

NIRB Baffinland Decision Recommends Digital Indigenous Democracy

The Nunavut Impact Review Board broke new ground for regulators in Canada this month. NIRB recommends using new media technology to inform, consult and connect Inuit communities in its Final Hearing Report on Baffinland's Mary River Project released September 14, 2012.

The potential of digital media to improve public participation in oral Inuktitut was demonstrated to NIRB by IsumaTV's Digital Indigenous Democracy [www.isuma.tv/DID], a new web portal launched last May by Inuit filmmaker Zacharias Kunuk.

The website streamed live call-in radio shows, used Skype and collected video testimonies of Elders and Youth to promote region-wide community discussion in Inuktitut on the Baffinland development.

Kunuk delivered 22 call-in radio shows and 59 video consultations to NIRB's Final Public Hearings in Iqaluit, Igloolik and Pond Inlet July 16-28. Kunuk's presentation with human rights lawyer Lloyd Lipsett urged NIRB and Baffinland to use 21st century media to increase Inuktitut information and participation at the community level, to meet today's constitutional and human rights standards of informed consultation and consent.

Digital Indigenous Democracy also filmed the Public Hearings and streamed Inuktitut audio from Igloolik and Pond Inlet live online to all Nunavut communities and worldwide.

NIRB's September 14 Final Hearing Report to AANDC Minister John Duncan approves the multi-billion dollar Baffinland development with 184 wide-ranging Conditions that include a multimedia commitment to oral Inuktitut consultation and Inuit participation in four conditions:

- To establish a **project-specific web portal** or web page to make monitoring and reporting information available to the general public (General Conditions item 12, p. 241);
- To consider the **use of existing and innovative technologies** (e.g. community radio station call-in shows, cell phones, video-conferencing, Skype, etc.) to maintain contact between workers on the job and families at home (Specific Condition #143, p. 289);
- To make all reasonable efforts to engage **Elders and community members...to have community level input** into monitoring and mitigative measures...informed by traditional activities, cultural resources and land use (Specific Condition #162, p. 295);

- To continue to engage and **consult with the communities...to ensure that Nunavummiut are kept informed** about the Project activities...management and monitoring plans (Specific Condition #163, p. 296);
- *See attached Terms and Conditions for details.*

"Inuit live in the modern world," Kunuk says. "We need to be up to date, not left behind. 21st century media helps Inuit stay involved in what happens on our land. Thanks to NIRB for confirming Inuit rights to have our say at the community level."

The next phase of Digital Indigenous Democracy will propose a sustainable model of ongoing consultation and participation for Inuit through modern media tools that allows Baffinland and other major developments to meet NIRB Conditions for informed Inuit participation using innovative technology.

Digital Indigenous Democracy is a community-based new media initiative by Igloolik Inuit organizations Isuma Distribution International and NITV, co-directed by Zacharias Kunuk and long-time collaborator Norman Cohn, with support from Dr. Frances Abele, director of Carleton Centre for Innovation, Dr. Ian J. Mauro, Canada Research Chair at Mount Allison University, the GN Department of Culture, Language, Elders and Youth and an investment of \$1 million from Canada Media Fund Experimental Stream.

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For complete text of Digital Indigenous Democracy NIRB Intervention

<http://projects.isuma.tv/DID>

<http://www.isuma.tv/did/zacharias-kunuk-formal-intervention-to-nirb-written-submission-june-8-2012>

To view Digital Indigenous Democracy multimedia:

www.isuma.tv/DID

www.isuma.tv/DID/radio/igloolik

www.isuma.tv/inuktitutvoice

**Nunavut Impact Review Board Final Hearing Report, September 14, 2012
Mary River Project, Baffinland Iron Mines Corp. File #08MN053**

Terms and Conditions related to IsumaTV Digital Indigenous Democracy

General Conditions, Item 12, (p. 241). The Proponent shall establish a Project-specific web portal or web page as a means of making all non-confidential monitoring and reporting information associated with the Project available to the general public.

Specific Condition No. 143

Category: Livelihood and Employment – Employee family contact

Responsible Parties: The Proponent

Project Phase: Construction, Operations

Objective: To enable and foster connection and contact between employees and family members.

Term or Condition: The Proponent is encouraged to consider the use of both existing and innovative technologies (e.g. community radio station call-in shows, cell phones, video-conferencing, Skype, etc.) as a way to ensure Project employees are able to keep in contact with family and friends and to ward off the potential for feelings of homesickness and distance to impact on employee retention and family stability.

Reporting Requirements: To be developed following approval of the Project by the Minister

Specific Condition No. 162

Category: Culture, Resources and Land Use – Public consultation

Responsible Parties: The Proponent, Elders and community members of the North Baffin communities

Project Phase: Construction, Operations, Temporary Closure / Care and Maintenance, Closure and Post-Closure Monitoring

Objective: To ensure the ongoing and consistent involvement of Elders and community members in developing and revising monitoring and mitigation plans.

Term or Condition: The Proponent should make all reasonable efforts to engage Elders and community members of the North Baffin communities in order to have community level input into its monitoring programs and mitigative measures, to ensure that these programs and measures have been informed by traditional activities, cultural resources, and land use as such may be implicated or impacted by ongoing Project activities.

Reporting Requirements: To be developed following approval of the Project by the Minister

Specific Condition No. 163

Category: Culture, Resources and Land Use – Public consultation

Responsible Parties: The Proponent, North Baffin communities

Project Phase: Construction, Operations, Temporary Closure / Care and Maintenance, Closure and Post-Closure Monitoring

Objective: To involve communities in the development and evolution of management and monitoring plans.

Term or Condition: The Proponent shall continue to engage and consult with the communities of the North Baffin region in order to ensure that Nunavummiut are kept informed about the Project activities, and more importantly, in order that the Proponent's management and monitoring plans continue to evolve in an informed manner.

Reporting Requirements: To be developed following approval of the Project by the Minister.

Complete Final Hearing Report: <http://ftp.nirb.ca/02-REVIEWS/ACTIVE%20REVIEWS/08MN053-BAFFINLAND%20MARY%20RIVER/2-REVIEW/10-FINAL%20HEARING%20DECISION/>