

TWEET

.@NunatsiavutGov and @ParksCanada successfully complete feasibility assessment toward establishing an #InuitProtectedArea near Torngat Mountains National Park as part of @Imappivut. #Imappivut #ProtectNature #ProtectedArea #OceanConservation

News Release

For Immediate Release

Nunatsiavut Government and Government of Canada take major step forward toward establishing Inuit Protected Area along the northern coast of Labrador

Once established, the new protected area will conserve more than 16,700 square kilometres of the Labrador Shelf Marine Region

March 15, 2024

Gatineau, Quebec

Parks Canada

Parks Canada is committed to a system of national heritage places that recognizes and honours the historic and contemporary contributions of Indigenous peoples, their histories, and cultures, as well as the special relationships Indigenous peoples have with ancestral lands, waters, and ice.

Today, Johannes Lampe, President of Nunatsiavut, and the Honourable Steven Guilbeault, Minister of Environment and Climate Change and Minister responsible for Parks Canada, announced the successful completion of a feasibility assessment that deemed the establishment of a new Inuit Protected Area in northern Labrador as both feasible and desired.

The proposed 16,791 square kilometre Inuit Protected Area is located in the Labrador Sea, in the coastal waters adjacent to Torngat Mountains National Park in northern Labrador. The area is home to polar bears, whales and dolphins, seals, breeding and migrating seabirds, waterfowl, and a variety of fish species. If established, it will conserve a portion of the Labrador Shelf Marine Region and protect the fjords that extend into Torngat Mountains National Park.

Building on this major step forward and supported by Fisheries and Oceans Canada as the federal authority on fisheries, the Nunatsiavut Government, Makivvik Corporation, stakeholders, and Parks Canada will continue to work toward finalizing and signing a Memorandum of Understanding to begin working on the negotiation phase on the establishment of a new Inuit Protected Area. Focus during this stage will be placed on key items, including a final boundary, a co-management structure, and ongoing consultations with rights holders, partners, stakeholders, industry, and communities.

In addition to conserving biodiversity, protecting these marine ecosystems in northern Labrador will contribute to the vitality of Inuit culture and traditions and the well-being of Labrador and Nunavik Inuit who have been stewards of this region since time immemorial. Inuit have extensive knowledge of the land, water and sea ice in this area and are sustained, to this day, by its wildlife. Inuit knowledge, coupled with western science, has been used as the foundation during the feasibility assessment and will continue to play a key role in the establishment of the Inuit Protected Area.

Today's announcement underlines the Government of Canada's commitment to advancing reconciliation and the implementation of rights and treaty obligations through a renewed nation-to-nation and government-to-government relationship with Indigenous peoples. It also highlights the shared interest of the Nunatsiavut Government, Makivvik Corporation, Fisheries and Oceans Canada, and Parks Canada to protect the ecological and cultural integrity of the terrestrial and marine ecosystems of northern Labrador.



Parks Canada Parcs Canada



Once established, the new Inuit Protected Area could contribute 0.29 per cent, an area approximately three times the size of Prince Edward Island, to the Government of Canada's commitment to protecting biodiversity and conserving 30 per cent of marine and coastal areas by 2030.

Quotes

"This announcement today is an important one, not only in the protection of our homeland, but for the preservation of our culture, traditions, and Inuit identity. We have worked hard to reach this milestone and will continue to do so as we finalize the Memorandum of Understanding that will see the establishment of this Inuit Protected Area. We are glad to see this achievement become a reality today, and proud to take steps forward in ensuring our true Labrador Inuit way of life is maintained for future generations."

*Johannes Lampe
President of Nunatsiavut*

"Today marks an important achievement and a great step forward in the protection and stewardship of Nunatsiavut waters and the Labrador Shelf Marine Region. The Government of Canada, through Parks Canada, will continue to work in close collaboration with the Nunatsiavut Government, Makivvik Corporation, stakeholders, and Nunatsiavut Inuit toward establishing an Inuit Protected Area in these rich and unique waters that will help protect the many species that use them, while ensuring that Inuit culture and traditions persist for many generations."

*The Honourable Steven Guilbeault
Minister of Environment and Climate Change and Minister responsible for Parks Canada*

"We recognize the importance and significance of this area in northern Labrador. Establishing a future national marine conservation area here will safeguard many species and help to perpetuate Inuit culture and way of life for generations to come. The successful completion of this feasibility assessment is an important milestone and example of the progress we continue to make in our shared goal of protecting the oceans in Canada."

*The Honourable Diane Lebouthillier
Minister of Fisheries, Oceans, and the Canadian Coast Guard*

"Today's announcement is great news. Working to protect the vast ecosystems of the Labrador Shelf Marine Region while promoting Inuit leadership and culture is a win for the people of Newfoundland and Labrador, Canadians, and the environment. I look forward to the ongoing collaboration of our two governments as we strive together to negotiate the establishment of an Inuit Protected Area in Nunatsiavut waters off the coast of northern Labrador."

*Yvonne Jones
Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Northern Affairs and to the Minister of National Defence (Northern Defence), and Member of Parliament for Labrador, Newfoundland and Labrador*

Quick Facts

- The feasibility assessment and associated process contribute directly to the Nunatsiavut Government's Imappivut (Our Oceans) Marine Planning Initiative and work toward achieving the goals outlined in the Statement of Intent for Imappivut.
- Feedback gathered through engagement sessions and consultations with Inuit and local communities and key stakeholders, along with careful consideration of the social, environmental, and economic benefits and impacts of establishing an Inuit Protected Area recognized under the *Canada National Marine Conservation Areas Act* played an integral role in the feasibility assessment.
- Pursuant to the recommendation to move forward with an Inuit Protected Area, negotiations will begin on an Impact and Benefit Agreement in accordance with the provisions of the Labrador Inuit Land Claim agreement.



Parks Canada Parcs Canada



- Northern Labrador is home to the cold offshore Labrador Current, which is famous for carrying a steady stream of icebergs to lower latitudes and mixing with the Gulf Current off the Grand Banks of Newfoundland.
- Since time immemorial, Nunatsiavut and Nunavik Inuit have occupied and used the lands, waters, and sea ice of this vast Inuit homeland and travel route.
- The area includes a transition between Arctic and Atlantic habitats ranging from highly scenic fjords to long beaches and mudflats. The area supports a diversity of wildlife, including marine mammal and fish species and important concentrations of breeding and migrating seabirds and waterfowl.
- Coastal and marine areas are the source of Inuit cultural, social, spiritual, ecological, and economic well-being.

Related Documents

- [The Governments of Canada and Nunatsiavut sign Memorandum of Understanding to assess feasibility of establishing a new protected area along northern Labrador coast – February 2022 announcement](#)
- [Canada National Marine Conservation Areas Act](#)
- [News Release - Inuttitut](#)

Related Links

- [Parks Canada](#)
- [National Marine Conservation Areas System Plan](#)
- [Nunatsiavut Government](#)
- [Imappivut – Nunatsiavut Marine Plan](#)
- [Makivvik Corporation](#)
- [Rights-free multimedia for announcement](#)

- 30 -

Contacts

Kaitlin Power
 Press Secretary
 Office of the Minister of Environment and Climate Change
 819-230-1557
kaitlin.power@ec.gc.ca

Bert Pomeroy
 Director of Communications
 Nunatsiavut Government
 709-896-8582
bert.pomeroy@nunatsiavut.com

Media Relations
 Parks Canada
 855-862-1812
pc.media@pc.gc.ca



Parks Canada Parcs Canada



Media Relations
Fisheries and Oceans Canada
613-990-7537
media.xncr@dfo-mpo.gc.ca

Saglek Fjord in summer
Credit: Rodd Laing



Parks Canada Parcs
Canada Canada

