

## NEWS RELEASE



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### **American Proposal to Uplist Polar Bears Rejected**

(March 13, 2013 – Iqaluit, Nunavut) Nunavut Tunngavik Inc. Vice-President James Eetoolook today announced that countries attending the CITES meeting in Bangkok, Thailand, would not challenge the vote which defeated the American proposal to uplist polar bears.

Countries attending the Convention on International Trade of Endangered Species' (CITES) 16<sup>th</sup> Committee of the Parties voted on the American proposal last week, but it was possible for the vote results to be challenged before the end of the conference. Changing the listing of polar bear from appendix II to appendix 1 of CITES would have significantly restricted the international trade of polar bears. The victory is substantial and clearly shows that Canada's sustainable and responsible polar bear harvest is well-managed.

"Inuit are celebrating today. We have responsibly managed the harvest of polar bears for centuries, and this is recognized by the international community," said Eetoolook. "The American government's proposal has been defeated twice now. Perhaps it is time that they turn their efforts to reducing their own impact on the climate instead of trying to control the Inuit economy."

Canada's delegation to Thailand was made up of representatives from NTI, the Regional Wildlife Organizations, Government of Nunavut, Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, Inuvialuit Regional Corporation, Makivik Corporation, Nunatsiavut government, and Government of Canada. Eetoolook said Canada's collaborative efforts resulted in the victory.

"During the meeting in Thailand and leading up to it, NTI and other officials heavily lobbied many countries to raise awareness about the responsible nature of our harvest. Science clearly shows that international trade does not negatively impact the polar bear population in Canada," said Eetoolook.

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