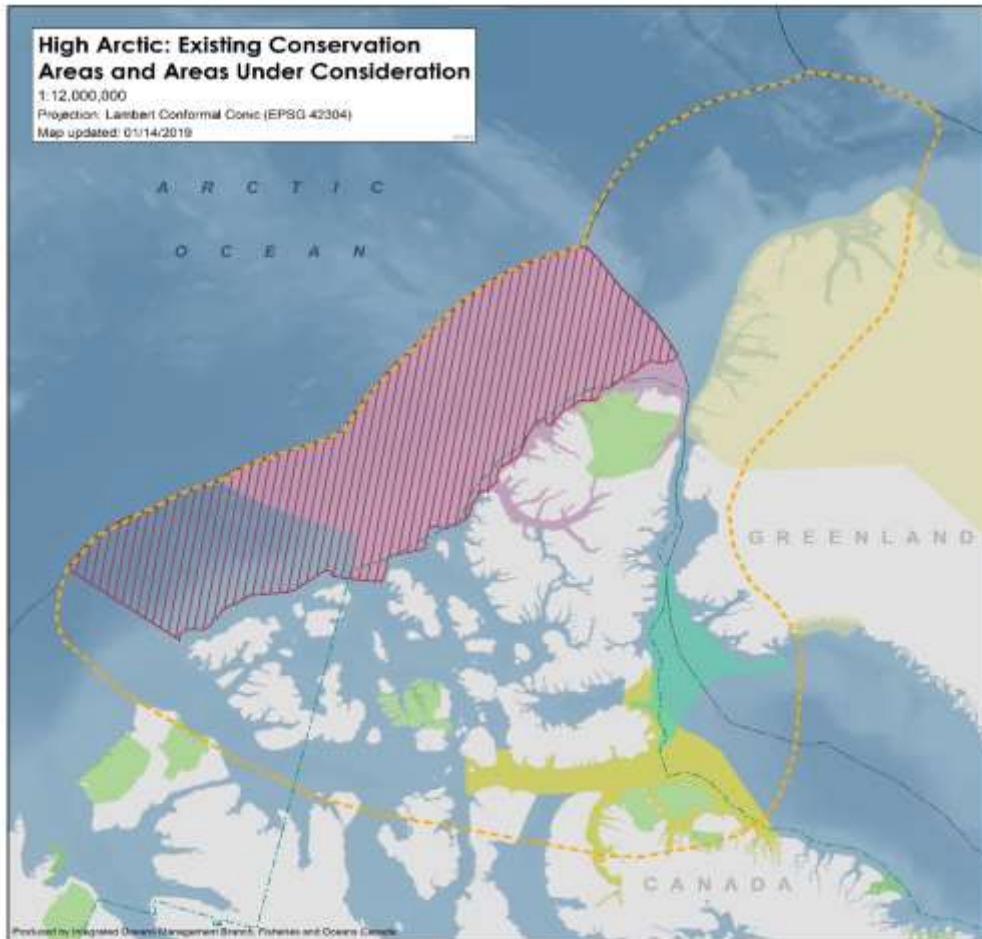
Mean May North Water Polynya Extent (from Dunbar (1969) and Traditional Knowledge (2016))



Map of Pikialasorsuaq between Nunavut, Canada and Greenland

High Arctic Context Complementary measures:

- Talluritiup Imanga NMCA Inuit Impact and Benefit negotiations
- Link to High Arctic Basin protection measure proposal
- Pikialasorsuaq – Inuit led management and monitoring
- Other federal protected areas
- Draft Nunavut Land Use Plan (not shown on map)



Areas Under Consideration

- Arctic Basin Multi-Year Pack Ice EBSA
- Lost Ice Area
- Proposed High Arctic Basin Study Area
- The Pikialasorsuaq (North Water Polynya)

Existing Conservation Areas

- Federal Protected Areas
- Talluritiup Imanga National Marine Conservation Area

Administrative Boundaries

- Exclusive Economic Zone
- Nunavut Settlement Area

PIKIALASORSUAQ COMMISSION

- Commission was mandated to:
 - Conduct consultations in communities in Canada and Greenland closely connected to Pikialasorsuaq
 - Communicate how Inuit communities envision the future of this marine region



Commission arriving in Qaanaaq, Greenland

RECOMMENDATION: INUIT-LED MONITORING

This was very strongly supported by consultations. Engagement and collaboration between Nunavut and Greenlandic regions near the Pikialasorsuaq and between Inuit knowledge holders and the academic community is critical to the success of managing this region for the future.



RECOMMENDATION: ESTABLISHMENT OF INUIT LED MANAGEMENT REGIME

- What do we want to manage in the Pikialasorsuaq?
- What are the community priorities in Canada and Greenland for the Pikialasorsuaq?
- What issues do we want a say in regarding the future and use of the Pikialasorsuaq?
- What is already in place to build upon in the Pikialasorsuaq and in Inuit Nunangat?

We will consider all the tools available to achieve an Inuit led management regime recognizing there are many available, each have benefits and consequences. We hope to create a regime that best suits the needs of the communities and the future of the Pikialasorsuaq.

RECOMMENDATION: ESTABLISHMENT OF FREE TRAVEL ZONE

- Global Affairs Canada leading on discussions for a travel-free zone
- Joint Declaration of the Canada-EU Strategic Partnership Agreement Joint Ministerial Committee (JMC) meeting “agreed to explore how to facilitate the mobility of Indigenous Inuit across the Canada-Greenland border to enhance economic, social and cultural opportunities for isolated northern Indigenous peoples in the Arctic, which would reflect a renewed relationship with Indigenous peoples based on the recognition of rights, respect, cooperation and partnership.”
- GAC has hired a consultant conducting engagement and an Assessment of possible short term and longer term options for more flexible border requirement
- GAC leading a whole of Government Process on Indigenous Mobility, with this objective embedded

UN DECLARATION ON THE RIGHTS OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

- Supports the Commission's recommendations
- Canada & Denmark are signatories and have responsibilities to uphold these rights

Article 25: Indigenous peoples have the right to maintain and strengthen distinctive spiritual relationship with traditionally owned and used lands, waters, coastal seas & to uphold responsibilities to future generations in this regard

Photo credit: Bjarne Lyberth

A Priority for the Government of Canada

- **Global Affairs Canada** has been mandated to explore how to facilitate the mobility of Inuit across the Canada-Greenland border
- **Fisheries and Oceans Canada** has direction to advance negotiations with the Government of Greenland and the Kingdom of Denmark on agreement to developing a framework for implementation of the management and conservation objectives of the Commission
 - **A lead negotiator has been appointed**

POSSIBLE MECHANISMS

International law instruments:

Current state rights under UN Convention on Law of the Sea
Adoption of Particularly Sensitive Sea Area designation
(International Maritime Organization)

Bilateral agreements (e.g. Joint Development Agreement) and
regional initiatives

Domestic legal instruments (MPA, NMCA)

Indigenous Protected and Conserved Areas (IPCA)

IUCN Other Effective Conservation Mechanism (OECM)



MOVING FORWARD

The Pikialasorsuaq Implementation Committee will be inclusive to all views and perspectives.

“Joint Leaders Statement” that will launch engagement and negotiations to define an implementation framework for the Pikialasorsuaq Commission recommendations

And specifically:

- Work with Canada and Greenland through appropriate local and regional bodies and organizations
- Create a management plan including an Inuit-led monitoring program
- Continue to work with Global Affairs Canada on easing mobility issues for Inuit across the Pikialasorsuaq



Photo credit: Vincent Desrosiers



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Next Steps

- Identifying data and knowledge gaps: Creating a base-line
- Understanding the threats and potential impacts from human activities
- Assessing the economic interests and potential for the area
- Defining management and monitoring objectives
- Defining the structure, roles and functions of the potential joint Canada-Greenland Inuit led Management Authority
 - Role for communities and regional organizations
 - Role for Nunavut regional and land claim agreement bodies
 - Role of existing bilateral multilateral bodies: Polar Bears; Bowhead Whales
- Defining the boundary of the Pikialasorsuaq management area

MORE INFORMATION

Trilingual report

Website

www.pikialasorsuaq.org

