Qikiqtani Project Finance for Permanence
The Qikiqtani Inuit Association (QIA) is a not-for-profit society, created through the Nunavut Agreement, which represents approximately 15,500 Inuit in the Qikiqtani Region of Nunavut. The Qikiqtani Region includes 13 communities from Grise Fiord in the High Arctic, down to Sanikiluaq on the Belcher Islands.

Qikiqtani Inuit Association advances the rights and benefits of Qikiqtani Inuit through protecting and promoting our social, political, economic, and cultural interests; while safeguarding the land, waters and resources that sustain our communities.
The Qikiqtani Region encompasses 10 percent of Canada’s land mass and marine waters—larger than British Columbia and more than twice the size of California. It is replete with biologically and culturally significant wildlife, and the health of this ecosystem has direct implications for the health of Inuit and other coastal communities.

The Qikiqtani Project Finance for Permanence (Q-PFP) project is a vital opportunity to advance large-scale conservation in a highly ecologically vulnerable region and presents numerous significant opportunities for Inuit leadership, self-determination, and reconciliation with Canada.

Canada has committed to protecting 30% of its land and waters by 2030 and has signalled a strong desire to invest in protecting lands, waters and wildlife and the communities that rely on them while also meeting international standards for long-term conservation.

Canadian and international foundations have also expressed the desire to partner in Inuit-led conservation.

The opportunity has never been greater to advance Qikiqtani Inuit’s vision to improve community well-being, economic prosperity and the health of their lands, waters, and wildlife through an Inuit-led regional conservation economy.
Conservation areas in the Qikiqtani Region
Since time immemorial, Inuit have been stewards of the Arctic—protecting its ocean and land. The Inuit worldview is based on a close relationship with the land, sea, ice, and environment. Unfortunately, Inuit have suffered the direct consequences of Canadian colonialism, which has resulted in dramatic changes to Inuit lives and lifestyles.

In 2007, QIA established an independent truth commission to gather testimonials from Inuit on changes to Inuit life that happened to Qikiqtani Inuit between 1950 and 1975.

Approximately 350 Inuit participated in public hearings to uncover the truth about the Government of Canada’s policies and practices.

The Qikiqtani Truth Commission (QTC) provided Inuit with the opportunity to directly speak to and confront the Canadian Government about forced relocations, the killing of qimmiit (sled dogs), and other assimilative actions.
An outcome of QTC was the release of twenty-five (25) recommendations through which the Government of Canada can achieve Saimaqatigiingniq, which means a new relationship, when past opponents get back together, meet in the middle, and are at peace, with Qikiqtani Inuit.

In the spirit of reconciliation, QIA asks that all parties seeking to partner with Inuit familiarize themselves with the findings and recommendations of QTC. QIA asks that partners make the effort to learn about the history of Qikiqtani Inuit, QIA’s work to implement QTC recommendations and how to best support the vision Inuit have for their homelands and communities.
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For Qikiqtani Inuit, protecting the lands, waters, ice and wildlife supports cultural continuity and the reinvigoration of Inuit traditions and governance informed by traditional knowledge.

The landscape of the Qikiqtani Region is dominated by open tundra, sea ice, rivers and lakes. Sanikiluaq, the most southern Qikiqtani community, an archipelago in the southeast part of Hudson Bay is known for rich biodiversity including the presence of Arctic eiders. At higher latitudes, communities such as Mittimatalik (Pond Inlet) and Ausuittuq (Grise Fiord) feature still-thick ice caps.

Our understanding of our place in the world is based on our close relationship with the land, sea, ice, and environment. We are a part of the land and sea. Inuit rely on marine wildlife for physical sustenance and cultural renewal, and, in turn, Inuit are the stewards of the marine environment. We are dedicated to ensuring its long-term health and sustainability to protect our own long-term health and cultural sustainability.
Climate change is impacting the Qikiqtani and other Arctic regions at an accelerated rate. Qikiqtani Inuit are observing these changes first-hand in the migration patterns in the abundance of Arctic animals and their migration patterns, as well as abundance of Arctic animals and changes to sea ice and weather patterns.

The rich coastal ecosystems of the Qikiqtani Region are home to beluga, bowhead whale, narwhal, migratory birds, polar bear, caribou, and ringed seal—all of which support the culture, economy, and health of Qikiqtani Inuit.
The Arctic is warming at three times the global average.

Arctic sea ice is declining at a rate of 13% per decade.

Permafrost is melting 70 years ahead of predictions.

Canadian wildlife depends on the land and waters of Inuit Nunangat.

- **75%** Narwhal: 75% of global population
- **62%** Beluga: 67% of global population summer in Canadian waters
- **90%** Bowhead whale: 90% of global population summer in Canadian waters
- **80%** Polar bear: up to 80% of all polar bears live in Canada

Seabird species: some of the largest colonies in the Canadian Arctic.
WHY A PFP IN THE QIKIQTANI REGION

The Project Finance for Permanence (PFP) model is a holistic approach to conservation and development aimed at ensuring a participatory approach to achieve durable outcomes. It will allow Inuit communities to define the conservation and community development conditions that need to be met for the project to succeed.

Through the PFP model, the Qikiqtani Inuit Association is proposing 195,000 km² of new protection, and stronger standards for what is already protected, totalling over 690,000 km².

QIA envisions a future where the entire Qikiqtani Region, covering 989,879 km², is fully and permanently protected and managed by Qikiqtani Inuit.
The objective of Q-PFP project is to re-establish a strong relationship with the land and water Inuit have relied on since time immemorial. The protections realized through the PFP will safeguard a critical ecosystem for the health of our planet and help realize meaningful reconciliation and cultural continuity for Inuit.

QIA’s proposal is based on a Whole of Government approach which seeks to achieve Saimaqatigiingniq.

The Q-PFP is designed to align with the goals and recommendations of the QTC which seeks: acknowledgement and healing of past wrongs, strengthening Inuit governance, strengthening Inuit culture, and improving community health.
Q-PFP GOALS AND DESIRED OUTCOMES:

- 989,879 km² of the marine and terrestrial environment managed through an Inuit-led regional integrated approach.
- Adequate financial support for Inuit governance and management of all protected areas.
- Fisheries policies and quotas that are fair to Inuit rights holders and support sustainable fisheries.
- Improved and expanded sustainable job opportunities for Qikiqtani Inuit in the conservation economy and offshore fisheries.
- Sustainable management of Inuit resources.
- Community development through targeted infrastructure improvements that provide essential workspace for staff engaged in PFP implementation and community multi-use centres that facilitate country food harvesting and processing.
- Support for Inuit-led research and knowledge on-the-land and water.
- Pathways to expand Inuit leadership and professional development.
To implement an integrated Inuit regional conservation approach that achieves our mutual goals, investments are required using a whole-of-government-approach in five key areas:

1. Inuit-led Governance on a Regional Scale
2. Inuit Stewardship (Nauttiqsuqtiiq) Programs for all Qikiqtani Communities
3. Infrastructure Support
4. Sustainability of Inuit-led Conservation
5. Fisheries Reconciliation
MILESTONES

Government of Canada pledged CA$800M for four Indigenous-led conservation projects across Canada, including the Q-PFP project.

The federal public service received a mandate from cabinet to negotiate the terms of the Q-PFP.

Ongoing community engagement in Qikiqtaaluk to raise awareness and seek feedback on the conservation and community development plan.

2022

December

2023

Summer/Fall

Spring
Agreement in principle between federal government and Qikiqtani Inuit on Q-PFP “closing conditions.”

Q-PFP Donor Council is formally launched. All participants are screened by QIA to ensure alignment with Qikiqtani Inuit values and goals.

Final Q-PFP Agreement ratified.

Q-PFP Conservation Plan approved.

Implementation commences.

Establishment of priority governance, stewardship structures.

2024
PROJECT COSTS

In 2022 the Q-PFP was assessed as requiring CA$270M in establishment costs with approximately half these costs associated with governance and stewardship and the other half associated with infrastructure. It was also estimated that ongoing costs would total approximately CA$28M/year primarily related to governance, stewardship, and monitoring.

QIA is also seeking financial and policy commitments from the Government of Canada to address fisheries reconciliation, including additional conservation measures, related to Nunavut’s offshore fisheries sector.

Through the federal mandate released in Spring 2023, QIA has confirmed a minimum contribution of CA$100M towards the Q-PFP with additional funding subject to negotiations and the terms of a Final Q-PFP Agreement.
QIA is currently revisiting all costs with updated unit rates and revised project plans.

QIA’s vision for financial sustainability relies upon a blending of resources from the Government of Canada, both through a PFP but also through existing and future protected area agreements, philanthropic investments, and potential Inuit-specific revenue sources.

QIA is seeking financial contributions from the Government of Canada, separate from Q-PFP, to address funding shortfalls associated with delivering benefits through agreements related to Tallurutiup Imanga National Marine Conservation Area.

Through their mandate, the Government of Canada requires a minimum of 1:4 matching ratio whereby philanthropy contributes at least one dollar for every four dollars that the federal government contributes towards the Q-PFP.

To fulfill its vision for conservation, QIA is embarking on a major fundraising campaign.

If you are interested in learning more, please contact info@qia.ca