



January 9, 2024

## Marine Environmental Working Group (MEWG) Meeting

**Meeting ID:** M-01092025  
**Group / Organization:** MEWG Members and Observers, Baffinland and Consultants  
**Meeting Location:** Conference Call  
**Meeting Chair:** Cortney Oliver

Organization Name	Participants
Member Organization	
Mittimatalik Hunters and Trappers Organization (MHTO)	Mathias – Chairman MHTO Owen Jaworenko (OJ)
Igloodik Hunter and trappers Organization (IHTO)	none
Sanairaijak Hunters and Trappers Organization (HBHTO)	Laimike Ullapak (LU)
Nangmoutaq Hunters and Trappers Organisation (NHTO)	Present – Nysana Qillaq [NQ]
Ikajutit Hunters and Trappers Association (IHTA)	None
Baffinland Iron Mines Corporation (Baffinland)	Cortney Oliver (CO), Lou Kamermans (LK), Lizzie Philips (LP) Translator Jesse Manufor (JM), Matt Weaver(MW) Michael Salomonie (MS) Katie Babin (KB)
Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC)	Melissa Pinto (MP), Jessica Kassar (JK) Sarah Forte (SF) Grant Gilchrist (GG)
Qikiqtani Inuit Association (QIA) and Consultants	Bruce Stewart (BS), Jeff Higdon (JH), Andrew Jaworenko (AJ), Amoudla Kootoo (AK) Lindsay Galbraith (LG),
Government of Nunavut (GN)	Natalie D’Souza (ND)
Parks Canada (PC)	Scot Burley (SC), Marie-Claude Martel(MCM) Vincent Marmillot (VM)
Department of Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO)	Kimberly Howland (KH), Paul Harper (PH), Nicholas Wasilik (NW), Jose Audet-Lecoutte (JAL), Marianne Marcoux (MM),
Baffinland Consultants	

Organization Name	Participants
WSP Golder	Phil Rouget(PR), Andrea Locke (AL), Patrick Abgrall (PA), Julia Horgan (JH), Trish Tomliens (TT)
CIRNAC	Absent
<b>Observer Organization</b>	
World Wildlife Fund (WWF)	Sam Davin (SD), Devin Holtermann (DH)
Nunavut Impact Review Board (NIRB)	Absent
Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency (CANNOR)	Absent
Oceans North (ON)	Kristin Westdal (KW) Ben Savard (BS)
Transport Canada (TC)	Melissa Guay (MG)
Makivvik	Camille Le Gall-Payne (CLP)
Others	

## AGENDA

Item	Time	Activity
1	11:00- 11:30	Welcome and Roll Call
2	11:30-12:00	Review Minutes and Action Items
3	12:00-1:00	Lunch Break
4	1:00 – 2:00	Summary of Marine Monitoring Work Completed in 2024 Season (Includes Summary of Program Updates and Implications of Ice Conditions on Field Programs)  Q & A
5	2:00 – 3:00	Continuation on 2024 Monitoring
6	3:00 – 3:15	Health Break
7	3:00 – 3:45	2024 Shipping Season Overview
8	3:45 -- 4:30	Overview of 2024 DFO Ballast Water Program  Q & A
9	4:30 – 4:45	Update on Terms of Reference (TOR)

## SUMMARY OF ACTION ITEMS

Action ID	Responsibility	Item Description	Due Date	Status
M-14062022-04	Daniel Coombs (DFO)	Provide MEWG and TEWG for review the details and report of the sampling program in the Robertson River area.	September 30 <sup>th</sup> , 2025	Not started – DFO asked to update the due date. QIA is still interested in the report.
M-12122023-09	DFO	DFO to provide aerial survey program results from Steensby Inlet area to the IHTO.	Not specified	Not started. – Clarify this action from the December MEWG minutes where it was actioned.
M-12122023-05	DFO	DFO to find the studies on where narwhal and beluga are located in the winter in the area of the Southern shipping route and provide this information to the MEWG.	Not specified	Not started.
M-12122023-02	DFO	DFO to follow up with IHTO regarding identified calving areas in the Clyde River and Arctic Bay areas	Not specified	Not started.
M-14052024-08	DFO	To meet offline with Andrea Locke (WSP) on the gauge discussion and seek experts within DFO that can provide advice on the issues raised with tidal gauge monitoring.	Not specified	<b>In progress.</b> This has lost some traction, PH (DFO) will follow up with colleagues on this.
M-05062024-03	BIM	To meet with Igloodik to hear their concerns and adjust the mapping for spill modelling if we need to.	Not specified	<b>In progress.</b> BIM has started Steensby engagements.
M-09012025-1	BIM	To organize an interim virtual MEWG in the next 8 weeks to discuss the 5-year monitoring plan for the Northern Shipping Route previously shared in May and June 2024.	End of February or 2 <sup>nd</sup> week in March	<b>In progress:</b> Planning for this has started, looking at end of February or 2 <sup>nd</sup> week in March
M-09012025-2	BIM	To confirm the fuel used by vessels when they turn off their scrubber. Whether it is Ultra Low Sulphur Fuel (ULSF) or Marine Gas Oil.	As soon as possible	<b>Completed:</b> The ships use Marine Gas Oil (MGO)

Action ID	Responsibility	Item Description	Due Date	Status
M-09012025-3	QIA	Bruce Stewart QIA to share his thoughts and recommendation on the sedimentation issue in the MEEMP program in an email to Cortney	As soon as possible	<b>Completed</b> – emailed on Feb 28 <sup>th</sup> , 2025
M-09012025-4	BIM	BIM to hold an information session on the ToR at the same meeting as action M-09012025-1.	End of February or 2 <sup>nd</sup> week in March	<b>In progress:</b> Planning for this has started, looking at end of February or 2 <sup>nd</sup> week in March
M-09012025 -5	BIM	BIM committed to provide duration of vessels staging at Ragged Island and proportion of vessels that transited directly to Milne Port compared to those that staged at Ragged Island for the 2024 shipping season. This is to evaluate the risk of hull fouling at Ragged Island.	Not specified	Not started

## MEETING MINUTES

The meeting started at 11:00 AM with a welcome and roll call by Cortney Oliver (CO). She informed the members that the day's meeting would focus on the activities and accomplishments of 2024. A roll call followed, with members introducing themselves.

JM (BIM) reviewed the outstanding action points. Key takeaways from this session included:

- While there has been a delay in DFO addressing some of their action items, QIA is interested in receiving the Robertson River Report.
- DFO is uncertain about the action regarding the aerial survey in the Steensby area. This action will be reviewed based on the December 2023 meeting minutes, where it was originally assigned.
- QIA noted that their action item was reported as complete at the June 2024 meeting.
- The action on the tidal gauge has seen little progress. PH (DFO) committed to following up with colleagues.
- BIM has started planning Steensby engagements and will coordinate with Igloolik in the coming weeks.
- It was suggested that action items should be shared with meeting invitations.

### Summary of 2024 Marine Monitoring Program – Andrea Locke and Phil Rouget

The Marine Environment Effects Monitoring Program (MEEMP) activities conducted in 2024 were presented by Andrea Locke.

### Lunch Break

### Questions on the MEEMP Program

- KH (DFO) inquired about the spacing between the two sets of sampling. AL (WSP) clarified that the sampling season in 2024 was shorter than in the previous year. It was not a full period for benthic sampling, but sampling was conducted at the beginning and end of the season, approximately three weeks apart.
- KH (DFO) also asked why no sampling was conducted at Ragged Island. MCM (PC) emphasized the importance of sampling Ragged Island due to concerns about invasive species. AL (WSP) explained that while sampling was planned, safety concerns prevented it. Ragged Island was last sampled two years ago, and there is minimal risk of AIS/NIS as there is no discharge there. BIM vessels adhere to IMO standards, and fewer vessels anchor at Ragged Island compared to Milne Port. However, AL assured that Ragged Island will be considered in future planning with a strong safety plan in place.
- SD (WWF) asked why results were absent from the presentation and whether changes to the sampling plan were planned for 2025. CO clarified that this meeting was to review 2024 activities, and results would be shared in the Spring meeting. SD recommended sediment traps for a more comprehensive understanding of ship-source pollution at Milne Port. AL acknowledged the suggestion but stated it was outside the scope of the MEEMP program. However, water quality monitoring is conducted for Type A water license reporting.

### Discussion on Quadrants at Philips Creek

- SF (ECCC) requested additional details on the two missing quadrants at the mouth of Philips Creek. AL (WSP) explained that divers attempted to locate them, but they may have been buried by sediment or moved due to ice breakup. Replacements were not available at the time. Recommendations will be included in the 2024 Annual Report and discussed in the Spring MEWG meeting.
- BS (QIA) urged consideration of SD's (WWF) sedimentation monitoring suggestion, particularly for Steensby Inlet. AL (WSP) stated that changes to methodology are challenging mid-series, but the team will discuss it internally.
- BS (QIA) emphasized the need to determine what happened to the quadrants and explore alternative tracking methods. AL reiterated that sedimentation at Philips Creek is a natural process (spring snowmelt) and not related to the port. BS (QIA) suggested that sedimentation could be linked to the Tote Road project, requiring further investigation.
- CO (BIM) clarified that any sedimentation related to the Tote Road would be detected through BIM's Tote Road monitoring program. She requested BS (QIA) to share recommendations via email. **Action: BS (QIA) to provide recommendations via email.**

### Sampling at Ragged Island

- KH (DFO) mentioned that DFO observed vessels staging at Ragged Island for several days. CO (BIM) committed to providing data on the duration of vessel staging at Ragged Island and the proportion of vessels transiting directly to Milne Port versus those staging at Ragged Island. **Action: BIM to provide vessel staging data.**

### Marine Mammal Program – Phil Rouget

- DH (WWF) asked about plans for future marine mammal surveys at Steensby and the publication of the shipping route. CO (BIM) confirmed that a draft shipping route had been shared previously and that future monitoring at Steensby was still in the planning phase due to construction delays.
- JH (QIA) inquired about the timeline for the annual report publication. CO (BIM) stated that the timeline would align with previous years, with results shared at an appropriate time.
- JH (QIA) asked if the 2021 ringed seal report had been analyzed and if the 2024 study followed the same design. PR (WSP) clarified that the 2021 survey was conducted by Golder (not LGL), and results would be analyzed alongside the 2024 survey. The study design was the same, except that the 2024 survey included two sampling events.

### Planning for 2025

- MM (DFO) inquired about plans for an aerial survey in 2025. CO (BIM) explained that BIM follows a three-year cycle for aerial surveys and acoustic monitoring. The next Leg 2 survey is planned for 2026.
- AK (QIA) noted that April may be too late to plan for aerial surveys and emphasized the importance of involving HTOs. **Action: BIM to organize an interim MEWG meeting within eight weeks to discuss the five-year monitoring plan.**

### 2024 Shipping Season Overview – Cortney Oliver

- Mathias (MHTO) praised the usefulness of shipping transit information for hunters.
- NQ (NHTO) suggested that other communities should visit Pond Inlet to understand the impact of shipping.

- Sam (WWF) inquired about the fuel used by vessels to ensure compliance. **Action: Confirm the compliant fuel used by vessels.**
- CLP (Makivvik) requested information on discharged water management for the southern route. CO (BIM) noted that BIM would provide more details as Steensby planning progresses.
- LU (HBHTA) asked about ballast water use at Milne Inlet. CO (BIM) confirmed that ballast water is discharged in the deep ocean, 200 nm from shore, and is treated with chlorine to meet D2 standards.

#### **DFO Ballast Water Program – Kim Howland (DFO)**

- CO (BIM) thanked Oceans North for funding DFO's monitoring efforts. BS (QIA) appreciated BIM's improved communication and sampling process. KH (DFO) confirmed funding availability for trial monitoring after 2025.

#### **Update on Working Group Terms of Reference (ToR) – Cortney Oliver**

- CO (BIM) announced that since April 2024, BIM, QIA, and GoC have worked on refining the enforceability of MEWG recommendations. The ToR is nearly finalized and will be submitted to NIRB before being shared with MEWG for feedback.
- ND (GN) questioned why the ToR was finalized by only three members rather than the full MEWG. CO (BIM) clarified that the Terms and Conditions require consent from BIM, QIA, and GoC. ND (GN) insisted that all members should sign the ToR. ND expressed that the ToR should be agreed to and signed off by all members that are bound by it, not just a few parties. If that has not occurred, the ToR should not bind the entire group. The GN also requested a copy of the ToR that would be submitted to the NIRB be shared with the MEWG and for this to be added by BIM as an action item. BIM declined to add this as an action item during the call and stated they would not be sharing the ToR for further input. CO (BIM) reiterated that concerns should be emailed for discussion.

CO (BIM) thanked everyone and stated that the action items from the meeting would be circulated within a week. The meeting adjourned at 4:55 PM.