



## **News Release**

For Immediate Release

## Nunavut transfers territorial museum and archival collections to the Canadian Museum of Nature

**OTTAWA, Ontario (August 4, 2016)** – Through a five-year lease agreement with the Canadian Museum of Nature (CMN), the Government of Nunavut (GN) is transferring the territory's museum and archival collections to CMN's national collections facility in Gatineau, Quebec.

The collections, which total approximately 140,000 items, are currently housed at the Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre in Yellowknife, Northwest Territories. The transfer to the museum's Natural Heritage Campus, planned for June 2017, will be coordinated by the Government of Nunavut's Department of Culture and Heritage, in collaboration with the Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre, the CMN and the Canadian Conservation Institute.

"The decision to move the collections is based on several factors, including the opportunity to strengthen our existing partnership with the Canadian Museum of Nature, and significant cost savings for the GN through the lease agreement," says Minister of Culture and Heritage George Kuksuk. "This will also allow us to fulfill the Government of the Northwest Territories' longstanding request that Nunavut removes its museum and archival collections from the Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre, so it can meet its own cultural program and service requirements."

The new agreement builds on already established partnerships with the Canadian Museum of Nature. Through separate agreements, the museum has curated Nunavut's fossil collections since 2002 and, in 2012, became Nunavut's designated repository for archaeology collections arising from GN-issued research permits. Nunavut's archaeology collections account for approximately 85 per cent of the materials to be transferred, and represent 4,500 years of human history and achievement. The balance of the collections to be transferred includes Nunavut's archival holdings, Inuit ethnographic materials, and other museum objects and natural history specimens.

"We're pleased to assist the Government of Nunavut in preserving these important treasures through this new storage agreement, which benefits from our world-class standards for collections care and management," says Meg Beckel, President and CEO of the Canadian Museum of Nature. "The presence of these artifacts also strengthens our museum's long-standing leadership in Arctic research and exploration."

The agreement allows the museum to access the material for use in exhibitions or outreach activities. Among the archeological and cultural artifacts are three kayaks, grave markers from Beechey Island for the last Franklin expedition, archival documents about the political development of Nunavut, and even some natural history specimens.

## **About the Canadian Museum of Nature:**

The Canadian Museum of Nature is Canada's national museum of natural history and natural sciences. The museum provides evidence-based insights, inspiring experiences and meaningful engagement with nature's past, present and future. It achieves this through scientific research, a 10.5 million specimen collection, education programs, signature and travelling exhibitions, and a dynamic website, nature.ca. In June 2017, the museum will open a new permanent gallery about the Arctic.

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