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October 13th, 2010

RE: Feedback on the proposed shipping route to Milne Inlet

I have written a statement relating to the impacts of the environment, wildlife and the marine environment (this includes the marine life).

I will be more than happy to provide this letter to the other agencies/organization that is working on this proposed shipping in Milne Inlet. Provide to others like Hamlet of Pond Inlet and QIA.

What I have written is what I have witnessed and experience and what the hunters have told me.

I would like to thank you in advance for accepting my statement of concern and hope that these will be taken seriously.

Sincerely;

Israel Mablick

As an Inuk of Pond Inlet, NU NTI Enrolment Card # 7516-199613 I am very concern of the potential Iron mine 60 Km south of our community (Mary River) run by Baffinland Iron Mine (BIM) “Mary River Project”.

Since the junior company BIM started their exploration in Mary River in 2004 to today 2010 (6 years) I have witnessed what the Environmental world would call a Domino effect from the project. Effects such as...

- Caribou, migration pattern and breeding grounds
- Char migration and the population growth
- Seal migration and the effects of their diet
- Narwhal and their migration pattern
- Killer Whales migration
- Bow Head migration
- Marine environment i.e. plankton, cods etc.
- Polar Bear
- Socio Economic of the people in Pond Inlet

Caribou

The caribou migration pattern has been affected since the start of the BIM exploration. Mary River was and is the breeding ground of our main diet “Caribou” and Mary River is the migration ground for there off springs. Caribou being the main diet for the Inuit of Pond Inlet they have been hunting Caribous since our ancestors first moved into the area. And like the domino once the Caribous have been affected, it has domino to us Inuit which now becomes a Socio Economic Impact. Caribou is used for surviving of there rich meat and the economic benefit of their furs and clothing as well.

Char

Due to the heavy activity of the exploration with the tote road and the changes and potential changes of covets it has affected the migration of the char in the area of Milne Inlet. The population growth of the char has been impacted by too much activity which again becomes a domino effect to the marine life in Milne Inlet, in the end of the domino is us Inuit of Pond Inlet. The growth pattern has also shown the impact of the size of the chars in Milne Inlet. They are smaller then prior to 2004. With the spills they have already experienced, how could they prevent from happening that again? Sure they will clean it but the fact of the spill into a habitat of the chars. This already happened, and we the Inuit have already paid the price of sickness and illness which we haven’t heard of.

Seal

Seals are also the main diet for us Inuit of Pond Inlet, and their impact has affected us Inuit for survival and economic benefit of their skins. Once their main diet (Chars, Cods etc) are affected their migration, population growth are affected which is called a domino effect and on the last domino is both the Inuit and Polar Bears. In the summer/fall season of 2010 a research was being done under water in Milne Inlet using some sort of technology like sonar, the seals in Milne Inlet disappeared. A

local Inuk hunter has gone on local radio saying that there is no seals in Milne Inlet and the surrounding area.

Narwhale

Due to the increase shipping activity in Milne Inlet the Narwhales have been effected. Later migration has proven that over the years, one fine example is the 2008 incident between Pond Inlet and Bylot Island. The time when the Narwhales got stuck due to the sea ice formation. Their migration was impacted by the exploration increased shipping activity, and the Inuit in Pond Inlet were being looked at as bad Inuit/savages because there were killing all the Narwhales.

Again like the domino, it has already impacted us Inuit.

Killer Whales

Their diet for survival has been impacted so there migration is also affected. We use to see lots of Killer whales passing by our community, the numbers were incredible, and now the numbers have dropped dramatically. This year alone I only saw three (3) Killer whales.

Bow Head Whales

As you may know by now over the years since the Bow Head Whale was listed as endangered species, they took a very long time to repopulate to a number that satisfied the people and organization. They have recently been listed off the list, and the people of Pond Inlet were one of the communities in 2010 to hunt one. With the increase shipping activity which has already started to shown, there numbers will decrease and the people of Pond Inlet will not be allowed to hunt no more. This will affect the Inuit rights and the NLCA for the traditional hunt of a Bow Head.

Marine Environment

All Marine environments including the habitat will be impacted by the increase shipping activity and the disturbance of their environment which are now starting to show. Prove is right there, the hunters can tell you. Seals are gone in the area of Milne Inlet and soon in the surrounding areas. Like the term I used a “Domino Effect”. What about 2008? The time the Narwhales got stuck in ice between Pond Inlet and Bylot Island. The population decrease of Killer Whales and Bow Head Whale. All these marine mammals depend on one thing to survive and that is all the smaller marine life i.e. Krills, plankton, cods etc. Once an increase of the shipping as proposed by Baffinland, it will have a major impact of our marine life and environment.

What is the plan if there was a spill? Or what is the plan if the ship punctured a hole on the side of the ship? What is the plan for the abundance of food for the Inuit of Pond Inlet? All these facts need to be looked at.

Polar Bear

Polar Bears have also been impacted by the disturbance of the shipping activity in the area, and with the proposed increase of the shipping there is a potential of decreasing the population of the Polar Bears due to the decrease of their main diet Seals. Polar Bears are known to attack humans, when they are hungry and with the abundance of there meals. As you may already know Polar Bears are considered to be listed endangered spices, we the Inuit will have the affect of hunting them. A ban has been put in place for sport hunters in Baffin Bay and the impact which we the Inuit are experiencing is the economic benefits. Since the ban there has been negative impacts on our hunters and businesses which becomes a Socio Economic of the people in Pond Inlet. More social problems because of the lack of money being spent on sport hunts.

Socio Economic

The socio economic may be improved but the culture of our Inuit is being lost. There have been more and more crimes and the use of drugs and alcohol has increased as well violence. This is a negative impact which started with the little things from disturbing our environment to animals to marine life to Humans. This is what is called a “Domino Effect”. When Baffinland first started their exploration they were promised jobs and benefits. If you take a closer look at the Human Resources statistics, you will notice the change in keeping their promise of jobs for the people of Pond Inlet. As a resident of Pond Inlet I see a lot of socio economic impacts at first it was a positive impact but as time goes on it became a negative impact. It started to going towards negative when the jobs and economic benefits started going somewhere else.

I would like to say in conclusion that to our future generation the mine would be good, but to our environment and our culture this is a very bad idea to be approved. The term “Between 2 worlds” is where we are right now. We as Inuit don’t want to lose our culture, our tradition, our way of life for over hundreds of years, and yet this is a modern world now with new technologies, money is needed by the people to survive. I ask you to take a closer look what happened to the Jericho Mine, the Nanisivik Mine, and compare it to the Gold Mine in Baker Lake. How is it that the mines in the other 2 places closed and one survived. From my personal understanding is that the companies listened to the people of their concerns and ideas to mitigate the impact of our environment, our wildlife, our marine life. The IIBA is not even done, and yet the BIM is really going at it by trying to start mining. I am really tired of hearing the news from the media before the company them self or other organization informing us. We need to take a step back and assess the situation before anything else goes on.

I hope that I made a clear statement in regards to the proposed mine in Mary River.

Israel Mablick