

NEWS RELEASE



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Rejection of Polar Bear Proposal Confirmed

(March 25, 2010 – Rankin Inlet, Nunavut) Nunavut Tunngavik Vice-President of Finance Raymond Ningeocheak today announced that the decision to reject an American proposal to uplist polar bears was upheld during the plenary session of the Convention on International Trade of Endangered Species' (CITES) 15th Committee of the Parties meeting in Doha, Qatar.

The American proposal to change the listing of polar bear from appendix II to appendix 1 of CITES was defeated last week in Doha by delegate countries. The proposal, which would have restricted the international trade of polar bears, was defeated with 48 in favour, 62 opposed and 11 abstentions.

"I am relieved to hear that the decision to reject the proposal was upheld," said Ningeocheak. "I thank all the wildlife representatives, Inuit organizations in Nunavut and the rest of Canada, and government officials who worked so hard to make this victory a reality."

"I'd like to also thank the Kitikmeot Inuit Association, Kivalliq Inuit Association and the Qikiqtani Inuit Association, the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board and the Government of Nunavut who also made financial contributions to our joint lobbying efforts."

The American proposal was based on scientific predictions of habitat loss and reduced populations of polar bears due to climate change. The proposal did not address the actual causes of climate change or suggest ways to reduce its impact.

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