



POLAR BEARS ON THIN ICE

CRUISE NORTH'S AUGUST 5th BAFFIN ADVENTURE ARCTIC EXPEDITION FOCUSES ON GLOBAL WARMING

ENVIRONMENTAL ACTIVIST & INUIT LEADER SHEILA WATT-CLOUTIER LEADS CLIMATE CHANGE DISCUSSION IN THE HIGH NORTH

"The Arctic is the health barometer of the world, and we, the Inuit, are the mercury of that barometer... We're the early warning system for the rest of the world."

Sheila Watt-Cloutier

Montreal, Quebec, May 4, 2006 – Cruise North Expeditions – the only cruise line to specialize exclusively in the Canadian Arctic and the only cruise line to be owned by the Inuit, the indigenous people of the North – has a passionate view about the need to curb global warming from the unique perspective of the people and the wildlife of the North who rely on the Arctic ice for their very existence.

To raise awareness of the current impact of global warming in the Canadian Arctic and further the dialogue about what can be done to protect this fragile ecosystem, Cruise North is giving voice to the menacing effects of global warming on its August 5 – 12 Baffin Adventure expedition cruise themed "Polar Bears On Thin Ice."

Environmental activist and Inuit leader **Sheila Watt-Cloutier will lead the discussion, joined by Inuit guides, wildlife naturalists, an Arctic historian and a climate change expert. The group will draw on their research and experience to show the real-time dramatic effects of global warming in the Canadian North, and engage passengers in a discussion of what can be done now.

The World Conservation Union just put the polar bear on its "vulnerable" list predicting that the polar bear population would drop more than 30 percent in the next 45 years as the melted ice caps deprive them of their habitat.

David Ljunggren's article for Reuters News Service brings the exigency of global warming closer to home when he points out that by 2100, Manhattan could be another New Orleans. He cites a recent Gallup survey showing that people are still not worried about climate change, and rank global warming near the bottom of environmental problems.

“Global warming is at the top of the list of environmental concerns for the Inuit because they are living with its effects now,” says Dugald Wells, president of Cruise North Expeditions and a Professional Engineer who started his career 20 years ago studying Arctic sea ice. “The Inuit are among the first to feel the impact of climate change, and they are urging us to listen to what they have to say.”

Cruise North Expeditions’ August 5-12 Baffin Adventure cruise, priced from \$3,895 per person inclusive of round-trip air from Montreal, begins in Kuujjuaq and ends in Iqaluit, capital of Nunavut Territory. The cruise journeys far off the beaten path into remote and isolated wilderness where few have gone before.

Cruise North’s 122-passenger ship *Orlova* sails the Arctic from July 4th through September 4th with a series of eight expedition cruises. The Cruise North package includes a short two-hour, 15 minute flight from Montreal to Kuujjuaq on Cruise North’s sister company First Air, *Canada’s airline of the North* for more than 50 years. The ship is docked in Kuujjuaq allowing for the Arctic experience to begin immediately without extra travel days at sea.

Cruise North Expeditions is the first to make the Arctic affordable and accessible with its eight- and nine-day cruises. *Travel & Leisure’s* April 2006 issue listed Cruise North on its honor roll of 35 Travel Innovators for changing the face of travel, recognizing the company as the first cruise company to be owned and operated by an indigenous people.

For complete details about the August 5 Baffin Adventure “Polar Bears On Thin Ice” expedition and all other Arctic expeditions, and to make a reservation call your travel agent or Cruise North Expeditions at The Travel Network, a Virtuoso travel agency in Toronto, Canada at 1-866-263-3220 or 416-789-3752 or visit <http://www.cruisenorthexpeditions.com>

***Sheila Watt-Cloutier is the chair of the Inuit Circumpolar Conference which represents the interests of the 155,000 Inuit residents in Canada, the USA, Greenland and Russia; the 2005 winner of Norway’s prestigious international environment and development “Sophie Prize” for her tireless effort to draw the world’s attention to the devastating human effects of climate change and emissions of toxic chemicals, and the recipient of the 2005 United Nations Champion of the Earth Award. In 2005, she was appointed to the Canadian Roundtable on Environment and Economy which is charged with guiding Canada in its commitments to follow up on the Kyoto agreements.*

Note: Cruise North Expeditions is owned by the Makivik Corporation of Quebec, a highly successful investment corporation born of the first modern-day Aboriginal land claim settlement agreement in Canada (the JBNQA of 1975). Makivik also owns the well-respected First Air and Air Inuit.

Media Contacts:

Dugald Wells
Cruise North Expeditions
1-866-263-3220 ext. 401
dugald@cruisenorthexpeditions.com

Lisa Greenberg
LBG Communications
914-722-1390
lbgcom@aol.com