



EEYOU MARINE REGION IMPACT
REVIEW BOARD

FIVE YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN

for

2023 – 2028

September 27, 2021

**EMRIRB FIVE-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN
2023-2028**

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STRATEGIC PLAN

1. INTRODUCTION

This Strategic Plan was formulated using input derived from a ½ day workshop attended by the EMRIRB Board members and the EMRIRB staff on July 29, 2021. The objective of the workshop was to develop the goals, objectives, and action items for the EMRIRB Five-Year Strategic Plan for 2023-2028.

This Strategic Plan sets out the major goals of EMRIRB for the next five years. The assumption is that the Strategic Plan will come into effect when the next round of funding is secured from CIRNAC. The goals listed in this document are consistent with EMRIRB's legislated mandate, as well as its vision and mission.

2. BACKGROUND

The EMRIRB

The Eeyou Marine Region Impact Review Board (EMRIRB) is an Institution of Public Government (IPG) established through the coming into force of the Eeyou Marine Region Land Claims Agreement Act in 2012.

As set out in Chapter 18 of the Eeyou Marine Region Land Claims Agreement (EMRLCA), the EMRIRB's role is to assess the potential impacts of proposed development in the Eeyou Marine Region prior to approval of any required project authorizations. EMRIRB screens and, if required, reviews project proposals to determine whether they have significant impact potential or will cause public concern. The EMRIRB utilizes both traditional knowledge and recognized scientific methods in order to gauge and assess the biophysical and socio-economic impacts of proposals, and makes recommendations to Government about which projects should be allowed to proceed and under what terms and conditions. The Board also monitors the impact of projects once screened or reviewed and approved to proceed.

In carrying out its functions, EMRIRB is directed to act fairly and in such a way that, at all times, it protects and promotes the existing and future wellbeing of residents of the EMR and the coastal Cree communities of Eeyou Istchee and protects the ecosystemic integrity of the Eeyou Marine Region. The EMRLCA also instructs the EMRIRB to take into account the well-being of residents of Canada outside of the Eeyou Marine Region.

Funding

Pursuant to the EMRLCA, the costs of the EMRIRB are the responsibility of Government, and the EMRIRB must prepare an annual budget subject to review and approval by Government. Each year the EMRIRB submits a CORE budget and work plan and a separate CARRY OVER budget and work plan which utilises the funds remaining from previous years. The annual CORE budget and work plan is derived using the guaranteed total of annual fixed contribution funding provided by CIRNAC to the EMRIRB.

CORE related work includes the costs of the following:

- Board Member honoraria for work associated with Screenings and regular Board Meetings;

- Salaries and benefits for staff;
- Professional development and training;
- Office building lease and maintenance fees;
- Professional fees for legal counsel and consultants;
- Travel for Board and staff to regular Board Meetings, conferences, networking events, and regulatory cooperation meetings.

The EMRIRB's budgets and work plans are presented to the Board for review and approval at their regularly scheduled meeting in February of each year. The CORE and CARRY OVER budgets are much more than a tool for allocating money; they are an adopted plan for expenditures and revenues structured to follow the programs, work and mandate of the EMRIRB. After the Board approves the budgets and their respective work plans, they become the official plans for the operation of the Board for the fiscal year of concern, recognizing the right of the Board to allocate or reallocate funds within its approved budgets as required by evolving circumstances.

Previous Strategic Planning

The EMRIRB has been in existence for approximately 8 fiscal years, starting in 2013-2014 FY. During the early years, most of the organizational impetus was directed at creating the initial organizational infrastructure necessary to operate and determine how to fulfil the primary functions of EMRIRB's mission.

In 2017, the EMRIRB developed its first three-year strategic plan for 2017-2019, which had a focus on key areas such as operations, impact assessment, governance, funding, and relationships. The appendix of this report contains an analysis of activities that were completed in the plan, and activities that are being transferred to the 2023-2028 plan.

The driving force behind this second Strategic Plan for the 2023-2028 period is to demonstrate to Government that the EMRIRB requires additional financial resources in order to fulfill its EMRLCA mandate and be sustainable in the medium to long term.

Recent Activities

Over the past several years, the Board and staff have completed initiatives related to a number of relevant topics, including:

- Established an office space in Waskaganish jointly with the EMRPC and EMRWB
- Community Visits to each community in the EMR, with presentations to the Chief and Council
- Developed a Governance Policy, HR Policy, bylaws, and a Communication Plan
- Publication of 5 Information Booklets
- Creation of the EMRIRB Website (www.emrirb.ca)
- Development of a Public Registry and project proposal application process

- Attendance at various conferences
- Government Outreach and Training Sessions on the EMRLCA
- The development of a Technical Procedures Manual for internal staff use. This manual includes detailed instructions for undertaking project screenings, reviews, and monitoring.
- Staff training with the Nunavut Impact Review Board (NIRB) in Cambridge Bay
- Issued press releases and advertisements
- Hosted the 2014 Symposium on Science and Traditional Knowledge in the Eeyou Marine Region
- Co-hosted with NIRB and the Nunavik Marine Region Impact Review Board (NMRIRB) an “Impact assessment in the Eeyou Marine Region” Workshop (2016)
- Signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the NIRB and NMRIRB
- Purchased books and expanded the EMRIRB Library

Strategic Plan Objectives

The EMRIRB believes that a prerequisite to a successful, strategy-focused organization is a strong connection between the organization’s strategic plan, annual budget and work plan, and the organization’s long term financial sustainability. It is important to link the EMRIRB’s financial decisions to the mission and strategic direction of the Board and to link the annual budgeting process to multi-year programs and long-term financial planning. It is critical that EMRIRB also understand the human resources, time and support of outside groups needed for its strategies to succeed.

The responsibility for funding the EMRIRB rests with the Government of Canada through implementation of the EMRLCA. The Government provides the EMRIRB with a set total budget amount for CORE operations annually, and the EMRIRB is required to submit a budget and work plan which works within this total amount. ***The work plan and associated budget for implementation of this Strategic Plan exceeds the total annual budget made available to the EMRIRB, however the Board believes it is necessary for Government to be made aware of the organization’s true funding need and what would be achieved through increased funding support.***

The EMRIRB’s annual work plans will be shaped by its Strategic Plan, and the work plans for the EMRIRB’s staff will support the objectives of the annual organizational work plan. Staff evaluations and the organizational training and development priorities will be influenced by these work plans as well. The Board’s policies, salary bench-marking and information technology planning will both influence and be influenced by the EMRIRB’s annual budget and work plan for CORE operations.

The EMRIRB believes that it is important to have a strategic plan that sets out benchmarks and performance indicators for the Board’s own internal use and for key

stakeholders such as Cree communities, Cree organizations, Government and industry that the EMRIRB interacts with. The EMRIRB will regularly evaluate its progress with meeting the defined strategic planning objectives and will report achievements and outcomes through its public annual report.

3. BOARD GOVERNANCE

The EMRIRB's governance and policy direction is provided by the Board members. The EMRIRB consists of five (5) members, including the Chairperson. Two (2) members are nominated by the Grand Council of the Crees (Eeyou Istchee)/Cree Nation Government; one (1) member is nominated by Canada through the federal Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada; one (1) member is nominated by the territorial Minister of Environment of the Government of Nunavut (GN). The nomination of the Chairperson is decided by consensus amongst the Board members and must be jointly approved by the federal Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada and Grand Council of the Crees (Eeyou Istchee)/Cree Nation Government.

Governance at the EMRIRB includes the structures, responsibilities and processes that the Board members use to direct and manage the organization's overall operations. These structures, responsibilities and processes, in turn, determine how authority is exercised, how decisions are made, and how decision-makers are held accountable. The EMRIRB has in place an established Governance Policy. The Staff are also further governed by the shared EMR Institutions of Public Government Human Resources Policy.

The Board carries out its mandate with fairness to all stakeholders. In making its determinations, Board members are at all times guided by impartiality and due process. Over time, the Board's prior decisions also provide a useful benchmark to indicate how the Board might view particular types of proposals. However, while the Board will generally try to ensure similar project proposals are considered in a consistent manner, as a matter of law, the Board must evaluate each proposal on its own merits and with respect to its own context.

4. ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

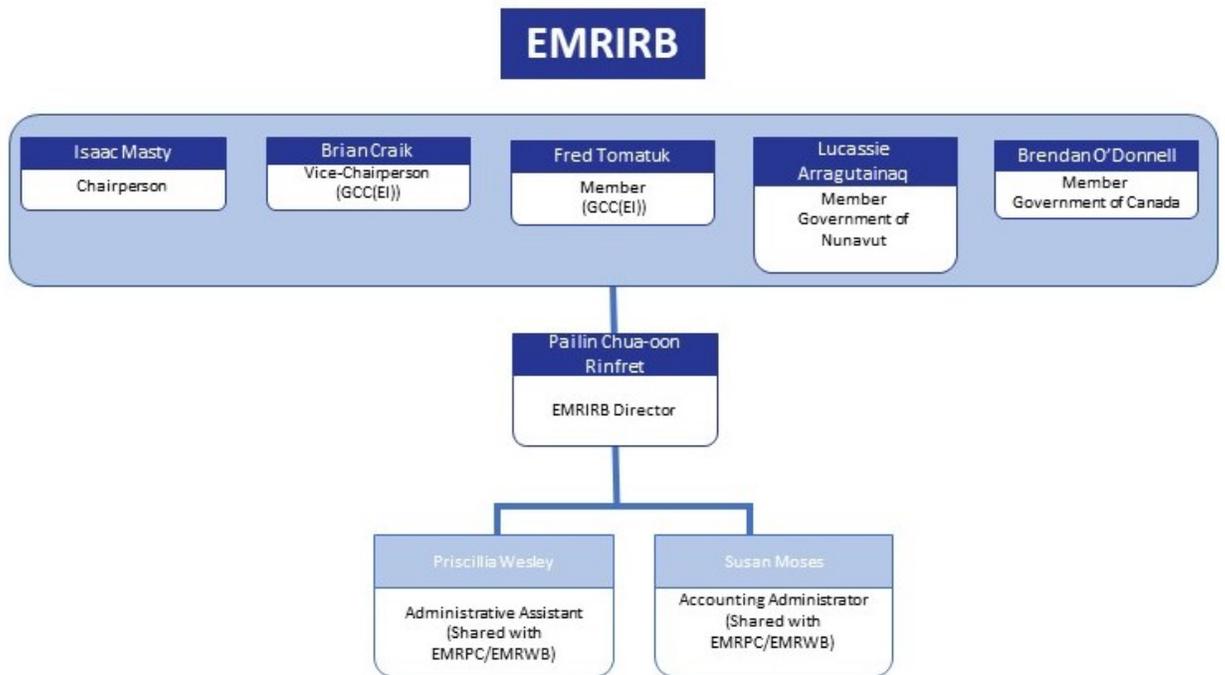


Figure 1 illustrates the current organizational structure of the EMRIRB.

Administrative Organization and Services

The EMRIRB consists of up to five members, appointed by the Government of Canada and the Government of Nunavut from nominations made by the federal and territorial government as well as designated Cree organizations. The Board nominates its Chairperson which must then be appointed by the Government of Canada following Consultation with the Cree Nation Government. The EMRIRB is responsible for making recommendations to the federal or territorial governments regarding the issuance of authorizations and approvals for projects in the Eeyou Marine Region. The EMRIRB is supported by a staff consisting of a Director, Administrative Assistant, and Accounting Administrator.

Director

The Director is responsible for implementing the organization's goals and objectives identified by the Board and to provide direction, guidance, and advice to the Board on environmental impact issues and legislative undertakings affecting environmental issues impacting upon the ecosystemic regime within the Eeyou Marine Region.

The Director is also responsible for the overall efficient day-to-day administration of the Board's financial, human resource and administrative systems which includes financial reporting and control systems, personnel files, leave and attendance records, and the monitoring of administrative and personnel policies, procedures and guidelines. Other responsibilities include budgeting and work plan development.

The Director also leads the Board's environmental assessment process for the screening and review of all projects referred to EMRIRB under Chapter 18 of the EMRLCA. The Director leads all initiatives and follow-up associated with screenings, reviews and monitoring programs. The Director is responsible for overseeing the receipt and distribution of project proposals established under Chapter 18 of the EMRLCA, to act as the first point of contact in the project proposal process providing information or directing inquiries and managing the flow of information pertaining to environmental assessments. Other responsibilities include communications and maintaining the Public Registry.

The Director reports directly to the Board and is responsible for planning, directing, and managing the overall operations of the organization. The Director represents the Board and serves as a liaison with federal, territorial and local agencies, Designated Cree Organization's, other Institutions of Public Government (IPGs), and private foundations and corporations on environmental impact related matters affecting the Eeyou Marine Region.

As of 2018, the EMRIRB has had its own Director. Prior to this, the Director position was shared with the EMRPC, which led to capacity issues impacting the Board's ability to meet its mandate. In 2018, the EMRIRB made a request to CIRNAC for additional funds to cover the cost of the Director position. CIRNAC responded that the EMRIRB had sufficient carry-over funds left unspent that could be used towards funding the Director position until CORE funding could be increased as part of the implementation plan renewal. In the long-term, an increase in CORE funding will be required for the EMRIRB to continue to have its own Director.

Finance and Administration

The Accounting Administrator and Administrative Assistant positions are shared with the Eeyou Marine Region Planning Commission and Eeyou Marine Region Wildlife Board. The members of the three Boards made the joint decision to combine staff to promote collaboration between the EMR IPGs and to optimise Board budgets and resources. These staff work diligently to keep up with the workload of three organizations, and at times find this extremely challenging. Activities such as attending consecutive board meetings can mean back-to-back travel for up to three weeks at a time - the Boards schedule their bi-annual meetings around the same time due to similar CIRNAC reporting deadlines. Similarly, requirements for meeting minutes and quarterly financial reporting means work are tripled and deadlines for these activities happen again, around the same time.

Environmental Program Officers

On several occasions, the EMRIRB was able to hire on contract an Environmental Program Officer to support its initiatives.

- April-October 2018
- January-April 2021
- April-June 2021

The responsibilities of the Environmental Program Officer have shifted over the course of the years due to changing needs of the organization. For example, the Environmental Program Officers were charged with the development of information booklets, the

creation of the Public Registry, communications and outreach work, and the drafting of the internal Technical Procedures Manual.

5. ORGANIZATIONAL PRINCIPLES

5.1 EMRIRB Mandate

The mandate for the EMRIRB is set out under Chapter 18 of the EMRLCA, which specifies that the EMRIRB is to screen, and if required, review project proposals determining the extent of regional impacts including ecosystemic and socio-economic factors. The provisions of the EMRLCA, including the establishment of the EMRIRB with the capacity, rights, powers and privileges of a natural person, were given effect by the Eeyou Marine Region Land Claims Agreement Act and came into force, by Order in Council of the Government of Canada, on February 15, 2012.

5.2 EMRIRB Vision

To excel in the field of impact assessment for the Eeyou Marine Region that incorporates Cree traditional knowledge and western science.

5.3 EMRIRB Mission Statement

The mission of the Eeyou Marine Region Impact Review Board is to promote the well-being of the Eeyou Marine Region and Cree way of life through the impact assessment process.

6. ANALYSIS OF EMRIRB'S CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

The starting point for the planning portion of a strategic plan is to assess the current status of the organization. This was done with a SWOT analysis at our ½ day workshop on July 29, 2021. A SWOT analysis involves appraising the status quo in preparation for determining goals and setting priorities for the next five years. Strength, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) can come from within (internal) or be out of our control (external).

6.1 Strengths and Opportunities

- Competent staff, low turnover rates, continuity
- Long term continuity of Board members
- Strong financial management processes
- Communication skills, both internal and external
- Technical expertise (broad experience base on both Board & staff)
- Guidance documents and good corporate knowledge
- Screening decisions widely accepted - good track record

- Strong working relationships with neighbouring impact review boards
- High level of continued professional development
- Working with other EMR IPGs to coordinate funding and other initiatives (minimize duplication)
- EMRIRB is willing to help other Boards improve by providing in-kind expertise
- Arctic sovereignty is currently a focus for Canada, which will bring more attention to EMRIRB's work and decisions
- Increased attention on the Arctic and Indigenous Peoples will raise the profile of the EMRIRB
- Taking advantage of available technologies (new software and improved internet capacity)
- EMRIRB is an independent and nimble organization that is positioned to implement changes quickly
- New legislation may provide EMRIRB with opportunities
- EMRIRB decisions are respected and accepted based on the reputation EMRIRB has built
- Staff are willing to travel
- High-quality, standardized internal documents, and tracking tools that help to streamline staff onboarding
- Strong working relationship between Board members and staff, which enables frequent and open communication
- Participation in various academic and impact assessment conferences, which allows for promotion of the EMRIRB and the Eeyou Marine Region

6.2 Challenges and Threats

- 45-day screening process is a limiting factor, 21-day public commenting period is short for communities to participate
- Co-management of support staff with EMRPC and EMRWB requires additional coordination
- Inadequate Core funding, which has implications throughout the organization
- High-level of bureaucracy in Board member appointments, which can create serious delays in screening decisions
- Delays in the Board appointment process can prevent having a quorum for meetings
- Two Land Claims Agreements covering the Cree/Inuit Joint Zone area that obligates the EMRIRB to take into consideration the views of the NMRIRB

- Other external IPGs not pulling their weight in joint assessments may hinder EMRIRB's progress, credibility, and positive image
- EMR IPGs not pulling their weight in project assessments may hinder EMRIRB's progress, credibility, and positive image
- Isolated communities (inadequate bandwidth, challenge to attract qualified staff)
- Lack of housing for employees
- High cost of travel makes it difficult to move between regions and conduct business efficiently
- Continuously having to promote an understanding of EMRIRB's role with the public, Cree Band Councils, federal and territorial bureaucrats and ministerial staff, industry representatives and organizations
- Bureaucrats and ministerial staff within those government departments responsible for issuing permits to project proponents are generally unaware of the terms of the EMRLCA or the processes of the EMRIRB
- Politics and legislation may impact the EMRIRB and other IPGs
- Loss of staff can impact the function of the EMRIRB (due to the low number of total staff)
- Limited succession planning for key staff which may lead to a loss of corporate knowledge
- Lack of opportunity for upward movement for staff (i.e., promotion)
- Lack of Cree/Inuit in senior positions
- Limited mentoring program for staff and Board, partially due to flat organizational structure
- Highly technical nature of EMRIRB documents limits the incorporation of Traditional Knowledge, Cree/Inuit languages, and plain English/French languages
- Limited language training for employees which limits traditional language use in the workplace, cultural appreciation, and pride in traditional language
- Dealing with the uncertain consequences of climate change, including assessment of the impacts of climate change, and the potential for more impact reviews with high volumes of information
- Available technology does not always enable the EMRIRB to undertake effective public engagement
- Limited availability of interpreters and translators who are knowledgeable on EMRIRB processes and terminology
- Potential reluctance on the part of communities to share Traditional Knowledge
- Consultation fatigue in communities may result in limited engagement

- No Land Use Plan expected in the short-term for the EMR
- Estimating Implementation Plan needs, including Core funding, for years 5 to 10 in document that has no built-in mid-point review process

7. GOALS AND ACTION ITEMS

The EMRIRB Strategic Plan focuses on seven Priority Areas:

1. Operations
2. Impact Assessment
3. Governance
4. Funding
5. Relationships
6. Communication
7. Staff

These Priority Areas were developed in our 2017-2019 Strategic Plan, with the addition of the 7th Priority Area: Staff.

Each Priority Area is presented with an introduction providing some background and insight. The timeline for the implementation of the plan is as follows:

Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
April 2023 – March 2024	April 2024 – March 2025	April 2025 – March 2026	April 2026 – March 2027	April 2027 – March 2028

The implementation of the Strategic Plan will only begin once additional funding is secured from CIRNAC for the next 10 years of implementation. The assumption of this report is that this funding will be obtained by April 2023. This report is being developed in 2021 to use as supporting documentation for the ongoing negotiations with CIRNAC to increase Core funding. The completion of this plan, and the activities that it contains, will require a sufficient increase in Core funding.

The section below first describes the EMRIRB’s 6 overarching **Goals**. These are the broad aspirations that are consistent with our vision and mission.

For each priority area, there are **Objectives** listed. These are the clearer statements of specific activities required to achieve these goals. Objectives basically address the difference between where we currently are and where we want to be (our vision and goals) by spelling out what we need to do (specific tasks, projects and action plans) to get there.

For each Objective, there are **Action Items** which are specific steps which will have measurable results which can be evaluated while implementing the larger goals or strategies.

What are the EMRIRB’s Goals for 2023-2028?

The 6 Overarching Goals for the EMRIRB are:

1. The EMRIRB will comply with the requirements and spirit of the *Eeyou Marine Region Land Claims Agreement* and all applicable legislation.
2. The EMRIRB will conduct high quality impact assessments.
3. The EMRIRB will maintain long-term organizational stability.
4. The EMRIRB will reflect the principles of Cree and Inuit cultures through its work.
5. The EMRIRB will promote public confidence and participation in the EMR’s regulatory system and the EMRIRB’s processes.
6. The EMRIRB will collaborate to manage marine issues with the other EMR IPGs.

Priority 1: Operations

The lack of adequate staffing at the EMRIRB is making it difficult for the Director to focus on longer term goals of the organization. The operational requirements of the organization currently take up a considerable amount of time. The Director is responsible for all financial reporting, budgeting, procurement, human resources and the development of governance and operational policies while trying to move the organization forward. Ensuring operational requirements are met will allow the EMRIRB to fulfill its obligations.

Priority 1: Operations		
Objectives	Action Items	Time frame
Ensure key operational tasks are successfully completed.	Conduct an annual review of the shared EMR HR Policy. Propose changes to EMRPC and EMRWB as needed.	Y1-Y5
	Conduct an annual performance review of the Director.	Y1-Y5
	Ensure adequate and relevant professional development is available for Board members and staff.	Y1-Y5
Comply with requirements and spirit of the EMRLCA and other relevant federal	Ensure staff training on awareness and understanding of provisions of the EMRLCA, especially Chapter 18.	Y1-Y5

and territorial legislation.	Be aware of relevant legislation and potential changes to legislation which affect the EMRIRB.	Y1-Y5
	Comply with federal & territorial language laws. Ensure sufficient funding for translation of documents.	Y1-Y5
Ensure internal and external reporting requirements are met.	Comply with reporting requirements by submitting to CIRNAC an annual mid-year report and annual report.	Y1-Y5
	Provide quarterly financial reports to the Board.	Y1-Y5
	Publish and distribute a public-facing annual report every year and publish it on the EMRIRB Website.	Y1-Y5
	Conduct external audit of EMRIRB finances.	Y1-Y5

Priority 2: Impact Assessment

Impact assessment is the core business of the Eeyou Marine Region Impact Review Board. The Board's mandate is to screen project proposals in the EMR, and when required, review them to determine their potential eco-systemic and socio-economic impacts. All project proposals in the EMR are first assessed by the EMR Planning Commission to determine if they conform to the parameters of the EMR land use plan, if one exists. If the Commission determines that a project conforms, and that it does not fall under the Schedule 18-1 exemption list, it will forward its determination and recommendations to the Impact Review Board for a screening. The EMR currently does not have an approved Land Use Plan.

Priority 2: Impact Assessment		
Objectives	Action Items	Time frame
Conduct high quality environmental impact assessments.	Meet regularly with authorizing agencies in the Federal Government.	Y1-Y5
	Develop guidelines on the use of Traditional Knowledge in EMRIRB assessments for each EMR	Y3

	community. Consult with each EMR community on the development of these guidelines.	
	Consult communities on cultural values and assess project impacts in relation to these values. These cultural values can be used for developing criteria for assessing impact significance.	Y3
	Make use of available Cree and Inuit Traditional Knowledge databases to more effectively incorporate Traditional knowledge in decision-making.	Y1-Y5
	Utilize the results of monitoring programs to improve assessments. Consider how to feed recommendations and lessons learned from monitoring back into impact assessment predictions and practices.	Y1-Y5
	Remain up to date with available impact assessment literature and best practices.	Y1-Y5
	Where a project is in an area of multiple jurisdictions, coordinate the joint determination.	Y1-Y5
	Continue to compile available scientific research on the EMR.	Y1-Y5
	Consult the expertise of EMRWB on project screenings and reviews.	Y1-Y5
	Consult with EMRWB regarding mitigation measures and compensation to be required from commercial and industrial developers which cause damage to Wildlife habitat (Section 13.2.2 (e) of the EMRLCA).	Y1-Y5
Create means for early	Develop a community consultation	Y4

and meaningful engagement.	protocol for project proponents.	
	Develop a toolkit of consultation mechanisms and processes for proponents to use with EMR communities.	Y4
Develop tools to assess Cumulative effects.	Utilize available GIS technology to assess cumulative impacts.	Y1
Utilize available technologies to maximize efficiency.	Make use of GIS software to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop place name maps of the EMR. 2. Develop maps with appropriate community content. 3. Populating EMR information into maps 4. Create a database of information to use during project screenings and reviews 	Y1
	Utilise available environmental data, such as the CTA Geoportal, Eeyou Conservation, Bird portal, Siku.	Y1-Y5
Promote meaningful participation of communities in EMRIRB processes.	Seek the advice of traditional knowledge carriers.	Y2
	Incorporate Cree values/culture into EMRIRB processes (decision-making, etc.).	Y1
	Support public involvement and be creative and adaptive in engaging input (e.g., written/oral, formal/informal).	Y1-Y5
	Engage CTA-EMR liaison officers for every project proposal received for screening.	Y1-Y5
Contract consultants, experts, and/or researchers for project screenings and reviews.	Hire consultants, experts, and/or researchers as needed.	Y1-Y5

Utilize the expertise of the Federal Government.	Receive comments regarding project proposals from Federal Departments with appropriate expertise for project screenings. Secondment of government staff may be appropriate in certain cases (18.2.31).	Y1-Y5
Ensure proper monitoring of projects in the EMR.	Engage Canada and EMRPC in their responsibilities for developing a Monitoring Plan under section 18.7.6 of the EMRLCA.	Y1
	Use improved monitoring technology such as drones and instant video feedback.	Y5
	Participate in regional monitoring efforts.	Y1-Y5
	Ensure the EMRIRB receives copies of project authorizations.	Y1-Y5
Sign Schedule 18-1 exemption agreements as needed.	Consider entering into new EMRLCA Schedule 18-1 exemption agreements.	As needed
Initiate discussion and advocate for the establishment of the Cree Marine Region Council (EMRLCA, 16.7).	In collaboration with EMRPC and EMRWB.	As needed
Collaborate with EMR IPGs.	Sign and periodically review an M.O.U with the EMRWB for wildlife research projects in the EMR	Y1
	Work with the EMRPC in maintaining and improving the pre-screening process. Continue to maintain the online platform for project proposals jointly with EMRPC (Public Registry).	Y1

Priority 3: Governance

The EMRIRB was established as an Institution of Public Government with a number of responsibilities outlined under the EMRLCA. In order to be effective, efficient, transparent and accountable, the EMRIRB will need to adhere to and follow sound principles of governance at all levels of the organization. This will include the use of Board reviewed and approved Governance Policies, HR Policies, and up-to date and relevant By-Laws.

Priority 3: Governance		
Objectives	Action Items	Time frame
Maintain accountability to stakeholders through sound governance practices.	Conduct annual review of the Governance Policy. Review the roles of the Board members and of the Director.	Y1-Y5
	Conduct annual review of the Strategic Plan and assess progress.	Y1-Y5
	Review by-laws every two years.	Y1, Y3, Y5
	Maintain and keep up to date an orientation package and training resources for new Board members and employees (governance, roles and responsibilities, operational expectations).	Y1-Y5
	Encourage Governments to improve management of the appointment process to avoid having vacancies over an extended period of time.	Y1

Priority 4: Funding

Core funding for the EMRIRB is outlined in the 2012 Implementation Plan, including a ten-year budget detailing costs for the Board, staff, and operations. It can be demonstrated that the funding allocated for a half-time Impact Review Board Director falls far short of the true human resource needs of the organization. Without additional Core funding dedicated to increase human resource capacity, it will be extremely challenging for the Director to meet the needs and give the attention required by the Impact Review Board. This strategic plan will be used to create a 10-year projection of the anticipated funds required in the next 10 years. This 10-year

projection is being developed to justify additional Core funding as the agreement is up for renewal negotiation.

Priority 4: Funding		
Objectives	Action Items	Time frame
Have stable, appropriate, long-term financing.	Continue to meet financial and activity reporting requirements on time.	Y1-Y5
	Develop a strategic plan in 2028 for the period of 2028-2033.	Y5
	Meet with CIRNAC to discuss the challenges and issues regarding Board funding and staff capacity; communicate and update staff regularly.	Y1-Y5
Research participant funding options for EMR communities.	Gather information for communities to access third party funding opportunities to participate in Impact Assessments.	Y2
	Develop a governance policy on third party funding.	Y2
Seek supplementary funding for project reviews, public hearings, project monitoring, special projects and contract positions.	Seek supplementary funding from CIRNAC as needed.	As needed

Priority 5: Relationships

Developing and maintaining collaborative working relationships with key stakeholders and partners is very important for the EMRIRB as it continues to work towards the goal of excelling at impact assessment. There are opportunities to strengthen ties with the Government of Canada, while at the same time developing and cultivating relationships with other key stakeholders such as the Cree Nation Government, the Government of Nunavut and Makivik Corporation, representing Nunavik Inuit. The table below lists the key organizations that the EMRIRB will need to continue to work with as it continues to establish itself in the EMR.

Priority 3: Relationships		
Objectives	Action Items	Time frame
Further develop relationship with Crown Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada (CIRNAC).	Provide ongoing updates to CIRNAC and invite staff to Board meetings as observers as necessary.	Y1-Y5
Further develop relationship with the EMRLCA Implementation Committee (IC).	Provide ongoing updates to the EMRLCA Implementation Committee (IC) and participate in IC meetings as required.	Y1-Y5
Further develop relationship with the NMRIRB and NIRB.	Develop collaboration protocols with the NMRIRB for projects in the Cree-Inuit Joint Zone.	Y1
	Ensure coordinated decisions with NMRIRB at the Board level for each project screening and/or reviews in the Cree-Inuit Joint Zone.	Y1-Y5
	Continue to receive and provide training from NMRIRB and NIRB senior staff.	Y1-Y5
	Renew M.O.U as needed.	As needed
Further develop relationship with Federal Departments responsible for issuing authorizations for projects in the EMR.	Provide training to bureaucratic and ministerial staff at permitting/authorizing/regulatory agencies on the EMRLCA and the responsibilities of Government. Provide training to staff on EMRIRB processes.	Y1
	Seek advice on “terms and conditions list” from Departments with appropriate expertise.	Y1-Y5
	Participate in provincial caucuses and interdepartmental working groups.	Y1-Y5

Further develop relationship with Impact Assessment community.	Disseminate information, share experiences and best practices, put documents online, with translation and visual tools.	Y1-Y5
	Attend conferences and share technical expertise and resources with other organizations.	Y1-Y5
Further develop a relationship with the Cree Nation Government.	Enter into a data sharing agreement with the CNG to access information about the EMR.	Y1
	M.O.U with CNG regarding Entry/Access permitting process.	Y1
	Advocate for the creation of a Point-EMR person at the CNG.	Y1
Further develop a relationship with Makivik Corporation.	Ensure proper collaboration on proposals that require Entry and Access from Makivik Corporation in the Cree-Inuit Joint zone.	Y1
Develop a working relationship with the Government of Nunavut (GN).	Coordinate impact assessment processes/regimes straddling or impacting the EMR and GN territory.	Y1
Further develop a relationship with Industry.	Increase awareness and understanding of EMRIRB within key industries (tourism/ecotourism, natural resources (including trapping, mines and forestry), maritime industries and data centers.	Y4

Priority 6: Communication

Effective external and internal communication will continue to be very important for the EMRIRB to create a more inclusive, vibrant and participatory environment. Developing strong working relationships with key stakeholders will require clear and open communication channels and a willingness to work together. Engaging the Cree in communities to play a meaningful role in this process will be a challenge but vital to the success of the EMRIRB. Taking advantage of available technologies will help engage partners and stakeholders in an efficient and cost-effective manner.

Priority 6: Communication		
Objectives	Action Items	Time frame
Communicate the work of the EMRIRB and its mandate.	Network and present at conferences.	Y1-Y5
	Continue to develop materials to communicate the EMRIRB impact assessment process to the public.	Y1-Y5
	Distribute series of 6 Information Guides. Revise information guides as needed.	Y1-Y5
	Continue to be active on social media and on the EMRIRB website.	Y1-Y5
	Improve knowledge of EMRIRB in academia (Universities with research programs in the EMR, Indigenous and Arctic research circles). Host information sessions.	Y2
	Continue to implement the 2018 EMRIRB Communication Strategy.	Y1
Establish an efficient and cost-effective physical and information technology infrastructure.	Maintain the shared file system with the EMRPC and EMRWB.	Y1-Y5
	Share data with EMRPC and EMRWB.	Y1-Y5

Priority 7: Staff

The EMRIRB, as of 2018, has its own Director. Prior to this, the Director/Regional Planner position was shared for both the EMRIRB and EMRPC. The EMRIRB has continued to share an Administrative Assistant and Accounting Administrator with the EMRPC and EMRWB. It has also been able to hire on contract short-term Environmental Program Officers when funds have been available. When the EMRIRB receives its next round of funding, it plans to hire a Communications Officer, Office Manager, Environmental Program Officer, and a GIS Specialist.

Priority 7: Staff		
Objectives	Action Items	Time frame
Hire additional support staff.	Hire a Communications Officer (shared with the EMRWB and EMRPC)	Y1
	Hire an Office Manager (shared with the EMRWB and EMRPC)	Y1
	Hire an Environmental Program Officer. The EPO will maintain the EMRIRB Public Registry and process project proposals.	Y1
	Hire GIS Specialist responsible for the creation of project location reports, cumulative impacts mapping, and the initial analysis of project proposals. The GIS Specialist will also produce maps of the EMR as required and maintain a repository of EMR information.	Y1
	Hire consultants and contract legal work for project screenings.	As needed
Maintain sufficient employee capacity and skills.	Provide a positive work environment for employees and Board members to promote retention.	Y1-Y5
	Provide annual professional development for staff.	Y1-Y5
Ensure cultural awareness and respect.	Promote Cree language training and cultural activities (“on the land”) for Board members and staff.	Y1
Build capacity in EMR communities to participate in EMRIRB assessments.	Contribute to educational initiatives and support educational providers in efforts to educate the public on EMRIRB (ex. Career Day).	Y1-Y5
	Provide training opportunities in communities (ex. around public hearing participation, rules of procedure, etc.)	As needed
Acquire staff housing and additional office	Acquire house in Waskaganish for Director.	Y1

space.	Acquire additional office space in Waskaganish.	Y1
	Hire remote positions when appropriate (such as for Environmental Program Officer and GIS positions).	As needed

8. EVALUATION

8.1 Evaluation Process

The EMRIRB will evaluate its progress on the Strategic Plan annually. The Annual Report developed every year will describe the progress made with implementing the 5 Year Strategic Plan. The process for producing the Annual Report will include undertaking an evaluation of the effectiveness of the Strategic Plan, including identification of any updates and revisions which may be necessary. When developing the Work Plan and Budget for the year, the EMRIRB will use the Strategic Plan to inform its activities of the year.

The yearly evaluation process will be completed at a Board meeting. The following are questions the Board members will reflect on:

- What goals and objectives listed in our strategic plan are progressing and how well are we achieving what we set out to achieve?
- What now needs to be done, what has to happen in the future, and, what should we desist from doing at this stage?
- To what extent does our progress align with the vision, mission and values we have espoused in our strategic plan? In other words, how well is the EMRIRB performing at this stage of the overall plan?
- How can we use the data we have gathered when completing our evaluation for informing the next cycle of strategic planning?

9. APPENDIX

Analysis of completed activities and postponed activities from the 2017-2019 Strategic Plan. Under “Time frame”, red colored boxes indicate postponing of the activity to the 2023-208 plan, and green colored boxes indicate the activity was completed as planned.

Priority 1: Operations		
Objectives	Action Items	Time frame
OPS 1: Ensure key operational tasks are successfully completed.	Apply for supplemental funding for a program officer.	Y1 Q2
	Conduct bi-annual review of the HR policy.	Y1 Q4
	Move operations to Waskaganish office.	Y1 Q2
	Develop an orientation package and training for new employees.	Y2 Q1
	Ensure adequate and relevant professional development is available for members and staff.	Y2 Q1
	Administer employee benefits.	Ongoing
	Prepare annual budget for Board approval.	Annually
	Director approval for biweekly payments eg. rent, member honoraria, travel, etc.	Ongoing
	Director approval for procurement eg. office supplies, furniture, etc.	Ongoing
OPS 2: Ensure internal and external reporting requirements are met.	Draft mid-term activity report for 2017 – 2018 FY	October 15 Annually
	Draft annual activity report for 2016 – 2017 FY	July 29 Annually
	Draft public facing report	Q1 Q3 start
	Quarterly reporting to the Board, as required.	Ongoing
	Conduct external audit of EMRIRB finances	Annual

Priority 2: Impact Assessment

Objectives	Action Items	Time frame
Ensure effective screening of project proposals to determine whether a review is required.	Determine whether the project conforms to the land use plan. In the absence of a land use plan, the project proposals are screened by the IRB (18.3.5)	As needed bases
	Develop impact assessment forms and guidance documents.	Y2 Q3
	Consult with appropriate communities, organizations and experts.	
	Consult with EMR Wildlife Board for potential impacts of proposed project on wildlife habitat (13.2.2 (e)).	As required
Gauge and define the extent of the regional impacts of a project.	Board members to review and, in consultation with Director, determine whether outside expertise required to assess the regional impacts of a project.	As required
	Contract experts to assist with assessing the regional impacts of a project.	As required
Review the ecosystemic and socio-economic impacts of project proposals (18.4)	Board members to review and, in consultation with Director, determine whether outside expertise required to assess the regional impacts of a project.	As required
	Contract experts to assist with assessing the regional impacts of a project.	As required
	Director consults with EMR Wildlife Board Director on mitigation measures/compensation of proposed project on wildlife habitat (13.2.2 (e)).	As required
	Where a project is in an area of multiple jurisdiction, coordinate the joint determination.	As required
Make a determination on whether project proposals should proceed.	The Board submits its determination to the Minister.	As required

Priority 3: Governance		
Objectives	Action Items	Time frame
GOV 1: Maintain accountability to stakeholders through sound governance practices.	Review and revise EMRIRB Governance Policies on a bi-annual basis.	Y2 Q2
	Collaborate with EMR boards to develop a shared Operations, Human Resource and Administrative policies and procedures manual.	Y1 Q3
	Review and approve by-laws bi-annually.	Y2 Q2
	Adopt a clear and proven model of sustainable governance.	Y1 Q1
	Develop an orientation package and training (governance, roles and responsibilities, operational expectations) for new Board members and employees.	Y1 Q4
	Develop Financial policies and procedures manual.	Y1 Q4
	Develop a governance policy on third party funding.	Y1 Q4

Priority 4: Funding		
Objectives	Action Items	Time frame
FD 1: Secure additional Core funding for Implementation Plan renewal date – March 31, 2021 (still waiting for confirmation from INAC). Renegotiations to will begin 24 months in advance (April 19, 2019)	Prepare a detailed business case outlining the additional funds required for operations. Including: staffing levels, training, budget, etc.	Y3 Q4
	Meet with CIRNAC to discuss the challenges and issues regarding Board funding (& capacity), communicate and update them regularly.	Y1 Q1
FD 2: Explore third party funding	Environmental Program officer to generate a report on third party funding opportunities.	Y1 Q3

opportunities		
FD 3: Seek supplementary funding for project reviews, public hearings, project monitoring, special projects and contract positions	Environmental Program officer	Y1 Q1
	Community/Stakeholder visits	
	Community information sessions	
	Project reviews, public hearings, project monitoring, contract positions – all things related to project submissions	As required

TP 3: Relationships		
Objectives	Action Items	Time frame
REL 1: Further develop relationship with Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada	Provide ongoing updates to the EMRLCA Implementation Committee (IC) and participate in IC meetings as required.	Ongoing
	In collaboration with the EMR Wildlife Board and Planning Commission, initiate discussion and advocate for the establishment of the Cree Marine Region Council (CMRC, 16.7).	To be included in the next version of the EMRIRB Strategic Plan
	Monitoring program as per 18.7.6.	To be included in the next version of the EMRIRB Strategic Plan
REL 2: Strengthen and maintain relationships with the EMR Planning Commission and EMR Wildlife Board.	Coordinate project, files and important information on an as needed basis.	Ongoing
REL: 3 Maintain and strengthen relationship with the Cree Nation Government (CNG).	Initiate contact and dialogue with Cree Nation Government	
REL: 4 Participate in outside initiatives when possible, such as those	ArcticNet, IAIA, Oceans Innovation, etc.	Ongoing

undertaken by government agencies and Cree organizations		
REL : 5 Develop a working relationship with the Government of Nunavut (GN).	Coordinate IA processes/regimes straddling the EMR and GN territory.	Ongoing
REL : 6 Maintain and strengthen relationships with Cree Communities and stakeholders.	Deliver community information sessions to Cree coastal communities	Y1 Q4
	Conduct community/stakeholder visits to introduce the IRB and the impact review process to the a broader audience e.g. research community, industry, northern organizations (COTA)	Funding dependent (Y1 Q3 – start coordinating and deliver Y2 Q1)
REL : 7 Further develop relationship with neighbouring IPGs – Nunavut Impact Review Board (NIRB) and Nunavik Marine Region Impact Review Board (NMRIRB)	Coordinate projects and share information based on a tri-party Memorandum of Understanding.	Ongoing
REL: 8 Further develop a relationship with Makivik		
REL : 9 Further develop a relationship with Quebec (QC)		
REL : 10 Cultivate a relationship with Eeyou Istchee James Bay Regional Government		

Priority 6: Communication		
Objectives	Action Items	Time frame
COM 1: Develop a comprehensive communication strategy.	Develop and implement the EMRIRB communication strategy	Y1 Q3
	Develop materials to communicate the EMRIRB impact assessment process to the public.	Y2 Q1
	Continue to develop EMRIRB promotional	Ongoing

	materials on an as needed basis.	
	Develop PowerPoint template slides for the EMRIRB.	Y1 Q2
	Develop a campaign to promote IRB business area	Y1 Q2
COM 2: Align website functionality with organizations mandate.	Continually update and maintain the EMR website with IRB news	Ongoing
	Develop an online registry for project screenings and reviews	Y1 Q4
	Develop an online platform for project proponent forms	Y1 Q4
COM 3: Utilize available technologies to maximize efficiency.	Make use of GIS software to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop place name maps of the EMR. 2. Develop maps with appropriate community content. 3. Populating EMR information into maps 	Y1 Q3
		Y3 Q3
		Y3 Q3
	Develop a Data Management System customized to address EMRIRB needs.	Y1 Q4
COM 4: Outsource the development of a database management system for the EMR Boards	Develop a shared file system for the EMR Boards	Y1 Q4
	Purchase sharepoint software for managing projects between staff members and staff members and Board members	Y2 Q2