



## ICC PRESS RELEASE

### **Ahead of Earth Day 2021, ICC Obtains Observer Status within the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)**

April 21, 2021 – Anchorage, Alaska – The Inuit Circumpolar Council (ICC) is pleased to announce the success of its application for Observer Status within the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). ICC is the first Indigenous Peoples Organization to hold Observer Status with the IPCC. The IPCC is the body tasked with assessing the science related to climate change. The body was established by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) in 1988. The IPCC currently has 195 member countries and thousands of contributors. ICC made the request for Observer Status to the Secretary of the IPCC in February 2020. This status was granted during the 53<sup>rd</sup> Session of the IPCC, held virtually, from March 22-26, 2021. ICC was formally advised on April 15<sup>th</sup>.

ICC Chair Dalee Sambo Dorough stated, “As we wrote in our letter to the IPCC Secretary, ‘ICC has great interest in the IPCC’s work and process, particularly as it relates to our homelands and how Indigenous Knowledge is considered and utilized.’ Over the years we have contributed to critical IPCC reports on the state of climate change and in particular, on the oceans and cryosphere. As the first Indigenous Peoples Organization to hold this status, we look forward to our enhanced participation and the continuation of our work with the IPCC leadership and the respectful co-production of knowledge with the scientists active within this significant forum. This week we will mark ‘Earth Day’ on April 22<sup>nd</sup>. We are thrilled to make this announcement ahead of this important day, the theme of which is ‘Restore Our Earth’.”

ICC contributed to the *IPCC Special Report on the Ocean and Cryosphere in a Changing Climate*, released in September 2019. The cryosphere refers to frozen components of the Earth system. Around 10% of Earth’s land area is covered by glaciers or ice sheets. ICC received particular attention in the report for our work on the Pikialasorsuaq Commission as an example of Inuit Knowledge and Inuit-led management responding to cryosphere change in the North Water Polynya, located between Greenland and Baffin Island in Canada.

“Given the diverse impacts of climate change upon us and our region of the world, this is one example of how we have been bringing the Inuit voice to contribute to the findings of hundreds of scientists working in collaboration on the special reports of the IPCC,” said ICC Canada Vice-President (International) Lisa Koperqualuk. “Observer Status will strengthen the Inuit voice in this climate forum and support greater access for Inuit input into the work of the IPCC.”

“ICC has been working with the IPCC to ensure that proper consideration is given to Indigenous Knowledge in future assessments,” she added. “We anticipate that having Observer Status will help us to build an understanding among climate scientists of the importance of the co-production of knowledge.”

The Inuit Circumpolar Council also has Observer Status at the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), and holds Consultative Status II at the United Nations, obtained in 1983.

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*The Inuit Circumpolar Council (ICC) is an Indigenous Peoples’ Organization (IPO), founded in 1977 to promote and celebrate the unity of 180,000 Inuit from Alaska (USA), Canada, Greenland, and Chukotka (Russia). ICC works to promote Inuit rights, safeguard the Arctic environment, and protect and promote the Inuit way of life. In regard to climate change, we believe that it is crucial for world leaders and governments to recognize, respect and fully implement the human rights of Inuit and all other Indigenous peoples across the globe.*