

NEWS RELEASE



NR 11-25 NAR ENG – For Immediate Release

NTI Meets with Fisheries on Narwhal

(July 21, 2011 – Iqaluit, Nunavut) Nunavut Tunngavik Vice-President James Eetoolook said NTI met with the Department of Fisheries and Oceans last week to address governance issues between narwhal co-management partners, which include NTI, Nunavut Wildlife Management Board, Government of Nunavut and DFO.

The meeting was the first of two meetings planned as part of an alternative resolution to the legal action NTI launched against DFO earlier this year after DFO restricted international trade in narwhal tusks without consulting Inuit or explaining their decision. NTI agreed to halt the legal action in June, 2011, after DFO agreed to participate in meaningful, timely consultations with Inuit on decisions on narwhal harvesting and trade. Co-management partners at the meeting discussed roles and responsibilities of narwhal management.

“By agreeing to participate in meetings with Inuit on this matter, DFO has demonstrated they will respect the constitutionally protected harvesting rights of Inuit that are clearly laid out in the *Nunavut Land Claims Agreement*,” said Eetoolook.

During the meeting, NTI expressed concerns about the accuracy of DFO’s scientific advice that they use to make management decisions. Co-management partners then engaged in discussions to address these concerns.

DFO also gave a presentation on international trade, which led the group to begin making preparations for the next CITES meeting in 2013. Eetoolook said NTI and DFO agreed to work cooperatively on the CITES process to ensure the continued trade of wildlife parts is conducted in a manner that reflects the principles of conservation and benefits Inuit.

The second meeting between narwhal co-management partners will take place in Iqaluit Aug. 10-11, and will bring together representatives from NTI, the Inuit Wildlife and Environment Advisory Council, the Regional Wildlife Organizations, NWMB and DFO. The second meeting will largely focus on the co-management of narwhal.

-30-

For further information:

Kerry McCluskey
Director of Communications
Tel: (867) 975-4914 Toll-free: 1-888-646-0006
Cell: 867-222-2893
kmcluskey@tunngavik.com
www.tunngavik.com