



## *Final Report*

# *Evaluation of the Advancing Conservation Interests in the Northwest Territories Initiative (Protected Areas Strategy)*

*Project Number: 10018*

April 2013

Evaluation, Performance Measurement,  
and Review Branch  
Audit and Evaluation Sector

# Table of Contents

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<b>List of Acronyms</b> .....	<b>iii</b>
<b>Executive Summary</b> .....	<b>iv</b>
<b>Management Response and Action Plan</b> .....	<b>vii</b>
<b>1. Introduction</b> .....	<b>1</b>
1.1 Overview .....	1
1.2 Program Profile .....	2
1.3 Program Management, Key Stakeholders and Beneficiaries .....	6
1.4 Program Resources.....	9
<b>2. Evaluation Methodology</b> .....	<b>11</b>
2.1 Evaluation Scope and Timing .....	11
2.2 Evaluation Issues and Questions .....	11
2.3 Roles, Responsibilities and Quality Assurance.....	15
<b>3. Evaluation Findings - Relevance</b> .....	<b>17</b>
3.1 Continued Need.....	17
3.2 Alignment with Government Priorities .....	19
3.3 Alignment with Federal Roles and Responsibilities .....	22
<b>4. Evaluation Findings – Design and Delivery</b> .....	<b>25</b>
4.1 Design and Delivery.....	25
<b>5. Evaluation Findings – Performance (Effectiveness/Success)</b> .....	<b>35</b>
5.1 Results .....	35
<b>6. Conclusion</b> .....	<b>54</b>
6.1 Conclusion.....	54
6.2 Recommendations .....	55
<b>Annex A: Protected Areas Process Map</b> .....	<b>57</b>
<b>Annex B: Evaluation Matrix: Evaluation of Conservation Interests in the Northwest Territories</b> .....	<b>58</b>
<b>Annex C: Program Logic Model</b> .....	<b>62</b>
<b>Annex D: Map of NWT-PAS</b> .....	<b>63</b>
<b>Annex E: Terrestrial Ecoregions of NWT</b> .....	<b>64</b>
<b>Annex F: Bibliography</b> .....	<b>65</b>

## ***List of Acronyms***

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AANDC	Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada
EPMRB	Evaluation, Performance Measurement and Review Branch
EPMRC	Evaluation, Performance Measurement and Review Committee
LUP	Land Use Planning
NWT	Northwest Territories
NWT-PAS	Northwest Territories Protected Areas Strategy
PAS	Protected Areas Strategy

# Executive Summary

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## Evaluation Scope and Issues

This report presents the findings and recommendations of the Evaluation of the *Advancing Conservation Interests in the Northwest Territories Initiative*. The Initiative supports the Northwest Territories (NWT) Protected Areas Strategy (PAS) and its objectives are to establish, develop and operate up to six federal national wildlife areas; one national historic site; carry out consultation and a feasibility study that could lead to the establishment of a national park reserve (Thaidene Nene); and assist in responsible resource development in support of the NWT's PAS. The evaluation reports on findings from fiscal years 2008-09 to 2011-12 and addresses five core issues outlined in the 2009 Treasury Board *Policy on Evaluation*: relevance (continuing need for the NWT-PAS; alignment with government priorities, consistency with federal roles and responsibilities); and performance (achievement of expected outcomes, and demonstration of efficiency and economy). It also addresses design and delivery, best practices, and lessons learned.

## Program Background

The NWT-PAS promotes and supports the creation and establishment of a network of protected areas in the NWT. Approved by the Government of Canada and the Government of the Northwest Territory in 1999, it is designed to be both community-based and community-driven. The two principal goals of the NWT-PAS are to protect: (a) special natural and cultural areas; and (b) core representative areas within each eco-region in the NWT. The Strategy's 8-step planning process<sup>1</sup> and balanced approach to establishing protected areas are its primary guiding principles.

## Evaluation's Methodology

The evaluation's methodology consisted of four lines of evidence: (a) literature review; (b) document and file reviews; (c) 29 structured key informant interviews; and (d) two case studies with 11 participants. A total of 40 respondents were interviewed, including officials from AANDC, Environment Canada, Parks Canada Agency, Government of the Northwest Territories, Aboriginal groups/communities, industry associations and individual resource companies. Limitations included the availability of some participants due to scheduling conflicts.

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<sup>1</sup> 1. Identify priority areas of interest; 2. Prepare and review protected area proposal at regional level; 3. Review and submit proposal for candidate protected area status; 4. Consider and where necessary apply interim protection for candidate area; 5. Evaluate candidate area (resource assessment); 6. Seek formal establishment of protected area; 7. Approve and designate protected area; and 8. Implement, monitor and review protected area.

## **Key Evaluation Findings**

### ***I. Relevance***

The evidence clearly demonstrates a *continued need* for a network of protected areas in the NWT. This is due to: (a) increased interest and activity in economic/resource development in the NWT and its consequent impact on First Nations, wildlife, habitat; and (b) how the Initiative complements regional land use planning. The Strategy is also *aligned with Government of Canada priorities* (e.g. managing resources, land and environment in the North) and it is *appropriately aligned with federal roles and responsibilities* (e.g. statutory and regulatory responsibilities related to crown land). However, at the time of writing this evaluation report (December 2012 – January 2013) there was uncertainty with respect to how and to what extent devolution<sup>2</sup> of lands and resources in the NWT may impact the Government of Canada's roles and responsibilities with respect to the NWT-PAS.

### ***II. Design and Delivery***

The NWT-PAS is appropriately *designed* to provide the opportunity for stakeholders to meaningfully participate in it, share their interests and priorities, while also building upon relationships. This is largely due to the governance structure's commitment to communication, collaboration and consultation to facilitate the 8-step process that is required to establish and maintain protected areas. However, significant challenges like vertical communication (between the NWT-PAS and senior federal Headquarters officials) and achieving quorum for Steering Committee meetings remain. There is a need to revisit and improve upon the clarity of roles and responsibilities of the Steering Committee and Secretariat and to encourage a stronger understanding of the relationship between the NWT-PAS and marine conservation. There is also a need for the Steering Committee roles and responsibilities to evolve (i.e. provide more strategic direction and advice), specifically in terms of protected area management and monitoring.

With respect to the Strategy's *delivery*, the Initiative offers stakeholders sufficient financial, technical, scientific and administrative supports to participate in the NWT-PAS process. However, there is a need to improve the mechanisms for financial transfers as they are unpredictable and consequently pose unnecessary administrative burden and creates uncertainty in planning. There is also no evidence of Performance Measurement mechanisms. Mitigating such program delivery issues would improve the Initiative's effectiveness and efficiency.

### ***III. Performance (Effectiveness, Efficiency and Economy)***

The Government of Canada has not yet established any of the six mandated national wildlife areas. Approval for the finalization of these sites has been delayed in the approval process. Currently, there is only one established National Historic Site (Saoyú-behdacho) under Parks Canada Agency. With respect to Environment Canada, there are four candidate national wildlife areas under interim protection (Edézhíe, Ts'ude niline Tu'eyeta, Ka'a'gee Tu and Samba K'e) and one awaiting approval (Kwets'oòt'àà). According to the 2008 Results-based Management

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<sup>2</sup> <http://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/eng/1363269358714/1363269524805>

and Accountability Framework, the targeted immediate outcome of three additional areas under interim protection in 2011 and up to four more by 2013 has not been achieved.

There is awareness of the NWT-PAS among NWT residents and the Strategy is managed in a way which allows regional organisations and communities to be engaged. Due to a lack of appropriate data, it is unclear if there has been an increase in awareness of the Strategy among NWT residents or in their capacity to participate. At the same time, there is evidence of increased and sustained support for the NWT-PAS from numerous communities and from the majority of stakeholders.

Finally, financial and qualitative data suggest that the NWT-PAS has managed to minimize financial and material resources while optimizing outputs. However, human resource capacity in remote regions and outcomes can be improved through addressing capacity issues at the community level, reviewing the role of the Steering Committee and reviewing current funding mechanisms.

#### ***IV. Best Practices and Lessons Learned***

The evaluation identified a number of *best practices*. These include earlier engagement of Aboriginal peoples', involvement in the NWT-PAS process, placing a strong emphasis on multi-stakeholder partnership and collaboration, substantial and active communication efforts through regular Steering Committee and working group meetings, newsletters, etc., and the use of Aboriginal traditional knowledge, which enhances the overall understanding of the culture, history, habitat, etc. of the land.

Evidence suggests numerous *lessons learned*, including informing stakeholders early on that the 8-step process can be longer than anticipated, clarifying ministerial approval timelines, encouraging stronger communication between NWT-PAS senior federal (Headquarters) government officials (i.e., Assistant Deputy Minister and Deputy Minister); and, clarifying to stakeholders all available land protection options before proceeding with the Strategy.

#### **Recommendations**

It is recommended that the participating departments/agencies, in collaboration with each other:

1. Address the issue of capacity constraints at the community level by working with the relevant community partners in order to include more expertise and increase capacity in the NWT-PAS activities while sharing costs related to assessments and Working Group activities.
2. Revisit and review the role of the Steering Committee to ensure it provides strategic direction as per its mandate.
3. In coordination with the relevant departments and agencies, review current funding mechanisms, to ensure predictability of funds and a timely delivery to recipients.
4. Develop an approach that will foster better understanding and communication of the NWT-PAS as it pertains to the devolution of lands and resources.

# ***Management Response and Action Plan***

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**Project Title: Evaluation of the Advancing Conservation Interests in the Northwest Territories Initiative: Protected Areas Strategy (NWT-PAS)**  
**Project #: 1570-7/10018**

## **1. Management Response**

To date, only one of seven protected areas has been permanently created using the federal government's contributions to the NWT PAS through targeted funding in 2008-09 and beyond. Limited investments in the next year or two should deliver additional results for this initiative because of the analysis and process undertaken to date with wide participation by NWT stakeholders and communities.

As noted in the report, other land conservation mechanisms like land use planning or other conservation processes such as those managed by the Government of Northwest Territories, may also attain similar results to those sought with the NWT PAS. There is also continued interest in the long-term permanence of parks and national wildlife areas that should continue to be explored with the ongoing funding associated with this initiative.

The scope of the evaluation recommendations were limited to actions that could be implemented within one year of the evaluations' approval, given that devolution will occur at the end of that time frame. The proposed action plans will address these recommendations in order to enable improvements in ongoing federal NWT PAS activities.

In the context of devolution, what had been AANDC's role in the NWT PAS will largely become the responsibility of the Government of the Northwest Territories as of April 1, 2014. AANDC will play a lead role in supporting an orderly transfer of NWT PAS duties and knowledge, including the operation of the PAS Secretariat, to their Government of Northwest Territories counterparts in the period leading up to devolution.

Environment Canada will continue to support the completion of working group reports for candidate national wildlife areas. Environment Canada will also manage and monitor any national wildlife areas that are established. Building on the strong base of protected area analysis and community and stakeholder engagement engendered to this point in time, and based on feedback from this evaluation, the focus of future program activities will be on the completion of working group reports, where such reports have not yet been finalized. From this point, based on decisions by federal and NWT governments, in the context of devolution, the final steps to establish national wildlife areas may be undertaken.

Parks Canada will continue to use ongoing funding to complete the establishment and development of the Saoyú-behdacho National Historic Site as agreed to with Sahtu Dene and Métis, and to continue to operate the site. With respect to the Thaidene Nene, Parks Canada will continue to work with other federal departments, the Government of the Northwest Territories,

the Lutsel K'e Dene First Nation and the Northwest Territories Métis Nation to achieve a boundary for a national park reserve while respecting devolution. This work of developing and consulting on a final boundary, as well as negotiating the required agreements, will be funded by Parks Canada. Parks Canada will also examine the means to secure the necessary funding to establish, develop and operate the national park reserve as the NWT PAS program does not provide the necessary funding for this aspect of the Thaidene Nene project.



## 2. Action Plan

**It is recommended that the participating departments:**

Recommendations	Actions	Responsible Manager (Title / Sector)	Planned Start and Completion Dates
<p>1. Address the issue of <u>capacity constraints at the community level</u> by working with relevant community partners in order to include more expertise and increase capacity in the NWT-PAS activities while sharing costs related to assessments and working group activities.</p>	<p>In the context of devolution, what had been AANDC's role and ongoing funding in the NWT PAS will become the responsibility of the Government of Northwest Territories after April 1, 2014. This said, the federal government (AANDC and Environment Canada) will continue supporting this initiative, each department within its area of responsibility and within existing resource levels.</p> <p>AANDC funding for NWT-PAS related activities is significantly reduced as of April 2013. In the context of their different departmental mandates, AANDC and Environment Canada will work together collaboratively in order to increase participation / expertise and cost-sharing for Working Group meetings involving community members, and will work towards achieving completed reports for all candidate areas.</p>	<p>AANDC NWT Regional Director General</p> <p>Environment Canada Prairies &amp; Northern Region, Regional Director and Northern Conservation Service Manager</p>	<p><i>Start Date:</i> March 2013</p> <p><i>Completion:</i> April 2014</p>
<p>2. <i>Revisit and review the <u>role of the Steering Committee</u> to ensure it provides strategic direction <b>in order to clarify roles and responsibilities related to ongoing devolution discussions and to ensure adequate partner participation, as per its mandate.</b></i></p>	<p>In coordination with Environment Canada and Government of Northwest Territories, AANDC will lead the review of the Steering Committee's Work Plan and Terms of Reference until devolution (April 2014). All options will be examined which could include a new role and mandate for the Steering Committee or the Steering Committee being disbanded if it is deemed no longer needed. Government of Northwest Territories input into changes to the Steering Committee will be paramount as they will be responsible for funding the Steering Committee post-devolution.</p> <p>1) Initial discussion on changes to the Steering Committee presented during 2013-14 Steering Committee</p>	<p>AANDC NWT Regional Director General</p> <p>Director Environment Canada Prairies &amp; Northern Region and Northern Conservation Service Manager</p>	<p><i>Start Date:</i> April 2013</p> <p><i>Completion:</i> 1) February 2013</p>

	<p>Workplan review at Steering Committee meeting.</p> <p>2) Follow-up Steering Committee meeting to discuss the ongoing role of the Steering Committee.</p> <p>3) Decisions made and communicated on the future of the Steering Committee.</p>		<p>2) May 2013</p> <p>3) April 2014</p>
<p>3. In coordination with the relevant departments and agencies, review current <u>funding mechanisms</u>, to ensure predictability of funds and a timely delivery to recipients.</p>	<p>1) AANDC funding for PAS activities as of 2013-14 and beyond is significantly reduced, to an extent that it will likely preclude funding of recipients. At the time of devolution, Government of Northwest Territories will take on responsibilities and funding associated with ongoing NWT PAS activities. Through the Policy on Transfer Payment initiative, AANDC will continue the work to address outstanding concerns regarding predictability of funds and timely delivery to recipients.</p> <p>2) Should the proposed Thaidene Nene national park reserve prove feasible, and the necessary agreements are successfully negotiated, Parks Canada will examine the means to secure new funds to establish, develop and operate the Thaidene Nene national park reserve as the NWT PAS program does not provide the necessary funding for this aspect of the park reserve project.</p>	<p>1) AANDC NWT Region Regional Director General</p> <p>2) Parks Canada Agency Director, Protected Areas Establishment Branch</p>	<p>Start Date:</p> <p>March 2013</p>
			<p>Completion:</p> <p>1) April 2014</p> <p>2) April 2014</p>
<p>4. Develop an approach that will foster better understanding and communication of the NWT-PAS as it pertains to the devolution of lands and resources.</p>	<p>Within the context of devolution of lands and resources, AANDC, in coordination with Environment Canada, is currently working with Government of Northwest Territories on developing an approach that will ensure smooth transition and foster better understanding of the NWT-PAS activities and intent post-devolution. So far, the following actions have been completed:</p> <p>1) Correspondence at the Ministerial level between AANDC / Environment Canada / Government of Northwest Territories to clarify / agree on an orderly transition to</p>	<p>AANDC NWT Regional Director General with support of AANDC Director General of Natural Resources and Environment Branch</p> <p>Environment Canada National Capital Region Protected Areas Manager and Environment Canada Strategic Policy Branch, Prairies and Northern Region</p>	<p>Start Date:</p> <p>February 2013</p>
			<p>Completion:</p> <p>Overall, by April 2014</p> <p>1) February 2013</p>

	<p>Devolution. 2) Participation in Working Group meetings with common messaging.</p> <p>Further joint Environment Canada/AANDC communications will be undertaken leading up to devolution.</p> <p>Parks Canada will work with AANDC and the Government of Northwest Territories on common communication messages regarding Thaidene Nene</p>	<p>Parks Canada's Director, Protected Areas Establishment Branch</p> <p>AANDC Director General of Natural Resources and Environment Branch</p>	<p>2) March 2013</p> <p>Start June 2013</p>
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**I recommend this Management Response and Action Plan for approval by AANDC's Evaluation, Performance Measurement and Review Committee, on behalf of the three organizations' evaluation teams:**

*Original signed on October 28, 2013, by:*

**Michel Burrowes**  
**Director, Evaluation, Performance Measurement and Review Branch, AANDC**

**I approve the above Management Response and Action Plan**

*Original signed on August 20, 2013, by:*

**Janet King**  
**ADM, Northern Affairs Organization, AANDC**

**I approve the above Management Response and Action Plan**

*Original signed on October 16, 2013, by:*

**Mike Beale, Environment Canada**  
**ADM, Environmental Stewardship Branch, Environment Canada**

**I approve the above Management Response and Action Plan**

*Original signed on August 30, 2013, by:*

**Rob Prosper**

**VP, Protected Areas Establishment and Conservation, Parks Canada**

*The Management Response / Action Plan for the Evaluation of the Advancing Conservation Interests in the Northwest Territories Initiative: Protected Areas Strategy were approved by the Evaluation, Performance Measurement and Review Committee.*

# 1. Introduction

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## 1.1 Overview

This report presents the findings and recommendations of the Evaluation of the *Advancing Conservation Interests in the Northwest Territories Initiative* in support of the *Northwest Territories Protected Areas Strategy* (NWT-PAS). The evaluation was conducted in response to the Treasury Board requirement that all direct program spending, excluding grants and contributions is evaluated every five years (Treasury Board Policy on Evaluation, 2009). Throughout this document, the NWT-PAS is also alternately referred to as the “Program,” the “Initiative” and the “Strategy.”

This horizontal evaluation with Environment Canada addresses 2009 Treasury Board *Policy on Evaluation* requirements. In line with that policy, it examines five core issues associated to the NWT-PAS: relevance (i.e. continuing need for the program, alignment with government priorities, consistency with federal roles and responsibilities) and performance (i.e., achievement of expected outcomes and demonstrated efficiency and economy). The evaluation also looked at design and delivery, best practices, lessons learned and where possible, provides alternatives in order to help inform future similar initiatives and programming.

The Terms of Reference, developed during the planning phase of the evaluation, sets out the scope of the evaluation, which was conducted between November 2011 and November 2012. The Evaluation, Performance Measurement and Review Branch (EPMRB), in collaboration with the Audit and Evaluation Branch at Environment Canada and Goss Gilroy Inc., initiated the evaluation. The work was completed internally by EPMRB with assistance from Environment Canada and to some extent, Parks Canada Agency. For example, the literature, document and file reviews and the development of the case studies background were conducted by Goss Gilroy Inc. with additional information coming from EPMRB. EPMRB undertook the case studies and a majority of the key informant interviews with some help from Environment Canada, and drafted the final report with input from the evaluation’s working group (officials from Environment Canada and Parks Canada Agency).

The report is structured as follows:

- Section 1.0 – Introduction (including the NWT-PAS’ profile, objectives, structure, management, stakeholders, beneficiaries and resources);
- Section 2.0 – Evaluation methodology and limitations;
- Section 3.0 – Evaluation findings related to relevance;
- Section 4.0 – Evaluation findings related to design and delivery;
- Section 5.0 – Evaluation findings related to performance (efficiency, economy and effectiveness);
- Section 6.0 – Conclusions and recommendations; and
- Section 7.0 – Annexes.

## 1.2 Program Profile

### 1.2.1 Background and Description

The Northwest Territories (NWT) and the Mackenzie Valley (Valley) in particular, provides numerous opportunities to protect new areas in Canada. The Valley covers a vast area of pristine boreal forest that supports a rich diversity of wildlife, including over 100 species of migratory birds and several species at risk, and contains significant historic sites that document traditional Aboriginal lifestyles and land uses. At the same time, it has potential for non-renewable resource development.

In 1974, the Government of Canada commissioned the Berger Inquiry to examine the social, environmental, and economic impacts of the proposed Mackenzie Gas Project, which would be one of the largest non-renewable resource infrastructure projects in Canadian history. Although the Mackenzie Gas Project is limited to producing and transporting natural gas from the Mackenzie Delta, it is regarded as having basin-opening potential, and would induce new resource exploration and development in other regions of the Valley. This would create unwanted direct impacts in 16 of the NWT's eco-regions; the long-term effects of the Mackenzie Gas Project and related developments may extend to all of its 42 eco-regions. The 1977 Report of the Inquiry concluded that such a pipeline would pose significant risk to the environment and provide few long-term economic benefits to northern communities. Particularly, it raised concerns about Aboriginal peoples, recommending that the Mackenzie Gas Project be delayed 10 years and that any development be preceded by land claim settlements and the establishment of protected areas.

Similar recommendations were made in 1996, when during the environmental assessment of the proposed BHP diamond mine, the World Wildlife Fund threatened legal action against the federal government unless a commitment was made to develop a strategy for protected areas in the NWT. Collaboration among federal and territorial governments, industries, communities, Aboriginal organizations and environmental non-government organizations ensued, resulting in the NWT-PAS in 1999.

The NWT-PAS has two primary goals: to protect significant natural and cultural areas, and to represent each of the NWT's 42 eco-regions. The NWT-PAS sets out an 8-step, community engagement process that utilizes the best available traditional, ecological, resource and economic knowledge to make land use decisions. The 8-steps include: candidate area identification; proposal development; various ecological, social/cultural, economic and resource assessments; management planning; interim and final protection; and ongoing management, monitoring and enforcement activities (see Annex A).

In 2003, the Minister of the then Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development Canada requested that a plan be developed to address concerns that the proposed Mackenzie Gas Project might preclude the NWT-PAS vision of a network of protected areas in the Mackenzie Valley. The result was the *Mackenzie Valley Five Year Action Plan – Conservation Planning for Pipeline Development*. The Action Plan is subsequent to the NWT-PAS; its aim is designating protected areas ahead of, or concurrently with, pipeline development.

By 2008, three candidate protected areas (Edézhíe (Horn Plateau), Samba K'e (Trout Lake) and Ts'ude niline Tu'eyeta (Ramparts)) had been proposed through the NWT-PAS but only one, Saoyú-behdacho, had achieved permanent protection as a National Historic Site. To pursue a more balanced approach to development and conservation, the Government of Canada decided to provide \$25 million over five years and \$4 million per year thereafter in Budget 2007 in an effort "to create or expand protected areas in the NWT, supporting the Protected Areas Strategy (PAS)."

The NWT-PAS relies on existing legislation. As a result, only Environment Canada, Parks Canada Agency and the Government of the Northwest Territories can sponsor protected areas. There are two imperatives to sponsoring protected areas: the candidate area must fit within the planned results and priorities of mandated programs and there must be an available source of funds to provide for ongoing operations.

### ***1.2.2 Program Objectives/Activities and Expected Outcomes***

The *Advancing Conservation Interests in the Northwest Territories Initiative* supports the NWT-PAS and its objectives are to establish, develop and operate up to six federal national wildlife areas by Environment Canada. This includes establishing one national historic site; carrying out a consultation and a feasibility study that could lead to the establishment of a national park reserve (Thaidene Nene) to be completed by Parks Canada Agency; and assist in responsible resource development in support of the NWT's PAS. AANDC is to provide ongoing support (technical assistance) to the protected areas sponsors (Environment Canada, Parks Canada Agency and the Government of Northwest Territories). AANDC also provides coordination and financial support to the PAS Secretariat, and is responsible for land management in the NWT.

Further, AANDC's role is to support the Government of Canada's commitment to assist Aboriginal communities in fulfilling their aspirations for greater self-reliance. AANDC delivers its programs through the following key strategic outcomes: The People, the Government, the Land and Economy, the North, Regional Operations and the Office of the Federal Interlocutor. The Initiative specifically contributes to the North outcome, which addresses the sustainable use of lands and resources by First Nations, Inuit and Northerners in ways that emphasize improved environmental management and stewardship.

#### ***Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada***

As the Department responsible for administering Crown land in the North, AANDC has a number of duties related to the establishment of protected areas in the NWT. These include participating in stakeholder consultation; conducting assessments of candidate areas; putting in place interim land withdrawals; and, transfer of lands to the agency responsible for the protected area.

In partnership with the Government of Northwest Territories, AANDC provides a strategic leadership role, including support to the NWT-PAS Secretariat, which is staffed by AANDC and Government of Northwest Territories officials. The Secretariat is the point of contact for the public and provides coordination, funding, technical and administrative support (provided by AANDC) to communities in the identification of candidate areas and proposal development.

### *Environment Canada*

According to the Initiative, Environment Canada's role in this Strategy is to establish six national wildlife areas. National wildlife areas protect significant habitat that supports wildlife or ecosystems at risk. Environment Canada's legislation is intended to offer communities the type of permanent protection they desire for candidate areas. To date, Environment Canada is working towards establishing five national wildlife areas. The three most advanced sites towards achieving permanent protection are: Edézhíe, Ka'a'gee Tu and Ts'udeniline Tu'eyeta. Environment Canada will also continue to collaborate with communities and stakeholders to advance planning efforts so that the public expectation for additional national wildlife areas might be realized in the future.

The NWT-PAS contributes to Environment Canada's strategic outcome, which is "Canada's natural environment is conserved and restored for present and future generations" and it will be achieved primarily through one Program Activity: "Biodiversity – Wildlife and Habitat." In support of this, Environment Canada has established a goal specific to ecosystem sustainability, which is "to develop and implement innovative strategies, programs, and partnerships to ensure that Canada's natural capital is sustained for present and future generations."

Environment Canada's activities are directed towards:

- working with communities and stakeholders to complete NWT-PAS planning activities leading towards the establishment of the national wildlife areas; and
- managing six national wildlife areas, including monitoring and collecting inventory of natural resources, managing species at risk, management planning, resource conservation, conducting outreach education programs, regulatory enforcement, and area administration.

A federal cabinet decision is required to create a national wildlife area. Formal designation of the areas as a National Wildlife Area requires an amendment to regulations made under the *Canada Wildlife Act*. As part of this process, consultations are conducted with local Aboriginal organizations (community and regional level) and other stakeholders; required documentation for this process include a Regulatory Impact Analysis Statement, communication plan, legal description of the land, as well as supporting briefing material. Final Proposal, Draft Management Plan, Regulatory Impact Analysis Statement and strategic environmental assessment are forwarded to the Environment Canada Minister and the federal Cabinet for consideration;<sup>3</sup> it is the prerogative of cabinet to decide if and when a national wildlife area is created. This legislative process for establishing a national wildlife area also includes publication in the *Canada Gazette* and listing in Schedule I of the *Wildlife Area Regulations*.

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<sup>3</sup> <http://www.nwtpas.ca/typesofprotection-NWA.asp>



## *Parks Canada Agency*

Parks Canada Agency legislation provides for the creation of national parks under the *Canada National Parks Act*, national historic sites under the *Historic Sites and Monuments Act*, and national marine conservation areas under the *Canada National Marine Conservation Areas Act*. Under the Conservation Interests initiative, Parks Canada Agency received funding to assess the feasibility of the Thaidene Nene (the East Arm of Great Slave Lake) National Park proposal and to develop and operate the Saoyú-behdacho National Historic Site.<sup>4</sup> It also used agency funding to achieve the protection of the Nááts'ihch'oh National Park Reserve to conserve the upper reaches of the South Nahanni River – this was a site first identified under the NWT- PAS.

Consistent with its normal business practices, Parks Canada Agency generally, works separately from AANDC and Environment Canada to complete all activities involved with these two candidate areas. However, they collaborate on mineral assessments, land withdrawals and land claims negotiations. Assessment and establishment of the Thaidene Nene National Park Reserve involves a feasibility study, community consultation, and communications and promotional products. Funding through this authority seeks only to assess the feasibility of the Thaidene Nene National Park Reserve proposal. Development and operation of the Saoyú-behdacho National Historic Site, has completed seven of the eight PAS steps, including land transfer. Funding for this National Historic Site involves setting up and funding a visitor centre, maintaining the national historic site and providing financial support to the Deline First Nation for co-management of the area.

With respect to approvals as it pertains to Parks Canada Agency, the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada makes recommendations to the Minister of the Environment regarding the commemoration of national historic sites.

## *Government of the Northwest Territories*

Working closely with AANDC, the Government of Northwest Territories (through the Departments of Environmental and Natural Resources and Industry, Tourism and Investment) provides support to the NWT-PAS Secretariat, which, in turn, provides support to communities and regional organizations for the completion of NWT-PAS 8-steps (for the protection of land under territorial legislation (*Territorial Parks Act* and *Wildlife Act*).

### **1.2.3 Logic Model**

A logic model is part of the Initiative's Results-Based Accountability Framework and Risk-based Audit Framework. This Results-based Management and Accountability Framework/Risk-based Audit Framework specify expected activities, outputs, and immediate, intermediate and final outcomes. The expected outcomes for the Initiative, which are presented in Annex C include: stakeholder and community support for candidate protected areas and interim protection

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<sup>4</sup> As a National Historic Site, its primary role is heritage resource conservation, not natural resource conservation.

(*immediate*); designation of ecologically important sites and permanent protection (*intermediate*); and, protection of culturally and ecologically important sites without the compromise of resource development (*long term*).

## **1.3 Program Management, Key Stakeholders and Beneficiaries**

### ***1.3.1 Program Management***

The NWT-PAS involves collaboration among communities, regional Aboriginal organizations, governments, environmental groups and industry groups. It is led by a multi-stakeholder Steering Committee, which guides and facilitates the implementation process, with the objective of providing a forum for information exchange and offering strategic direction to the territorial and federal ministers on the implementation of the NWT- PAS, including the Mackenzie Valley Five-Year Action Plan. As a community-based initiative, community and regional-level stakeholders play an important role throughout the process, including site identification, preparing proposals for potential sponsoring agencies, and participating on Candidate Area Working Groups and on management bodies for established areas.

The NWT-PAS has a Managing Director who reports to, and receives direction from, the Steering Committee for Strategy Implementation, with the support of the multi-partner NWT-PAS team. The Steering Committee and the Managing Director have access to secretariat support provided by the Government of Northwest Territories and AANDC.

#### ***Program / PAS staff and representatives***

- Government of Northwest Territories (Industry Tourism and Investment; Environment and Natural Resources)
- Federal government: AANDC/Environment Canada (regions and Headquarters)
- PAS Secretariat staff / Community coordinators
- PAS Managing Director

#### ***NWT-PAS Steering Committee***

The Steering Committee is composed of 14 organizations that guide the implementation of the NWT-PAS. It provides strategic advice to territorial and federal ministers on the best way to develop a network of protected areas across the NWT. Steering Committee members include:

##### ***Eight Aboriginal Groups and Governments***

1. Akaitcho Territory Government
2. Dehcho First Nations
3. Gwich'in Tribal Council
4. Inuvialuit Regional Corporation
5. North Slave Métis Alliance
6. Northwest Territory Métis Nation
7. Sahtu Secretariat Incorporated
8. Tłı̨chǫ Government

### *Two Industry Groups*

1. Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers
2. NWT and Nunavut Chamber of Mines

### *Two Environmental Non-Governmental Organizations*

1. Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society NWT Chapter
2. Ducks Unlimited Canada

### *The Federal and Territorial Governments*

1. Government of Canada (AANDC and Environment Canada)
2. Government of the NWT

### ***NWT-PAS Secretariat***

Staff in AANDC (Headquarters and NWT region) are responsible for the coordination of the NWT-PAS, and work closely with their Government of Northwest Territories counterparts and have formed a PAS Secretariat. The Secretariat is responsible for coordinating and encouraging cooperation among communities, regional organizations, land claim bodies, stakeholders and government institutions; it is also responsible for monitoring and reporting on progress related to commitments made in the PAS and the Mackenzie Valley Five-Year Action Plan.

### ***Managing Director***

The NWT-PAS has a Managing Director who supports the Secretariat by overseeing implementation of the NWT-PAS and the Mackenzie Valley Five-Year Action Plan, including coordination and planning of activities, preparation of an annual implementation plan, and monitoring and reporting on progress. This is done in close consultation with members of the Secretariat and approvals are sought from the NWT-PAS Steering Committee. The Managing Director is accountable to the Steering Committee.

### ***1.3.2 Key Stakeholders and Beneficiaries***

Federal government departments and agencies, other levels of government and other non-federal entities, public or private, organizations, individuals, have an interest in the NWT-PAS. These include:

- Federal departments (AANDC, Environment Canada, Parks Canada Agency)
- The Government of Northwest Territories
- Aboriginal groups/communities
- Industry
- Environmental non-government organizations

*Stakeholders (directly participating in NWT-PAS or involved in protection of land)*

- Selected northern communities represented on case study candidate area working groups<sup>5</sup>
- Mackenzie Valley land protection organizations (e.g. the Mackenzie Valley Environmental Impact Review Board; Mackenzie Valley Land and Water Board)
- Sahtu and Gwich'in Land Use Planning Boards
- Regional organizations
  - Inuvialuit Regional Corporation
  - Gwich'in Tribal Council
  - Sahtu Secretariat Incorporated
  - Dehcho First Nations
  - Tlicho Government
  - Akaitcho Territory Government
  - Northwest Territory Métis Nation
  - North Slave Métis Alliance
- Industry representatives on the NWT-PAS Steering Committee or candidate area working groups
  - Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers
  - NWT Chamber of Mines
  - The Association of Mackenzie Mountain Outfitters
  - Brabant Lodge
  - Deghanni Lake Lodge
  - Enodah Wilderness Travel
  - Hay River Hunters and Trappers Association
  - Northern Transportation Company Ltd.
  - Norwal Northern Adventures
  - Rabesca's Resources/Tamerlane Ventures
  - True North Safaris
- Environmental non-government organizations representatives on NWT-PAS Steering Committee or candidate area working groups
  - Ducks Unlimited
  - World Wildlife Fund
  - Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society: NWT Chapter
  - The Nature Conservancy of Canada
  - Other sponsor organizations

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<sup>5</sup> Candidate area working groups are usually set up once an area has been sponsored for protection. They include each community and each regional Aboriginal organization with an interest in the area, the sponsoring agency and other directly affected parties (e.g. outfitters, mineral lease holders). The working groups help evaluate the candidate protected area and make recommendations about the future status and management of the area.

## *Beneficiaries*

The implementation of the NWT-PAS supports a balance of land conservation and resource development, which, when complete, is expected to benefit several groups in the NWT and beyond. For instance, protection of traditional sites and wildlife habitat will help to preserve First Nations culture. The ecological benefits of protected areas are also expected to ensure that the areas have the ability to continue providing food, fresh water and other ecological goods and services to First Nations and Northerners. Also, greater clarity around areas set aside for resource development is expected to benefit resource-based industries. Greater resource development, in turn, will benefit First Nations through royalties and Northerners in general through employment and economic development. More generally, protection of a variety of Canadian eco-regions benefits all Canadians.

## **1.4 Program Resources**

*Contributions for promoting the safe use, development, conservation and protection of the North's natural resources (Funding Authority 334)*, is the funding authority that supported the implementation of AANDC's contribution to the NWT-PAS:

To deliver the commitments made in the Advancing Conservation Interests in the Northwest Territories, AANDC, Environment Canada and Parks Canada Agency accessed \$25 million from fiscal years 2008-09 to 2012-13. The expected program expenditures for each of the three departments is \$8.4 million, over five years, (approximately \$1.7/yr). Table 1 below shows the funding is somewhat evenly distributed over the five-year funding period (the period covered by the evaluation). Note that Environment Canada will receive considerably more ongoing funding in order to fulfill its ongoing wildlife area administration, monitoring, outreach and other activities.

**Table 1: Overview of authority spending (expected)**

<b>Cash - \$000</b>	<b>2008-09</b>	<b>2009-10</b>	<b>2010-11</b>	<b>2011-12</b>	<b>2012-13</b>	<b>5-Year Total</b>	<b>Ongoing</b>
Environment Canada	1,310	1,370	2,230	1,830	1,780	8,520	2,900
Indian and Northern Affairs	1,130	1,982	2,150	1,950	1,210	8,422	350
Parks Canada Agency	1,894	2,056	1,905	1,189	1,014	8,058	750
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,334</b>	<b>5,408</b>	<b>6,285</b>	<b>4,969</b>	<b>4,004</b>	<b>25,000</b>	<b>4,000</b>

The following table shows a breakdown of the expected expenditures of the three federal NWT-partners over the five-year period of funding.

**Table 2: Overview of AANDC, Environment Canada, Parks Canada Agency spending (expected)**

<b>AANDC</b>	<b>2008-09</b>	<b>2009-10</b>	<b>2010-11</b>	<b>2011-12</b>	<b>2012-13</b>	<b>5-Year Total</b>	<b>Ongoing</b>
<b>Total Salary (incl. Operations and Maintenance)</b>	898,934	1,682,849	1,850,849	1,633,349	964,849	7,030,830	305,630
<b>Total Grants and Contributions</b>	187,500	232,500	232,500	250,000	178,500	1,081,000	15,000
<b>Public Works and Government Services (Public Works and Government Services) Accommodation</b>	43,566	66,651	66,651	66,651	66,651	310,170	29,370
<b>Grand Total AANDC</b>	1,130,000	1,982,000	2,150,000	1,950,000	1,210,000	8,422,000	350,000
<b>Environment Canada</b>							
<b>Total Salary (incl. Operations and Maintenance)</b>	1,196,062	1,240,858	2,121,246	1,722,932	1,673,141	7,954,271	2,740,380
<b>Total Capital Expenditures</b>	45,000	60,000				105,000	
<b>Public Works and Government Services Accommodation</b>	68,908	69,142	108,754	107,068	106,857	460,729	159,620
<b>Grand Total Environment Canada</b>	1,310,000	1,370,000	2,230,000	1,830,000	1,780,000	8,520,000	2,900,000
<b>Parks Canada Agency</b>							
<b>Total Salary (incl. Operations and Maintenance)</b>	1,340,610	1,443,860	1,634,110	831,500	806,500	6,056,580	696,786
<b>Total Capital Expenditures</b>	390,000	398,750	107,500	357,500	207,500	1,461,250	53,214
<b>Total Grants and Contributions</b>	150,000	200,000	150,000			500,000	
<b>Public Works and Government Services Accommodation</b>	13,390	13,390	13,390			40,170	
<b>Grand Total Parks Canada Agency</b>	1,894,000	2,056,000	1,905,000	1,189,000	1,014,000	8,058,000	750,000
<b>Total new funding (all departments)</b>	4,334,000	5,408,000	6,285,000	4,969,000	4,004,000	25,000,000	4,000,000

## ***2. Evaluation Methodology***

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### **2.1 Evaluation Scope and Timing**

The evaluation scope covered fiscal years 2008-09 to 2011-12 and focused on the federal government's activities, roles, responsibilities and achievement of results related to this Initiative. It has an overall funding of \$25 million over five years (AANDC is allocated \$8.4 million over this five-year period). The evaluation also took into account the horizontal, multi-department/agency nature of this Initiative. The evaluation was careful not to evaluate territorial park creation and wildlife activities currently being completed under the wider PAS. The Terms of Reference was approved by AANDC's Evaluation, Performance Measurement and Review Committee (EPMRC) in November 2011 and field work was conducted in October 2012.

#### ***2.1.1 Objectives of the Evaluation***

The main objective of this evaluation was to assess the performance and relevance of the Strategy in accordance with the 2009 Treasury Board *Policy on Evaluation*.

### **2.2 Evaluation Issues and Questions**

The NWT-PAS evaluation addressed the following core evaluation issues:

#### ***Relevance:***

Issue 1: Continued need for the program;  
Issue 2: Alignment with government priorities; and  
Issue 3: Alignment with federal roles and responsibilities.

#### ***Performance (effectiveness, efficiency and economy):***

Issue 4: Achievement of expected outcomes (*effectiveness*); and  
Issue 5: Demonstration of efficiency and economy.

The evaluation also looked at *design and delivery* and *alternatives, lessons learned and best practices*. Design and delivery focused on the extent to which the program's design contributed to the achievement of the intended results/outcomes.

#### **Evaluation Questions**

A suite of evaluation questions along with associated indicators and data sources was developed (see Evaluation Matrix in Annex B). Supplementary evaluation questions were also developed. The evaluation rigorously applied the ten evaluation questions contained in the evaluation framework, which together examined all five core evaluation issues noted above.

### *Phase 1 - Pre-assessment*

The evaluation approach and methodology were informed by the results of an evaluation pre-assessment, which included data and availability assessment, as well as undertaking consultations with federal department/agency stakeholders. Subsequently, a methodology report was prepared, which set out broad directions (e.g. roles and responsibilities of the participating departments) for the second phase of the evaluation (the actual undertaking of the evaluation study).

#### *Collaborative approach*

The pre-assessment showed that the Initiative involved AANDC, Environment Canada and Parks Canada Agency but only AANDC and Environment Canada relied on the NWT-PAS Steering Committee and Secretariat for the coordination and reporting. Parks Canada Agency's role in the delivery/implementation of the Initiative is significantly different as it uses its own processes (which pre-date the evaluation), thus, its participation in the evaluation was more limited. As a result, a horizontal evaluation involving Environment Canada was deemed the most effective approach, with EPMRB serving as the lead for the evaluation. Parks Canada Agency was kept apprised of all developments and opportunities for exchange of information among the departments were welcomed.

#### *Performance Measurement*

The Advancing Conservation Interests in the Northwest Territories Initiative has a Results-based Management and Accountability Framework and Risk-based Audit Framework for establishing Federal Protected Areas in the NWT. This was developed in May 2008.

### *Phase 2 – Evaluation Study*

Following Phase I, the evaluation team refined its work plan to reflect the results of the pre-assessment. The evaluators undertook the following work:

1. Developed a detailed questionnaire and, where appropriate (e.g. case studies), involved members of the evaluation working group; these were forwarded to interview subjects in advance with a covering letter from EPMRB requesting their agreement to be interviewed.
2. Scheduled and conducted interviews with representatives from AANDC, Environment Canada and Parks Canada Agency by phone or in person in the official language preferred by the interviewee.
3. Analyzed information gathered from Phase I; Phase 2 included stating the significance of findings, conclusions and making recommendations related to the evaluation issues.



4. Prepared a draft evaluation report and shared with Environment Canada and Parks Canada Agency (evaluation branches) and AANDC and Environment Canada program representatives for comments.
5. Reviewed draft report taking into account comments received from Environment Canada and Parks Canada Agency (evaluation branches) and AANDC program representatives.
6. Peer review of the draft final report undertaken by EPMRB evaluators.
7. Prepared a final report.

## **Evaluation - Data Sources**

The evaluation's findings and conclusions are based on the analysis and triangulation of the following multiple lines of evidence:

### *Literature review*

The purpose of the literature review was to explore key issues related to the Strategy's relevance and performance, lessons learned, best practices and alternatives. A total of 28 secondary sources were reviewed, including but not limited to, academic articles and papers, government reports and publications.

Program representatives identified and provided documents for review by the evaluation team and suggested documentation from international sources that could contribute to relevant background information. The review of national and international literature helped to inform best practices and assess the economy and efficiency issue. Information was extracted systematically from the literature, using a review template developed by the EPMRB evaluators.

### *Document and file reviews*

The objective of this data collection was to develop a sound understanding of the NWT-PAS in order to be able to address other issues (e.g. success, design and delivery aspects of the program). EPMRB evaluators, with Goss Gilroy Inc., identified and reviewed relevant files and documents during the pre-assessment phase and supplemented these during the data collection phase. Key NWT-PAS documentation that was reviewed included the NWT-PAS achievement reports, proposals, committee reports, frameworks, guidelines, annual reports, Steering Committee Terms of Reference, and strategic plans. A total of 27 document and files were reviewed. The analysis of these documents looked at NWT-PAS products and publications, partners involved, conferences and presentations facilitated by the NWT-PAS, etc.

The documents and files reviewed provided background for the evaluators prior to the field work and helped inform findings and recommendations. Information was extracted systematically from each document and file, using a document review template developed by the EPMRB evaluators.

### *Key informant interviews*

Key informant interviews helped researchers gain a better understanding of the perceptions and opinions of individuals who have had a significant role in, or experience with, the NWT-PAS Initiative. Interviews were principally conducted by EPMRB evaluators, although EPMRB evaluators assisted with Environment Canada program staff and management interviews which were conducted by staff from the Environment Canada Evaluation Division. The initial list of key informants totaled 45; 29 were available for interviews (conducted between July and November 2012).

In-person interviews were conducted except where key informants were not available in person; in such cases, telephone interviews were undertaken. Interview questionnaires were e-mailed or faxed to key informants in advance of the interview. Where initial attempts to contact key informants were unsuccessful, up to 10 subsequent attempts were made via phone, email, and fax to schedule potential respondents for an interview. Key informants included the following representatives:

- AANDC (n=6)
- Environment Canada (n=6)
- Parks Canada Agency (n=2)
- Government of Northwest Territories (n=7)
- The NWT-PAS Steering Committee (n=6)
- Environmental Non-government Organizations (n=2)

\*The above list does not include First Nations representatives (n=11) who were interviewed as part of the case studies (see below); also, industry representatives (n=2), were interviewed as representatives of the NWT-PAS Steering Committee.

### Analysis

Following interviews, data were stored in individual Microsoft Word files. Where appropriate, the repetition of a theme was quantified. Information was captured in a systematic manner according to the evaluation matrix and the generated themes were shared among the evaluators. This was done to ensure accuracy among the interviewers with respect to information collected.

### *Case Studies*

The purpose of the case studies was to provide first-hand external input into evaluation questions. The results from the case studies assisted in interpreting and validating findings, and to provide an external perspective to the evaluation report. AANDC evaluators visited one of the NWT-PAS related communities from October 22-26, 2012, with an additional case study interview completed by teleconference on October 29, 2012. A case study visit protocol was used to guide data collection at these Aboriginal communities. Two AANDC evaluators undertook the community visit.

Selection of the case studies was based on criteria such as: geographic coverage, budgetary considerations and the beneficiaries associated with the projects. Goss Gilroy Inc. and EPMRB developed a case study background profile based on project files (annual reports, proposals) and additional website information. EPMRB (with input from regional AANDC officials) later developed the case study questions. Preliminary findings on the design, implementation, results, impacts, lessons learned and challenges were extracted from those project files. Findings from interviews conducted during the site visits informed the project background descriptions and all evaluation issues. Two case studies with a total of 11 interviewee participants were conducted.

### ***Considerations, Strengths and Limitations***

#### **Strengths**

1. *Multiple lines of evidence*

The use of multiple lines of evidence helped compensate for any weakness affecting a particular line of evidence; for example, where interviewees declined or did not show up.

2. *Coordination of the evaluation with Parks Canada Agency*

As much as possible, some data collection for this evaluation was done in parallel with Parks Canada Agency's Evaluation of Parks Canada's National Park Establishment and Expansion, to be tabled at the Parks Canada Agency evaluation committee meeting in early 2013. The Parks Canada Agency evaluation includes a case study of the Thaidene Nene proposal. While these remained two separate evaluations, such coordination helped in information sharing and cost saving between the two studies.

#### **Limitations**

1. *Key informant interviewees' availability*

From a total of 45 potential key informants, half either declined or did not respond to the invitation to participate.

Mitigation: Followed up with potential interviewees and conducted some of the interviews by telephone. However, there was little time for interviewers to probe for more in-depth responses and also prevented interviewers from noticing non-verbal cues. The study followed up with individuals for clarification and also, relied on triangulation of data.

## **2.3 Roles, Responsibilities and Quality Assurance**

To ensure the quality of its evaluations (e.g. produce reliable, useful and defensible evaluation products), EPMRB uses a mix of quality control tools such as working groups and peer review.

### Evaluation Working Group

An evaluation working group, including Environment Canada, Parks Canada Agency and AANDC program area representatives was formed in order to provide knowledge and expertise of the NWT-PAS. The working group's mandate was to provide ongoing advice to the evaluation team (e.g. methodology report, proposing key data sources and stakeholders, commenting on evaluation findings, etc).

### Internal Peer Review

EPMRB evaluators who are not directly involved in the evaluation project conducted internal peer reviews (e.g. examined the degree to which final reports correspond with the evaluation's Terms of Reference and methodology reports). The reviewers' work is guided by the EPMRB's Peer Review Guides. These guides include questions, which reflect Treasury Board standards for evaluation quality and guidelines for final reports.

## 3. Evaluation Findings - Relevance

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The evaluation examined the continuing need for the NWT-PAS and the extent to which it aligns with current AANDC and federal government priorities, as well as federal roles and responsibilities.

The evaluation concluded that there is a clear and continued need for the NWT-PAS, specifically for a network of protected areas in the NWT. The Strategy is aligned with current Government of Canada and AANDC and Environment Canada priorities and strategic objectives, including Canada's Northern Strategy. The Initiative is also consistent with AANDC's responsibilities under the *Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development Act*, which fosters knowledge of Canada's North, as well as its developmental activities. Moreover, the federal government's role in the NWT-PAS is appropriate and is closely in line with its priorities and strategic objectives, adhering to national and international commitments. Further, the NWT-PAS activities are complementary to the NWT's regional land use planning and do not duplicate other similar activities in the NWT or provided by the Government of Northwest Territories.

### 3.1 Continued Need

#### 3.1.1 *Is there a need for a network of protected areas in the Northwest Territories?*

***Finding: There is a need for a network of protected wildlife areas and parkland in the NWT. This is largely attributed to: (a) increased interest and activity in economic/resource development in the NWT and its subsequent impact on First Nations, wildlife and habitat; and (b) its complementarity to regional land use planning.***

Home to some of the richest and most diversified resource bases in Canada, the NWT, in recent years, has sparked increasing interest in economic activity and in resource development, particularly in mining, energy, oil and gas. For example, annual expenditures in oil and gas *exploration* alone have more than doubled, from \$130 million in 1999 to \$325 million 2008, while capital expenditures invested in mining and oil and gas *extraction* have also tripled during the same period, from \$264 million to \$789 million.<sup>6</sup> The proposed construction of the Mackenzie Valley Pipeline, stretching from Inuvik to the northwest border of Alberta forecasts potential revenue of \$2.2 billion per annum,<sup>7</sup> but poses significant environmental threats.<sup>8</sup> At the same time, the NWT is also home to unique ecosystems, flora and fauna, and harbours many species-at-risk, including the Peary Caribou, Whooping Crane, Polar Bear and Wolverine, all highly sensitive to environmental changes.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Northwest Territories, "Northwest Territories Energy Report," May 2011, p. 11; Northwest Territories, Bureau of Statistics, retrieved November 29, 2012, <http://www.statsnwt.ca/economy/investment/>

<sup>7</sup> Government of Canada, "Invest in Canada," November 27, 2012

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> Government of Canada and the Northwest Territories, "Species at Risk in the Northwest Territories," 2012, p. 11, 25, 29, 57 November 30, 2012

Key informant interviews, case studies, document and literature reviews indicate that mounting developmental activities and pressures have not only posed a real threat to the future sustainability of the NWT's biodiversity, but also to the preservation of First Nations' culture, tradition and history. For example, case study participants raised the issue of human-modified landscapes, the decrease of animal populations and its impact on the environment and Aboriginal culture, while document and literature reviews indicate rampant land fragmentation<sup>10</sup> and its adverse effects on plant and animal habitat. One of the expectations of the NWT-PAS is to preserve Aboriginal culture, tradition, history and the environment, while benefiting communities, all Canadians and future generations. For instance, it is anticipated that permanent protection in Saoyú-?ehdacho will result in "positive and important impacts from the protection of cultural, traditional and educational resources for the Sahtugot'ine."<sup>11</sup> This includes the preservation and transference of traditional knowledge<sup>12</sup> and the preservation of "a rare cultural landscape for all time."<sup>13</sup>

The greatest concerns raised by First Nation interview and case study participants were the ongoing and projected growth in economic/resource development in the NWT and the adverse impact it would have on Aboriginal lifestyles, including vitally important social, cultural and economic activities that many continue to practice (i.e., hunting, gathering and medicinal practices). Case study participants indicated that their communities have already observed much of these impacts though specific examples were not offered. Considering the overall context of the Strategy, the evaluation finds the need to ensure a measure of environmental protection as well as a sustainable ecosystem, particularly since 51 percent of the territorial population is Aboriginal;<sup>14</sup> otherwise, Aboriginal Peoples are vulnerable to losing their connection to the land.

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<sup>10</sup> Land fragmentation occurs when "entire landscapes that were once connected mosaics of native habitats that remain may occur in patches of various sizes that are separated from one another by these altered landscapes. Many species and processes are unable to survive in human-modified landscapes, and their ability to travel between patches of native habitats has been severed. This fragmentation disrupts natural movements of animals (and their genes), seeds, spore and pollen, as well as nutrient and energy flows." National Round Table on the Environment and Economy, "Securing Canada's Natural Capital: A Vision for Nature Conservation in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century," 2003, November 30, 2012

<sup>11</sup> The Outspan Group Inc., "Socio-Economic Assessment of the Saoyú-?ehdacho Candidate Protected Area: Background Information and Preliminary Assessment," 2006, p. 36, December 4, 2012

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., p. 34.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., p. 35.

<sup>14</sup> Government of the Northwest Territories, Bureau of Statistics, "Community Population Estimates by Ethnicity, Northwest Territories, July 1, 2011," retrieved November 30, 2012, <http://www.statsnwt.ca/population/population-estimates/>

## *Duplication*

The issue of continued need also raises the matter of duplication. The evaluation found that the NWT-PAS does not duplicate any other protection measures in the NWT. The Strategy is similar only to regional Land Use Planning (LUP) to the extent that they both establish conditions that control the use of land, but diverge in three particular areas:

1. *Timing of protection* – LUP usually offers short-term protection, often for a five-year period after which the protection scenario can be reviewed and possibly renewed; a protected area designation can offer long-term protection.
2. *Type of protection* – LUP offers more flexible protection; National Wildlife Areas, National Parks and Historic Sites offer secure protection that is less flexible. Under the laws used for long-term protection, it is hard to change things like boundaries or the type of activities allowed.
3. *Complimentary relationship between NWT-PAS and LUP* – NWT-PAS identifies and gathers a wide range of information about special areas of land anticipated for protection. The LUP uses the information from the NWT-PAS process to move an area of land through its process and vice versa.

Of note, whereas a regional LUP can be required for regions/areas, if specified in an established land claim, the NWT-PAS provides communities without a comprehensive land claim the opportunity to also set objectives for conservation and resource management. This difference was especially noted by case study participants; communities without a comprehensive land claim would otherwise not have any available tools for desired conservation efforts. Thus, the evaluation found that the NWT-PAS fills an important gap that regional LUPs leaves behind, which is establish protected areas in unsettled land claims. In settlement areas, the NWT-PAS and LUP are complementary processes.

All lines of evidence argue that there is a need for: sustainable economic development; a network of protected wildlife areas and parkland in the NWT (*parkland* is discussed in more detail in 3.2.1); the protection of important ecological and cultural sites in the NWT as the Strategy is able to operate in unsettled land claim areas, thus, filling a gap left by regional LUP.

## **3.2 Alignment with Government Priorities**

### ***3.2.1 Is the NWT-PAS aligned with federal government priorities?***

***Finding: The Strategy is aligned with Government of Canada priorities and with AANDC, Environment Canada and Parks Canada Agency priorities.***

Affirming the need for balance between environmental protection and economic development in the NWT, the Auditor General of Canada stated in 2010 that the “federal government has specific obligations relating to the effective governance, environmental protection, and capacity building to provide sustainable and balanced development in the Northwest Territories. Failure to meet these obligations could mean missed economic opportunities, environmental degradation

and increased social problems in NWT communities....”<sup>15</sup> The Government of Canada had previously indicated that sustainable development is a priority, even well before the establishment of the NWT-PAS in 1999, by ratifying numerous international and national commitments. International commitments include the Convention on Biological Diversity (1992) and the Inuvik Declaration (1996), while national plans and obligations include Canada’s Green Plan (1990), the Tri-Council Statement of Commitment (1992), the Whitehorse Mining Initiative (1994), the Joint Federal-Territorial Task Force on Northern Conservation (1994), the Minerals and Metals Policy (1996), the Federal Water Policy, the Canadian Biodiversity Strategy (1996), and the Mackenzie River Basin Trans-boundary Waters Master Agreement (1997).

Likewise, both federal and NWT governments have committed to sustainable natural resource management and development that include policy commitments calling for increased regulation of industries interested in developing the NWT’s natural resources. Such initiatives include the North of 60 Action Plan (2001), the Government of Northwest Territories’ Sustainable Development Strategy (1993), Non-renewable Resource Development Strategy (1998), Improving the Northern Operating Environment (2001), and the Environmental Stewardship Framework and the NWT Water Stewardship Strategy (2010). Case studies, interview participants and document and literature reviews also indicate that the NWT-PAS is aligned with the priorities of the three sponsoring bodies: AANDC, Environment Canada and Parks Canada Agency.

In addition, interview and case study participants expressed the significance of federal support in the Initiative, particularly since communities, industry and other third parties would otherwise have very limited capacity to participate in the program. Interview and case study participants indicated that communities would be financially unable to participate in working group and Secretariat meetings, as well as the greater NWT-PAS process since their resources are spread quite thin. Interview participants also expressed concern for the future capacity of environmental non-government organizations in the NWT-PAS without federal support since their capacity had significantly decreased since the recent global financial crisis, specifically citing the consequential withdrawal of the World Wildlife Fund’s support in the Initiative.

#### *AANDC and NWT-PAS*

The NWT-PAS serves to support the Department’s broad mandate in the North. The AANDC Minister is mandated through the *Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development Canada Act* to oversee the resources and affairs of Canada’s three territories. The strategic objective is to support the sustainable development of the North’s natural resources while also protecting Arctic ecosystems for the use and enjoyment of future generations.

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<sup>15</sup> Office of the Auditor General of Canada, “Spring Report of the Auditor General of Canada, Chapter 4: Sustaining Development in the Northwest Territories,” 2010, [http://www.oag-bvg.gc.ca/internet/docs/parl\\_oag\\_201004\\_04\\_e.pdf](http://www.oag-bvg.gc.ca/internet/docs/parl_oag_201004_04_e.pdf)



AANDC is responsible for the administration and management of all Crown land in the NWT and is also responsible for granting interim land withdrawals and, as a result, plays a crucial role in the NWT-PAS. Working in conjunction with the Government of Northwest Territories, the Department provides financial resources to communities and helps coordinate efforts to identify, assess and seek sponsors for protected areas. For example, AANDC undertakes non-renewable resource assessments to evaluate the mineral and petroleum potential of candidate protected areas with the aim of realizing future economic development and conservation opportunities.

#### *Environment Canada and NWT-PAS*

Environment Canada's strategic outcome that "Canada's natural environment is conserved and restored for present and future generations," as well as the Canadian Wildlife Service's mandate<sup>16</sup>, also indicate alignment with the NWT-PAS. In addition, Environment Canada has commitments to the Departmental Sustainable Development Strategy (2012) and reports to the Convention on Biological Diversity, International Union for the Conservation of Nature's World Commission on Protected Areas, as well as to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development regarding the state of Canada's conservation efforts.

#### *Parks Canada Agency and NWT-PAS*

Parks Canada Agency's priorities are also directly related to the NWT-PAS. In particular, its legislation provides for the creation of national parks under the *Canada National Parks Act* and national historic sites under the *Historic Sites and Monuments Act*. An evaluation undertaken by Parks Canada Agency indicates that the establishment and expansion of national parks is consistent with Parks Canada Agency's mandate and priorities (under the sub-activity National Park Establishment and Expansion of Program Activity 1, Heritage Places Establishment), which continues to be a priority for Parks Canada Agency, as reflected by its corporate plans. Establishing national parks that are representative of Canada's 39 natural regions has been an ongoing commitment since the first National Parks System Plan was released in the early 1970s. Parks Canada Agency's National Parks Policy adds to this commitment, specifically stating that efforts to establish new parks will be concentrated on those natural regions that do not have a national park, such as the Northern Boreal Uplands in the NWT (to be represented by the establishment of the Thaidene Nene National Park Reserve).

In addition, the *Parks Canada Agency Act* (1998) states that it is "in the national interest to protect the nationally significant examples of Canada's natural and cultural heritage in national parks" and "to include representative examples of Canada's land and marine natural regions in the systems of national parks and national marine conservation areas." Further, the Act indicates a need for a long-term plan for national parks and confirms Parks Canada Agency's role for negotiating and recommending the establishment of new national parks to the Minister.

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<sup>16</sup> CWS is a directorate within EC, and its mandate is the preserving of habitat for migratory birds, species at risk and other nationally important wildlife.

### 3.3 Alignment with Federal Roles and Responsibilities

#### 3.3.1 *Is the NWT-PAS aligned with federal roles and responsibilities?*

***Finding: While the NWT-PAS is appropriately aligned with federal roles and responsibilities, it is presently unclear how and to what extent devolution may impact the federal government's roles.***

Evidence from key informants, case studies and document and literature reviews suggest that the roles and responsibilities of the federal government are appropriately aligned with the NWT-PAS in light of federal and departmental priorities discussed in 3.2.1., and specifically in terms of contributing to the fulfillment of international environmental commitments and conservation efforts in the NWT.

The Government of Canada subscribes to the International Union for the Conservation of Nature, the world's largest global environmental network, which has adopted protected area management categories to classify protected areas according to their management objectives. Canada's national parks fall under Category II – National Parks, reporting that “Natural area of land and/or sea, designated to: (a) protect the ecological integrity of one or more ecosystems for present and future generations; (b) exclude exploitation or occupation inimical to the purposes of designation of the area; and (c) provide a foundation for spiritual, scientific, educational, recreational and visitor opportunities, all of which must be environmentally and culturally compatible.” The International Union for the Conservation of Nature 1994 Guidelines for Protected Area Management Categories, suggested that ownership and management of these areas should normally be undertaken by the highest competent authority of the nation, while maintaining jurisdiction over such responsibilities. More recently, International Union for the Conservation of Nature guidance (2008) has recognized that national parks may also be vested in another level of government, council of indigenous people, foundation or other legally established body.

Emphasizing the importance of the federal government's role, key informants indicated that significant barriers to land protection without federal sponsoring legislation exist, including financial resources and regulation. In other words, according to key informant interviews, there is limited community and local legislative capacity governing the NWT-PAS. Hence, the federal government's legislative responsibility as manager of Crown lands for the long-term benefit of Northerners and all Canadians is important. At the same time, the Strategy compliments other protection measures in the NWT. In particular, the Strategy is an accompaniment to LUPs, which is discussed in more detail in Section 3.1.1. Parks Canada Agency's National Park and/or National Historic Site designations and Environment Canada's Canadian Wildlife Service's Migratory Bird Sanctuaries are compatible with the NWT-PAS.

#### *NWT-PAS and Devolution*

The *Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development Canada Act* establishes AANDC as lead federal department in the North. Through the Northern Affairs Organization, the Department is responsible for two equally important mandates - Indian and Inuit Affairs and Northern Affairs. Northern Affairs Organization's mandate include: meeting the federal

government's constitutional, political and legal responsibilities in the North; and administering most northern lands (except those devolved to territorial governments or Self-Governing First Nations). The Northern Affairs Organization's priorities, among other things, involve the Northern Strategy and Devolution. "Devolution" is the transfer of authority from the Government of Canada to the Government of Northwest Territories.

The Government of Canada and the Government of Northwest Territories have been negotiating for years on the issue of devolution. The evaluation has found that at the time of writing this evaluation report (December 2012 – January 2013), there was uncertainty with respect to devolution and its relation and/or impact on the NWT-PAS. Specifically, there are differing perspectives in terms of federal roles and responsibilities and how it will align with the NWT-PAS when devolution of lands and resources comes into effect in the NWT. AANDC reports, "Federal departments that have a wide role in the management of lands and resources such as the national Energy Board, Natural Resources Canada, Environment Canada and Parks Canada *may* see the way they do this work in the NWT change as a result of devolution."<sup>17</sup>

Key informants maintain two differing positions, that: (a) federal roles and responsibilities will continue to be appropriately aligned with the program, particularly as it could take an unspecified amount of time for the Government of Northwest Territories to create stronger land protection tools for protected areas; while the second (b), questions the role of the Government of Canada in land claims and LUP, noting that the role is ambiguous at present (focusing on economic development while promoting environmental protection) and there is no clear path forward that will address the NWT-PAS process in the event of devolution. However, it must be stated that this latter group of key informants voiced their support in the Government of Canada's role in general conservation efforts to which it made commitments, such as the *Canada Wildlife Act*, *Species at Risk Act* and the *Migratory Birds Convention Act*.

It is expected that the NWT devolution initiative will transfer control over federal Crown (public) lands and resources, including rights in respect of water, from the Government of Canada to the Government of Northwest Territories.<sup>18</sup> The document review highlights the expectation that as a result of devolution, the Government of Northwest Territories will receive a transfer of "province-like" powers: administration and control over Crown (public) lands, including land/non-renewable resource management, assets, funding and staff, influence over economic/environmental issues and retention of some residual social/economic roles. This will give the Government of Northwest Territories the ability to grant interests as an owner of lands and resources, in the same way the federal government is able to do so presently. Thus, while having increased authority to make decisions about the way public lands, resources and waters are managed, including the way the economy is developed and the way the environment is protected, there will be increased opportunity for the Government of Northwest Territories, Aboriginal governments and NWT residents to work together on land management and natural resource stewardship strategies. According to Government of Northwest Territories documents, "this means that decisions about development and the environment will better reflect northern

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<sup>17</sup> AANDC, "NWT Plain Talk – Devolution Edition," June 2012, retrieved November 29, 2012, <http://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/eng/1345135767118/1345135859815>

<sup>18</sup> See 120713 PDF in devolution folder

needs and priorities,”<sup>19</sup> but initially, the Government of Northwest Territories will mirror existing federal legislation and processes to ensure a smooth transition.

While it is important that program policies and procedures be up-to-date and complete before devolution, the evaluation notes that devolution is an important issue that falls within the larger domain of the federal government, which includes other federal departments. The study found that the impact of devolution on the roles and responsibilities remains unclear. Hence, the nature of residual federal responsibilities remaining with the federal government (at least AANDC) have not yet been clearly identified and clarified by AANDC officials for the benefit of stakeholders.

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<sup>19</sup> Ibid

## **4. Evaluation Findings – Design and Delivery**

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This section addresses the issue of the extent to which the Initiative’s design effectively responds to the needs it was intended to address (i.e., whether implemented as intended or appropriate performance measurements were in place to report results), and analyzing evidence of best practices and lessons learned.

### **4.1 Design and Delivery**

#### **4.1.1 Is the Initiative designed to respond to the needs related to the creation of a network of protected areas?**

***Finding 1: The Strategy is appropriately designed (e.g. governance structure) to respond to the needs and contexts of regional organizations and communities related to the creation of a network of protected areas.***

Case studies, interview participants and document reviews indicate that the NWT-PAS is designed to appropriately respond to the needs and contexts of regional organizations and communities, largely as a result of its governance structure. In terms of needs (which include interests, priorities and regional land use planning), interview participants reported that the working groups, in particular, have provided opportunity for individuals, communities and regional organizations to participate in the 8-step process, share their interests, express their priorities, points of view and build upon relationships. The NWT-PAS was purposely designed to ensure the inclusion of various stakeholders throughout each process in order to obtain better and more informed decisions, as well as attaining broad agreement on certain matters.

In addition, interviewees also stressed that the NWT-PAS is appropriately suited to different contexts (including the political, legislative, ecological, economic and cultural) due principally to its flexibility of adapting to various areas and dimensions in the NWT. For instance, interviewees stated that the NWT-PAS can operate in both settled and unsettled land claim areas, and its processes can be adapted to meet federal and territorial legislation. The evaluation noted that while the 8-step process is applied in the same manner across the territory, the level of complexity surrounding it (i.e., engagement of consultations) depends on the level of certainty regarding land rights and the priority accorded to different stakeholder interests, such as the relationship between conservation and development.

***Finding 2: The Program’s governance structure has contributed to the achievement of outcomes, particularly as a result of the Steering Committee’s commitment to information-sharing. However, there is a need to revisit and improve upon four areas of concern: (1) the clarity of roles and responsibilities of the Steering Committee and Secretariat; (2) the need for the structure and mandate of the Steering Committee to further evolve; (3) the need to clarify the future of the Initiative post-devolution; and (4) the need to encourage a stronger understanding of the relationship between the NWT-PAS and marine conservation.***

The NWT-PAS' governance structure (8-steps, working groups, Steering Committee and Secretariat) is intended to be responsiveness to the needs and contexts of many stakeholders related to wildlife and creation of parks and protected areas and it has also contributed to the achievement of outcomes; this is due, in part, to three key strengths associated to the NWT-PAS' governance structure.

First, the Steering Committee has a strong commitment to transparency and to the sharing and dissemination of information. In particular, documents and literature reviewed shows that the Steering Committee has provided "a forum for communication among stakeholders and the public, by updating NWT-PAS guidelines as necessary, and by approving the NWT-PAS annual work-plan and budget."<sup>20</sup> Both key informant and case studies interviewees echo this sentiment, but also reflect upon the Steering Committee's value for inclusivity, which includes communication, participation and relationship-building. Second, working groups (typically comprised of members from the community and Elders, Aboriginal governments, territorial and federal government representatives, environmental non-government organizations and industry representatives), facilitate information dissemination and communication among the stakeholders, thereby contributing to the achievement of objectives like "increasing communication" and "capacity-building."<sup>21</sup> However, case studies demonstrate that working groups could be more representative of First Nations living within the boundaries of the candidate protected area. Third, interviewees noted the active and attentive role of the Secretariat, how it promotes cost-sharing and the achievement of mutual objectives.

At the same time, evidence from interviewees and the document review suggest there are three key areas for improvement in the manner the NWT-PAS is delivered. First, nearly half of all interview participants cited the need to revisit the roles and responsibilities of the Steering Committee and Secretariat due to a lack of understanding in their functions, specifically noting that the Steering Committee performs some of the Secretariat's tasks. However, none of the interviewees provided specific details of this issue. Second, the structure and mandate of the Steering Committee must evolve in terms of area management and monitoring,<sup>22</sup> as well as provide more strategic direction and advice in order to stay relevant, particularly in light of impending devolution (see discussion on devolution in Section 3.3.1). For instance, the evaluation found that the Steering Committee is more of an information platform (individuals share information about other ongoing initiatives) than a body that provides strategic direction/advice, thus, not adhering to its Terms of Reference. Third, the role of the NWT-PAS in terms of marine conservation needs to be better defined (discussed in more detail below).

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<sup>20</sup> Protected Areas Steering Committee, "Establishment Action Plan 2010-2015: Fulfilling the Promise of the Northwest Territories' Protected Areas Strategy," 2010, <http://www.nwtpas.ca/documents/document-2010-EAP.pdf>

<sup>21</sup> Protected Areas Steering Committee, "Establishment Action Plan 2010-2015: Fulfilling the Promise of the Northwest Territories' Protected Areas Strategy," 2010, <http://www.nwtpas.ca/documents/document-2010-EAP.pdf>

<sup>22</sup> This is supported by the Protected Areas Steering Committee, "Establishment Action Plan 2010-2015: Fulfilling the Promise of the Northwest Territories' Protected Areas Strategy," 2010, <http://www.nwtpas.ca/documents/document-2010-EAP.pdf>; and Nesbitt, L., "Putting Policy into Practice: The Contribution of the Northwest Territories Protected Areas Strategy to the National and International Biodiversity Conservation," <http://www.nwtpas.ca/documantes/document-2007-nesbittbiodiversitypaper.pdf>

## *Marine Conservation and the NWT-PAS*

The purpose of the NWT-PAS is to establish national wildlife areas (including the six from this initiative) in 17 of the NWT's 42 eco-regions in partnership with the respective governments, First Nations and departments. As defined in program documents, national wildlife areas are intended to not only conserve terrestrial ecosystems in Canada in order to protect essential habitat for wildlife species and migratory birds, but freshwater and marine ecosystems as well.

With water stewardship viewed as an important priority for communities when proposing areas for protection, there is a need for clarity with respect to the NWT-PAS' role in terms of marine conservation areas and freshwater protection. For example, interviewees in the case studies, in particular, expressed a desire for the NWT-PAS to protect water. However, there is general confusion pertaining to the relationship between the NWT-PAS and marine conservation areas, and whether bodies of water within proposed areas are protected by national wildlife areas.

According to Parks Canada Agency, "national marine conservation areas divide the country's oceans and Great Lakes into 29 marine regions, each one a distinct combination of physical and biological characteristics." Parks Canada Agency identifies marine conservation areas as including "submerged lands, the water above them, and any species found there. They can also take in wetlands, estuaries, islands and other coastal lands."<sup>23</sup>

The NWT-PAS' founding document, *A Balanced Approach to Establishing Protected Areas in the Northwest Territories* (1999), indicates conservation of both terrestrial and marine areas within its framework, noting that "national wildlife areas offer a relatively flexible tool to protect an area and its wildlife." It adds that "they may be established on Canada's lands, internal waters and territorial sea," which can include any habitat (e.g. forest, wetland, mountain, marine, etc). The document also states that "Federal government institutions with mandates to establish and manage protected areas in the marine and freshwater ecosystems will work collaboratively with each other and communities, regional organizations and/or land claim bodies to prepare plans that define their intentions for establishing protected areas in the NWT's marine and freshwater ecosystems."

While reiterating the founding document's position, the recent *Establishment Action Plan 2010-2015: Fulfilling the Promise of the Northwest Territories Protected Areas Strategy*, prepared by the NWT-PAS Steering Committee states that "The PAS was envisioned as helping focus attention on the need for marine and freshwater protected areas." It speaks of the Department of Fisheries and Oceans and Parks Canada Agency "as the two sponsoring federal agents who have used their own national planning processes and resources to evaluate, establish, and manage marine protected areas and marine conservation areas." The Action Plan is a key document, which applies to all of the NWT and is intended to co-ordinate PAS activities until March 2015. Its goal is to "Enhance the implementation of the Protected Areas Strategy in a co-ordinated and co-operative way."

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<sup>23</sup> [http://www.pc.gc.ca/progs/amnc-nmca/intro\\_e.asp](http://www.pc.gc.ca/progs/amnc-nmca/intro_e.asp)

Recognizing that marine conservation areas are one tool to conserve marine areas and that they are not part of the NWT-PAS, there is a need to address this confusion by clarifying with stakeholders and in source documents that marine conservation area commitments were not specifically made for the federal NWT-PAS' program activities. Additionally, while the NWT-PAS protects water bodies through national wildlife areas within proposed areas, its role is different from marine conservation areas, which is a specific tool used by Parks Canada Agency to achieve conservation/protection outcomes. The *Canada National Marine Conservation Areas Act* provides the Minister of Environment the authority to establish National Marine Conservation Areas for the protection and conservation of marine areas.

The evaluation notes that no proposals for marine conservation areas have to date been made within the NWT-PAS process. It is clear that both the national wildlife area and marine conservation area processes engage in water stewardship activities. As such, to the public, the language is similar and therefore, confusing in spite of the fact that these are different conservation outcomes.

***Finding 3: There is close alignment with the NWT-PAS and the Mackenzie Valley Five-Year Action Plan.***

Document reviews illustrate close alignment of the NWT-PAS with the Mackenzie Valley Five-Year Action Plan, which, at the request of the AANDC Minister in 2003, was to address concerns that the Mackenzie Gas Project might preclude the Strategy's vision of a network of protected areas. Specifically, the NWT-PAS has effectively assisted the Action Plan to meet most of its objectives through the 8-step process.<sup>24</sup> Presently, fourteen candidate areas for the Mackenzie Gas Project action plan have advanced through the NWT-PAS process. While the Steering Committee guides and facilitates the Initiative's implementation process, it provides a forum for information exchange, offering advice to territorial and federal ministers on its implementation, as well as to the Mackenzie Valley Five-Year Action Plan.

***4.2.1 Is the program being delivered in a way that will achieve outcomes?***

***Finding 1: The Initiative offers communities, regional organizations and other stakeholders financial, technical, scientific and administrative supports to participate in the NWT PAS process. However, there is a need to improve the mechanisms for financial transfers and to mitigate three issues that impede delivery: stakeholder lack of engagement, time (assessments and proposals) and communities withdrawing program support.***

The Initiative offers communities, regional organizations and other stakeholders financial, technical, scientific and administrative supports in order to develop maps, hire local field assistants and community liaison workers, as well as ensuring (assessment) reports are employing "plain" language. However, case study and interview participants reported that resources should be increased, yet they did not go into detail of explaining why this would be optimal.

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<sup>24</sup> Northwest Territories Protected Areas Strategy, "PAS 8-Step Process," 2012, <http://www.nwtpas.ca/about-process.asp>



Of particular concern to interview participants was the process by which funds are transferred to the program. The timing and amount of financial resources are unpredictable and consequently poses an unnecessary administrative burden and creates uncertainty in planning.

Three of the most common issues mentioned among case study and interview participants, which also impede delivery included:

- *Stakeholder lack of engagement:* members on the various working groups, the Steering Committee and the Secretariat have several commitments and priorities beyond the NWT-PAS, which makes it, on occasion, challenging for individuals to meaningfully participate in the Strategy. For instance, most Steering Committee meetings do not achieve quorum and alternates are rarely present.
- *Time:* parts of the 8-step process take more time and are more resource intensive than expected; this is particularly the case for non-renewable resource assessments. Attaining interim protection also takes more time than originally anticipated with communities waiting many months, or even more than one year, to achieve this status.
- *Communities withdrawing program support:* There was one case where a community had been working on Step 5 and decided to withdraw from the PAS process and instead, use a land use plan as a mechanism to conserve the land; it must be kept in mind that considerable resources have been invested towards their participation in the NWT PAS process.

***Finding 2: The NWT-PAS governance structure appropriately and actively coordinates activities across stakeholder groups through collaboration, consultation and communication to facilitate the 8-step process. However, there are three significant challenges, including vertical communication (between the NWT-PAS and senior federal Headquarters officials), translation and achieving quorum.***

The NWT-PAS has been designed to include collaboration, consultation and communication in order to further the 8-step process, as reflected in its logic model. Consequently, the Initiative's governance structure, particularly working groups and the Steering Committee, is designed to ensure that all three elements are appropriately implemented with respect to the program's members, the public and other stakeholders. For example, working group participants are composed of community members (including Elders), federal and territorial governments and outfitters. While the Steering Committee incorporates all of the same participants, they also included members from industry. Case studies have noted that both bodies work hard to facilitate and ensure: communication through employing translators, exchanging information with other working groups and dissemination of information through their website, via radio, newsletters, annual and assessment reports, as well as going over working group agendas and documents a day before meetings in order for Elders to be better informed. They also ensure collaboration by encouraging working groups to engage closely with consultants and recognize that the Steering Committee collaborates on projects with other stakeholders. Further, both bodies help ensure

consultation by having consultants present reports to the Steering Committee and working groups, as well as exchanging best practices and lessons between working groups.

The evaluation has found three shortcomings. First, interview participants reported on the challenges with respect to vertical communication between the NWT-PAS and senior federal (AANDC and Environment Canada Headquarters) officials. There was concern noted regarding communication delays, in the approvals process, for example explanations regarding prolonged delays for interim approval, which have hindered the 8-step process from moving forward. Case studies suggested that it would be beneficial to working groups if there could be real-time translation for the individuals whose first language is not English, as it would save time.

The evaluation did find some key challenges with the effectiveness of the Steering Committee. For example, in 2012, members from industry participated once due to their perception that the Initiative is no longer providing a balanced approach between conservation and development. Instead, they are of the view that it has considerably favoured the former; the same sentiment was echoed by a few other interview participants apart from industry. This tension with industry partners, as well as the fact that some members would attend only once a year either due to scheduling conflicts or other reasons, may be a factor in the habitual challenge of attaining quorum for Steering Committee meetings.

***Finding 3: The extent to which the NWT-PAS process meets Environment Canada assessment standards and known good practices is: (a) generally unknown, however, assessments are informative and represent important resources for the program and communities; and (b) the assessments appropriately conduct community consultations. Yet, there is opportunity to improve upon both aspects.***

At a general level, it is not possible to ascertain whether assessments are conducted according to Environment Canada standards (ex. Non-renewable resource assessments) as evaluators were not able to review these documents given evaluation resource constraints. In terms of whether or not the assessments were conducted with an appropriate level of breadth and scope, answers varied pertaining to the type of assessment in question. For example:

(i) *Ecological assessments*: Feedback from interview participants suggested that these Environment Canada standards and good practices though this evidence was largely anecdotal.

(ii) *Renewable resource assessments*: guidelines are provided by the Steering Committee and are regularly updated. Key informants suggest that though the process for conducting renewable assessments is not timely, they are generally done appropriately in terms of breadth and scope.

(iii) *Non-renewable resource assessments*: the assessment reports are generally detailed enough and appropriate in depth and scope. However, they are resource intensive in terms of both time (especially when the area is large) and cost (the undertaking requires roughly half of the AANDC budget for the NWT-PAS). Furthermore, there are a variety of perspectives/controversy regarding non-renewable resource assessment. It was noted by key informant interviews, for example, that industry gains an edge for potential development by benefitting from highly valuable data that they obtain at no cost. First Nations communities, on the other hand, would

like to see the area protected under the NWT-PAS. It was highlighted during the interviews that there is a risk these communities will lose trust in the process as they do not understand/are unsure why non-renewable resource assessments are allowed to go forward when they had stated they want the area protected under the NWT-PAS.

(iv) *Cultural documentation*: is typically done either in-house or with the help of contractors, but with communities involved in the process. Cultural documentation is not often made public due to sensitivity issues and that it also includes traditional information. It is hard to comment on the appropriate breadth and scope on cultural documentation. However, where it is shared, it provides a good understanding through a cultural perspective, as to why or why not a community or group would like to protect a particular area.

(v) *Socio-economic assessments*: are always taken into consideration but there are, on occasion, issues with the quality of the report (i.e., figures and statistics are not referenced). Further, reports are highly technical and often not useful or usable for communities. At the same time, there is some difficulty related to gathering the information and this is due to a lack of available and/or knowledgeable contractors. As to whether or not socio-economic assessments are done in the appropriate breadth and scope, only one individual suggested that they were.

***Finding 4: Delivery has been slow to date since the Strategy's inception as only one of the expected seven sites has been established. There is also minimal clarity on the NWT-PAS' performance measurement systems and its monitoring and adaptive management programs.***

To date, only one protected area has been established under the NWT-PAS (Saoyú-behdacho), compared to the six sites that were originally envisioned. Case study evidence does indicate, however, that candidate national wildlife areas (e.g. Ka'a'gee 'Tu and Kwets'ootl'aa) may achieve Step 8 in less than one year.

There are several factors that have created delays and have impacted the extent to which the program has been delivered. Reasons for the delays, as reported by both case study and key informant interviewees, consist of: the complexity of the 8-step process and the degree to which the process is dependent on the involvement of many parties; the resource intensiveness specifically of subsurface rights discussions with AANDC that take between two to three years; the consultation time required for identifying the size of the candidate area with stakeholders; the time-consuming process of resource assessments; and, with respect to approvals, the challenges of communication between the NWT-PAS and senior federal officials. At a broad level, internal and external interviewees noted that the number of protected areas is smaller than originally expected as finalization of these sites has been delayed within senior decision-making groups. Several interviewees noted, for example, that while the appropriate steps have been taken to identify candidate sites, there has been no final decision. Further, the rationale for the delays have not been clarified or communicated to NWT-PAS program staff and stakeholders.

Performance measurement and reporting is an additional program activity that has not been implemented as planned. A key informant working closely with the NWT-PAS indicated that there were no performance measurement systems, monitoring and adaptive management<sup>25</sup> programs associated with the Initiative. The document review also found that these are not addressed, for example, in two key NWT-PAS documents: “A Balanced Approach to Establishing Protected Areas in the Northwest Territories,” (1999), neither in the strategy’s Terms of Reference for the Steering Committee (revised December 2011). This gap resulted in unsure responses from interview and case study participants. While some were not aware, others reflected upon the Secretariat and its role, noting that at least it ensures that the 8-step process does not come to a halt; however, they did not provide explanations on how the Secretariat ensures continued progress in the PAS process. With respect to the Steering Committee, which reports on progress, success and challenges, interim protection measures<sup>26</sup>, and on the strategy’s holistic approach (i.e. analyzing the NWT in order to assess which areas are important to protect for First Nation communities), the response was different.

The evaluation pre-assessment showed that data collection for performance measurement indicators was conducted primarily through annual progress reporting by NWT-PAS funding recipients. Information was also reported through the annual Departmental Performance Report. In the 2008-2009 Departmental Performance Reports, AANDC states that “In the area of environmental stewardship, Indian and Northern Affairs Canada designated three sites under the Protected Areas Strategy and made progress in identifying remaining national wildlife areas.”<sup>27</sup> Also, the 2010-11 Departmental Performance Reports affirms that “As part of the Northern Strategy, AANDC moved forward a number of key initiatives to support the development of sustainable Northern communities and to improve the business climate while taking necessary steps to protect its fragile ecosystems....”<sup>28</sup>

#### ***4.3.1 What are the best practices and lessons learned in program design and delivery (i.e., implementation)?***

***Finding: There are a number of best practices and lessons learned that would stand benefit the program in the short and long term.***

Case studies, key informant interviews and the document and literature reviews highlight four key best practices associated to the NWT-PAS. These include Aboriginal involvement, partnership, collaboration, communication and the use of Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge.

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<sup>25</sup>“Adaptive management” requires management activities that will allow for the continual improvement of management activities as management outcomes are monitored and assessed.

<sup>26</sup> These provide clarity and guidance in resource management decisions and predictability in terms of commercial and industrial activities

<sup>27</sup> <http://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/dpr-rmr/2008-2009/inst/ian/ian-eng.pdf> (pg. 45)

<sup>28</sup> <http://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/dpr-rmr/2010-2011/inst/IAN/ian-eng.pdf> (pg. 22)

## *Best practices*

(i) Aboriginal involvement: the lines of evidence reference the impressive level of continued Aboriginal involvement in the NWT-PAS, stressing their early inclusion and involvement in the process, which ought to be sustained in the future. This approach not only promotes decision making at the community-level, but increases the likelihood of buy-in, as well as develops community capacity to participate in the NWT-PAS, thus, helping the community realize its conservation aspirations. For instance, with respect to the NWT-PAS, early collaboration and involvement of First Nations in the Strategy has resulted in buy-in and continued support. This is also affirmed by the World Commission on Protected Areas (2004), which reports that where Aboriginal people's participation in management has taken place early in the planning process, there have been benefits for both themselves and management authorities.

(ii) Partnership, collaboration and consultation: the lines of evidence report on the NWT-PAS' strong emphasis on multi-stakeholder partnership and collaboration, an all-inclusive approach that is supported by both the NWT-PAS logic model and its 1999 founding document, "A Balanced Approach to Establishing Protected Areas in the Northwest Territories." For example, the working groups and the Steering Committee are composed of various stakeholders (Aboriginal communities, outfitters, environmental non-government organizations, industry and federal and territorial governments) and help guide decision making as well as oversee the 8-step process. The NWT-PAS also strives to maximize partnership and collaboration efforts by working with consultants and Aboriginal communities to conduct the required assessments, as indicated in Step 5 of the Strategy's process.

(iii) Use of Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge: affirmed by the Strategy's founding document, "A Balanced Approach" (1999), the use of Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge in the NWT-PAS process is seen as one of its guiding principles. Recognizing its value, the Strategy actively strives to achieve this by incorporating Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge at each stage of its process by encouraging Aboriginal participation in the working groups, the Steering Committee and as partners to socio-economic assessments, cultural documentation, and renewable and non-renewable resource assessments to ensure that the best decisions are made for the establishment of protected areas.

(iv) Communication: between the Steering Committee, Secretariat, working groups and to the general public is a best practice. This is achieved through regular meetings, newsletters, annual reports and through the NWT-PAS website. Interviews, in particular, noted that the communication structure between the working group members, Secretariat and Steering Committee functions well, as evidenced by the cooperation between members; however, there is less knowledge if the appropriate lines of communication are in place between the general public and the Strategy.

Some other aspects of this best practice pertain to the "big picture" approach to the NWT-PAS, which takes into consideration resource development needs. For example, where different Aboriginal groups and diverse stakeholders have been traditionally at odds, the NWT-PAS has contributed to bringing them together on working groups. The 8-step engagement process, recognized by participants as appropriate is seen as a best practice and a lesson learned due to the

following: it considers the interests of the particular community, addresses the interests of the various communities involved, and fosters relationships between the various stakeholders.

### *Lessons learned*

Interviewees stressed a number of lessons learned that would benefit the Strategy in the short and long terms, providing examples of five key lessons learned. These include: advising stakeholders that the NWT-PAS process can take longer than expected, particularly Step 5 (evaluate candidate area); ensuring that all stakeholders clearly understand the Strategy, including its rules, procedures, goals and interim protection measures; clarifying ministerial approval timelines; encourage stronger communication between AANDC and Environment Canada at the senior level as it is anticipated that it would expedite the process; and clarify all available land protection options to stakeholders, particularly to communities before proceeding with the Strategy in order to establish if it is the best process for them.

Results show that the NWT-PAS design included clear roles and responsibilities for AANDC and the horizontal partners. The governance structure was generally effective, including the multi-department, horizontal management and the various sub-committee (i.e., working group) structures. Time limitations had an impact on the efficiency of some of the structures. Most stakeholders agreed that NWT-PAS was responsive to the needs of the identified stakeholders, including Aboriginal people and Northerners as a whole. Program parameters and project criteria were comprehensive and proposal evaluation criteria were flexible enough to ensure that all eligible projects could meet them. NWT-PAS generally was accessible to stakeholders and attracted proposals. Any criticisms generally dealt with the flow of funds, as some stakeholders perceived that access was unpredictable.

## 5. Evaluation Findings – Performance (Effectiveness/Success)

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### 5.1 Results

This section addresses the extent to which the Initiative’s activities and outputs have contributed to the expected outcomes (i.e., the immediate, intermediate and long-term outcomes), as indicated in the evaluation matrix (Annex B).

**Immediate Outcome a): To what extent is there increased awareness of the NWT-PAS among NWT residents and increased capacity to engage in the NWT-PAS among regional organisations/communities?**

*Finding: There is some awareness of the NWT-PAS among NWT residents and it is leveraged in a way wherein there is capacity among regional organisations and communities to engage in the Strategy. However, due to a lack of appropriate data, it is unclear if there has been increased awareness of, and the capacity to participate in, the Strategy among NWT residents.*

While a lack of data precludes the ability to comment on whether awareness of the strategy or community capacity has increased, it does assert that NWT residents are aware, and are made aware, of the NWT-PAS and have the capacity to engage in the Strategy as a result of a number of mechanisms described below. While both issues (awareness and capacity) are closely related, effort was made to separate the two for clarity, as well as to highlight their intricate nature.

#### *Awareness*

Case studies, key informant interviews and document reviews identify three key means through which NWT residents are made aware of the NWT-PAS. The first is the Strategy’s commitment to information dissemination, which is executed by a communications team that was established during the Mackenzie Valley Five-Year Action Plan (2004-2009) and is expected to remain active by conducting ongoing communications activities to increase awareness until 2015. For instance, the Strategy is communicated to the public via a website, through radio, by newsletters and mailing out annual reports to NWT households. However, not all communities in the NWT have access to, or have reliable internet in order to consult pertinent information on the Strategy. Working groups, the Steering Committee and Secretariat also share the same commitment to information dissemination by holding regular meetings to discuss concerns, progress and updates on certain topics, such as assessment reports.

The second avenue for promoting awareness of the NWT-PAS among NWT residents, but which also builds capacity to engage interested parties in the Initiative, is the Strategy’s commitment of holding information workshops designed for new employees and managers for team building and training purposes. According to the Multi-Partner PAS Budget and Work Plan from fiscal years 2008-09 to 2010-11, a total of eight workshops were funded by the NWT-PAS Secretariat, AANDC, Environment Canada and Ducks Unlimited.

Candidate area working groups were recorded in the document reviews as avenues that were designed to promote awareness of the NWT-PAS among residents, and enabled capacity among interested parties to participate in the Initiative. Working groups encourage and engage Aboriginal, territorial and federal governments, community representatives, Elders, environmental non-government organizations and industry representatives to participate in the Initiative. For example, the Protected Area Working Group for the Edézhíe national wildlife area is comprised of representatives from 16 different groups. Likewise, stakeholders who are part of working groups return to their communities/organizations/government to share information with other interested parties.

At the same time, this awareness of data is linked to capacity-building in the sense that it engages additional individuals in the Strategy and encourages further discussion in communities, government, non-governmental organizations and the private sector. For instance, the evaluation shows that federal protected areas agencies (e.g., Environment Canada) have experience in long-term monitoring programmes, established monitoring protocols, communication techniques and that their expertise could be helpful to Cumulative Impact Monitoring Program, and vice versa. In particular, interviewees indicated that the NWT-PAS “has a good set of ecological (and cultural) data that can be useful in evaluating cumulative impacts.”

This is particularly significant since AANDC’s website asserts that in the NWT, scientists, governments, Aboriginal people and industry are cooperating to monitor the cumulative effects of development on the environment. The website maintains that while scientists and Aboriginal people are carrying out field studies to assess current trends in the environment, Elders are using Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge to provide valuable information about weather patterns, the land, plants and animals, and how these have changed over time. The evaluation also highlighted the significance of collaboration between the NWT-PAS and programs such as the Cumulative Impact Monitoring Program as departmental officials noted that good environmental management requires putting together all the pieces of an environmental stewardship framework typically in a framework entitled the Cumulative Effects Assessment and Management Strategy and Framework.

### *Capacity*

While some issues relating to the capacity for individuals and organizations to participate in the NWT-PAS stemmed from the discussion on the types of awareness of the Strategy by NWT residents (as reflected above), the evaluation raises an additional mechanism related to capacity: financial resources. The Initiative offers funding to communities to support meetings in communities and to travel to meetings in other locations. Funding also supports hiring local translators, caterers and supporting regional or local community coordinator positions. Through the NWT-PAS, the Initiative also provides the financial means to promote the capacity (i.e., human resources) to engage in consultations for resource assessments, identify candidate areas and prepare proposals. Case studies stated that financial resources provided by the Initiative have been important means to increase community capacity (as indicated in Section 4.2.1), adding that the NWT-PAS is a highly important vehicle to the protection of Crown lands.



However, while the Strategy strives to build capacity, at the time of this evaluation, some communities have less financial capacity than others, such as the North Slave Métis Alliance due to non-recognition of their status. Key informant interviews cited an additional challenge that impeded capacity, which was a lack of engagement of Steering Committee members, in particular, from attending meetings due to other commitments and responsibilities.

**Immediate Outcome b): To what extent is there increased/maintained stakeholder and community support for protected areas?**

***Finding: There has been increased and maintained support for the NWT-PAS and protected areas from numerous communities and from the majority of stakeholders. However, industry has generally been less supportive as their primary concern is the development of natural resources.***

The NWT-PAS is committed to work with Aboriginal governments and organizations, the Government of Northwest Territories, environmental non-government organizations, industry, the federal government and other stakeholders in order to establish protected areas in the NWT. Likewise, most stakeholders and communities share the same commitment to establishing protected areas in the NWT, reflecting the importance of environmental sustainability and preservation of Aboriginal culture, tradition and history (as noted in Section 3.1.1).

There has been maintained support for the NWT-PAS, in general, and protected areas, in particular, but the evaluation also noted that support had increased over time, largely as a reflection of the creation of additional working groups and candidate areas.

By definition, “candidate area” can only be applied when it has community, regional and sponsoring agency support. The evaluation noted considerable support for candidate areas, such as from the Tlicho and Dehcho. Levels of support include participation in working groups, sharing best practices and other important information with stakeholders, attending Steering Committee meetings, opposing attempts to reduce the boundaries of candidate protected areas, among other measures. On the other hand, there has been one instance of a community, the Tulita District Land Corporation from the Shúhtagot'ine Néné candidate area, who withdrew from the NWT-PAS process after obtaining a sponsoring agency. At the same time, some First Nations would like to have entire areas protected while others look for more balance, including opportunities for resource/economic development. When asked if the NWT-PAS would be supported and embraced by communities that have yet to be part of it, an informant responded that all the NWT-PAS can do is to make the offer that the opportunity is available and it would be up to the communities if they would like to take part.

The document review indicates that those who are less supportive of the proposed protected areas argue for the use of a mixture of various means for land and area protection, which include applying formal protections like national parks, national wildlife areas, LUPs, merged with the prevailing regulatory environment, etc.

More specifically, while the private sector resource industry appears to be conversant with concerns that communities are concerned about over development of their lands and resources, they have been generally less supportive of the process than other stakeholders as they see it as a hindrance to explore and develop some lands protected by the establishment of protected areas. In particular, they express interest for an approach where decision makers will opt for a flexible, shorter-term protection that can be derived from approved regulations. Therefore, they cite access and flexibility as their primary concerns. They also advocate for a combined use of available tools for more suitable results, such as LUPs, which can be revisited and altered over time, and express the belief that economic/resource development will provide sustained financial gain to communities. In addition, their dissatisfaction with the direction of the Steering Committee, in particular, has led them to be less present at Steering Committee meetings. However, industry recognises some benefits of the NWT-PAS, including providing clarification and conclusions on various assessments, which, for example, provides information on what can and cannot happen within an area.

The NWT-PAS works with LUP boards and committees in order to ensure that areas identified for protection through the NWT-PAS process are accurately reflected in regional LUPs; the inverse is also true, where areas identified as ecologically or culturally important in an LUP could, or may, also be referred to the NWT-PAS to be evaluated for legislative protection and management. Furthermore, since the NWT-PAS complements the LUP (and other processes that may or could be used to achieve conservation goals such as heritage sites, or heritage river designation), the NWT-PAS managers provide information and advice on ecological representation to LUP boards and committees. LUPs set out rules that govern how certain geographic areas are to be managed in order to provide for better conservation and the appropriate development and use of lands, waters and other resources.

From the above examples, the evaluation concludes that stronger partnership is needed, particularly with industry. The evaluation has observed that the NWT-PAS is committed to working with Aboriginal governments and organizations, the Government of Northwest Territories, industry, and environmental non-government organizations in order to progress toward the ultimate outcome of establishing six national wildlife areas, one National Park and one Historic Site in the NWT. To date, the Government of Canada has not established the six mandated national wildlife areas.

**Immediate Outcome c): What is the status of interim protection established for candidate areas?**

***Finding: There are currently four candidate national wildlife areas under interim protection: Edézhíe, Ts'ude niline Tu'eyeta, Ka'a'gee Tu and Smbaa K'e. The targeted immediate outcome of three additional areas under interim protection in 2011 and up to four more by 2013 has not been achieved, largely a result of challenging vertical communication (between the NWT-PAS and senior federal Headquarters officials). This finding is also addressed in the intermediate outcome (d) of this report.***

AANDC and the Government of Northwest Territories share responsibility for implementing the NWT-PAS. They do this in partnership with other federal departments (Environment Canada and Parks Canada Agency), communities, regional organizations, land claim organizations, environmental non-government organizations, and industry. An interim land withdrawal is applied to an area pursuant to the *Territorial Lands Act* and through a federal Order-in-Council. The Government uses interim protection or interim land withdrawal as a tool to protect land from development and other activities for a certain period of time. With respect to the NWT-PAS, the initial period is a maximum of five years although more commonly two years and with additional renewal periods of two years. During this time, no new mining rights can be registered nor can new oil and gas rights be issued, while existing rights are grandfathered.

According to the NWT-PAS, interim protection refers to a time-limited withdrawal of lands (within the study area of a candidate protected area) from new surface and/or subsurface interests. Candidate national wildlife areas can be protected through interim surface only, subsurface only, or surface and subsurface withdrawal. The NWT-PAS requires that interim protection be used to ensure that the establishment of new surface and/or subsurface interests does not compromise the natural and cultural values of a candidate protected area during the protected area planning process. Step 4 of the 8-step process calls for partners in the planning process to consider, and where necessary apply, interim protection measures. The support of communities, regional organizations and/or land claim bodies, and an established partnership with a sponsoring agency is required prior to the implementation of interim protection. Letters of support from the territorial government, regional organizations and/or land claim bodies are usually required when the federal government applies for interim and land withdrawal.

Information on interim protection was mainly obtained from the document and literature reviews. According to the Advancing Conservation Interests in the NWT's 2008 Results-based Management and Accountability Framework/Risk-based Audit Framework, land withdrawals were already in place for Edézhíe, Samba K'e and Ts'ude niline Tu'eyeta national wildlife areas, as well as a permanent land withdrawal for the Saoyú-behdacho National Historic Site and an interim one for the proposed Thaidene Nene national park reserve<sup>29</sup>. The evaluation study ascertained that there are now four candidate national wildlife areas under interim protection.<sup>30</sup> These include: Edézhíe, Ts'ude niline Tu'eyeta, Ka'a'gee Tu and Samba K'e.

Kwets'oòt'áà is currently awaiting ministerial/Cabinet approval for a two-year surface and subsurface Interim Land Withdrawal. This consultation was completed in July 2012 with the expectation that the subsequent application will receive ministerial approval by March 2013.

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<sup>29</sup> There is a permanent land withdrawal in place for part of Thaidene that was put in place in 1970 (7,150 sq km) with an interim applied to the remainder of the 33,000 sq km that is currently withdrawn in total. It is not just an interim one for Thaidene.

<sup>30</sup> Shúhtagot'ine Néné has been advanced as a Conservation Zone under the Sahtu Land Use Plan in 2011, rather than a National Wildlife Area under the CWS. The CWS continues to explore options for the inclusion of a portion of the Shúhtagot'ine Néné as a NWA.

Based on documents received from the NWT-PAS, the majority of national wildlife areas have progressed steadily through the 8-step process and are expected to achieve final protection status by 2015. Specifically, case study interviewees express the position that both Kwets'ootl'aa and Ka'a'gee Tu will achieve the final step in one year. However, while a targeted *Immediate Outcome* of attaining three additional areas under interim protection by 2011 and up to four more by 2013 was set in the Results-based Management and Accountability Framework, this was not achieved.

**Intermediate Outcome d): What is the status of the designation of ecologically important sites?**

*Finding: Four candidate national wildlife areas are currently under interim protection and one is awaiting approval for interim land withdrawal. The National Historic Site (Saoyú-behdacho) is the only existing federal protected area established under the Advancing Conservation Initiative in the NWT.*

Ecologically representative areas contain samples of all living things and various landscapes in an eco-region and all proposed protected areas have cultural, ecological and economic values. The goals of the NWT-PAS are to protect core representative areas within each eco-region as well as special natural and cultural areas.

To help meet these goals, a working group is formed, which then undertakes a study of the specific Area of Interest and then prepares an analysis of its ecological representation. Based on the analysis, the Area of Interest is evaluated in order to determine if it adequately represents the ecological features of a particular eco-region. Likewise, the NWT-PAS team also provides information and advice on ecological representation to LUP boards and committees. An Area of Interest identified as ecologically or culturally important in an LUP may also be referred to the NWT-PAS to be evaluated for legislative protection and management.

At the same time, the NWT-PAS process requires to undertake detailed evaluations of an area's ecological, cultural, and economic values. This includes (once a candidate area has been identified) evaluating existing renewable and non-renewable resources within a study area, identifying economic opportunities associated to those resources, while also highlighting any knowledge gaps. The designation of ecologically important sites is an Intermediate Outcome that calls for six national wildlife areas by 2013 and up to four more national wildlife areas after 2013.

Presently, there are four candidate national wildlife areas under interim protection.<sup>31</sup> These include Edézhíe, Ts'ude niline Tu'eyeta, Ka'a'gee Tu and Sambaa K'e.

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<sup>31</sup> Shúhtagot'ine Néné has been advanced as a Conservation Zone under the Sahtu Land Use Plan in 2011, rather than a National Wildlife Area under the Canadian Wildlife Service (CWS). The CWS continues to explore options for the inclusion of a portion of the Shúhtagot'ine Néné as a NWA.

### *1. Edézhíe*

Edézhíe includes the Horn Plateau, Horn River, Mills Lake and Willowlake River. The Edézhíe working group's recommended boundary is 14,250 km<sup>2</sup> and was sponsored by Environment Canada as a candidate national wildlife area in 2002. According to the NWT-PAS website, in December 21, 2011, an Order-in-Council granted interim land withdrawal of surface and subsurface rights until May 2013. It is now in the advanced stages of Step 6 of the NWT-PAS process where a formal request has been made for the site to become a permanent protected area. As of date, the Government of Canada is reviewing the proposal for establishment. AANDC is also reviewing Environment Canada's request for an extension of the interim land withdrawal until May 2015.

### *2. Ts'ude niline Tu'eyeta*

Ts'ude niline Tu'eyeta, or Ramparts River and Wetlands, consists of approximately 15,000km<sup>2</sup> of prime northern boreal forest. It is a rich cultural area that lies west of the Mackenzie River and the community of Fort Good Hope. The working group's recommended boundary is 10,103km<sup>2</sup> and was sponsored by Environment Canada as a candidate national wildlife area. The Ts'ude niline Tu'eyeta working group finalized their Recommendations Report in March 2012. It is temporarily protected by an interim land withdrawal through an Order-in-Council that expires in November 2013. Their next step is to make an official request to Environment Canada to advise the Government of Canada to establish Ts'ude niline Tu'eyeta as a national wildlife area based on the finalized Recommendations Report.

### *3. Ka'a'gee Tu*

Sponsored by Environment Canada, the Ka'a'gee Tu candidate area is approximately 9,600km<sup>2</sup> and is situated in the south-eastern corner of the Dehcho region and includes a large portion of the Kakisa River watershed. The NWT-PAS website information and program documents show that much of the Ka'a'gee Tu Candidate Area is temporarily protected under the Dehcho Process Interim Measures Agreement, which offers interim surface and subsurface land withdrawal until November 2013.

### *4. Sambaa K'e*

The Sambaa K'e candidate protected area is approximately 10,600 km<sup>2</sup> and is situated in the south-central Dehcho region. Sambaa K'e is currently in the 5<sup>th</sup> step of the NWT-PAS process, which is to make recommendations on the area's designation, boundaries and management. The Sambaa K'e Candidate Area is temporarily protected through the Dehcho Process Interim Measures Agreement, which offers interim surface and subsurface land withdrawal until November 2013.

## 5. Kwets'ootl'àà

Kwets'ootl'àà is an area of approximately 590 km<sup>2</sup> located in the northern portion of the north arm of Great Slave Lake watershed and was sponsored by Environment Canada as a candidate national wildlife area. It is currently waiting for approval by the Government of Canada for a two-year surface and subsurface Interim Land Withdrawal, which is anticipated to occur in March 2013.

### **Intermediate Outcome e): What is the status of protection of candidate areas under legislation?**

***Finding 1: Presently, the only protected area established under federal legislation is the Saoyú-behdacho National Historic Site. Legislation will protect candidate areas, especially when interim protection is withdrawn.***

In order to protect the land, the NWT-PAS process uses various legislation, including existing federal and territorial laws. Laws provide long-term protection and make it difficult to change or remove protection. Documents reviewed show that there are three categories of protected areas legislation in the NWT: Federal Protected Areas Legislation (e.g. *Canada Wildlife Act*, *Canada National Parks Act*), Territorial Protected Areas Legislation (e.g. *Wildlife Act*), and Regional Protected Areas (including areas protected under land claims and Land Use Planning). Regional LUPs<sup>32</sup> have the ability to zone areas for conservation. The evaluation found that the policy conditions that will enable successful delivery of the NWT-PAS, including protection from surrounding human activity, include such legislative frameworks that are complimentary to each other.

Currently, the NWT-PAS sites include one National Historic Site (Saoyú-behdacho), which is protected under the *Historic Sites and Monuments Act* and *Territorial Lands Act*. The federal government and the Deline Land Corporation own the entire surface and sub-surface rights.<sup>33</sup> The proposed Thaidene Nene National Park would also require federal ownership of surface and sub-surface rights. Proposed national wildlife areas are to be protected under the *National Wildlife Act*. Documentation reviewed on Environment Canada activities states the purpose of national wildlife areas, that they are created and managed for the purposes of wildlife research, conservation, and interpretation in respect of migratory birds, species at risk and other wildlife (Canadian Wildlife Services) and “to conserve essential habitats for migratory birds and other wildlife species, especially endangered wildlife.” To date, Environment Canada has not been able to establish any of the six mandated national wildlife areas.

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<sup>32</sup> Regional land use plans require approval by the First Nation regional organization, territorial government and federal government before any activities will be required to conform to the land use plan.

<sup>33</sup> The Crown owns the majority, approximately 80 percent of the surface and all sub-surface lands, including the mines and minerals below the entire surface of the site and the Deline Land Corporation owns the remaining surface lands, which are primarily located at the necks of the peninsula.

Under the authority of the Minister of the Environment who is also the Parks Canada Agency Minister, Environment Canada is usually the sponsoring agency with the Canadian Wildlife Services as the administrator. Surface rights are held by Environment Canada, who, under the *Territorial Lands Act*, could make a request for subsurface rights to be permanently withdrawn. The Minister of Environment Canada can make this request to the Minister of AANDC on behalf of the communities and the department. Key informants have admitted that without federal sponsoring legislation, the barriers to land protection would be cumbersome.

The NWT-PAS process is driven by community decisions and the objective is that it will result in permanent, legal protection for candidate areas. To this end, a legislative approach to protecting these values and areas, which involves the legislative weight of governments, is seen as complementary to other processes as well as a beneficial way of attaining and protecting candidate areas. To some extent, it is expected that legislation will protect candidate areas, particularly when interim protection is not in place.

While the various legislations are complementary to each other, they also lend credence to Canada's international commitments and obligations with respect to protected areas. However, the evaluation found that when interim protection expires, in particular candidate areas, this leaves room for possible human activity (e.g. resource development) to take place. Only when an additional interim protection is granted (which can take several months to receive), can the candidate area be free of human activity. As the National Historic Site (Saoyú-behdacho) has so far shown, legislation does guarantee protection from surrounding human activity, but not in its absence, which is the very reason why communities and stakeholders involved in the NWT-PAS process are keen to reach Step 7 (approve and set up the permanently protected area) and Step 8 (manage, monitor and review the protected area).

***Finding 2: There are mixed feelings as to whether protection of candidate areas will lead to the expected ecological, social and economic impacts.***

There are mixed responses by key informant interviews and case studies pertaining to evidence that protection will lead to the expected ecological, social and economic impacts. The first group (mix of stakeholders) suggests that while the NWT-PAS has yet to achieve a balance between different impacts, they believe that the Initiative is well on its way to realising them. They suggest that this is primarily due to their interconnectedness to the 8-step process and through discussions at Steering Committee and working group meetings. Informants noted that if the NWT-PAS manages to create at least five protected areas in the next few years, it will go a long way to fulfilling the NWT-PAS' vision of protection that will lead to the expected ecological, social and economic impacts. For instance, case studies suggest that in terms of ecological impact, species at risk and other animals will remain and flourish in a protected area for generations to come; socially, they note that Aboriginal people will be able to continue their way of life, while also preserving and protecting their history, culture, tradition for future generations; and they believe that economically, Aboriginal people and communities will "have a handle on other initiatives," such as eco-tourism and preventing ecologically detrimental resource exploration and development. However, there is fear among the Initiative's participants that people in the NWT do not know what will happen in the end when an area does become protected. For example, Aboriginal people are nervous that they could lose their rights, tradition

and culture. They are also nervous about how the land will be managed by the governing authorities and whether it will protect all Aboriginal values.

The other mix of stakeholders, on the other hand, did not directly speak to whether the protection of candidate areas will lead to the expected ecological, social and economic impacts, but focused more on two elements: sustainable development and Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge. Informants suggested that while they are not certain if the Initiative will achieve sustainable development, they recognize that the program is part of a larger picture of achieving this end (e.g. it is part of a proper land management regime). However, they also recognize that it is well beyond the scope of the NWT-PAS to achieve sustainable development in the NWT. A small group of informants presented various views, ranging from the belief that sustainable development will only be present in certain parts of the territory, while others suggested that it will not be achieved at all, citing competing interests, a lack of a common definition, and confusion as to what sustainable development means for people working in other fields, such as mining, land claims, etc. At the same time, another small group of respondents believe that the Initiative will not achieve balance, specifically for industry as it will make it more difficult for them to operate.

Key informants and case studies also touched on the use of Traditional Knowledge, which provides valuable information and important guidance for such stewardship activities. They mention that the presence of Traditional Knowledge and/or information considers how to effectively involve residents in decision-making processes and is an indicator that protection will lead to expected impacts when a protected area is established. Traditional Knowledge is discussed in more detail as a best practice in Section 4.3.1. While the evaluation sought to establish the extent to which it is likely that the NWT-PAS will lead to the protection of culturally and ecologically important sites without the compromise of resource development, only two informants responded to the question, both citing opposing perspectives. However, the evaluation found that the discussion on sustainable development (above) reflects whether the protection of culturally and ecologically important sites without the compromise of resource development would be possible.

**Other Outcomes (g): Have there been positive or negative unintended outcomes?**

***Finding: There are five key positive unintended outcomes and nine unintended negative outcomes associated with the NWT-PAS.***

*Positive unintended outcomes*

Case study and interview participants indicate two broad key unintended positive outcomes. While some positive outcomes can be interpreted as being purposefully designed to stem from the NWT-PAS, both lines of evidence stressed these for their impressive impact on the Initiative and the communities. First, key informant interviews and case studies reported the substantial knowledge of the land that was gained from communication with Elders and other Aboriginal people, which will remain with communities and benefit them in the long-run. Not only this, but the level and quantity of data from the various assessments, as well as the knowledge gained from working groups and the Steering Committee has resulted in substantial benefits for the



NWT-PAS process in general and stakeholders in particular. Such information provides communities with more and alternate information that they did not, or may not otherwise have, thus filling a data gap and enabling them to use that information in land claim negotiations. For example, ecological and cultural reports have reiterated the importance of migratory birds and endangered species. Secondly, the NWT-PAS process has brought communities, government, environmental non-government organizations and industry to work together, which has resulted in building stronger relationship between them.

### *Negative unintended outcomes*

Interviews cite nine key negative unintended outcomes stemming from the NWT-PAS. The first includes time, particularly in the sense that the NWT-PAS process takes much longer than originally anticipated, which can consequently develop levels of frustration among the Initiative's members. The second focuses on what was considered as misleading and controversial perceptions of the NWT-PAS, such as anti-development, that candidate areas are too big, the misconception that protected areas will become a national park.

Where non-renewable resource assessments are concerned, it was noted that there were some instances wherein these assessments were conducted and which resulted in communities forgoing the Strategy in order to explore the possibilities of resource development instead. Closely associated to this unexpected negative outcome are examples provided of industry receiving data (at no financial expense), as a result of non-renewable resource assessments (e.g. minerals, oil and gas), something that they otherwise would have had more difficulty in attaining and at a cost to them. Interviewees noted as well that this is not the only impact but, for example, should communities decide to pursue resource development, industry would have already obtained a better understanding of where to focus their activities, adding to the technological advantage that they already have.

The fourth issue is in regards to non-renewable resource assessments that arise out of competing interests and an ongoing need to find a balance between protection and development. Where non-renewable resource assessments are concerned, there is a perception that they create an unfair advantage to industry in that while the overriding goal of the NWT-PAS is protection, it is not to the exclusion of development.

The fifth concern is with regard to interim withdrawals in the sense that assessments are, at times, being conducted without communities' involvement and that they are not being renewed, which, as the evaluation learned, leads to distrust in communities. For example, concerns were raised that AANDC is, at times, not undertaking consultations, but instead taking unilateral decisions. Although interviewees did not provide specific examples, it is assumed that these comments were in reference to the Edézhie interim withdrawals, which were the subject of litigation during this evaluation process. This specific case was, however subsequently resolved through settlement by the Parties in March 2013.

Also of great concern, which was repeated by multiple individuals, is that there has not been stable flow of funding to the NWT-PAS with respect to the sum of money that the strategy can or should expect and when it will be made available. In turn, this has negatively affected future

planning on behalf of the NWT-PAS. Interviewees have also indicated that while the Initiative strives to achieve high levels of collaboration and communication, industry has not been keen in participating in the NWT-PAS. Both of these issues were addressed in more detail in Section 4.2.1 in Design and Delivery and in immediate outcome (b) in the Performance section of the evaluation report.

Finally, there is fear that communities will not have a final input or authority over the candidate site once it is protected under the Initiative, which is expressed in detail in immediate outcome (e) in the Performance section of the report. Briefly, this particular unintended outcome is linked to a lack of communication regarding clear future roles and responsibilities for all parties involved in protected areas.

### ***5.2.1 How has the program optimized its process and the quality/quantity of products or services to achieve expected outcomes? (Efficiency)***

***Finding: Overall, the program has achieved some expected outcomes. Yet, there is evidence of opportunities to improve efficiency of program delivery in such areas as: clarity of role of NWT-PAS and marine conservation, consistency and timeliness in funding, clarifying governance structures and improving capacity of communities to engage in the NWT-PAS process.***

NWT-PAS personnel have been successful in the coordination of the Strategy's activities, an indication of the Initiative's efficiency. In addition, the evaluation found that use of NWT-PAS structures (e.g. working groups, AANDC and Environment Canada regional officials) also resulted in efficiencies. For example, there is demonstrated alignment between the 8-step NWT-PAS process and federal department practices/processes. Respondents also indicated that the 8-step process is efficient due to its flexibility, its acknowledgement of all stakeholder interests and recognition that the Initiative has been efficient in terms of costs (e.g. value for money). In addition, the evaluation found no duplication of efforts.

At the same time, key informant interviews, document review and case studies identified a series of elements that can be addressed in order to help improve the Strategy's efficiency of program delivery. Certain areas for improvement cited here have surfaced in other parts of the report. Briefly, they include: accelerating approval for interim withdrawals, clarifying the strategy's role in terms of marine conservation, consistency and timeliness of funding, collaboration with others (e.g. Cumulative Impact Monitoring Program), clarifying governance structures and improving stakeholders' capacity in participating in Steering Committee meetings.

### ***5.3.1 What does a comparison of the Initiative with protected areas/park creation in other jurisdictions determine about alternative approaches to achieve similar results?***

***Finding: The evaluation cannot suggest that any one strategy would be more efficient in the NWT than the NWT-PAS.***

Comparing the NWT-PAS with similar initiatives in other territories, provinces and countries will yield interesting data, but the risks of misinterpretation are high and could be misleading. The evaluation found that while each initiative is unique, comparisons ought to be considered with careful discretion and prudence and interpretations be applied cautiously.

In the NWT-PAS situation, comparisons are made with other protected areas in other provinces and territories as well as with similar initiatives within the NWT itself. For instance, the literature identified conservation strategies in Canada that are comparable to the NWT-PAS. In the Yukon, the Government adopted the *Wild Spaces and Protected Places: A Protected Areas Strategy* in 1998 in the effort to protect core areas and special sites in each of its 23 eco-regions.<sup>34</sup> In the Nunavut, a Nunavut Park Program is currently being developed by the Nunavut government and is to be followed by the implementation of a Parks and Conservation Areas System Plan, ultimately leading to a Protected Areas Strategy. At the same time, each province has a comparable conservation initiative. Alberta, for example, has the Alberta Special Places; Manitoba, the Protected Areas Initiative and Newfoundland, the Natural Areas Plan.<sup>35</sup>

Likewise, there are specific conservation initiatives within settlement areas and regions in the NWT that complement the NWT-PAS. For instance, the Inuvialuit Settlement Region has adopted the Tarium Niryutait Marine Protected Area in the Mackenzie Delta under Fisheries and Oceans Canada *Ocean's Act*, which is nearing completion, as well as the Gwich'in Settlement Area involving the Gwich'in Land Use Plan, which is the only approved regional plan within the NWT that identifies areas for conservation, special management and heritage conservation zones and general use zones.

While there are additional conservation initiatives within settlement areas and regions in the NWT and country-wide, it was beyond the scope of the evaluation to analyze each one in order to explore alternative practices. The lines of evidence did not sufficiently address this question, thus, the evaluation cannot suggest that any one strategy would be more efficient in the NWT than the NWT-PAS. The NWT-PAS has proven to be flexible and complements regional LUP (e.g. the Initiative has the authority to function in unsettled land claims, whereas regional LUP cannot), thus indicating the uniqueness of the NWT-PAS.

The evidence from the majority of key informant interviews and case studies suggest that the NWT-PAS is unique (i.e., that there is no program like it), it has been suggested that LUPs would be an appropriate alternative. However, this must be taken into careful consideration as LUPs have notable differences with respect to the NWT-PAS. In particular, LUPs have the authority to change or amend boundaries, whereas these boundaries are considered permanent under the NWT-PAS. Also, LUPs take much longer to implement in comparison to the NWT-PAS. Another difference between both processes is that there is no management funding associated with conservation zones under LUP as there is with the candidate national wildlife areas established under this Initiative. On the other hand, the NWT-PAS is appropriate for

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<sup>34</sup> Information for this section was derived from the Prospectors & Developers Association of Canada website (<http://www.pdac.ca/pdac/advocacy/land-use/protected-areas.html>) and the Convention on Biological Diversity (n.d.). Thematic Report: Overview of Terrestrial and Marine Protected Areas in Canada.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid.

immediate results and until there is a land claim in place, interim withdrawal becomes highly important in order to halt undesired industrial activity.

It has been expressed by key informants that certain modifications could be adopted into the NWT-PAS process, including having the Strategy identify a maximum size of a protected area from the beginning instead of having to increase boundary size in an incremental manner; this leads to apprehension for some stakeholders. At the same time, a number of key informants stated that many alternatives were considered when the NWT-PAS was established and that it took a lot of time to refine the process, which included new aspects and different values.

#### ***5.4.1 What are the perceptions on challenges and opportunities to achieve immediate outcomes?***

***Finding: Particular key challenges and opportunities identified are: having the human resources and a steady flow of finances in order to effectively participate in all levels of decision making.***

##### *Key challenges*

Three key challenges re-emerged in this section of the report that were also brought to attention earlier in the report, thus again highlighting the significance of addressing these issues. The first challenge pertains to the inappropriate length of time to obtain interim land withdrawal for a candidate area, thus, stalling and prolonging the NWT-PAS process. The second refers to the issue of capacity. In particular, it is important for the NWT-PAS to have the human and financial resources to effectively participate in all levels of decision making, thus, reflecting the values and visions of the people affected. According to interviewees, stakeholders have limited capacity and time to engage in certain aspects of the process (such as attending Steering Committee meetings) due to other commitments. This is interpreted by some interviewees as a lack of, or disinterest in engagement (see Section 4.2.1 in Design and Delivery).

The third key challenge includes the lack of efficient channelling of funds to the NWT-PAS. Interviewees again indicated that recipients do not have a proper understanding of the sum they will receive and when it will arrive, thus impeding on planning (see Section 4.2.1 in Design and Delivery).

##### *Opportunities*

Key informant interviews indicate that the NWT-PAS is an excellent example of engaging with communities. The Initiative provides the appropriate tools and the opportunity for communities and groups to enter the program if they are interested and when they are ready to participate.

#### ***5.5.1 Has the program minimized resources (financial, human and material) while optimizing outputs and outcomes? (Economy)***

***Finding: The NWT-PAS has managed to minimize financial and material resources while optimizing outputs. However, human resources and outcomes can be improved.***

Overall, the NWT-PAS has been on budget for the last four fiscal years (2008-09 to 2011-12),<sup>36</sup> even in light of a shrinking budget, as demonstrated in Table 3. This is particularly notable recognizing the high costs of conducting business in the North, such as flying to remote locations, shorter operational seasons, etc. The Steering Committee regularly reviews the budget in an effort to make best use of funding, which comes from multiple sources (see Table 5).<sup>37</sup> Both tables 3 and 4 do not include Parks Canada Agency's financial information because as a sponsoring agency for specific areas, Parks Canada Agency has its own processes that pre-date the NWT-PAS. Table 5 provides Parks Canada Agency's financial information.

**Table 3: NWT-PAS Budget for 2008-09 to 2011-12**

Fiscal year	Funding allocated	Funding spent
2008-09	4,095,501	3,929,634
2009-10	3,142,822	3,105,276
2010-11	2,716,411	2,551,296
2011-12	2,160,691	1,916,685

Source: Multi-Partner PAS Budget and Workplan submitted by the program (Multi-Partner includes all stakeholders).

**Table 4: Overview of AANDC, Environment Canada and other sources actual funding (allocated/spent)**

	2008-09		2009-10		2010-11		2011-12		Total	
	Allocated	Spent	Allocated	Spent	Allocated	Spent	Allocated	Spent	Allocated	Spent
<b>AANDC</b>	1,910,120	1,910,120	1,759,513	1,755,649	1,455,445	1,455,445	1,105,500	1,083,943	6,230,578	6,205,157
<b>Environment Canada</b>	674,000	674,000	274,000	274,000	207,000	191,000	267,500	255,300	1,422,500	1,394,300
<b>Other sources<sup>38</sup></b>	1,525,139	1,345,524	1,109,309	1,075,627	1,053,966	904,851	787,691	577,442	4,476,105	3,903,434
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,109,259</b>	<b>3,929,634</b>	<b>3,142,822</b>	<b>3,105,276</b>	<b>2,716,411</b>	<b>2,551,296</b>	<b>2,160,691</b>	<b>1,916,685</b>	<b>12,129,183</b>	<b>11,502,891</b>

Source: Multi-Partner PAS Budget and Work Plan.

Table 5 below shows that Parks Canada Agency has not spent the entire envelope that it was allocated. Delays have hampered progress but the Agency is nonetheless moving forward with the operationalization of the Saoyú-behdacho National Historic Site and a feasibility assessment of the Thaidene Nene proposal, albeit at a slower pace. Funds have been carried forward to complete the specific projects intended. For instance, in Saoyú-behdacho National Historic Site, work is ongoing to build a traditional log cabin at the site for multi-purpose uses, including cultural gatherings. Pertaining to Thaidene Nene, work will continue to focus on relationship

<sup>36</sup> Note: Budget information for Fiscal year 2012-13 is currently not available

<sup>37</sup> Other sources are not specified in the Multi-Partner PAS Budget and Work Plan.

<sup>38</sup> Other sources: DUC, WWF, CPAWS, CWS, TNC, ITI, Environmental non-government organizations and other funders (information is available only for 2008-09)

building and negotiations with the aboriginal groups, completing the socio-economic assessment, wrapping up the Mineral Energy and Resource Assessment, with public consultation targeted to start shortly.

**Table 5: Allocation and Expenditures for Parks Canada Agency Allocation**

Year	Parks Canada Agency Allocation	Saoyú-behdacho National Historic Site	Thaidene Nene National Park Reserve	Total
2008-2009	\$1,894,000	\$28,260	\$216,615	\$244,875
2009-2010	\$2,056,000	\$320,500	\$266,767	\$587,267
2010-2011	\$1,905,000	\$345,500	\$587,619	\$933,119
2011-2012	\$1,189,000	\$499,100	\$628,615	\$1,127,715
2012-2013 <sup>39</sup>	\$1,014,000	\$478,100	\$417,024	\$895,124
Total	\$8,058,000	\$1,671,460	\$2,116,640	\$3,788,100

*Source: Parks Canada Agency Program Official*

Table 6 below provides an example of how the funds are distributed throughout NWT-PAS.

**Table 6 NWT-PAS budget by Tasks for Fiscal Year 2008-09 to 2011-12**

Fiscal year	2008-09		2009-10		2010-11		2011-12	
	Fund allocated	Fund spent	Fund allocated	Fund spent	Fund allocated	Fund spent	Fund allocated	Fund spent
Steering Committee and Staff	\$1,113,682	\$1,102,126	\$696,953	\$651,108	\$411,421	\$472,778	\$599,909	\$571,223
Ecological Representation	\$118,850	\$66,850	\$71,576	\$71,576	\$115,000	\$75,000	\$159,097	\$176,596
Non-Renewable Mapping/Planning, Policy Review	\$1,129,314	\$1,129,314	\$1,133,476	\$1,128,574	\$1,070,000	\$1,070,000	\$112,584	\$172,484
Policy Review and Development	\$45,520	\$49,352	\$115,737	\$103,737	\$0	\$0	\$24,000	\$1,170
Communications	\$96,410	\$90,710	\$96,518	\$91,602	\$35,500	\$41,700	\$30,378	\$42,838
Protected Areas Initiatives by Region	\$1,592,725	\$1,477,534	\$1,028,561	\$1,058,679	\$1,084,490	\$891,819	\$1,234,723	\$952,375
Total	\$4,095,501	\$3,915,886	\$3,142,822	\$3,105,276	\$2,716,411	\$2,551,296	\$2,160,691	\$1,916,685

*Source: Multi-Partner PAS Budget and Workplan*

One of the evaluation findings relating to costs and confirmed by key informant interviews and case studies is the unequal distribution of resources for assessments. As Table 7 shows, 84 percent of the funds that AANDC contributed to assessments of candidate national wildlife areas were allocated to non-renewable resource assessments.

<sup>39</sup> Note - 2012-13 reported program expenditures are actual and forecast as of January 23, 2013.

**Table 7: AANDC funding for assessments for candidate national wildlife areas**

AANDC funded Assessments	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	Total
Cultural Assessments	15,961		5,300	48,892	70,153
Ecological Assessments	59,426			476	59,902
Non-renewable Assessments	386,328	1,095,200	1,020,000	110,484	2,612,012
Renewable Assessments	64,191	14,229	32,400		110,820
Socio-Economic Assessments	37,159		84,481	136,106	267,681
Total	563,065	1,193,910	1,193,806	169,787	3,120,568

Source: Program officials

A further breakdown of the costs for non-renewable assessments in terms of AANDC's expenditure is shown in Table 8. In fiscal year 2008-09, the amount spent for non-renewable assessments was \$1,129,314. Though this amount kept dropping over the years to \$172,484 in fiscal year 2011-12, the amount spent in comparison to the other assessments is significant. The evaluation was unable to ascertain the reason for the decrease, although it is known that the amount spent on a Non-Renewable Assessment depends largely on the size of the study area as well as the location and existing information. In years when smaller and/or less remote areas are assessed, the amount spent on Non-Renewable Assessments will decrease. Some years more than one Non-Renewable Assessment was conducted, causing the amount spent to increase.

According to some interviewees, this disproportionate distribution of funds is compensated by the wealth of information resulting from these assessments. AANDC is the main funder for this task and spent \$3,494,072 from fiscal year 2008-09 to 2011-12. A comparison of total AANDC funds that went into non-renewable assessments (Table 8) with overall AANDC actual funding (Table 4) shows how much of available funds went into non-renewable assessments.

**Table 8 : NWT-PAS non-renewable resource assessments**

	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	Total
AANDC	1,129,314 <sup>40</sup>	1,122,274	1,070,000	172,484	3,494,072
Other Sources (Ducks Unlimited Canada)		6,300			6,300
Total	1,129,314	1,128,574	1,070,000	172,484	3,500,372

Source: Multi-Partner PAS Budget and Work plan submitted by the program

The evaluation also noted that resources leveraged from other sources are not large, as identified in the Multi-Partner Budget and Work Plan (Table 4). The amount leveraged from other sources in fiscal year 2008-09 (see Table 4 footnote) was \$22,376; no other information was available for the other years. Key informants also indicated that at certain times, and due to the inconsistent flow of funding from the federal government, NWT-PAS was left to borrow money from environmental non-government organizations in order to proceed with the agenda. Key informants added that a multiyear funding agreement would be more appropriate for this program because the expected amount would be clearly identified, delays would be reduced, and the NWT-PAS' efficiency, economy and cost-effectiveness would improve.

<sup>40</sup> It must be noted that this amount includes non-renewable assessments as well as non-renewable Mapping/Planning, Policy Review as seen in Table 7.

There are mixed feelings from informants regarding adequate levels of human and financial resources (quantity and quality) in terms of achieving results, but stakeholders are in general satisfied with the products and services provided by the NWT-PAS. In particular, they mention that there is good value for money spent on the Initiative. However, from other stakeholders' perspective, there is room for improvement. Case studies interviews showed that working group members are not fully satisfied with the quality of resource assessments. For example, the resource assessment reports (done by consultants), according to interviewees, could have better quality data and are not always of the highest calibre (i.e., sometimes important information was absent). Key informant interviews indicated that the quality issues appeared to be a consequence of the consultant's lack of knowledge of the NWT (i.e., the people, culture, geography), thus losing credibility within the community.

Other interviewees are of the view that more funds be allocated to the socio-economic assessments because it identifies all organizations, communities and other parties that may have interests in and around the Candidate Protected Area, identifies past and present socio-economic conditions for the potentially-affected communities and finally estimates the economic and other values of different resources found in the Candidate Protected Area. Also, interviewees noted as well that all reports produced are not always presented to the working groups and rarely are people in communities consulted with regard to issues related to the land, animals, resources, etc.

Regarding staff, respondents mentioned that the staff work hard at transparency, collaboration and are passionate about their work. However, they noted that there is room for additional human resources, particularly due to instances of staff turnover that have contributed to the inconsistency in the NWT-PAS process. Staff turnover was attributed to the nature of the work, work location and the type of funding agreement in place. Inferring from the documents reviewed and interviews, the evaluation could not determine the exact number of employees hired or who left the program.

Step 5 (assessments) was also highlighted as an area that can be better resourced in terms of funding and obtaining the particular expertise in certain assessments (i.e., hiring cultural anthropologists for cultural assessments, economists to undertake socio-economic assessments, etc). Regarding representation in working groups, there are two opposing perspectives. According to interviewees, some working group members believe that they have the appropriate number of representatives while others believe that there should be more representatives from communities, particularly of communities that reside in the candidate area. Other capacity issues are discussed in Section 4.2.1. Most of the informants noted that without NWT-PAS funding, some communities could not participate in the different steps of the NWT-PAS process.

Key informants and case studies interviewees mentioned that regarding the issue of fewer resources related to assessments, LUP was the only alternative method to achieve outcomes. Respondents strongly recognized that while NWT-PAS and LUP have some similarities, they are both unique in certain capacities. For example, the literature review and document review shows that both LUP and NWT-PAS set out rules for how certain geographic areas will be managed to provide for conservation, development, and use of lands, waters and other resources. Based on the document review, the evaluation found that the development of LUP can be legally required



through comprehensive claims or legislation, can be pursued by governments and Aboriginal people if desired. Notably, areas identified as ecologically or culturally important in a LUP may also be referred to the NWT-PAS to be evaluated for legislative protection and management.

***Finding 2: It is unknown if the NWT-PAS is cost-effective.***

The multiple lines of evidence did not provide sufficient evidence as to whether the Initiative is cost-effective, thus, the evaluation could not formulate a sound conclusion on this matter. This conclusion is drawn from the evaluation's analysis that it is difficult to attach a pecuniary value to achieving a given conservation target with limited resources. This challenge is compounded by such evaluation limitations as resource and time constraints. Undertaking a cost-effectiveness analysis requires, for example, an understanding of the biological aspects of conservation, or the complexities attached to a total area of a landmass; there are many inherent challenges in estimating this. For instance, disaggregating overlapping costs as several of the actions involved in protected areas can achieve multiple objectives (e.g., new trans-boundary areas can improve connectivity, representativeness and protecting key ecosystem services). And where the degree of overlap is unknown, it is very difficult to disentangle overlapping costs or distinguish between certain costs, etc.

Furthermore, ascertaining cost-effectiveness requires a mastery of the knowledge of the different types of conservation costs, including such variables as management costs (i.e., those associated with management of a conservation program like establishing and maintaining a network of protected areas); acquisition/transaction costs (i.e., the price of acquiring/transferring property rights to a given parcel of land, which include the costs of negotiating with landholders and obtaining approval for title transfer); damage costs (damages to economic activities resulting from conservation programs; for example, damages to livelihoods from wild animals living in protected areas adjacent to human settlements can result in significant losses in income); or, opportunity costs (costs of foregone opportunities which are a measure of what could have been earned via the next-best use of a resource had it not been put to that particular use).

Nevertheless, anecdotal evidence suggests that the majority of informants suggested that NWT-PAS is cost-effective in that it uses its funding to maximize results and, as a result, there have been very notable successes for communities to participate in the process; they remarked that it gets the job done for a "low price." Without NWT-PAS funding as a financial leverage, communities would not have the opportunity to participate in the process. Key informants and case studies interviewees also noted the great benefits of interim protection to protected areas, citing as examples, the prevention of resource development in areas where it is not needed, sustainability of the land, preservation of Aboriginal culture, tradition and history, protection of the unique environment/ecosystem for the community, for future generations, all Canadians and the whole world.

## 6. Conclusion

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### 6.1 Conclusion

The evaluation concludes that the federal contribution to the NWT-PAS is relevant and has generally achieved short-term objectives, but has not met its long-term outcomes as planned. Therefore, the recommendations are formulated with the view of guiding improvement. The conclusion is organized into two parts. The first presents the findings according to relevance, design and delivery, and performance. The second presents the evaluations' recommendations.

#### *Relevance*

The evidence demonstrates a *continued need* for a network of protected wildlife areas in the NWT. This is particularly due to increased interest and activity in economic/resource development in the NWT and its subsequent impact on First Nations, wildlife and habitat. At the same time, it is complementary to regional LUPs.

Recognizing that the environmental issues that prompted the creation of the NWT-PAS still exist, there is a continued need for tools, mechanisms, policy, leadership, coordination and collaboration with government bodies and communities that will help challenge these issues. In this respect, there is a need to maintain the NWT-PAS.

The Initiative is also *aligned with Government of Canada priorities* as AANDC manages the resources, land and environment in the North. NWT-PAS is also appropriately *aligned with federal roles and responsibilities* since it holds statutory and regulatory responsibilities to Crown land. However, it is unclear how and to what extent devolution of lands and resources in the NWT may impact the Government of Canada's roles and responsibilities with respect to the NWT-PAS.

#### *Design and delivery*

The evaluation found that the NWT-PAS is appropriately managed. Yet, while its governance structure is clear and represents a model of good decision making that involves multiple interests, the role of the Steering Committee raises concerns among stakeholders who are of the view that it must provide strategic direction and evolve, especially with devolution on the horizon. This could help prepare the NWT-PAS to respond to devolution-related issues. Therefore, the evaluation finds it necessary to not only review the Steering Committee's role and approach, but to evolve particularly in terms of protected area management and monitoring.

Overall, the evaluation found that the NWT-PAS's financial resources are sufficient in terms of supporting NWT-PAS processes, including decision making, administrative support and conducting assessments. However, there has not been a consistent flow of expected funds, which has posed challenges for planning and administrative efforts. Thus, ensuring a steady flow of funds and a strengthened human resource capacity are seen to be particularly relevant for now and in the coming years, as industrial resource projects (e.g., mining and energy) are expected to increase. There is also no evidence of performance measurement mechanisms.

The evaluation raises a key issue found in the implementation and oversight of the NWT-PAS with respect to marine conservation areas. Specifically, there is no evidence of effort made toward marine conservation. This highlights an important gap in NWT-PAS activities since program documents cite that it is to focus both on marine and terrestrial conservation, in addition to the fact that national wildlife areas are intended to protect land and water.

### ***Performance***

This federal contribution to the NWT-PAS has achieved some of its targeted objectives. For instance, there is awareness of the initiative among NWT residents and it is managed in a way where there is capacity among regional organizations and communities to engage in it. The program did not achieve its immediate outcome of attaining three additional areas under interim protection by 2011 and up to four more by 2013 according to the Results-based Management and Accountability Framework, nor did it establish any of the six mandated national wildlife areas under federal legislation. Currently, there is only one: Saoyú-behdacho. The realization of key intermediate and long-term outcomes, particularly of establishing the protection of 7 candidate areas under legislation by 2013, has likewise not taken place. Delivery issues (e.g., complexity, resource intensity, delays in approvals) as well as improved communication regarding reasons for delays were highlighted as challenges for the successful attainment of immediate and longer-term outcomes.

As stressed by a wide range of stakeholders, the evaluation confirms that significant and long-lasting improvements in efficiency and effectiveness of the NWT-PAS will only come from major changes. These changes include collaboration and coordination with other existing programs like Cumulative Impact Monitoring Program to reduce the length and costs of assessments while strengthening capacity, as well as a strong central function of a revamped Steering Committee, in combination with improved coordination from senior-level Headquarters-based federal officials. The evaluation suggests that the NWT-PAS has taken steps to minimize financial and material resources while optimizing outputs but was unable to confirm if the NWT-PAS was cost-effective due to a lack of data.

## **6.2 Recommendations**

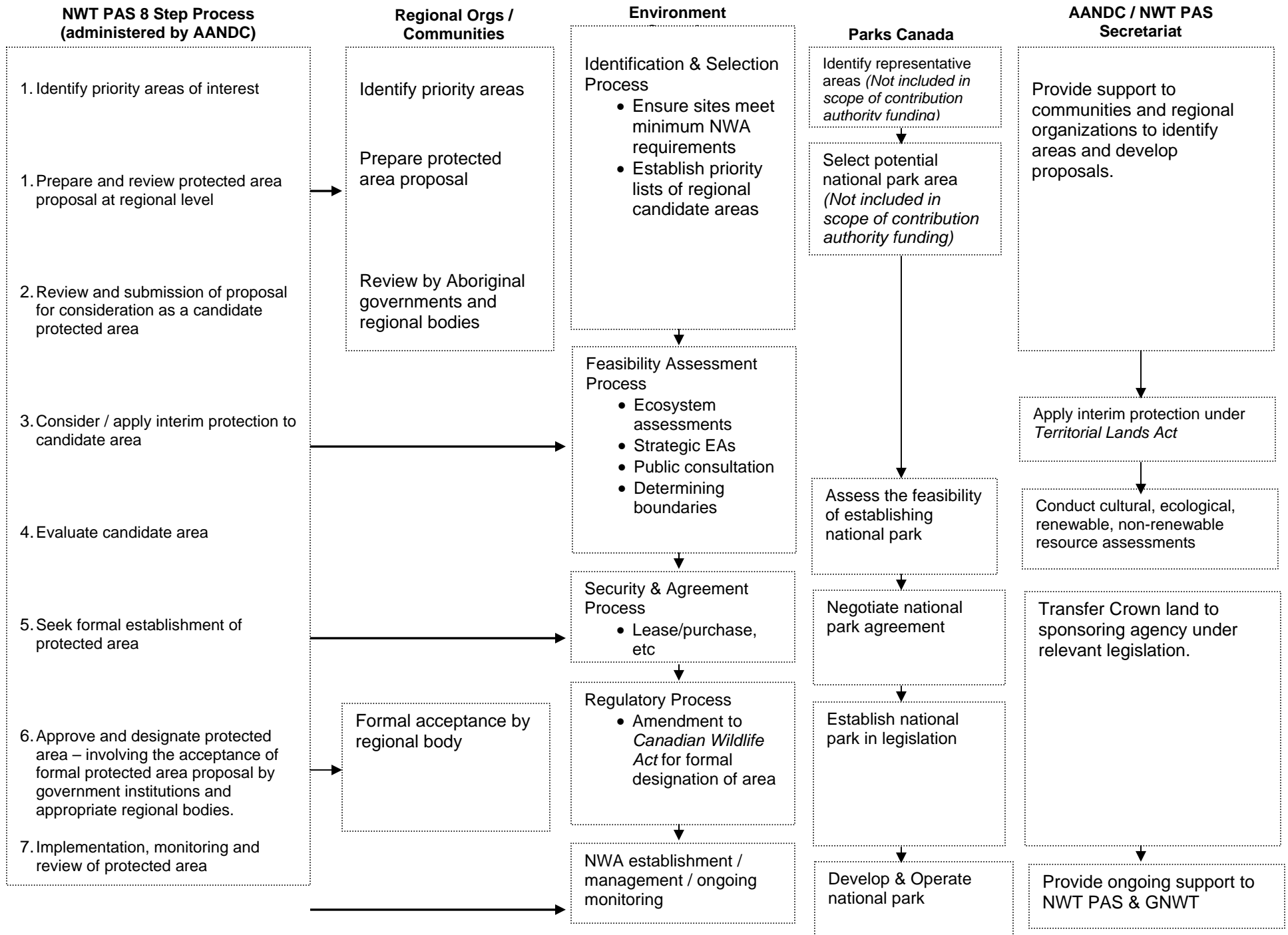
It is recommended that the participating departments/agencies, in collaboration with each other:

1. Address the issue of capacity constraints at the community level by working with the relevant community partners in order to include more expertise and increase capacity in the NWT-PAS activities while sharing costs related to assessments and working group activities.
2. Revisit and review the role of the Steering Committee to ensure it provides strategic direction as per its mandate.
3. In coordination with the relevant departments and agencies, review current funding mechanisms, to ensure predictability of funds and a timely delivery to recipients.

4. Develop an approach that will foster better understanding and communication of the NWT-PAS as it pertains to the devolution of lands and resources.

# Annex A: Protected Areas Process Map

(this diagram was prepared for this evaluation through a review of program funding documents)



## ***Annex B: Evaluation Matrix: Evaluation of Conservation Interests in the Northwest Territories***

Evaluation issues/questions	Indicators	Data source/method
<b>RELEVANCE</b>		
1. Is there a need for a network of protected wildlife areas and parkland in the Northwest Territories?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ General need for sustainable economic development / wildlife area &amp; park creation</li> <li>▶ Need for protection of important ecological and cultural sites in the NWT (e.g., NWT wildlife species at risk; level of existing protection for eco-regions and identified heritage sites)</li> <li>▶ Current (i.e., time-bound) opportunities to protect land free of existing interests and development (incl. effect of land use uncertainty on resource development and rate of development)</li> <li>▶ Capacity of site working groups/communities; industry and other third parties to participate in the NWT PAS process without federal support</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Literature/cross-jurisdictional review</li> <li>▶ Document review</li> <li>▶ Key informant interviews               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– AANDC program officials / stakeholders &amp; beneficiaries</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
2. Is this initiative aligned with federal government priorities?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Extent to which the initiative is aligned with Government of Canada priorities and AANDC/Environment Canada/Parks Canada Agency Strategic Outcomes, including departmental priorities (with special consideration given to sustainable development priorities)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Document review</li> <li>▶ Key informant interviews               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– AANDC program officials / stakeholders &amp; beneficiaries</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
3. Is this initiative aligned with federal roles and responsibilities?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Review of AANDC's statutory mandate as Crown administrator of territorial land including related policy commitments</li> <li>▶ Barriers to land protection without federal sponsoring legislation (i.e., reliance on territorial parks/wildlife areas, land claim agreement measures and land use planning)</li> <li>▶ Extent to which federal efforts duplicate or complement other protection measures in the NWT (e.g. Government of Northwest Territories, regional land use planning; AANDC devolution to NWT)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Document review</li> <li>▶ Key informant interviews               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– AANDC program officials / stakeholders &amp; beneficiaries</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

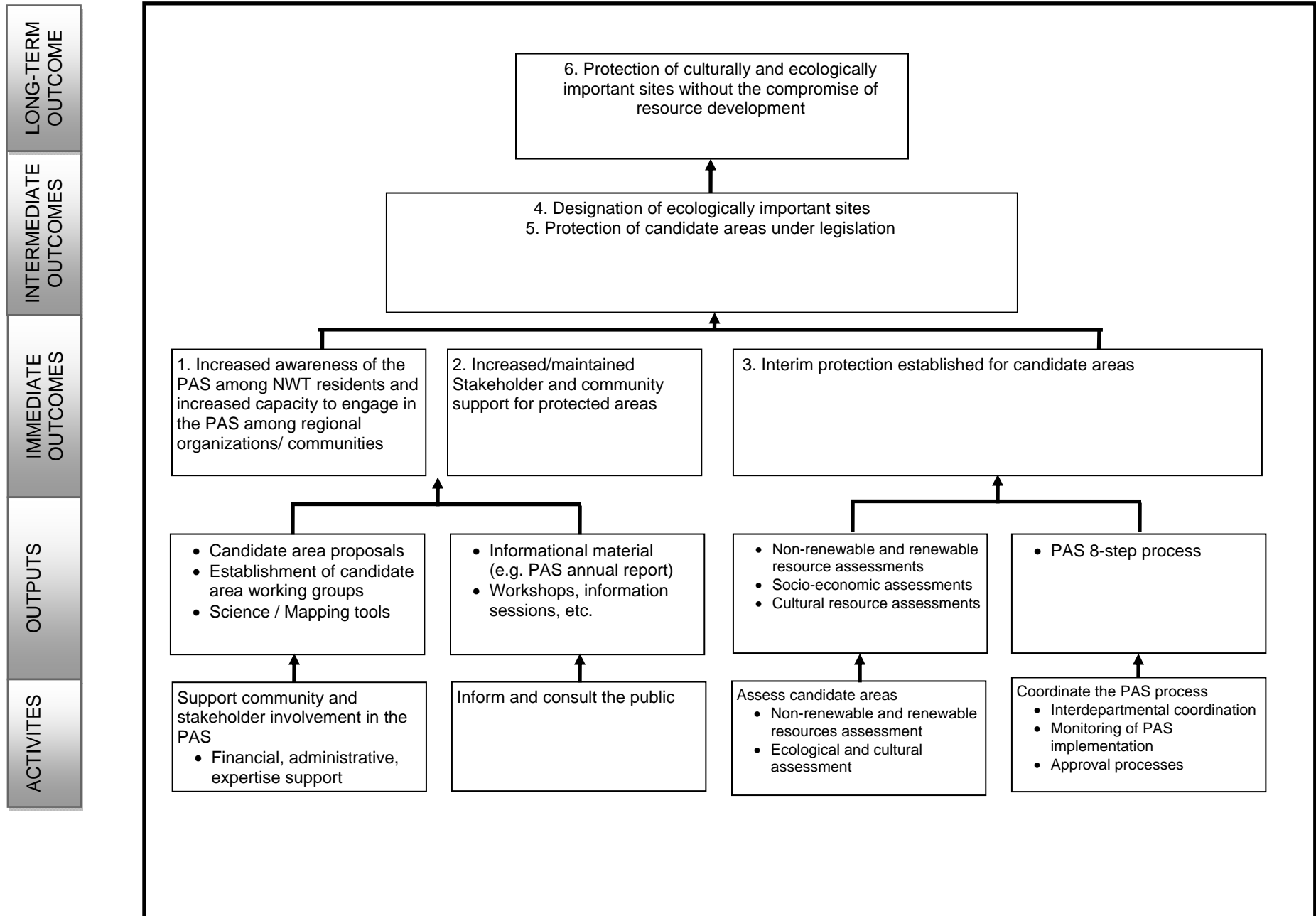
<b>DESIGN &amp; DELIVERY</b>		
4. Is the initiative designed to respond to needs related to park and wildlife area creation?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Extent to which the program is responsive to the <b>needs</b> (e.g., interests, priorities, regional land use planning, etc.) and <b>contexts</b> (political, legislative, ecological, economic and cultural) of individual regional organizations / communities</li> <li>▶ Extent to which appropriate governance structures are in place to effectively incorporate the many perspectives and interests (industry, government, First Nation, community) into NWT PAS planning, prioritizing and decision making (e.g., role of Steering Committee)</li> <li>▶ Extent to which program is designed to enable the implementation goals of the Mackenzie Valley Five-Year Action Plan</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Document review</li> <li>▶ Case studies</li> <li>▶ Key informant interviews <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– AANDC program officials / stakeholders &amp; beneficiaries</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
5. Is the program being delivered in a way that will achieve outcomes?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Extent to which the program offers communities, regional organizations and other stakeholders the necessary supports (financial, technical, scientific, administrative, etc.)</li> <li>▶ Extent to which the NWT PAS governance structure successfully coordinates activities across stakeholder groups through collaboration, consultation and communication to facilitate the NWT PAS 8-step process (including role of Steering Committee)</li> <li>▶ Extent to which the process meets Environment Canada assessment standards and known good practices in the areas of: 1) Assessing ecological/cultural/economic impacts and comparing alternatives for land protection decisions; 2) conducting community consultations</li> <li>▶ Extent to which the NWT PAS is on schedule and reasons for delays, if any Presence / use of performance measurement systems and monitoring and adaptive management programs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Literature/cross-jurisdictional review</li> <li>▶ Document review</li> <li>▶ Case studies</li> <li>▶ Key informant interviews <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– AANDC program officials / stakeholders &amp; beneficiaries</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
6. What are the best practices and lessons learned in program design and implementation?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Evidence of best practices and lessons learned including actions taken as a result</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Key informant interviews</li> <li>▶ Case studies</li> <li>▶ Literature / cross-jurisdictional review</li> </ul>
<b>PERFORMANCE: RESULTS</b>		
7. To what extent have AANDC activities and outputs contributed to the expected outcomes of the Advancing Conservation Interests initiative (including the following immediate, intermediate and long-term outcomes)?		
<b>Immediate outcomes</b>		
a) Increased awareness of the NWT PAS among NWT residents and increased	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Geographical range and nature of informational material distributed</li> <li>▶ Geographical range and number of workshops, information sessions (if</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Document review</li> <li>▶ Literature review</li> <li>▶ Case studies</li> </ul>

capacity to engage in the NWT PAS among regional organizations/communities	<p>applicable)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Evidence that the program has increased community capacity to engage in consultations, identify candidate areas, prepare proposals, etc.</li> <li>▶ Evidence that there is an increased awareness of NWT PAS among NWT residents</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Key informant interviews: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Stakeholders / beneficiaries</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
b) Increased/maintained stakeholder and community support for protected areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Evidence of public/community/stakeholder support for approach and implementation of NWT PAS</li> <li>▶ Evidence of public/community/stakeholder/Steering Committee support for candidate areas through: candidate area public review process; community and stakeholder perceptions; available public survey or feedback information</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Key informant interviews <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– NWT PAS stakeholders / beneficiaries</li> </ul> </li> <li>▶ Case studies</li> </ul>
c) Interim protection established for candidate areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Number of candidate national wildlife areas under interim protection (target=7) and their relevance/timeliness</li> <li>▶ Evidence of appropriate regional representation (e.g. eco-regions; settlement regions / First Nation traditional areas)</li> <li>▶ Extent of eco-region protection (target 17 of NWT's 42 eco-regions)</li> <li>▶ Nature of protection (e.g., full surface and subsurface, partial development, etc.)</li> <li>▶ Evidence that the protection will lead to the expected ecological, social and economic impacts</li> <li>▶ Extent to which the sites will be protected from surrounding human activity</li> <li>▶ Description of challenges to protection of candidate areas / extent to which consensus has been achieved</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ File and data review <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>Geographical Information System used to conduct gap analysis of degree to which ecoregions are represented</i></li> </ul> </li> <li>▶ Document review</li> <li>▶ Key informant interviews: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- stakeholders &amp; beneficiaries</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Intermediate outcomes</b>		
d) Designation of ecologically important sites		
e) Protection of candidate areas under legislation		
<b>Long-term outcomes</b>		
f) Protection of culturally and ecologically important sites without the compromise of resource development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Extent to which it is likely that NWT PAS will lead to the stated long-term outcome</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Key informant interviews</li> </ul>
<b>Other outcomes</b>		
g) Have there been positive or negative unintended outcomes?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Evidence of unintended positive and/or negative outcomes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Key informant interviews</li> <li>▶ Case studies</li> </ul>
<b>PERFORMANCE: EFFICIENCY, ECONOMY &amp; COST EFFECTIVENESS</b>		



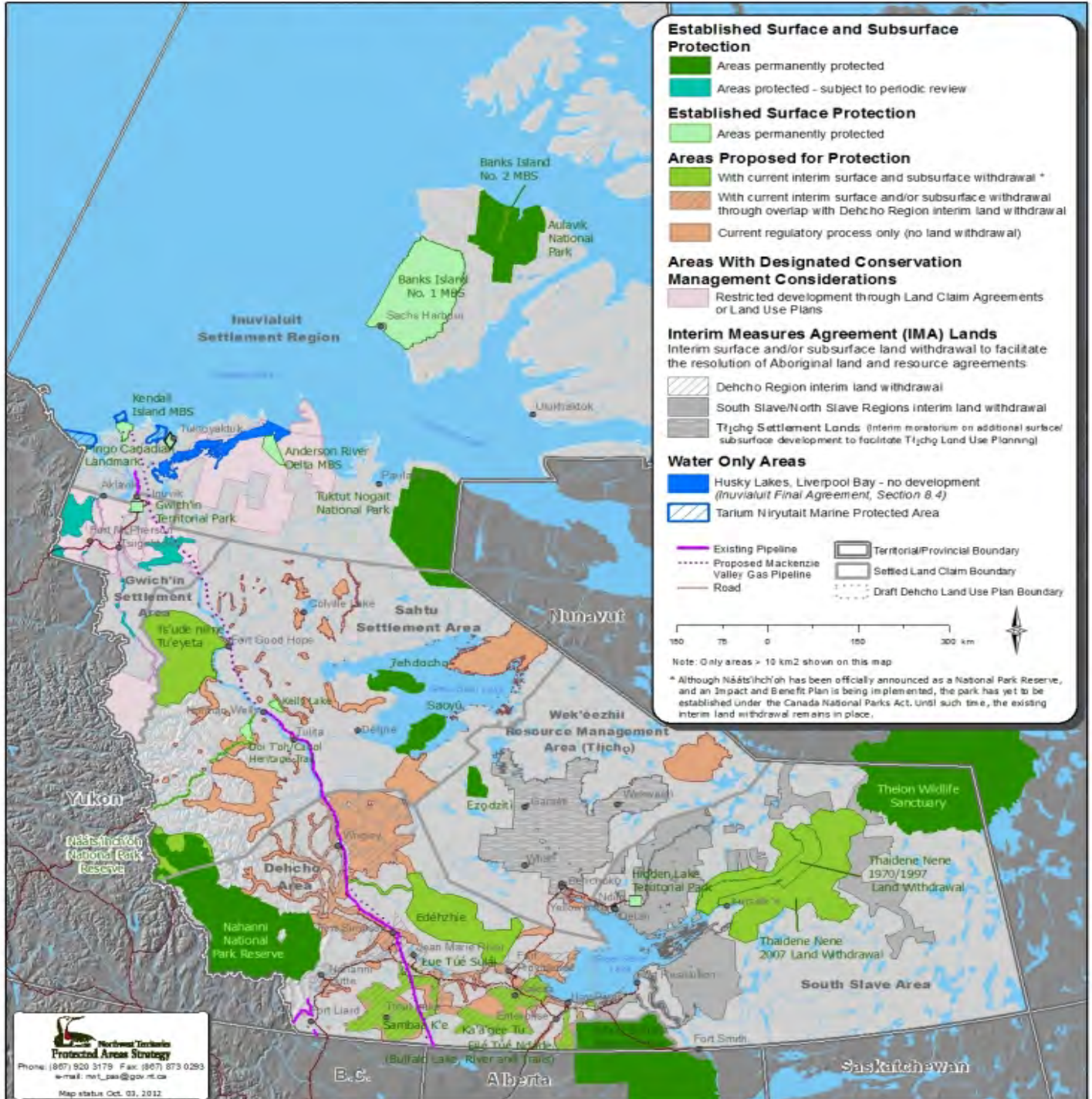
<p>8. Efficiency: How has the program optimized its processes and the quantity/quality of products or services to achieve expected outcomes?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Comparison of federal departmental practices/processes with the 8-step NWT PAS process including: extent to which they are in line with each other; presence of gaps; evidence of opportunities for increased efficiency/simplification/combination of efforts/concurrent activities, governance structures etc.</li> <li>▶ Comparison of initiative with protected areas/park creation in other jurisdictions to determine alternative approaches to achieve similar results</li> <li>▶ Perceptions on challenges/opportunities/alternate approaches to achieve immediate outcomes incl. design and delivery approaches for output production</li> <li>▶ Incorporation of best practices identified in question 6 above into program design/delivery</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Document review</li> <li>▶ Literature/cross-jurisdictional review</li> <li>▶ Data and file review</li> <li>▶ Case studies</li> <li>▶ Key informant interviews: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- AANDC program officials / stakeholders &amp; beneficiaries</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p>9. Economy: Has the program minimized resources (financial, human and material) while optimizing outputs and outcomes?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Comparison of input costs with other comparable programs (if applicable)</li> <li>▶ Comparison of budget vs. actual costs and reasons for gaps</li> <li>▶ Stakeholder satisfaction with resource use in terms of relevance of activities and outputs (products and services)</li> <li>▶ Evidence that the right resources (staff and other investments) are used for NWT PAS</li> <li>▶ Evidence that there are adequate levels of resources (quantity and quality) within the strategy to achieve results</li> <li>▶ Perceptions on alternative to achieve immediate outcomes using fewer resources</li> <li>▶ Extent to which resources are leveraged from other sources, including the involvement from other partners</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Document review</li> <li>▶ Literature/cross-jurisdictional review</li> <li>▶ Data and file review</li> <li>▶ Case studies</li> <li>▶ Key informant interviews: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- AANDC program officials / stakeholders &amp; beneficiaries</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p>10. Is the Conservation Interests initiative cost-effective?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Comparison analysis of protected areas vs. resource development (e.g., costs, benefits)</li> <li>▶ Comparison / cost analysis of measures to protect land before/after resource development has begun in the McKenzie Valley (e.g., negotiating third-party interests)</li> <li>▶ Alternative approaches to land protection</li> </ul> <p><i>Note: these indicators may be cross-references/combined with economy and/or relevance</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Document review</li> <li>▶ Literature/cross-jurisdictional review</li> <li>▶ Data and file review</li> <li>▶ Case studies</li> <li>▶ Key informant interviews: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- AANDC program officials / stakeholders</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

# Annex C: Program Logic Model



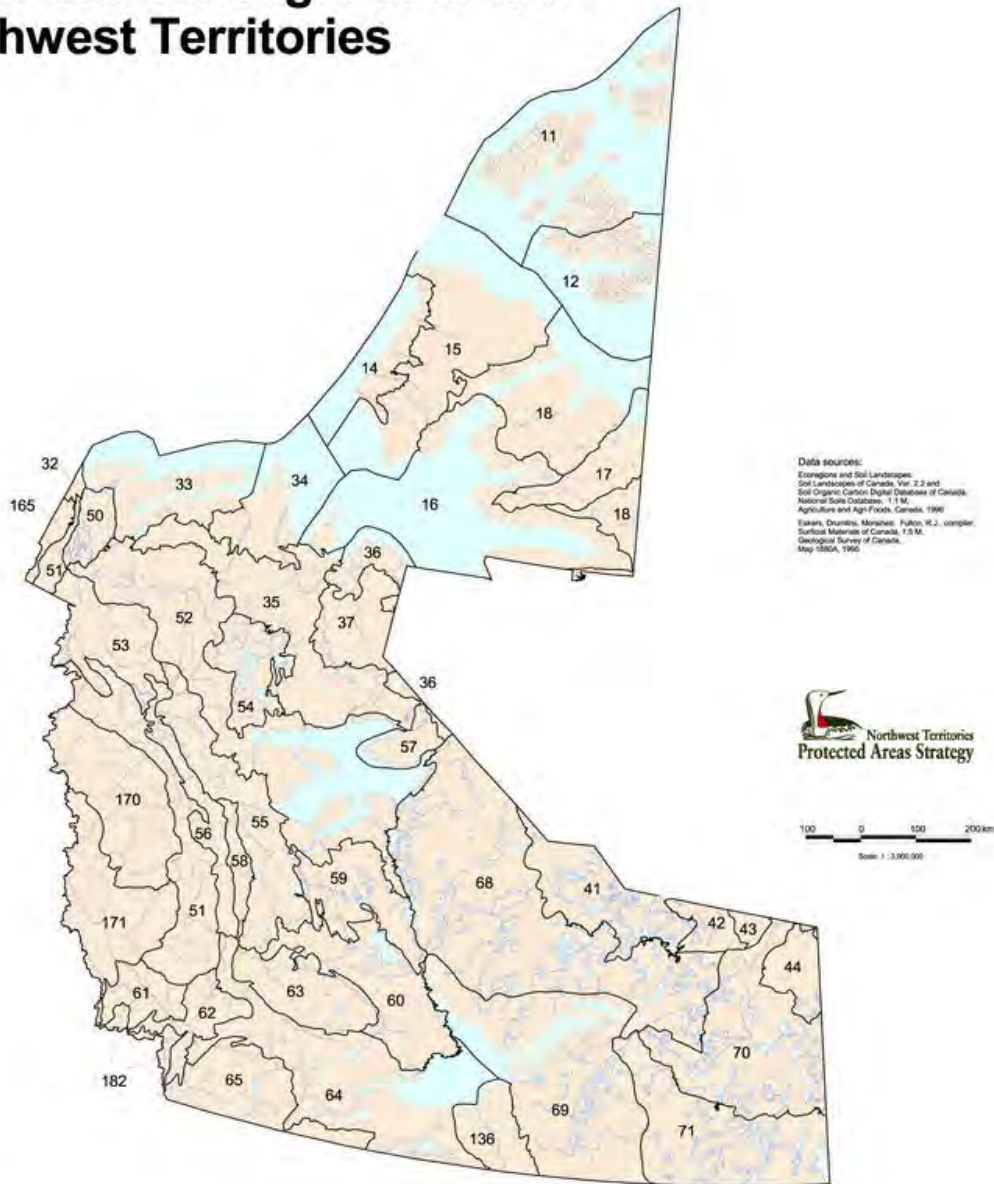
# Annex D: Map of NWT-PAS

## Overall Conservation and Land Management in the Northwest Territories



# Annex E: Terrestrial Ecoregions of NWT

## Terrestrial Ecoregions of the Northwest Territories



### Ecoregions:

11	Sverdrup Islands Lowland	42	Garry Lake Lowland	61	Nahanni Plateau
12	Parry Islands Plateau	43	Back River Plain	62	Sibbeston Lake Plain
14	Banks Island Coastal Plain	44	Dubawnt Lake Plain/Upland	63	Horn Plateau
15	Banks Island Lowland	50	Mackenzie Delta	64	Hay River Lowland
16	Amundsen Gulf Lowlands	51	Peel River Plateau	65	Northern Alberta Uplands
17	Shaler Mountains	52	Great Bear Lake Plain	68	Coppermine River Upland
18	Victoria Islands Lowlands	53	Fort McPherson Plain	69	Tazin Lake Upland
32	Yukon Coastal Plain	54	Colville Hills	70	Kazan River Upland
33	Tuktoyaktuk Coastal Plain	55	Norman Range	71	Selwyn Lake Upland
34	Anderson River Plain	56	Mackenzie River Plain	136	Slave River Lowland
35	Dease Arm Plain	57	Grandin Plains	165	British-Richardson Mountains
36	Coronation Hills	58	Franklin Mountains	170	Mackenzie Mountains
37	Bluenose Lake Plain	59	Keller Lake Plain	171	Selwyn Mountains
41	Takijuk Lake Upland	60	Great Slave Lake Plain	182	Hyland Highland



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