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Possible scenarios of how devolution will affect wildlife co-management in Nunavut, Canada, based on the experiences in Yukon and the Northwest Territories

Devolution, the transfer of responsibilities from the federal government to provincial or territorial governments, is a process that will have wide-ranging consequences for the Canadian Territory of Nunavut and its mostly Inuit population. The impending transfer of control over public lands and resources to the Government of Nunavut is expected to lessen the territory's economic dependence on the Federal Government. This paper explores the potential implications of devolution on wildlife management in Nunavut which has been under a co-management regime since the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement (NLCA) came into force in 1993. Based on the experiences in Yukon and the Northwest Territories, the author presents possible scenarios of how devolution can be expected to affect the current Nunavut wildlife co-management regime. The impending transfer of power provides an opportunity to redesign wildlife management so that it is socially and culturally appropriate and thus better aligned with the stipulations of the NLCA. Yet it may also lead to setbacks regarding Indigenous rights and collaboration within resource management as recent changes to water co-management in the Northwest Territories suggest. The paper concludes with a discussion of whether devolution is a form of decolonization or just a means that can potentially foster decolonization.