

ATHER/ENVIRONMI

Antifur activists applaud the closing of major Canadian fur auction house

TORONTO (Reuter-Kyodo) Antifur activists Monday celebrated the demise of a major Canadian fur auction house, forced to close its doors last week because of a sharp decline in fur prices in recent years.

"It's the sound of the death knell for the fur industry," said Michael O'Sullivan of the World Society for the Protection of Animals. "All over the world people are turning away from fur. We think it's wonderful news."

Northbay Fur Sales, owned and managed by the Ontario

Trappers Association, had gone heavily into debt in recent years because of a sharp drop in fur prices.

It went into receivership Friday after the governments of Canada and Ontario refused to guarantee its loans.

"Our forefathers are rolling in their graves," said Eldon Hawton, an executive with the auction house in North Bay, Ontario. "The governments wouldn't come to our aid. They are weak-kneed and always waiting for public opinion."