

## News Release

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### Federal Government Supports Economic Development Of Nunavut's Indigenous Seal Industry

\$150 Thousand Investment Agreement Announced By Minister Tootoo And Premier Taptuna

**OTTAWA, Ontario** - The Honourable Hunter Tootoo, Minister of Fisheries, Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard and Nunavut Premier, the Honourable Peter Taptuna today announced a new agreement to support Canada's Indigenous seal industry.

The contribution agreement worth \$150,000 is the first to be signed under the federal Certification and Market Access Program for Seals (CMAPS). CMAPS is a \$5.7 million, five-year program established in 2015. It will fund the development of certification and tracking systems so that seal products harvested by Indigenous communities can be certified to be sold in the European Union (EU). CMAPS will support capacity-building so Indigenous communities can take advantage of renewed market access, and it will also support the broader seal industry.

The Government of Nunavut will use the new funds to lead a number of projects in collaboration with the Nunavut Arts and Crafts Association and others. These projects aim to increase the amount and market value of sealskin products, reinvigorate the industry overall, and bring awareness and opportunity to Inuit about accessing the EU and other markets.

Minister Tootoo pointed to the agreement as further evidence of the federal government's commitment to strengthening relations with Indigenous communities and supporting northern economic development.

#### Quick Facts

- Canada's Certification and Market Access Program for Seals (CMAPS) is a \$5.7 million, five-year program to support Indigenous communities in leveraging the EU's Indigenous communities' exemption for seal products, to promote market access for all Canadian seal products, and to identify potential partners and collaborators.
- The EU requires that only seal products harvested by Indigenous people and certified by a recognized body are allowed to be sold in the EU.
- Currently, the Nunavut Department of Environment is the only Canadian recognized body designated to certify that seals harvested in Nunavut meet the requirement of the EU Regulation.
- CMAPS is managed collaboratively by Fisheries and Oceans Canada, the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency (CanNor) and the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency.

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## Quotes

“The seal harvest is a traditional way of life for Canada’s Indigenous people, and it provides a key source of food, clothes and income for many Inuit families. This financial agreement will help Inuit families to create value-added seal products and it is a key way in which this Government is demonstrating its commitment to supporting northern economic development.”

~ *The Honourable Hunter Tootoo, Minister of Fisheries, Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard*

“The EU ban on the import of seal products continues to affect Nunavut sealskin prices. The establishment of CMAPS supports our continued efforts to promote sealing as a sustainable industry, and actively market this important product through the Inuit exemption. It is also an opportunity to strengthen international knowledge and break down barriers to understanding why the sealing economy is so important to our people.”

~ *The Honourable Peter Taptuna, Premier of Nunavut*

“The Department of Environment, with the support of the Government of Canada, has continued to invest in supports to market Nunavut seal products, and we have successfully developed a very strong local market for manufactured products. This contribution by the federal government will further strengthen those markets, as well as provide manufacturers with improved access to the European market.”

~ *The Honourable Johnny Mike, Nunavut Minister of Environment*

## Associated Links

- [The market for Canadian seal products](#)
- [The Government of Nunavut is Formally Recognized Under the EU Seal Regime](#)
- [European Commission: Trade in Seal Products and Scope of the EU ban](#)

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