

Hı́dó Gogha Sė́nė́gots'ı́á (Planning for the Future – PFF) Policy and Guidance

This Policy and Guide is provided in accordance with Decision 3.1 of the SRRB's report on Déłı́nė 2021 Public Listening Session: ʔełets'ewė́hkwé Godı́ (Living with Wildlife) – Predators and Competitors, April 25-29, 2022). It is being submitted to the GNWT Minister of Environment along with the Déłı́nė 2021 PLS Hearing Report dated May 1, 2023.

Part 1: Policy

This part explains the ʔehdzo Got'ı́nė Gots'ė́ Nákedı́ (Sahtú Renewable Resources Board – SRRB) authority, policy, principles and review procedure for Hı́dó gogha sė́nė́gots'ı́á (Planning for the future – PFF) written plans.

The SRRB is the main instrument of wildlife management in the Sahtú Settlement Area. The SRRB was established by the Sahtú Dene and Métis Land Claim Agreement, a modern treaty that applies to the Sahtú Settlement Area. The rights that it grants are constitutionally protected by section 35 of the Constitution Act, 1982. The SRRB is responsible for approving plans for wildlife, habitat, and harvesting. The SRRB is adopting a policy to support hı́dó gogha sė́nė́gots'ı́á (planning for the future) to achieve the objectives in the *SDMCLCA* for wildlife, habitat, and harvesting.

Hı́dó gogha sė́nė́gots'ı́á (Planning for the future – PFF) is a community-based, rights-compliant, governance framework that reflects and respects local Dene and Métis knowledges, customs, and practices. Hı́dó gogha sė́nė́gots'ı́á is a viable conservation approach that is community-led and a more effective and more rights-compliant alternative to harvest limits.

The SRRB asserts that hı́dó gogha sė́nė́gots'ı́á is a viable conservation approach that can be more effective, more rights-compliant, and more community-led than harvest limits.¹ The SRRB is advancing hı́dó gogha sė́nė́gots'ı́á as the priority response to wildlife conservation concerns in the Sahtú region. The SRRB invited feedback on its policy and guide as part of the Déłı́nė 2021 PLS. This policy outlines the SRRB's approach to review and approval of PFF written plans. The SRRB is inviting each Sahtú community to undertake hı́dó gogha sė́nė́gots'ı́á and submit a written plan during the five-part public listening series, which began in 2020.

¹ Sahtú Renewable Resources Board (ʔehdzo Got'ı́nė Gots'ė́ Nákedı́), *Sahtú Ragóʔa (Hunting Law) and Approaches to Wildlife Harvesting: Second Report on the Colville 2020 Public Listening (Hearing) Session* (Tulıt'a, NT: SRRB, March 2021), 10, available on the SRRB [Public Registry](#) for Colville 2020 Public Listening Session.

The SRRB's Hı́dó Gogha Sė́nė́gots'ı́á (Planning for the Future – PFF) Policy is centred on three interdependent principles:

1. **ʔası́ı́ Godı́ hé Dene Ts'ı́ıı́ hé (Biocultural Diversity)** - Dene expect decisions that affect them to account for ʔası́ı́ dodı́ hé Dene ts'ı́ıı́ hé (all living things and Dene ways of being).
2. **ʔedets'ė́ K'áokerewe (Self-Regulation)** - In Dene ʔeʔa (law) people and wildlife are called upon to respect each other's autonomy as a basis for social cohesion and survival in a harsh environment through ʔedets'ė́ k'áots'erewe (self-regulation).
3. **Godı́ Kehtsı́ (Ethical Space)** - Dene and Métis participation in conservation efforts with government depends on godı́ kehtsı́ (fair consideration or coming together of diverse perspectives, or ethical space), including science and Indigenous knowledge through ʔełexé ʔeghálats'eda (collaborative) systems of accountability.

Vision for Community Leadership in Hı́dó Gogha Sė́nė́gots'ı́á

Hı́dó gogha sė́nė́gots'ı́á facilitates the documentation of local and Indigenous knowledges, customs, and practices in wildlife conservation in a written plan for consideration in decision-making. The SRRB recognizes the importance and value of Sahtú Dene and Métis involvement in decisions about wildlife and landscapes.

The SRRB believes the planning process should be defined by the community. Planning processes can be important opportunities for community members, leaders, and others to come together and discuss what is most important for the future. These discussions can inform the development of a written plan. The SRRB is not prescribing the form of written plan prepared by a community.

The planning for the future process must be community-led and -owned. The SRRB expects that the process will include extensive community input and the involvement of community leadership. The SRRB recognizes and looks for ʔehdzo got'ı́nė́ (renewable resources council) leadership in planning for the future. However, the SRRB again acknowledges that it is up to each community to define their specific process and resulting plan.

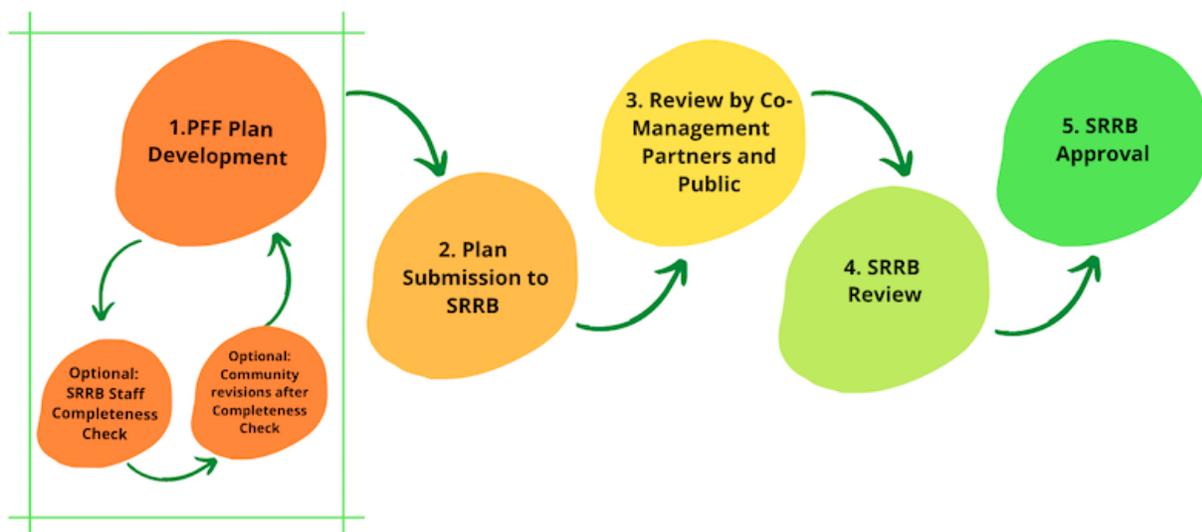
A Planning Process and a Written Plan

When communities decide to start *hjdó gogha sénégots'ízá* (planning for the future), they will undertake a planning process that can result in a written plan. For SRRB review, communities should have a written plan, with supporting information. When a written plan is ready, it may be submitted to the SRRB for review and approval. The SRRB provides communities undertaking *hjdó gogha sénégots'ízá* with guidance and toolkits. The SRRB is continuing to refine its resources to help communities plan for the future and prepare submissions for SRRB review and approval. Planning, like governance, is a living and active process that is ongoing, even as plans are completed and implemented.

SRRB Review and Approval of Written Plans

Review and approval of a PFF written plan submitted to the SRRB will comply with the *SDMCLCA* and this policy. The SRRB will be sensitive to diversity in community planning processes and the contents of any one plan. The SRRB anticipates the following steps for its review and approval of a written plan:

- PFF Plan Development:** A community will undertake the *hjdó gogha sénégots'ízá* process. SRRB staff and ENR may be involved in plan development if requested by the community. The community must ensure there is a community approval process.²
 - Optional SRRB Staff Completeness Check:** When communities have a written plan, they are encouraged to share it with SRRB staff. SRRB staff will review the chapters, sections, and supporting information explained in SRRB guidance. SRRB staff will identify gaps or potential issues, and provide communities with feedback related to the SRRB's review responsibilities. SRRB staff will not interfere or bias future SRRB review in the completeness check.
 - Optional Community Revisions:** Based on staff feedback, communities will have the opportunity to make revisions to a written plan prior to review by the SRRB Board.
- Plan Submission to SRRB:** The written plan may be submitted to a public listening or hearing as a proposal according to the SRRB's *Rules for Hearings*.



3. **Review by Co-management Partners and Public:** Co-management partners and the public will have the opportunity to comment on the proposed plan. The community party submitting the written plan should consider comments from co-management partners or the public on the proposed plan. The submitting party may choose to respond to comments.
4. **SRRB Review:** The SRRB will review the proposed written plan, the supporting information provided by the community, and take account of comments made by other parties and responses to these comments. During its review, the SRRB will look for the chapters, sections, and supporting information outlined in SRRB guidance and toolkits.
5. **SRRB Approval:** The SRRB will decide whether to approve a proposed plan on the basis of the record before it, including questions, responses, or comments during the public review. Each written plan is distinct and will be considered on a case-by-case basis. The SRRB may recommend changes or set conditions prior to approving a written plan.

The over-arching questions that guide the SRRB approval of a PFF written plan are:

- **Planning Process:** How was the plan developed? How was the community involved?
- **Plan Approval:** Has the plan been approved by community leadership organizations?
- **Plan Sections:** Does the plan address the sections outlined in the SRRB's hǫdó gogha sénégot's'írá guidance? If sections or supporting information are missing or not addressed, is there a reason?
- **Supporting Information:** Does the written plan include sufficient supporting information?

The SRRB's guidance and toolkits aim to help communities undertaking hǫdó gogha sénégot's'írá to understand the chapters, sections, and supporting information the SRRB looks for when it reviews a PFF written plan. SRRB guidance is governed by the SRRB's Hǫdó Gogha Sénégots'írá (Planning for the Future – PFF) Policy. If the SRRB receives a written plan that addresses some, or all, of the PFF sections, it will proceed using the same steps for review. If a PFF written plan is approved by the SRRB, it will be forwarded to the Minister according to the *SDMCLCA*.

Communities who propose a PFF written plan may be invited to make modifications to their plan after the Minister's initial decision and prior to an SRRB final decision. This is to facilitate modifications prompted by the SRRB review, the public listening or hearing process, or reconsideration under the *SDMCLCA*. The SRRB final decision on a PFF written plan has to be submitted to the Minister for acceptance.

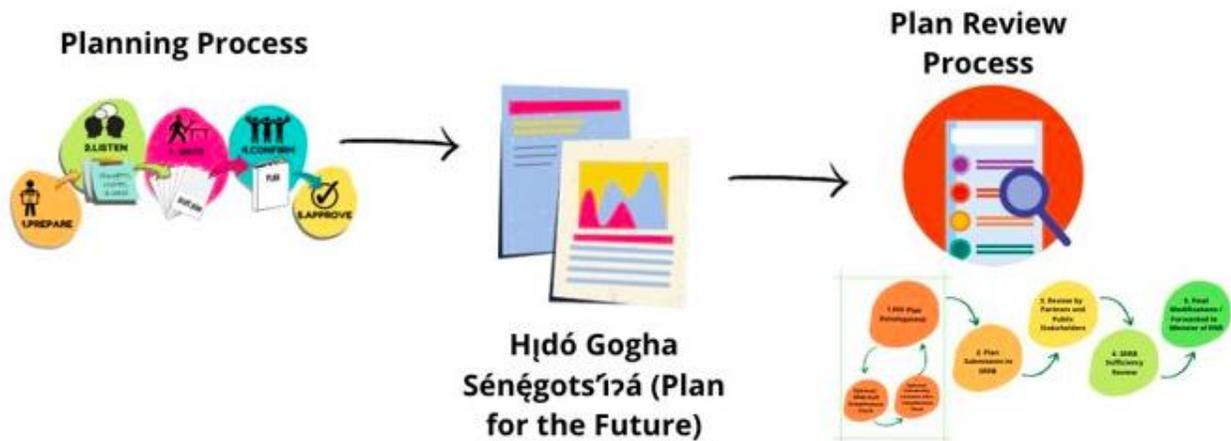
In a conservation context, circumstances are dynamic. Once approved, a written plan requires ongoing work to implement, monitor, and evaluate impacts. As active

governance models, written plans are meant to be updated, amended, or added to as time goes by. Review or modification of written plans may be warranted as circumstances change. A formal review may be prompted by the community itself, or by the SRRB, government, or other parties. Communities have to be able to make changes to their written plan and, where appropriate, explain changes. If a community already has a written plan, SRRB review and approval will proceed according to the SRRB’s PFF policy, SRRB guidance. and the *SDMCLCA*.

Part 2: Guidance

This part offers guidance to communities about the planning process, the SRRB’s role in assisting with planning, and the contents of a written plan.

Recognizing capacity constraints, the SRRB is developing guidance and toolkits to assist communities in the planning process and the preparation of a written plan for SRRB review and approval. SRRB guidance includes general questions for undertaking *hıdó gogha sénégots’ızá* and limits for SRRB staff participation in community PFF. The SRRB



anticipates that its staff and/or ENR personnel may be invited to observe, help, or offer feedback when communities prepare written plans that will be submitted for SRRB review and approval. The SRRB will remain independent to fairly review and consider submissions of written plans. The SRRB is sensitive to the capacity constraints communities face and seeks to mitigate them as it develops *Hıdó Gogha Sénégots’ızá* (Planning for the Future – PFF) Policy, subject to the SRRB’s public interest mandate, the duty of fairness, and the SRRB’s accountability to *SDMCLCA* decision-making.

Planning Process

Community discussions are essential to help make planning decisions about the future. Communities have to determine things like: what meetings need to be held, what

decisions need to be made, who needs to be involved, and how will we ensure that people are sufficiently engaged.

Learning lessons from the Sahtú experience to date, the SRRB has identified certain phases that a PFF process typically goes through to engage the community and gather supporting information to make a written plan. The phases are: prepare; listen; write; confirm; and approve (see figure 2).³ The planning process does not have to happen in this order. These phases are suggestions meant to inspire planning without imposing a process. Communities may address questions or identify supporting information in different phases of the process. The SRRB understands that thinking about a planning process can be a way of choosing how to prepare a written plan.

Content of the Written Plan

During the planning process, the community will gather the information needed to write a plan. A written plan helps explain the story of community governance in wildlife conservation, reflecting the *SDMCLCA*'s objectives to encourage the Sahtú Dene and Métis way of life and participation in decision-making about wildlife conservation. The content of the plan is important because it justifies the actions that were identified during *hı́dó gogha séné́gots'ı́á*.

A written plan can have sections that are grouped into chapters. Each section might address a key overarching question. Answers should include supporting information. The phases, chapters, sections, and supporting information are what the SRRB will be looking for when it considers whether a PFF written plan is ready for review.

Written plans, like the planning process, will look different for each community. However, the SRRB suggests that each plan include the following:

- A chapter that explains “**the story of the plan**”, outlines why this plan was completed, what area is included, and why it is important. Sections in this kind of chapter could include: gratitude for contributions of elders, knowledge holders, and others who participated in the planning process; evidence of support for the plan; purpose of the plan and topic or focus (i.e. caribou); plan area; planning context; community involvement; and involvement of others beyond the community.
- A chapter that explains “**the story of the land and animals in the area**” and compiles background information on the community’s understanding of the conservation issues that set the stage for this planning process. Sections in this kind of chapter could include: cultural context; community understanding of the

³ The SRRB acknowledges the phases and the sequence presented here is a non-Indigenous perspective for the purposes of co-management decision-making.

history and current situation of the land and animals; and other (government, scientists, neighbours, and/or other relevant contributors) understandings of the history and current situation for the land and animals.

- A chapter that explains the **vision and action plan** for how the community will be active in stewardship of wildlife, the landscape, and people. Sections in this kind of chapter could include: vision; goals; action plan; monitoring and evaluation plan; sharing the plan; and plan updates.