News Release

Nunavut Premier, Environment Minister
Call for Climate Action in Copenhagen

IQALUIT, Nunavut (November 20, 2009) - Premier Eva Aariak and Nunavut Minister of Environment Daniel Shewchuk will lead the Nunavut delegation to the UN climate change conference in Copenhagen next month. In light of the current and potential impacts of a warming climate on Nunavummiut, the Government of Nunavut is hopeful the Copenhagen meetings will lead to tangible progress by global nations.

"In Nunavut, scientific, local and Inuit observations are pointing to a number of potentially serious impacts on the Arctic way of life," said Premier Eva Aariak. "We sincerely hope the upcoming meetings will yield clear commitments from global nations for action on carbon emission reductions."

Scientific and local observations are contributing to a growing and diverse body of knowledge on climate change-related impacts in the arctic. Scientists and Inuit have observed changes in sea ice abundance, distribution and timing of ice freeze-up and thaw, and increasing temperatures. These and other factors may contribute to changes in wildlife, plant distribution and weather patterns, all of which could have major social and cultural implications for people living in Nunavut.

Nunavummiut remain closely connected to the land and wildlife for subsistence and as part of the Inuit cultural identity. According to Nunavut Environment Minister, Daniel Shewchuk, the Copenhagen meetings are taking place at a critical time for the future of Nunavut communities. "In Nunavut our focus is on building capacity at the community level to support adaptation to change while preserving our way of life," he said. "In the mean time, we will be working to bring together the best information we have from science and Inuit observations to understand the very complex issue of climate change and how it will shape our future in Nunavut".

The UN climate change conference takes place December 7th to 18th in Copenhagen, Denmark.

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