



News Release

Commissioning Ceremony of GN Research Vessel

IQALUIT, Nunavut (July 11, 2011) The Government of Nunavut today commissioned the fisheries research vessel MV Nuliajuk.

Premier Eva Aariak commissioned the MV Nuliajuk as it lay at anchor in Iqaluit harbour while Minister of Environment Daniel Shewchuk welcomed VIP's on board for a tour and provided the background and significance of having a research vessel to Nunavut.

"It is my great pleasure to host today's commissioning ceremony for the MV Nuliajuk," said Minister Shewchuk. "This event marks a major step forward for the sustainable development of Nunavut's fishing industry and significantly enhances our capacity for research and increased understanding of Nunavut's coastal resources. I would like to acknowledge the Government of Canada, without whose financial support the construction of the MV Nuliajuk would not have been possible".

The MV Nuliajuk, named after a prominent figure in Inuit legend believed to have nourished people for generations with the bounty of the sea, is a state-of-the-art, 64' research vessel outfitted with laboratories, sophisticated bottom mapping equipment and a range of fishing gear types.

The Government of Canada contributed \$1,874,560 for the building of Nuliajuk. This contribution came through an \$85 million Canada Economic Action Plan (CEAP) investment managed by Arctic Research Infrastructure Fund, a program created to renovate and upgrade research facilities across the North over two years.

"Working together to enrich our understanding of the North is crucial," stated the Honourable John Duncan, Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development. "Our Government is proud to have invested in the construction of the MV Nuliajuk through the Arctic Research Infrastructure Fund supported by the Northern Strategy. This vessel's scientific potential will bring many long-term benefits for Nunavut's communities and fisheries."

Following the Iqaluit ceremony, the vessel will be travelling to Cumberland Sound for its first research assignment with scientists from the Federal Department of Fisheries and Oceans. Upon conclusion of the Cumberland Sound research, the vessel will be utilized throughout Nunavut on a range of projects examining species identification and fisheries development potential in both inshore and offshore waters- priorities which were identified in the 2010 Nunavut Fisheries Science and Research Agenda.

"We look forward to working with communities, fishing industry stakeholders and the scientific community to set future research priorities and provide meaningful scientific information which will guide the development of Nunavut's fishing industries", continued Minister Shewchuk. "It is our goal to ensure that Nunavut fisheries are a model of sustainability and environmental stewardship".

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Media Contact:

Theresa Hughes
Executive Assistant to Minister Shewchuk
867-975-5001
thughes@gov.nu.ca

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BACKGROUND

Government of Nunavut Research Vessel MV Nuliajuk

July 11, 2011

Introduction

Nuliajuk is a 64' custom built, state-of-the-art fisheries research vessel that was built by Glovertown Shipyard, in Glovertown, Newfoundland. It is owned by the Government of Nunavut, and will be used to conduct fisheries research in waters adjacent to Nunavut.

Researchers

Primary researchers for the 2011 field season will be a group from the Department of Fisheries and Oceans, Canada. Department of Environment staff will also be carrying out a variety of fisheries research in partnership with ArcticNet, and an international group of researchers aboard the CGS Amundsen. Working collaboratively is essential for the work on the vessel in order to ensure the maximum benefits to Nunavut.

Benefits to Nunavut

The Government's new research vessel will provide significant short and long term benefits for Nunavut. In northern regions such as ours, there has been a major deficit in both inshore and offshore fisheries research. Nunavut will gain knowledge of existing and potential fishery resources, as well as biological and environmental factors influencing the health and productivity of our fisheries. The vessel will also help us acquire data necessary to ensure the efficiency and sustainability of the industry. Communities adjacent to research activities will benefit from the data collected, and community members will be encouraged to provide input as well; thereby, bringing science and traditional knowledge together. The vessel and ongoing research activities will provide training and employment opportunities in a field that is, and will continue to be, in high demand. At the forefront of this initiative is the assurance that we will have increased our capacity for undertaking and guiding our own research, for sustainable economic development, and for food security.

Operation and Management Costs

The Department of Environment has dedicated \$400,000 per annum for core operational and maintenance funding. In addition, other research partners and stakeholders will contribute funding through a daily vessel usage fee, and through in-kind support, such as, lab work, sampling gear and data analysis. Industry contributions to the research activities will be available through the Exploratory Fisheries Fund.

Construction Finance

Funding for the vessel's construction was provided by Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada (INAC) and the Government of Nunavut Department of Environment (DOE). The total cost of the vessel and equipment has amounted to \$3.2 million. The federal government's contribution was provided under the Arctic Research Infrastructure Fund (ARIF), an \$85 million dollar Canada Economic Action Plan (CEAP) investment. This program was created to renovate and upgrade research facilities across the North over the next two years.

Crew Members

The crewing of the vessel was done via a public tendering process. RCG Marine, a Newfoundland and Labrador company, won the bid to provide the vessel's crew. The full-time crew includes a Captain, a First Mate and two deck hands. All crew members meet or exceed the experience and training qualifications required by Transport Canada. We are pleased to report that one of the deck hands is an Inuit crew member, and that we also have an Inuit trainee on the vessel.

GN Training for Vessel Staff

The Department of Environment, in partnership with the Nunavut Fisheries Training Consortium, is working with the crewing company to incorporate space for additional Inuit trainees. The vessel's Captain will maintain a training log for each of the Inuit crew members.

Is it a Ship or a Boat?

Ships and boats are usually distinguished by their size, and cargo or passenger capacity. The term "ship" refers to a vessel that has at least 3 square-rigged masts and a full bow. Vessels that can carry out fishing and/or fisheries research are typically considered ships. Generally, if a vessel is capable of carrying another craft it is considered a "ship," while the smaller craft that is being carried is considered a "boat." There are many exceptions to this of course, but the MV Nuliajuk is a "ship". Smaller, "canoe" type vessel, with an outboard motor, seen in many communities throughout the territory, would be considered a "boat".

Itinerary (*subject to change due to weather)

A detailed schedule has been prepared for this year's research activities (see below). In subsequent years, the vessel will continue its role as a primary platform for inshore fisheries research, with plans to expand its activities throughout the territory.

Nuliajuk Workplan 2011 Season

Date	Activity and Location
July 2 nd – July 9 th	Steaming to Iqaluit from Glovertown, NL
July 9 th – 15 th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - July 11th Inaugural Ceremonies in Iqaluit - July 10th and 12th equipment trials onboard - Picking up supplies etc.
July 15 th – July 18 th	Steaming from Iqaluit to Cumberland Sound
July 19 th – August 27 th	<p>In Cumberland Sound with the University of Winsor, DFO and the Marine Institute;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Assess population structure of Greenland Halibut and commercial by-catch species (Arctic Skates and Greenland Sharks) in CS through a depth-stratified longline survey. (b) Explore alternative fishing methods to reduce by-catch, including fish traps and gear to discourage shark catches (c) Retrieve, service and redeploy acoustic receivers that were deployed in CS in August 2010 (d) Insert acoustic tags in Greenland Halibut, Arctic Skates and Greenland Sharks. These tagged individuals can then be detected by acoustic receivers. (e) Establish an array of acoustic receivers outside CS to assess if Greenland Halibut, Arctic Skates and Greenland Sharks move between Cumberland Sound and Baffin Bay. (f) Deploy archival pop-off satellite tags on Greenland Sharks that will provide detailed data on the depth and temperature preferences of this species.
July 25 th	Joint Acoustic Fish Sampling Survey with CGS Amundsen; take 50 fin clips of Cod samples for Kevin Hedges
August 18 th , 19 th and 20 th	Plankton sampling, Hydrolab data collection, water sampling, and current profiler training.
August 27 th – Oct 15 th	<p>August 27-September 3rd - Return to Iqaluit for bottom mapping training and CCFAM meetings.</p> <p>Sept. 3rd to Oct. 15th - Exploratory fishing in 0A NSA, around the communities of Qikiqtarjuaq and Clyde River, as well as additional plankton sampling.</p>