

Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami

Annual General Meeting

Date: September 27 & 28, 2011

Location: Inuvik N.W.T



Resolution #: A11-09-09

Resolution Title: Approval of Inuit Trade in Polar Bear

Moved by: Cathy Towtongie

Seconded by: Dennis Arrey

WHEREAS, the Inuit of Canada have co-existed with polar bears across Inuit Nunangat for a thousand years;

WHEREAS, the Inuit of Canada value and respect polar bears as an essential part of Inuit culture, spirituality, and identity;

WHEREAS, the Inuit of Canada possess traditional knowledge of polar bears that includes, but is not limited to, the species' past and current behaviours and movements, past and current population density trends, denning and reproduction, physical anatomy, and the food sources and environments on which they depend;

WHEREAS, the Inuit of Canada have sustainably harvested and utilized polar bears throughout Inuit Nunangat for a thousand years and continue to do so for cultural, social, subsistence, and other economic purposes;

WHEREAS, the Inuit of Canada possess legal rights to harvest polar bears as recognized and protected by the provisions of the Inuvialuit, Nunavut, Nunavik Inuit, James Bay & Northern Quebec, and Labrador Land Claims Agreements, as protected by Section 35 of the Constitution Act 1982;

WHEREAS, the Inuit of Canada are conserving and sustaining polar bear populations for current and future generational use based on Inuit cultural values of sustainable use and the conservation measures administered through regional wildlife management systems;

WHEREAS, the Inuit of Canada must be free to utilize legally harvested polar bears and their parts (such as hides) for the purposes of trade and selling to buyers inside or outside Inuit Nunangat in order to derive optimal economic benefits from such trade for Inuit hunters, families, and communities; and,

WHEREAS, the Inuit of Canada have successfully and responsibly traded legally harvested polar bears for many years and continue to do so without threatening or undermining polar bear conservation in Inuit Nunangat.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

The Inuit of Canada support the right of Inuit hunters to sell, trade, or otherwise dispose of legally harvested polar bears to buyers both inside and outside Inuit Nunangat;

The Inuit of Canada recognize that Inuit trade in polar bears is a legitimate activity that flows from Inuit harvesting, use, and governance rights recognized and protected within the Inuvialuit, Nunavut, Nunavik Inuit, James Bay & Northern Quebec, and Labrador Land Claims Agreements that have been concluded by Inuit and the Crown;

Agreements that recognize the importance of the principles of conservation interpreted and applied in the context of Inuit rights and obligations under those Land Claims Agreements;

The Inuit of Canada promote Inuit trade in legally harvested polar bears as an activity that provides optimal benefits to Inuit communities and that is entirely consistent with the principles of conservation.

Carried Unanimously

In Favor:

Against:

Abstentions:

Carried: X

Defeated: