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Chair

Mrs. Deborah Schulte

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• (1535)

[English]

The Chair (Mrs. Deborah Schulte (King—Vaughan, Lib.)): I call the meeting to order.

We'll get started, seeing that our guests are here and everyone who is going to be here is here. Welcome.

We are studying federal protected areas and conservation objectives.

I will ask that we have 15 minutes at the end of the meeting to go into committee business. We'll need to adopt our subcommittee report. We'll do that at the end of the meeting, if you don't mind, so that we can give our guests full attention and not delay their statements.

I want to welcome Ken Hardie, who is standing in for John Aldag. Thank you very much for coming back and joining us.

We have Rémi Massé standing in for Mark Gerretsen. Thank you very much for that.

Terry Sheehan is standing in for Darren Fisher.

We have a lot of stand-ins today. Everybody is running around trying to do a lot of things.

Wayne Stetski is standing in for Linda Duncan on this particular study. You've been with us the whole way through, so you are not really a stand-in, but we want to recognize that. Welcome to all.

We have three witnesses with us today. From Oceans North Canada, we have Trevor Taylor, who is the director of fisheries conservation. Welcome, Trevor, and thank you.

We have two witnesses from World Wildlife Fund-Canada: David Miller, president and chief executive officer, and Paul Crowley, vice-president, Arctic. Welcome, and thank you.

I will turn the floor over to you. Who would like to go first?

Mr. Trevor Taylor (Director of Fisheries Conservation, Oceans North Canada): Sure.

The Chair: Thank you, Trevor.

You have 10 minutes. We have a little process here. When you get within a minute of the end, I am going to hold up a little yellow card, just so I am not interrupting you, and when I hold up the red card, please wrap up, because that's the end of the 10 minutes. We always have a lot of questions, so we want to make sure we leave enough time for questions.

The floor is yours.

Mr. Trevor Taylor: Thank you, and I'll try to abide by that. I timed it at ten and a half minutes, and when I turn up my Newfoundland speak, it'll probably be eight and a half.

Thank you, Madam Chair, and members of the committee, for the invitation to contribute to your study on protected areas and conservation objectives, including the potential for indigenous conservation initiatives.

My name, as you know now, is Trevor Taylor, fisheries conservation director for Oceans North Canada, a partnership of the Pew Charitable Trusts and Ducks Unlimited Canada. Oceans North promotes science-based and community-based conservation of Canada's northern seas consistent with Inuit land claims and traditional practices.

We support Arctic-ready industrial rules and standards for sustainable commercial fishing, environmentally responsible offshore hydrocarbon development, and safe Arctic shipping.

To be clear, Oceans North does not represent the Inuit. There are numerous Inuit organizations and talented leaders who can speak for themselves, but our approach to promoting and supporting ecological conservation in the Arctic deliberately begins with establishing partnerships with Inuit communities and organizations on shared objectives.

We do this for a simple reason. We do not believe that conservation projects or policies in the Canadian Arctic can be successful unless the Inuit drive it. Inuit have a legal claim on the land and sea of the Arctic, possess sophisticated traditional ecological knowledge about it, and are deeply invested in its future. A few examples illustrating our approach are included in our submission in front of you, but suffice it to say that we operate in each of the four Inuit land claims areas, as well as across Davis Strait in Greenland.

The Arctic is vitally important to Canada and makes up 68% of Canada's total shore. It stretches 165,000 kilometres from Baffin Island in the east to across the high Arctic archipelago, to the Mackenzie River delta and Yukon in the west. Just about every one of the 52 or 53 Inuit communities in Canada is built directly on the shore of the ocean, on tidewater.

Every square kilometre of the Arctic Ocean is associated with an Inuit land claim settled with the federal government. Protection of special marine areas in the Arctic should be part of the spirit and intent of implementing those Inuit land claims agreements in the ocean. Marine conservation areas, one of the subjects of the committee's inquiry, can provide an innovative part of the answer for Canada's Arctic ocean. Properly created and financed, these areas have the potential to protect key areas of ocean essential for Inuit communities and Arctic wildlife. These areas can be used to monitor the pace and extent of climate change and provide jobs and training opportunities for Inuit experts.

The good news is that the new federal government has committed to playing a major leadership role in the creation of a network of marine protected areas in the Arctic. To fully realize this commitment, though, the federal government must acknowledge and incorporate Inuit leadership in the identification, establishment, and ongoing management of key marine areas.

As map 1, which we've distributed to the committee, illustrates, in the Canadian Arctic Inuit experts have already identified over half of Arctic Ocean areas as important biological habitat that are needed to maintain a thriving marine ecosystem essential for continued use.

Scientists are finding that earlier targets, such as the Convention on Biological Diversity's 10% goal, are inadequate to maintain the basic ecological services humans need oceans to produce. For example, a recent examination of over 140 studies concluded that meeting basic environmental and human needs would require protecting 30% to 50% of ocean habitat. In addition, one of the fathers of modern biodiversity science, E.O. Wilson, recently issued an urgent call for protecting half of the earth's habitat as a way to prevent massive extinctions.

I apologize to the translators. All of the "Hs" are in there; it's just that they may be in the wrong order or may be in the wrong spots. Okay? That's a Newfoundland problem. Actually, it's not a Newfoundland problem; it's everybody else's problem. We are perfectly fine with it.

Emerging scientific thought is converging with Inuit knowledge on the importance of protecting Canada's Arctic Ocean habitat; however, less than 1% of the Arctic is currently protected.

How do we fill this gap? We suggest the principles that follow for proceeding with the implementation of the commitment to establish a network of marine protected areas in the Canadian Arctic.

Number one: to protect key ocean habitat important for maintaining Inuit use, Inuit, in partnership with the federal government, should select areas already identified by Inuit as being important to their culture and the wildlife they depend on.

● (1540)

Number two is that management and monitoring of these areas should be led by Inuit, resulting in significant jobs and training opportunities.

Number three is that Canada must uphold Inuit rights and continued use of ocean areas as legally mandated under land claims with the crown and morally required under international human rights norms.

Some of this might be self-evident, but it bears repeating.

The resulting network of marine protected areas should allow for Inuit hunting and fishing, but preclude mineral leasing, seismic testing, and industrial fishing. Areas should be integrated into an Arctic shipping policy in which Inuit play a significant role in designating and managing vessel corridors. As our second map illustrates, shipping routes overlap with identified ecological and cultural areas. Special standards should be established and classified by risk for ships travelling through biologically and culturally important areas.

Inuit and government researchers have worked together to integrate with western science the traditional knowledge built up over the generations to identify ecologically and biologically significant areas, such as Lancaster Sound in Nunavut, Prince Albert Sound in the Northwest Territories, and the Torngat fjords in Labrador. These kinds of areas, rich in biological productivity and important for Inuit communities, should be at the top of the government's list for protection.

Areas selected should be identified by Inuit as important for traditional activities, such as hunting, fishing, and travelling. They should be near northern communities to maximize continued use by people and local conservation jobs for monitoring and management, and they should be an ocean habitat that provides an abundance of key Arctic animals, birds, and fish, and other ecosystem services. We would be protecting abundance, in short.

The information needed to select these kinds of areas is held by numerous Inuit organizations and communities, as well as territorial and federal governments, scientists, NGOs, and industry. These principles, applied to the government's conservation targets in the Arctic, will result in a network of Arctic places important for people and the environment.

A network of marine conservation areas in the Arctic used by nearby Inuit communities provides a platform for the delivery of federal jobs, benefits, and services to local communities in support of natural resources management, as well as economic, social, and cultural well-being and resilience. Possibilities include jobs and training for management and operation of the marine conservation areas, community-based monitoring of ecological trends in climate change, vessel monitoring in key ecological and culturally important areas, and other services that could take advantage of Inuit ties to special areas or economies of scale from a community-based trained workforce, and so on.

Delivery of the desired programs could be enhanced through an Arctic-wide Inuit coastal stewardship program that could be developed along with the conservation areas. This would provide a baseline of capacity and a platform to enhance the delivery of desired programs. By ensuring that economic benefits are tied directly to the conservation objectives, a program like this would also enhance their durability.

Such a program of benefits would require the federal government to re-examine its current practices with respect to the use of Inuit impact and benefit agreements that have been employed for protected areas by Parks Canada and the DFO. In our opinion, the current approach and thinking around the negotiation of these agreements are inadequate for the task ahead.

The current thinking in these departments appears to be satisfied with fulfilling what are seen as the minimum legally required steps to accommodate Inuit rights. The current approach seems to think of benefits to Inuit communities as a kind of programmatic add-on or afterthought when it's perceived by the federal government that there may be impacts on traditional use and occupancy in protected areas.

We need to flip that script.

We need to see the new shared leadership model as situating Inuit communities not as one aspect of or an adjunct or add-on to protected areas, but as constituting the very core of the planning, establishment, and management of protected areas. This new model of shared leadership would incorporate but also go beyond existing and enhanced ecological conservation measures and after-the-fact compensation or impact and benefit agreements. It should start with an essential role for Inuit communities at the front end of the design process. As well, it should incorporate funded support for locally delivered services to local communities in support of their economic, social, and cultural well-being and resilience.

• (1545)

Generally speaking, the 20th century approach to protected area creation has not provided an essential role to the indigenous people who are most intimately acquainted with many of these places—

The Chair: Trevor, may I just hold you for a minute?

Do I have unanimous consent to let Trevor carry on? He's probably got another minute or two.

Mr. Trevor Taylor: It's two paragraphs.

The Chair: There's a little bit to go. Are you okay with that? Are we all good?

Voices: Agreed.

The Chair: Okay, please carry on. Thank you.

Mr. Trevor Taylor: Thank you.

Generally speaking, the 20th century approach to protected area creation has not provided an essential role to the indigenous people who are most intimately acquainted with many of these places. In traditional models, the general Canadian public has been the main audience, and programs are geared at educating and engaging visitors. In the north, however, Inuit maintain a fundamental and uninterrupted relationship with these natural areas.

We have heard that the Arctic is not a park. This notion reflects the idea that parks are perceived as places separate from people, where nature is to be preserved and undisturbed, but people in the north, in particular, are part of that nature and those places. Northern MPAs should reflect that and should strive to reset this model and to primarily serve the communities that use, manage, and protect them. These protected areas should be integrated into many aspects of community life and should serve as a tool and platform for broader

local investments. We see the task of establishing a network of marine protected areas in the Arctic as both an historic opportunity and a heavy responsibility.

That said, we could not be more enthusiastic about the recent bold steps toward this goal. We are encouraged by the actions thus far and believe it is not overdramatizing to say that we are at a crossroads with respect to Canada's relationship with the Arctic and Inuit. We are headed in the right direction. The question is whether we have the imagination and political will—"will" generally is probably a better term—to move forward in a meaningful way.

Thank you very much.

The Chair: Thank you very much, Trevor.

What we're going to do is listen to all the witnesses. Paul and David can do their presentations, and then we'll start rounds of questioning, if you don't mind.

David, please go ahead.

Mr. David Miller (President and Chief Executive Officer, World Wildlife Fund-Canada): Thank you very much, Madam Chair.

I'm David Miller and the president over World Wildlife Fund-Canada. I'm joined by Paul Crowley, who is our vice-president, Arctic.

I'll give a couple of introductory remarks, and then Paul will give the substance of our presentation today.

For nearly 50 years, WWF-Canada has worked to protect nature here and internationally. We are Canada's largest international conservation organization. We have offices in Vancouver, Prince Rupert, Toronto, Ottawa, Montreal, Halifax, St. John's, and with relevance today, Iqaluit and Inuvik, and we have the active support of more than 150,000 Canadians.

We work in places that are unique and ecologically important so that nature, wildlife, habitat, and people thrive together.

We do this by working with communities, with industry, with academia and government, drawing on science, and by doing so we focus our efforts in Canada on increasing marine protection, on habitat-friendly renewable energy, on freshwater health, sustainable fisheries, and wildlife habitat conservation.

Today we'll share recommendations that we think are bold and whose time has come, especially considering that the changing climate is altering the Arctic environment faster than any other on the planet and putting species and people at risk.

Mr. Crowley will tell you about the dated practice of insisting on mineral and energy resource assessments before an area can be considered for protection. You'll hear how the Canadian Petroleum Resources Act puts oil and gas ahead of all other concerns in the Canadian Arctic and why it's time that stopped, and you'll learn about a respectful approach to marine protected areas that puts Inuit at the helm.

We will offer you concrete suggestions for conservation and sustainable development in this iconic but rapidly changing Canada environment.

On behalf of World Wildlife Fund-Canada, I say how heartened we are to see the work of the committee, and we're happy to support it in any way we can.

I'd now like to turn the podium over to Mr. Crowley.

• (1550)

Mr. Paul Crowley (Vice-President, Arctic, World Wildlife Fund-Canada): Thank you, David.

As Trevor said earlier, we approach our work with a community-first approach. We know that in the long term, conservation will only be sustainable in the Arctic if it's community driven and community supported and provides benefits to those communities.

We have a long-time presence in Nunavut. I have been there for over 20 years now and I am based there. I know that working with communities is often difficult, and it's difficult for governments to do when they're far away. However, it is incredibly rewarding, and ultimately it is the only path to truly sustainable change.

We're thrilled with Canada's commitment toward marine conservation. We're thrilled that it was adopted in the government platform and then repeated in the Obama-Trudeau joint statement. It was said there to be a milestone and not a destination. We think that's important.

As has been pointed to earlier, there is a developing consensus around the world that 10% will not be enough. The figure of 30% has been put forward by the World Parks Congress as a number that is probably a bare minimum. In the Arctic, in a region that is experiencing so much change, 30% is probably not sufficient. We're probably looking at a much higher number, closer to 50%, as was stated earlier.

With regard to how to get there, the first step is to finish what has started. When looking at the national marine conservation area for Lancaster Sound that the communities have been requesting for over 30 years, it would be timely to get on with that and to protect the whole region that the communities have been asking for.

There's also a great opportunity in the Arctic to move toward the interim goals of 5% and 10%, particularly when we look at the government's approach of ensuring that large pristine areas are protected. The Arctic certainly has many of those.

We know that ecologically and biologically significant areas have been broadly identified, mapped, and described within Canada's Arctic marine environment. That should be the starting point for new consultations with northern communities for new marine protected areas.

We do have to streamline this approach. Seven years, which is the minimum that it has taken up to now to create a marine protected area, just won't get us to those goals in a timely way.

We offer some recommendations.

Identification of sites should be community driven. There's no disagreement on that. Inuit are the holders of traditional and local

knowledge. They are the ones who bear all of the risks and receive the benefits associated with the marine use in their areas.

We must also look at other biologically important areas that may not be immediately adjacent to communities but that are still important for the biodiversity of the region, to ensure that the areas close to these communities are also well connected.

Looking at ecologically and biologically significant areas that are outside of immediate adjacency from communities or outside of land claim areas is also very important.

We suggest the last ice area. The last ice area is the area where summer sea ice is going to retreat to over the coming decades. We know from projections that the last summer sea ice—summer sea ice is an incredibly important habitat, as is the ice edge—is retreating, and the last remnants of it will be in the Canadian Arctic Archipelago or north of the Arctic Archipelago. We propose that the Department of Fisheries and Oceans should be looking for significant protection for this area.

We also suggest an area called the Pikiyasorsuaq. That's a Greenlandic word for “upwelling” and refers to the North Water Polynya, the most productive polynya in the Arctic. A polynya is an area that stays free of ice, even in the winter. This area, which is shared between Greenland and Canada, with much of it on the Canadian side, is the most important area in which to feed for plankton and phytoplankton in all of the eastern Arctic waters.

• (1555)

At the moment there is an Inuit-led commission, the Pikiyasorsuaq Commission, that is considering the future of this area. Certainly the Department of Fisheries and Oceans should be looking to their report, which is due out by the end of this calendar year, but we submit that we should be looking for the department to engage in discussions of the possible protection of the area as a large pristine area.

We also believe that there needs to be thought given to Inuit impact and benefit agreements to streamline the process. In a region where poverty is endemic, these agreements are extremely important for community and economic development, and there is economic and community development that can happen from conservation.

We also know that across the Arctic there are four land claim regions, and each holds different sets of rights. We recommend that the Government of Canada create an equitable and transparent financing formula, as well as high minimum standards, for community management for the impact and benefit agreements across all four land claims. It's critical that these negotiations be transparent, parallel, and rise to the highest level, not fall to the lowest floor. It's critical that these negotiations begin with Inuit organizations immediately and in parallel to the identification process.

With regard to minimum standards, setting minimum standards for the creation of marine protected areas does not end up being a completely new negotiation of regulations for each one. Setting minimum standards is important to not only streamline the process but also to ensure that protected areas are not just paper parks or lines on a map, that they actually do protect the biodiversity and provide benefit for the communities that are nearby.

Mineral and energy resource assessments, or MERAs, are currently required before an area is protected by a policy that was adopted some time ago. They often take a lot of time and they end up stalling the process. In the case of the Lancaster Sound national marine conservation area, the MERA has been a bone of contention.

We submit that this policy should be revisited. It is discretionary. Its application should be revisited, and it should be updated into the modern era to reflect all of the concerns that communities have now, not just the concerns about petroleum development.

The Chair: Mr. Crowley, hang on a minute. We are over your time. We are probably about another minute and a bit until the end.

Do I have unanimous consent to continue?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Chair: Okay. I am sorry to interrupt. I needed to do that. Thank you.

Mr. Paul Crowley: Thank you.

On the MERAs, we are just reflecting that Parks Canada itself has also recommended that this policy be updated.

Regarding oil and gas, we submit that marine protected areas should exclude all oil and gas development, including seismic activity. It's just not compatible with protection.

At the moment, officials from the Department of Fisheries and Oceans have told us that they are not entertaining marine protected areas where there may be existing oil and gas rights. This is under the 30-year-old Canada Petroleum Resources Act, which gave petroleum absolute priority over every other value and did not consider any other value. We think this is wrong and should be changed. We also believe that it is wrong-headed to provide indefinite rights, as the Canada Petroleum Resources Act does. To give indefinite rights is just not defensible.

Finally, we submit that the revisions of the Oceans Act that are coming our way should consider new approaches, such as Inuit marine protected areas where, when there is a clear expression of a desire to protect the marine area by the community, a rapid process—not a 30-year process—to deploy that protection should ensue, driven by the community itself and assisted by the Government of Canada. Inuit conservation management, allowing for continued harvesting and community uses, would be paramount.

I'd just like to conclude.

The Arctic is a heritage that is important not only to the communities that are there; it's also a heritage that Canada holds for the rest of the planet as well. It is vital for the well-being of communities. It's also vital for the planet. We believe that a

minimum goal of 30% protection over the long term, perhaps more, is what we should be aiming for.

Thank you.

• (1600)

The Chair: Thank you very much.

We'll open the floor to questions.

I want to welcome Michael McLeod, who is standing in for Mark Gerretsen.

Go ahead, Mr. Amos.

Mr. William Amos (Pontiac, Lib.): Thank you, Chair, and thank you to our witnesses. It's wonderful to see such committed and reputable conservation organizations testifying before us today.

In the interest of full disclosure, in a past life prior to being elected, I served as legal counsel on issues of offshore drilling projects in the Beaufort for WWF.

My first question goes to Mr. Taylor.

I've been impressed with the work that Oceans North has done, particularly the Inuit-first approach and the collaboration with communities. I commend the integrated shipping framework report that you came out with recently to all members here. It's actually a crucial piece in the marine protected areas discussion.

Would Oceans North agree with WWF's assessment of the need to review the approach to prioritizing mineral and energy resource assessments prior to the establishment of conservation? Is that something that Oceans North is on side with as well? That would lend strength to the recommendation that we might consider making.

Mr. Trevor Taylor: Absolutely. We would certainly agree and support that type of recommendation.

It seems preposterous that it takes 30 or 40 years. In the case of Lancaster Sound, there's been a 40-year discussion in trying to get a park established, but it would be less than 40 months, probably, if an oil company wanted to come in today and do something in that same area by going through the regulatory hoops and whatnot. I don't know what the exact timeline would be, but relatively speaking, there are orders of magnitude and differences there.

That has been the priority. Our priorities need to be re-examined. There are other values in the Canadian Arctic in particular that need to be considered and protected. We would fully support the observation of World Wildlife Fund on this matter.

Mr. William Amos: In regard to Mr. Crowley's suggestion that a review of the CPRA, the Canada Petroleum Resources Act, is necessary, would you agree that the approach of the CPRA to enable issuances of exploration licences be made subject to a broader marine planning exercise whereby conservation priorities ought to be identified first, prior to the issuance of licences that would lead to exploratory opportunities in oil and gas?

Is that something you would agree with? I will put the same question to Mr. Taylor.

●(1605)

Mr. Paul Crowley: Yes. Our view is that the whole of the regulatory regime for oil and gas in the Arctic needs to be reviewed. It is dated. It dates back to the late 1970s, when there was only one value put forward, and that was to encourage exploration.

In the interim, we know that other values have become more known. Certainly, community values were already there, but we know more of them now. Other economic values, such as like fishing and conservation, are also present. Furthermore, we're in a new world of climate change, where eventually there will be a hard cap on greenhouse gases, and Canada will have to live in that world.

The whole of the regulatory regime for oil and gas should be updated. Other jurisdictions—for instance, Norway—do conduct strategic environmental assessments on a region before they allow for permits within that region for oil and gas rights. They have a planning approach that Canada does not have yet.

Mr. William Amos: Mr. Taylor, how would you react to that?

Mr. Trevor Taylor: I'd agree.

I want to observe very generally on this point that after 40 or 50 years, maybe it's time to sit back and reflect on our whole approach in the Arctic as it relates to resource development.

We're not anti-resource development, not by any stretch of the imagination. Just to bring up a related topic, actually, there is the Baffinland mine. We think it would quite likely be a very positive development for Nunavut.

That said, we have to bear in mind that for 40 or 50 years some people have chased the dream of Arctic oil and gas, and with one small exception, there has been no oil and gas hauled out of the Canadian Arctic—well, two minor exceptions, I guess.

Regarding mines, can you tell me what the longest-operating mine in the Canadian Arctic has been? It's less than 25 years. There's no mine in the Canadian Arctic that has lasted longer than 25 years. Are these important? Yes. If they can be done in a sustainable way, great, but these things are not big economic drivers. They're not big taxation or royalty drivers, so it's time to look at it a bit differently.

The Chair: Mr. Miller wanted to have a few words on that, but maybe we can pick it up with subsequent questioning.

Mr. Fast is next.

Hon. Ed Fast (Abbotsford, CPC): First I'd like to ask a question of Mr. Taylor.

You mentioned that when establishing protected areas in the Arctic, Inuit rights need to be taken into account right up front. You suggested that fishing and hunting rights need to be fully protected, but you would exclude industrial fishing and resource development from the management rights that the Inuit would have, correct?

Mr. Trevor Taylor: No, I didn't say resource development; I said mineral development.

I don't remember the exact words now, but I said mineral development, seabed mining, seismic testing, and industrial-scale fishing. We do believe that in the core key habitat areas of the Canadian Arctic—and for that matter, anywhere—if there is a core

area that is absolutely essential to the ongoing ecological and biological productivity of the ecosystem, these things cannot happen there.

There are areas where industrial fishing and seismic hydrocarbon development and mining can take place, but there are some areas where they can't, and we need to recognize that.

●(1610)

Hon. Ed Fast: Then have you consulted with Inuit on that kind of approach, and do they generally support those particular areas being excluded from their area of management?

Mr. Trevor Taylor: I'll reiterate another point to clarify here, just so the member understands.

To be clear, Oceans North does not represent Inuit, nor do we speak on their behalf. We are advocating what we believe should be the principles governing and guiding this process. We are advocating that the federal government, in conjunction with Inuit, establish these areas. We're not saying this is the way it should be; we're saying this is our view of how it should be.

Have we consulted with Inuit? We work closely with Inuit. We haven't taken the government's mandate away from them yet, nor do we plan on it. It's the federal government's mandate to consult with Inuit on how this should unfold.

Hon. Ed Fast: I suspect that as these land claims move forward towards final settlement—

Mr. Trevor Taylor: I think they're settled, but anyway, carry on.

Hon. Ed Fast: Right now, do Inuit have the rights over the lands that are covered by their settlement areas?

Mr. Trevor Taylor: To varying degrees, yes. In some areas, they have total control, and in some areas they have advisory roles.

Hon. Ed Fast: Some of those territorial areas would be subject to protection.

Mr. Trevor Taylor: Yes.

Hon. Ed Fast: If, in fact, the Inuit have control over or significant say in the development of their resources within those areas, will it then require the government to repatriate some of those powers in order to achieve your goal, which is to ensure that no mineral development, seismic activity, or industrial fishing takes place in those areas?

Mr. Trevor Taylor: If the Inuit decide there is an area they want protected that is of critical importance to their culture and to the ecology of the surrounding area, and they believe there is something wrong, that's a discussion they will have to have with the federal government.

Having said that, I am not aware of any area where this is an issue. There was an issue in the area just outside of Lancaster Sound among some environmental organizations, the federal government, and the private sector, but that issue was resolved some months ago when Shell's leases—maybe leases, maybe not—were withdrawn. I am not aware of any other.

I could be wrong, Mr. Fast. I'm sorry.

Hon. Ed Fast: Thank you. That's very helpful.

Mr. Crowley, along the same lines, you mentioned that oil and gas development should be completely, absolutely excluded from protected areas. Again, right now the paradigm is quite different, since preference is given to the development of oil and gas above conservation objectives. I think that's what you said.

If you are going to reverse that paradigm to where oil and gas aren't in play anymore, that will require buy-in from our Inuit people. Would you agree?

Mr. Paul Crowley: No. I would disagree with that.

Hon. Ed Fast: Could you clarify that? Why do you disagree?

Mr. Paul Crowley: The Inuit do not hold rights to the subsea; therefore, the benefits they would receive from that are certainly not clear. They are currently wrapped up in what would be—at this point, under legislation—secret negotiations held by the Government of Canada with the company for benefits. It is not something the Inuit directly participate in. They do not get—and will not get, under the current regime—any direct benefit from that oil and gas development. They bear all the risk, without any of the benefit.

In this case, it's all held by the Government of Canada. The territorial government—I'll speak for Nunavut, which I know best—does not hold any of those rights.

Hon. Ed Fast: At some point in time, the government is going to have to make a decision and say, "Listen, oil and gas is a no go in these protected areas."

Do you not agree that there is going to have to be some level of Inuit buy-in to that kind of an approach? If you agree with me, has that buy-in discussion started? Do you suspect it will take place?

• (1615)

The Chair: Please answer very quickly.

Mr. Paul Crowley: I can answer quickly.

Because of all the risk being borne by the Inuit, I think it would be a fairly quick discussion. I give the example of the community of Clyde River, which is going to be in the Supreme Court of Canada contesting the seismic program that they believe was going to be harmful to their community, again without sufficient benefit coming.

Hon. Ed Fast: Thank you.

The Chair: Mr. Stetski, go ahead.

Mr. Wayne Stetski (Kootenay—Columbia, NDP): Thank you.

I'll give you a bit of background. I was born in Churchill, Manitoba. I started school in Chesterfield Inlet, up in the Northwest Territories. I won't try to pronounce the names you have on the map here.

I had the pleasure of speaking at a conference in Inuvik during the Muskrat Jamboree. I went back for seconds of Arctic char and caribou at their community dinner. I did not go back for seconds of muskrat.

I put that out there because I do have a personal interest in the Arctic and in conservation in the Arctic. During our travels so far, we have met with a lot of indigenous people in the south here, many of whom expressed a sincere interest in seeing new areas protected,

perhaps as indigenous protected areas with a different future from what has been seen in the past.

I know you don't speak for the Inuit, but I would like to ask all three of you whether you have a sense that there is support for protected areas in the Arctic. As well, what are the most important things we could do to gain the confidence of the Inuit that we do share common objectives around protected areas moving forward?

Perhaps we can start with Mr. Taylor.

Mr. Trevor Taylor: I think there is broad support for protection in protected areas at the community level. I think the closer you get to the people who live off the land and off the sea, the greater the commitment to conservation, sustainable use, and protection.

I jokingly say we're affiliated with Ducks Unlimited; it's a great conservation organization. I like working for a conservation organization that wants to preserve stuff so we can hunt it. I think it's fair to say that the approach to conservation—and again I don't speak for Inuit—is to protect it so that they'll be able to sustainably use it indefinitely. I think the closer you get to those people who are still involved in a traditional lifestyle, the greater that commitment to protection, and they would like to see protected areas.

There's been a strong commitment to protecting the area at the top of Foxe Basin in the area around Igloolik and Hall Beach, both prior to the proposed Mary River shipping corridor and during the discussion around what was going to be the southern route for ore shipment out of Baffin Island. It fell apart. They wanted a marine protected area and DFO wanted to establish a marine protected area and everybody was on the same page, but it fell apart over impact and benefit agreement negotiations. It was an inability to bring it together, essentially, on the dollar. If you could make a strong observation on that, I think it would be helpful. Paul already alluded to it.

What can be done? What can you do? What can the federal government do? The discussion has to move out of places like this and be more than a discussion among Paul Crowley, Trevor Taylor, Dave Miller, you guys, senior bureaucrats, and other politicians. It has to get out into the communities. People have to get over this fear of discussion with Inuit on marine protected areas. An Inuk in sealskin with a .30-06 strapped over his back is an imposing figure in February, but he isn't anything to be afraid of. They are a nice bunch of people. They are just as committed as anybody else is, but they need to be engaged, and my view is that they haven't been adequately engaged.

I think they would like to move faster than other people would. People are fearful because you hear some people talk about the need for development, and there is a need for development in the north, but I think some people are fearful of a backlash if you start talking about protected areas. I don't think there's anything to be afraid of, and the longer people don't talk to people in Igloolik and Hall Beach and wherever, the more difficult it's going to be to get this done.

•(1620)

Mr. David Miller: Thank you very much for the question, Mr. Stetski. I was just in Iqaluit. We hosted a clean energy summit there 10 days ago for the federal government, the private sector, a number of communities, the Nunavut government, and scientists. It was very successful.

As it happens, Mr. Crowley and I had a meeting with some of the Inuit organizations. We've been working there for a long time. As you all know, I'm from Toronto, and coming to Iqaluit and saying, "I'm from Toronto and I'm here to help you" is not the best way to start an evening.

Again, we also do not speak for Inuit people or organizations, but in our experience there is a very strong thread of support for conservation among Inuit people for the reasons that Mr. Taylor gave. It's been expressed by a number of their organizations, including the hunting and trapping organization. In our experience this extends to marine protected areas. In particular, there is a very significant concern about oil and gas exploration, particularly given issues like those with Shell. We were pleased to be part of their announcement when they withdrew from their permits in the Lancaster Sound vicinity, but it's clear to people there that there was significant damage just from initial exploration, particularly to fish and whales, and they are extremely concerned about it and about seismic testing. Of course they have seen no real development in that area.

That's our perspective. Mr. Crowley is far more experienced in the Arctic than I am, and he may have a more detailed answer, but in terms of the big picture, we found quite significant support. We're working with organizations and communities in a very positive way on marine protection and other environmental issues.

Mr. Paul Crowley: I've worked internationally—

The Chair: Mr. Crowley, I'm sorry to do this, but we are over time on that question. Maybe we can get back to it through other questioning.

Mr. Bossio, I don't know if you want to carry that on. It's up to you.

Mr. Mike Bossio (Hastings—Lennox and Addington, Lib.): I have a lot of ground that I want to cover myself, so I hope you don't mind. There's so much to talk about and so little time.

Thank you very much for being here today. This has been very informative and will help in generating this report.

The IPAs, these indigenous protected areas, are such an important aspect of achieving our Aichi targets. We were very fortunate to make a trip to Haida Gwaii a couple of weeks ago to see this in action, to see what it can truly look like and what benefits can be derived from that fifty-fifty relationship.

Do you think it's imperative in moving forward with the Inuit to have not just a relationship but a fifty-fifty partnership, working hand in hand together, like the model in Haida Gwaii?

I have a number of questions, so I'm going to try to get people to move along.

Mr. Paul Crowley: The bottom line is yes. I would flip it even further, though: I think there's a role for Inuit to manage these areas for Canada, rather than having Canada manage them.

Mr. Mike Bossio: That was going to be my add-on. What we found in Haida is that the majority of the people now working in Parks Canada are Haida. The Haida are managing it. The Haida now have a \$73-million investment trust that they're using to open up businesses in the north. They're managing things almost completely by themselves, but it started as that partnership, in order to initiate it, to get the training, and I guess to instill that hope for the future that they now have for their own people.

It goes deeper than that. There is this true connection they have in their souls, both to the land and to the water, right? It is totally tied to who they are. That was going to be my next question.

The Haida are now going to the water. They've had the 50/50 partnership on the land; now they want the 50/50 partnership for the water as well, in terms of protecting the water. On the marine side, they want to extend that. They're now going for title as well, for both the water and the sea shelf, out to the 200-mile limit.

One big piece of this is that they want a protected area 50 miles offshore, a no-go zone, period, for shipping, for commercial and industrial fishing, and for exploration and mining, so that there will be no shipping even allowed in that area, because of the sensitivity around having an *Exxon Valdez* out in the ocean. If a ship breaks up, then it's far enough out that the currents will take it away from land rather than to it. Would you agree that this is also imperative in these Arctic marine protected areas?

•(1625)

Mr. Paul Crowley: The experience I have from working in the north and from talking with communities and individuals is that they want to protect their heritage as marine people who have hunted these waters, whether on ice or on water. I can't speak for them, but I can repeat what I've heard, which is essentially that they want to maintain the heritage that they want to offer to their grandchildren.

In certain areas that are incredibly important, whether it's Lancaster Sound or others like the North Water Polynya that we've been hearing about lately from communities, they see themselves as part of those ecosystems and as the best managers of those ecosystems. I haven't seen anything in my 20 years in the north to dispel that notion. I would agree. I would be quite content if communities in the north managed those areas on my behalf.

Mr. Mike Bossio: Trevor, do you want to add to that?

Mr. Trevor Taylor: Yes, sure.

As I said in my remarks, I think this really needs to be driven by Inuit. It needs to be managed by Inuit. I wasn't aware that you had been to Haida Gwaii. Recently I was there as well, with some people from northern Labrador, from Nunatsiavut.

For those who don't know, the Torngat Mountains National Park was part of the land claims settlement in Labrador. The Inuit of northern Labrador basically said that the Torngat Mountains National Park was their gift to Canada. They insisted that it become a national park and they insisted that a clause be included in that national park agreement such that there could be a marine component added later, which they now are beginning to pursue. I hope the federal government moves with them on that down the road.

For the Haida, as you know, that didn't start off as a 50/50 partnership.

Mr. Mike Bossio: Right.

Mr. Trevor Taylor: It started off as the Haida saying that they were going to protect this area. Captain Gold, on his own, essentially —

Mr. Mike Bossio: Exactly—

Mr. Trevor Taylor: —started this.

It was the same thing we had our discussion earlier about how one value was placed over and above everything else. In Haida, it was the logging industry. In the north, it has been mining and oil and gas development.

Mr. Mike Bossio: Do you think it's imperative to move forward here—I'm sorry, I'm running out of time—to establish a 50/50 relationship? Do you think that once again, as Parks Canada has done in hiring 50% Haida—actually, more than 50% Haida—the same thing should happen in DFO to establish that cultural change within DFO, emphasizing conservation rather than development? Do you both agree with that?

Mr. Paul Crowley: I'd go a little further. Under the Nunavut land claim, for instance, it should be representative of the population, and that is the requirement. Since 85% of the population is Inuit, why aim for 50% when you should be representative?

The Chair: Thank you.

Next up is Mr. Eglinski.

Mr. Jim Eglinski (Yellowhead, CPC): Thank you, Madam Chair, and thank you to our presenters.

Mr. Taylor, on your website you stated that there's often a big push to protect areas that are under ecological threat, but less so for regions that are ecologically thriving. I think you cited Manitoba's coastlines. Can you please elaborate on the science behind which areas to protect, and why?

Mr. Trevor Taylor: I really can't speak to the science behind the areas to protect that have been identified. DFO, Environment Canada, and a variety of other federal agencies have gone through a process to identify areas that are ecologically and biologically significant. Parks Canada has a process of identifying representative ecological areas and whatnot. I am ill-equipped to speak to that.

As for protecting areas that are under threat as opposed to those that are not, and you referenced the Manitoba coastline, we found in our work there's a very large population of belugas that, as you may know, spend their summers in the estuaries of the Churchill, Seal, and.... The other river escapes me now. I should be ashamed of myself. My work colleague is going to kill me.

Anyway, we've been advocating that there need to be protective measures introduced in that area. It could be a marine protected area or a national marine conservation area or whatever, but some form of marine protection needs to be afforded to that population in their summer range, and that is supported by adjacent Inuit communities.

That is not advocating to support protection for a population that appears to be under imminent threat but to protect a population that is abundant. There's probably a reason that nature has some populations that are abundant; it's because they need to be abundant in order to survive. The northern cod population off Newfoundland was huge. It collapsed for a variety of reasons, and one in particular. It's been very slow to rebuild. It probably needed to be big in order to be resilient, so we advocate that in some areas you don't protect an area just because it is affording refuge for the last of a species: you need to protect areas because they afford a refuge for this huge amount of a species.

● (1630)

Mr. Jim Eglinski: Thank you.

Mr. David Miller: I will add to Oceans North's answer from the World Wildlife Fund's perspective.

All of our recommendations about marine protected areas are based on science, which may be to do with a species—it's a particular place for that species—or to do with all of the biodiversity represented by that area. In that context, in the Arctic it's our view that the science is very clear: the area is very fragile. It's also timely to protect the areas now before problems ensue from the melting sea ice and from the potential for both development and significantly increased shipping traffic.

It's science-based. Some of it can be protective and forward-looking, and we have a chance to get it right now, which is why we're so thrilled with the work of your committee.

I would like to add one other thought, which isn't in any of our notes—

Mr. Jim Eglinski: Before I lose my time, I just want to ask you a different question.

Mr. David Miller: Oh, sorry. I might have a different answer too.

Voices: Oh, oh!

Mr. Jim Eglinski: I'm sure it's through the Nunavut Tunngavik organization that the Nunavummiut have an exclusive sovereignty over large parts with resource wealth and are looking for opportunities to exploit the mineral wealth. What is your perspective on the drive for resource development in the north and the goals of conservation?

I noticed earlier that you said you didn't think there should be any oil and gas at all, and you seemed to be a little bit hesitant on mineral exploration.

Mr. David Miller: In marine protected areas with high standards, the position of the World Wildlife Fund is that there should not be drilling for oil and gas. We think that's self-evident from the science and the biology, particularly when there is a significant feeding area for fish and whales, for example. From an economic development perspective, it's probably negative as well. It probably costs more jobs than could potentially ever be created, particularly through seismic and other exploration.

We're not opposed to mineral development, but we do have concerns about mineral development in certain areas. We're making submissions to Nunavut land use planning in that regard, particularly with regard to the caribou calving grounds, which are extremely important. Mineral exploration has to be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

In that context, I think it's also important for the committee to think about this. If we can move quickly on marine protection, there's also a strategic issue for Canada. As the sea ice recedes and the Northwest Passage becomes more navigable, protected areas strengthen our claims to sovereignty. I think that layer is rarely mentioned in these issues, and it's extremely important.

• (1635)

Mr. Jim Eglinski: That's a very good point. Thank you, sir.

My time is up?

The Chair: Yes, it is. Sorry about that.

Mr. Amos is next.

Mr. William Amos: Thank you, Madam Chair.

I'll try to make my questions short. The purpose here is to get evidence on the record so that we can write a report on the basis of evidence brought here by our expert witnesses.

Does either of your organizations have proposals for a specific set of areas in the Arctic, whether marine or terrestrial, that you believe would be the best starting points for an integrated, comprehensive set of conservation areas? I understand that your response will be that it should be driven by the Inuit. I agree with that and I understand that. That said, have you as organizations set your minds to the areas that ought to be protected, and is that evidence that could be submitted to the committee?

Mr. David Miller: I think both organizations have done some work on that and could submit our analyses of where we think it's important.

I don't want to speak for Oceans North Canada, but I think the answer is yes. We could submit something.

Mr. William Amos: Is that something that—

The Chair: Perhaps I can make the point here that everybody should have on their desks the ecologically and biologically significant areas that you have identified as starting points.

Mr. Trevor Taylor: Yes, that is correct. Those were by DFO and other federal agencies.

I don't have it with me, unfortunately, but a map exists as part of the land claims negotiation process. The Inuit mapped areas from a use and occupancy perspective, areas that have been important to them from a cultural, ecological, hunting, and lifestyle perspective.

The Chair: That would be great to get.

Mr. Trevor Taylor: We have proposed areas, so to speak. They're not hard and fast areas, but we've said to the federal government and various agencies and politicians over the course of the past couple of years that if they were serious about this 10%, if they took the EBSAs and took the Inuit stuff, they could easily generate a map. It might look like this or it might look like that, but it's very easy to get 10% of these core key areas.

Mr. William Amos: It would be great to get thoughts from both Oceans North and WWF on where those specific areas could be. I note that while the government has identified objectives of 10% and 17% in marine and terrestrial, there also has to be a long-term vision. I would presume that we wouldn't want to limit ourselves to 10% and 17%.

Moving on to the issue of budget, it will come as no surprise that this will be a major challenge. Do you have submissions to make, or could you make submissions, in relation to specific budgetary allocations that you feel are necessary in order to get to the targets set in the Arctic region and to go beyond to what is actually necessary if you're going to achieve real conservation to enable the maintenance of a traditional Inuit lifestyle with all of the ecosystems intact?

Mr. Trevor Taylor: We have gone through a very poor exercise on that, so I'm not sure I'd be comfortable with advancing numbers from a budgetary perspective. We have gone through it, but—

Mr. William Amos: You understand my concern—

Mr. Trevor Taylor: I do.

Mr. William Amos: My concern is that what will come up will come up solely through the department.

Mr. Trevor Taylor: Yes.

Mr. William Amos: We're a new government still—

Mr. Trevor Taylor: Yes.

Mr. William Amos: —so the process of building confidence around what numbers are necessary in order to achieve appropriate objectives is, I think, open.

Mr. David Miller: The best we'd be able to do is order of magnitude, I would think.

Mr. Paul Crowley: Again, we have to be very cognizant that it's with the Inuit that Inuit impact and benefit agreements will be negotiated. We'd really be in awkward position to say, "This is how much you should be allocating to that." However, I will say that the perspective needs to be long term. It's not just a one-off payment; it is a long-term payment that allows for capacity-building, for training, for infrastructure associated in the communities. We have to remember these communities often have no marine infrastructure, not even a boat launch.

My guess is that whatever has come up through the department won't be nearly enough to take on the task, which is to develop an economy and a community that is truly working from conservation. I would say that even though that may appear to be in the end a big number, it's budget dust down here.

• (1640)

Mr. William Amos: Thank you.

I have a very quick question for Mr. Taylor. Would you agree that an integrated shipping lane—I'm not sure what the correct term is, but integrated shipping planning—is a necessary component of any conservation initiative? Do those things have to be done together?

The Chair: You have 30 seconds for that answer.

Mr. Trevor Taylor: Yes.

Voices: Oh, oh!

The Chair: That was easy.

Mr. William Amos: Do I have 15 seconds?

The Chair: Yes, 15 seconds.

Mr. William Amos: Okay, great.

Would you qualify as good or bad the level of coordination between DFO, Environment Canada, and Parks Canada, with regard to northern conservation, park establishment, and protected area establishment?

Mr. Trevor Taylor: Ask me in a year.

I don't mean to be cheeky about it, but in fairness to those agencies, prior to the last year there hadn't been much direction to move this stuff forward. There now appears to be direction to move this stuff forward. It has been just a year. Things need to move, but I don't know yet.

The Chair: That's great. Thank you.

Go ahead, Mr. Shields.

Mr. Martin Shields (Bow River, CPC): Thank you, Madam Chair.

I appreciate the information today.

I'm very familiar with Ducks Unlimited as a conservation organization and with how they work with the people on the land. They have land to deal with. However, you're in a different situation. Land titles are very different in the areas you deal with.

Can you describe to me the process? I'm familiar with Ducks Unlimited, and they often depend on the science and knowledge that the farmers and ranchers have. Science sometimes sits over here, because I understand those guys know a lot more about the land. Could you describe what you deal with?

Mr. Trevor Taylor: I think it's probably best to describe our relationship somewhat with Ducks and a few charitable trusts. Those organizations are the ones that provide funding for us to do the conservation work that we do with the Inuit in the Arctic and the Canadian north. Ducks' interest is waterfowl, and it's not limited to freshwater—

Mr. Martin Shields: Yes.

Mr. Trevor Taylor: —because it, of course, spills over into the salt water as well. We work with the Canadian Wildlife Service's migratory bird section in some areas.

To go to the Canadian boreal initiative, the Canadian Boreal Initiative was about protecting trees. You might wonder what that

has to do with Ducks. Well, you need trees to manage water and the ecosystems and whatnot, so presumably, from a Canadian Arctic perspective, Ducks Unlimited looks at the ocean as a key habitat for waterfowl, and in some cases marine protection is required.

I'm not sure if I'm answering your question, and I apologize if I'm not.

Mr. Martin Shields: You talk about building relationships and you talk about partnerships. You know about it and you've been working at it. How did you go about it?

Mr. Trevor Taylor: We have identified areas that we would like to work in and we identify issues that we would like to work on. We approach Inuit organizations, such as in the case of Pond Inlet, for example, which sits more or less in the proposed Lancaster Sound national marine conservation area. We approach hunters and the hunters and trappers organization in Pond Inlet and say, "We're interested in working here on this issue. Is that something that's of some interest to you?"

If it's of no interest to them, it's okay—well, we won't work on that, then. If it is of interest to them....

Floe edge monitoring is an example. The floe edge off Pond Inlet is critically important to the hunters for narwhal and seal. It's important to narwhal and seals, so from conservation perspectives and a sustainable use perspective, it's important. There's proposed shipping activity in that area.

We have worked with the people of Pond Inlet, the hunters and trappers organization of Pond Inlet, and set up cameras that do time-lapse photography to capture what's happening with the floe in advance of shipping activity during ice. That's just one example.

That's how we approach it basically everywhere. It can be the other way: they could approach us and say they would like to work on this. If it fits in with what we would like to work on, we'll partner with them. We don't do anything—we haven't done anything to my knowledge—without the Inuit leader of a relevant Inuit body duly constituted, so to speak, under the land claims agreement, signing some piece of paper that says they would like to work with us on this or they are partnering with us on this. To my knowledge, we have not. I could be wrong, but that's how we approach it, generally speaking.

Mr. Martin Shields: Thank you. I appreciate it.

Do I have a minute?

• (1645)

The Chair: You have two more minutes.

Mr. Martin Shields: Earlier you talked about the different land claims and the four different major ones out there. One of the things we've heard is, "Just give us the opportunity among ourselves and we'll sort it out." Do they have the capacity to do that there? You've talked about capacity.

Mr. Paul Crowley: The four Inuit land claims were settled over 30 years or so. There's quite a bit of different content in the rights secured in the first ones versus in the latest ones, and I think it's important to kind of ratchet up to the best available that we have. In this case, the Nunatsiavut have many more rights in terms of the marine environment than some of the other land claims, which is kind of striking because Inuit are marine-based people, really.

In terms of capacity, there certainly are challenges within a lot of our communities. People do need to be trained up, but they're also willing to be. I always find, particularly when it comes to issues with land and waters, it's what folks know best. The capacity to take on those issues, I would say, is quite strong.

Mr. Martin Shields: Then the barriers that they would run into go back to a question over here. Is it a funding issue, or are there other barriers between departments and governments that are going to keep that from happening?

The Chair: You have 15 seconds.

Mr. Paul Crowley: I think there's an issue of the relationship and Ottawa not always knowing best. The best managers of these areas are going to be the ones who know it the best, and they're up north, so it's flipping the relationship that is really important.

The Chair: Thank you very much.

Now I think Ken and Terry are going to share their time.

Go ahead. You have six minutes.

Mr. Terry Sheehan (Sault Ste. Marie, Lib.): Madam Chair, I share a similar fondness for Baffinland—my niece is from there, and it's a great area, and I find this extremely important. Just for clarification, I'm going to have a 30-second question and answer, and then I'm going to share my time with Michael, and then Ken and Michael can talk as Michael—

The Chair: Just to be clear, I'm going to do one more round, a short round, and Michael is going to get a chance to have some time. That's if we stick to the time.

Mr. Terry Sheehan: The question will be for all three, instead of one: describe the job opportunities around protecting lands in our north.

I'm from Sault Ste. Marie. We have a provincial park that's protected in that area, and I recognize those jobs. I'm not Inuit, but my wife and kids are Métis.

Also, with the new direction of the nation-to-nation process we're undertaking, what advice would you give this government in approaching that nation-to-nation discussion? It's extremely important.

It's a two-part question: about jobs around protecting areas in the north, and then the nation-to-nation discussion and some advice you can give.

Mr. Paul Crowley: There are some obvious jobs that come with a protected area. There are the wardens, the guardians, or whatever you want to call them, and that kind of employment. There's the research, and then there's community-based monitoring. These are best monitored. There are all the associated jobs that go with that.

We are hopeful that communities would be able to do their own patrols and have the equipment and the infrastructure—the boat ramps, at the very least, to get out there when needed. That's on the job side of the question.

I would need you to repeat the second part of your question in order to answer it correctly.

• (1650)

Mr. Terry Sheehan: Let's go through the comments on jobs and economic development from the two others and then we'll come back to that question.

Mr. David Miller: Mr. Crowley certainly hit the highlights. Those are good jobs that may require some training. In parallel, we worked with the town of Arviat to help them create a protection system against polar bears, which are more often in the town now because of climate change, and that has created employment in the town as well as protected the town, so we've seen models that go beyond just park wardens or guardians.

Without any question, conservation will lead to direct employment potential for local people.

Mr. Trevor Taylor: I think the vast majority of the economic opportunity as it relates to marine protected areas in the north is related to ongoing monitoring and research. There are the typical guardian-type jobs, park warden jobs that would come with this, which, of course, should be filled by Inuit.

I'm not under any illusion that creating vast marine protected areas in the Canadian Arctic is going to result in a flock of southerners coming up there and it being buried in tourists. That's not where the economic opportunity is. If there is any of that, it's incremental; that's gravy.

The real bread and butter of economic development as it relates to this is trying to understand what's going on in the north: to get the information that we don't have, to understand what's going on in the ocean with the ice and in the atmosphere. Inuit would collect the data and work with southern scientists, who will eventually become northern scientists over time. This is about capacity-building in part, and it will take time.

Imagination is required, and it's not just about park wardens and somebody saying there's going to be a pile of tourists and somebody's going to open up a restaurant, and blah, blah, blah. That's BS on one end, and there's probably a pile of it on the other end too.

What we know we need to know is what is happening with the northern environment in the face of climate change, and who better to do this type of work than Inuit who reside in the communities? That's where imagination can create jobs and protected areas can create jobs. You don't need southerners to fly up to do that.

The Chair: You have one and a half minutes in your time slot.

Mr. Terry Sheehan: Go ahead, Ken.

Mr. Ken Hardie (Fleetwood—Port Kells, Lib.): Thank you.

I have the interesting position of being on both the fisheries and oceans standing committee and the transport standing committee, and we've been asked to look at the Navigable Waters Protection Act changes and the Fisheries Act changes that were brought about in an omnibus bill back in 2012. Depending on who you talk to, you may hear that this change stripped a lot of protection from the majority of our rivers, lakes, and streams. The oceans are protected, but a lot of things lead into oceans.

We're being asked to dial back all those changes. Should we, or are there some things you've noticed in those changes that should be preserved?

Mr. David Miller: It would be our view that the changes to the Fisheries Act have been exceptionally problematic. They were a very important protection, environmentally. We haven't advocated the position I'm about to say, but I think if the government had just put them back and then gone out and consulted about how to look at a fisheries act for the future, we would be protecting the environment much better. They're very important, and I don't believe there's any debate about whether they're effective. Perhaps some people criticize them for being too inclusive, but they're exceptionally important, and our freshwater team would concur with this as well.

• (1655)

The Chair: Okay. We're out of time on that. Thank you very much.

I'm going to add four minutes to each party, and to make it more useful, I think I'm going to give Wayne four minutes with his three, so he's going to get seven. Then we're going to go four and four.

Is everybody okay with that? Okay.

Wayne, you're up.

Mr. Wayne Stetski: Thank you.

I'd like to go back to my earlier question and give Mr. Crowley a chance to answer it.

There's a pretty short time frame to reach these targets. We're making a series of recommendations to government, so what's the most important thing we, the government, can do to gain the confidence of the Inuit to move forward with a protected area agenda in the north?

Mr. Paul Crowley: I think the most important thing is to do this transparently. What are the economic benefits? What is the baseline management that can be handed over to communities? Have that up front right away and across the board, being fair and not renegotiating from one space to the next, from one community to the next, or from one land claim to the next. Start at the highest level right off the bat, and get to "yes" very quickly.

Mr. Wayne Stetski: Mr. Miller or Mr. Taylor, is there anything you'd like to add to that?

Mr. Trevor Taylor: I concur with Paul, but I'd also reiterate very briefly what I said previously. Getting out and talking to HTOs—hunters' and trappers' organizations—regionally, Inuit organizations, land claims organizations sooner than later, in an open and transparent way, is the most needed step right now. If it doesn't happen soon, you won't get the 5% in 2017 and you won't get the

10% in 2020. The tick-tock is happening, and time is very quickly running out.

Mr. David Miller: I'd concur with what both of my colleagues have said.

There are two things. Moving rapidly on Lancaster Sound is really important because it shows what's possible and it demonstrates respect for Inuit involvement in establishing a marine protected area. Since the Shell leases are gone, the last real obstacle should be out of the way. That's very important. It would also show that we can make this work.

The second thing is subtle, but I think we need to consider the positive economic impact of protecting the environment. For example, is it possible to have some small-scale fisheries, self-sustaining ones, that would create some employment there?

Those kinds of discussions are more complicated, and they go back to Mr. Taylor's point about starting the conversations with the Inuit organizations as soon as possible.

I think that layer of thought into conservation is really critical, because the argument, of course, for drilling for oil is that it's going to create jobs. With great respect, it won't create very many up there. There will probably be none for the Inuit, and it will threaten people's very subsistence existence, so having the countervailing potential is really important as part of the discussions, I think.

Mr. Wayne Stetski: We're concerned about quality as well as quantity in terms of protected areas moving forward.

Mr. David Miller: Yes.

Mr. Wayne Stetski: The map that you gave us, you said, is primarily from government?

Mr. David Miller: Yes.

Mr. Wayne Stetski: What's your view of quality as much as quantity on this issue? I think I heard you say there are other areas that the Inuit would probably add, from a quality perspective?

Mr. Trevor Taylor: There's not anything wrong, as such, with that map. As a matter of fact, one could argue that if it's really important, then how is it that 50% of it is really important...? Some people might ask that question. Well, obviously, it's important for a reason. It is biologically and ecologically significant and sensitive and what have you.

The Inuit map very much would lie over that; they've identified areas that are in some cases smaller, but almost all.... Again, I'm not speaking for Inuit, but if you look at a map of where Inuit live, at the map of ecologically and biologically significant areas, and at the map of what they've identified from a historical use and occupancy perspective, you can see that they might have been nomadic people who eventually settled in communities, but they moved and eventually settled in places that are critical wildlife habitat.

They are critical. From a migration perspective for belugas, narwhal, seals, and polar bears, the Fury and Hecla Strait is critically important. It's practically insignificant from a shipping perspective, but a no-brainer from a protection perspective. An MPA can and should be established in that area. There have been discussions on it; they should be back to it now. They should have been back to it last winter. The discussions on that area should already have started between DFO and the Qikiqtani Inuit Association. Why they haven't escapes me.

• (1700)

Mr. Wayne Stetski: To reflect Mr. Amos's request, if you have that Inuit map, it would be great to get a copy of it.

Mr. Trevor Taylor: Yes. Suffice it to say that once you lay on the maps, it becomes very clear and very easy to pick out the 10% that is critical and achievable.

With regard to some of the other points about hydrocarbon development, you can do it without even going into the sedimentary basins that have been identified. Once you have Lancaster, you can grab 10% in the Arctic very easily without having much in the way of adverse impacts on economic development.

Mr. Wayne Stetski: On the request, since I might not have time to get a response...?

The Chair: You have less than one minute.

Mr. Wayne Stetski: I'm really interested in how you make shipping and conservation work together. I don't know whether we have time to talk to that today, but if not, if you have some good papers you've read on how to make the two work, could you send them to us?

Mr. David Miller: We have a study on shipping in the Arctic that we can submit. It's about fuel, predominantly, and if there is anything else we'll submit it to the committee, if that's appropriate. We've certainly been looking at this issue.

Mr. Wayne Stetski: That would be great. I'm interested in how the two can work together moving forward, because of course it's essential to maintain the shipping in the Arctic.

Mr. Trevor Taylor: On that point, in terms of the shipping report that we've developed and our recommendation here in the presentation today that management of shipping corridors and marine protected areas needs to go hand in hand with Inuit involvement, it is in large part because to manage shipping in the Arctic you have to manage it with ecological and biological sensitivities in mind. That doesn't mean that you stop shipping, but it might mean that you reroute shipping or that certain types of ships go at certain times of the year.

Look at the Bay of Fundy. You don't have to look any further than the Bay of Fundy and right whales and Irving and shipping lanes to see that these types of things can be done and have been done in the past. If you look at the—

I'm going to shut up now. Thank you. I see the flag.

The Chair: Mr. Stetski, that's your time.

Mr. Wayne Stetski: In terms of process, anything you can send us becomes part of the evidence, so it's important that you send us things.

Mr. Trevor Taylor: Okay.

The Chair: Yes, we'll do that as our last little parting shot.

Mr. Fast, do you want to go next? You have four minutes.

Hon. Ed Fast: Thanks so much. This has been a fascinating discussion, and certainly a learning experience for me.

As our committee has undertaken this study and moved forward with it, sadly it appears that it might be coming to a close very soon. We were able to visit a number of different parks in the west: Haida Gwaii, the Gulf Islands National Park, Banff, and Jasper. It became very clear very quickly, I think to all of us, that each of these parks is actually quite different. The challenges are different. Their characteristics are different. How they need to be managed is different. The pressures on those parks are different.

Your presentations today highlight the fact that protected areas in the Arctic region are again going to require very tailored approaches to make sure that we protect those areas and do so in a way that respects our Inuit peoples and provides them with a much more significant say in the management of those areas.

Sadly, we haven't had the Inuit here yet. I don't believe either one of your organizations presumes to speak for the Inuit. When we were out west, we did get a chance to see the first nations' perspective on those lands and some of the struggles they're having and some of the demands they're coming forward to government with.

Again, the areas you're talking about are unique. Is there a way of winning the support of the Inuit in such a way that it becomes an example for the rest of the world on how to manage protected areas?

Could I have your comments, please?

• (1705)

Mr. David Miller: Yes, and I think you start with Lancaster Sound, because the agreement is almost there.

Hon. Ed Fast: You've repeated that quite regularly. That's good.

Mr. David Miller: Sorry to flog it, but you then create the precedent of mutual respect and work out some of the details. That's my view. I'm really speaking personally here, not on behalf of the WWF.

I'll let Mr. Crowley give the official response, if it's any different from mine.

Mr. Paul Crowley: The best starting point is the most concrete thing that's right in front of us, and communities have been asking for that protection in that area ever since there was oil and gas exploration in the 1970s, which really was very traumatizing to some people in the way it was conducted. They've looked for protection ever since. Working from something concrete is a good place to start.

I would say it's really important not to undervalue what's at stake here for these communities. When it comes to Inuit impact and benefit agreements, bring your A game and the desire to get to an agreement, rather than the desire to get away with the least amount possible.

Hon. Ed Fast: Mr. Taylor, you've suggested that the approach has to be to flip everything on its head and focus on the role that the community plays in terms of benefiting from these protected areas and managing the protected areas, perhaps more so than what we see in other parts of the country.

Mr. Trevor Taylor: Right. I think if you look back some years, parks establishment was about getting people who lived in the area where a park was going to be established out of them, and then trying to figure out how to get a bunch of tourists back into them. We saw that in many places. We saw it in Newfoundland with Gros Morne National Park. That's what we've done. That definitely needs to be flipped on its head.

These marine protected areas, to the extent that we do them, should be close to communities. They should be owned by the communities.

We talk about an Inuit impact and benefit agreement; the first benefit of a marine protected area in the north should be that it is an area that Inuit want protected. If you're talking about some place that's totally irrelevant to them, why would they be seized with that? I don't think either of us would be, would we?

The Chair: We're out of time.

The last one goes to Michael.

Mr. Michael McLeod (Northwest Territories, Lib.): Thank you, Madam Chair, for allowing me a few minutes.

My name is Michael McLeod. I'm from the Northwest Territories. I come from an area called the Dehcho, which means "big river". It's in the MacKenzie River area. I belong to the Dehcho First Nations.

I want to speak a bit about the protected areas strategy.

I had the opportunity to watch it over the years. The communities in my riding have a lot of interest in this program.

Many years ago, there was an application filed for a protected area in the Dehcho. A number of communities collectively agreed that this area was a good area that needed to be protected for wildlife. It was a refuge for moose and caribou, with good fishing, and we needed to protect it as things developed.

Things have been moving slowly. Since the application was filed many years ago—I can't remember how many years ago—two applications for diamond mines have been filed and approved. Those mines are operating now, and we still haven't settled the protected area process. There are eight steps. We're stuck at step five, so it's a frustrating process. It takes a long time.

I have done three terms as a territorial politician. I'm now on my first term here, and the process is ongoing. Our grand chief is coming to see if we can get the process going again, but the sad reality is that a lot of our elders who wanted to see this happen have passed away. We don't have that luxury of having the elders guide us as we discuss this further.

There are three areas I want to touch on. I'll just throw them out there so you can answer. One complication in our area has been with the land use discussions or protected areas discussions that are tied to other land tenures, such as national parks or a refuge, and even aboriginal land selection. They have capped it so that it's 40%. All

your negotiation discussions can't exceed 40%, including the land that's going to belong to the aboriginal people.

When Nahanni National Park was expanded and announced, our land was shrunk, including the protected areas land. We tried to make it bigger, but they said we had to take it out of the land that we're going to select. That doesn't make sense, but that's what the instructions were. We started with a huge chunk of land that we thought we were going to protect. We're down to 13% of what we initially started with as a request.

What further complicates the process is that in any of these strategies and these discussions, you need sponsors. For the most part the sponsors are government departments, and they help the organizations. Sometimes it's a national organization. I think World Wildlife Fund has been involved with several of these processes.

• (1710)

The Chair: Mr. McLeod, we only had four minutes, and you are almost out of time.

Mr. Michael McLeod: Okay. Can you talk to any of the subject matter that I raised?

The Chair: It will be for a short time. There is only one minute.

Mr. Paul Crowley: I think it requires a reversal of the onus. If a community wants to protect the lands that have supported them, we should get out of their way, and frankly, everything has been in their way, so that is a new approach to be taken.

You can award a significant discovery licence in perpetuity, which then blocks in perpetuity other uses for those areas. It just does not make sense.

I think the reversal of the relationship and having a true crown-to-Inuit or crown-to-first nation relationship would require reversing that approach and trusting the people who are on the land.

Mr. David Miller: When it comes to giving testimony and evidence, we would agree you have correctly identified a difficult problem that has to be solved and is wrong. The system is incorrect in the way it works. I think it starts with a respectful relationship with the indigenous people, but the system needs to prioritize conservation and protection as the first priority.

If that changed, then a lot of the rules, practices, and causes you spoke about eloquently would change. That has to be in the thinking, and if the committee can come to that kind of thinking, then it would be most helpful in preventing these kinds of problems from happening in the future.

We concur that these problems happen. They are wrong.

The Chair: Unfortunately, our time has come to an end. There are always more questions.

We really appreciate your being here and sharing your wisdom with us. We always mention that if you think there's something you wanted to say and you didn't get a chance to say it, we welcome you to send that to us in the next week. We would really appreciate it and we would be most grateful.

I think we also agreed that you might send us any maps of what the Inuit suggest might be protected areas that you haven't already shared with us. All that will be helpful, and we do understand about Lancaster Sound. We got that message loud and clear.

A Voice: It was heard.

The Chair: Yes, it was heard.

Mr. Crowley, Mr. Miller, and Mr. Taylor, thank you so much. We appreciate your time and your testimony.

We'll take a quick pause, guys, and then we have to get back to business. Thank you.

• (1710) _____ (Pause) _____

• (1715)

The Chair: I'm sorry to do this, but we need to get to the order of business. I was very generous in giving the committee more time, but we really do need to wrap up at half past the hour, and we have some orders of business that we have to get done. Thank you.

At the subcommittee we had a rousing discussion on what we might do going forward and how we're going to get the information we need to feel good about our report.

We came up with a recommendation that we would take the drafting instructions time period, which is right after the Thanksgiving break, and hear from witnesses in Ontario, Quebec, and the Maritimes. By noon Friday, everybody needs to let us know what witnesses they want to hear from, so that we could then judge whether we would be able to do that within the time period, the extra two days, or whether we would need to consider more time.

I will discuss the "more time" after I get the witnesses from everybody. We haven't heard from a lot of people yet, so we really need that tomorrow so that we can judge how we move forward.

I would like to suggest that we can't make the final decision on where we're going and how much time we might need until we get the witnesses in front of us and assess what that looks like, which will happen on Friday. What we need to do today is agree on and vote on taking the drafting instruction time that we had designated and hearing witnesses on protected spaces. Then we will have a subcommittee meeting next Tuesday and go back at it again, once we know the witnesses we're going to have.

The 18th and 20th will be for witnesses in Quebec and Ontario and Atlantic Canada. We do recognize that we have not heard from the Inuit. There was a suggestion on maybe hearing from some people on the land claims, so I really need to get those names. We tried to get one of the Inuit to come, but unfortunately he wasn't able

to. We're inquiring to see if there's another opportunity that he may be able to come in front of the committee. We open the invitation, and if they can't come, they can't come, so we'll have to see.

Is it clear what we're doing right now? We're just agreeing, with a vote, to devote the 18th and 20th for those witnesses that I'm going to get from you all on Friday by noon, and then, based on what everybody brings forward, we will discuss at the subcommittee next Tuesday how much time we may need.

Is that fair enough?

The motion is—

Sorry, Mr. Eglinski, you want to speak.

• (1720)

Mr. Jim Eglinski: I have a hard time, as I mentioned at our subcommittee meeting, with the time frame. After listening to what transpired today from our witnesses, I'm very uncomfortable with doing a report without speaking to the Inuit people. We need to work at trying to get some representation from them to speak to us. It's a large segment that they cover from the east to the west, and without hearing from them in person, it would disturb me a little if we just went into the central part here and eastern Canada.

Maybe I'm being a little bit overcautious, but I think they probably have a story that we need to hear, if we can get them to at least one of our meetings.

The Chair: Okay. There was a fellow, Natan Obed, who was identified to come and speak in front of us. We asked him to come and be part of this panel, and he's unable to do that. We offered the 18th or the 20th to see if he would be able to fit in on one of those days, and he's not able to do that either. He's not able to engage with us at that time, so we're asking him when he can engage with us. However, if somebody has a different name, then let me know and we'll pursue that.

Mr. Jim Eglinski: Madam Chair, could we maybe go to the government up there and ask them if they could maybe supply someone or get someone to work with us?

Mr. Tim Williams (Committee Researcher): I'm not sure if you want to hear from the Nunavut...?

Mr. Jim Eglinski: I don't want to hear from them, but maybe they can suggest who we contact.

Mr. Tim Williams: If you want to hear from the Inuit, it's really the NTL, the Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated, that represents the Inuit on the land claims agreement.

Mr. William Amos: Or the Inuvialuit corporation, etc. Any of these northern organizations would be great.

I think the challenge is that we will always want more, and you would be absolutely right to want more. I think what we could do is reach out to the various Inuit corporations that have been established pursuant to the land claims agreements with the federal government and ask for any written submissions they may have.

The timeline is tight, and I acknowledge that, but that doesn't mean it's the end of the conversation on the issue. It's simply to get what views we can. It's the same as with any first nation across the country. How many have we not spoken with? We've spoken with a very small number, so I think we're necessarily challenged in this respect. I think that has to be part of the conclusion. More consultation needs to be done in order to get a clear view of how to move forward.

The Chair: Okay. Go ahead. I'm watching the time.

Hon. Ed Fast: Well, watching the time or not, this is important, because I think there's an assumption here that we have this deadline we have to work towards. No one has made a compelling case that we actually should have a deadline. I don't know why we cannot allow this study to continue. It doesn't have to continue linearly.

For example, there's a CEPA study that has to be done. I'm prepared to get that done, but why ram this through? It's not only about the Inuit; it's about making sure that we have a representative list of witnesses from across the country to give us a true taste or feel for the uniqueness of each of the regions of Canada when it comes to protected areas and the uniqueness of each protected area itself.

For example, we should be hearing someone from Newfoundland and Labrador and Gros Morne Park. That's going to be unique. We probably should have an Innu voice speaking to us. Lake Superior national park, or whatever the proper name for it is, which we established over the past decade or so, is unique. It was groundbreaking to establish that park. What about Algonquin Park? What about some of the other parks in Quebec?

I don't think we need to rush. Even today, representatives from the WWF and Oceans North opened up a whole new perspective for me. If we want to do justice to a study like this and have a study that will not sit on the shelf, it cannot have holes in it.

I know there will always be a desire to hear more witnesses and I totally get that, but there is some basic amount of information we need to have to do justice to a study like this. I would prefer not to be rushed, because at the end of the day I think our goal is to have a unanimous report emanating from this committee. If we wind this up in the next committee, it is highly unlikely we could do that. We would have to highlight some of the gaps that exist and the fact that this study is incomplete.

• (1725)

The Chair: I want to make a point before I give the floor to Mr. Stetski.

Every single place in Canada is going to be unique, with its own set of constraints. We heard that today. We've heard that everywhere we've gone. It's unlikely that we're going to be able to.... Our report is not going to delve into the unique solutions for every single one of these parks, but we want to capture the overall frame.

Go ahead, Mr. Stetski.

Mr. Wayne Stetski: I do think there's some urgency. We've created a set of expectations, given all the witnesses we've met with, that something exciting and meaningful is going to come out of this. Government never moves that quickly; the targets that are set are coming up really quickly in terms of how government moves in general. I'd be fine with a report that sets out the things we've learned that we want government to move on immediately, and if there are still some gaps at the end, we could just identify that it would have been nice to do this, this, or this, or perhaps there should be some follow-up.

I think we need to get a report out that provides some direction back to government so they can get moving on this issue.

The Chair: I want to have this discussion again next Tuesday. I think everybody wants to say more, and because I gave more time, because these people came and we were having a good discussion, I didn't want to cut them off, even though I know that we need more time.

Recognizing that we need more time to discuss this, I think, before we come to what I hope will be a unanimous decision on how we're going to move forward, I'd like to move that to Tuesday, but I need agreement. We need to ask these witnesses to come. I need the witnesses and we need names and we need to at least identify that we are going to be extending this study to the 18th and 20th.

Mr. William Amos: Do you want to call a vote on that issue? I don't think it's that complicated. I move to call a vote on that proposal.

The Chair: Is that a problem? We'll discuss that on Tuesday. Just cross off the second one and just go with the first one, the report. Is everybody okay with that? Can you make a motion on that?

Number two is gone and we have just number one in the subcommittee report.

Does anybody have a problem? Is there any discussion required?

Hon. Ed Fast: You're saying number two is gone, and we're limiting the scope of the study.

The Chair: Two is gone. We're not limiting it; we're just going to go with one.

All in favour?

(Motion agreed to)

The Chair: That looks unanimous.

What I'm looking for is witnesses by tomorrow at noon.

Hon. Ed Fast: You're looking for witnesses. It's going to be a fairly long list.

The Chair: I want to see prioritization of those witnesses. If there are 20 people, I need to know what the priorities are. What do you want to hear from the witnesses? What are we digging for with a particular witness? What element are we trying to get at with those witnesses? We need a bit of help here.

There are two other things. First, this memory stick has the pictures from the trip I took. You can download the pictures if you want.

Finally, if you're interested in reading it, I have some information here from the Mikisew Cree First Nation on the Wood Buffalo National Park.

The meeting is adjourned.

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