



## News Release

### **Minister Shewchuk: Nunavut Seal Harvest Models Respect, Sustainability**

**OTTAWA, Ontario (January 28, 2010)** Nunavut Minister of Environment Daniel Shewchuk presented staff and students of the Nunavut Sivuniksavut (NS) Program with a plaque during a presentation in Ottawa today, in recognition of the program's strong support for Nunavut seal hunters and efforts in promoting the sustainability and cultural importance of the Inuit seal harvest.

"There remains a great deal of myth and misconception surrounding seal harvesting and we have plenty of work to do to share the good-news story of sealing in Nunavut with the world." said Minister Shewchuk. "I wish to thank and applaud the Nunavut Sivuniksavut program for assisting in this effort. NS students continue to be some of Nunavut's very best ambassadors. You have demonstrated to Canada and the world the role that Inuit culture and values play in ensuring the sustainability and respect for an important and iconic natural resource."

The plaque presented by the Minister bears the Nunavut Natures Edge Logo, under which sealskins and furs from Nunavut are marketed, both domestically and internationally, identifying them as products of a sustainable Inuit harvest.

The recent European Union seal ban has had a significant negative impact on the market for Nunavut sealskins. The ban was a direct result of pressures placed on EU Parliamentarians by animal rights lobby groups. Honouring the NS program for its contribution in defense of the Nunavut seal harvest is one of several initiatives by the Government of Nunavut to educate Canadian and international audiences on sealing in Nunavut.

"The transfer of sealing traditions and cultural practices, generation after generation, has meant that the sealing industry is alive and well in Nunavut and many other Arctic communities today." said Shewchuk. "I want to thank you for helping us share the message that the Nunavut seal harvest is sustainable, respectful and here to stay. This is a story that we should all be proud to tell."

As part of their coursework, students of the NS program learn about the anti-sealing and anti-fur movements and conduct a pro-sealing rally on Parliament Hill. During the rally students wear sealskin clothing, some of which is contributed by the Department of Environment.

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