

NEWS RELEASE



NR 11-27 SEC ENG – For Immediate Release

NTI Committee Meets with Fisheries on Narwhal

(August 12, 2011 – Iqaluit, Nunavut) Nunavut Tunngavik Vice-President James Eetoolook called this week's meeting with officials from the Department of Fisheries and Oceans promising. The meeting was the second 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. NTI halted the legal action in June, 2011, after DFO agreed to participate in consultations with Inuit on decisions on narwhal harvesting and trade.

Officials from NTI's newly formed Inuit Wildlife and Environment Advisory Committee participated in the meeting with other narwhal co-management partners, which include the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board, Government of Nunavut and DFO. Participants continued discussions on narwhal management.

Eetoolook said the meeting initiated a new working relationship between Inuit and DFO to co-manage narwhals in Nunavut and to consider alternative approaches to the management of narwhal. "It is promising that DFO is participating in these meetings with Inuit. The department is continuing to demonstrate that they are committed to respecting Inuit rights in the *Nunavut Land Claims Agreement*," said Eetoolook.

DFO presented scientific and management information on narwhal at the workshop. Various working groups were established, and co-management partners agreed to explore the option of managing narwhal based on summering stocks. Partners also discussed possible consultations with affected communities in January and February, 2012.

The Inuit Wildlife and Environment Advisory Committee is an NTI committee composed of the three chairs and three vice-chairs of the Regional Wildlife Organizations, representatives from the Regional Inuit Associations, and NTI's vice-president.

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