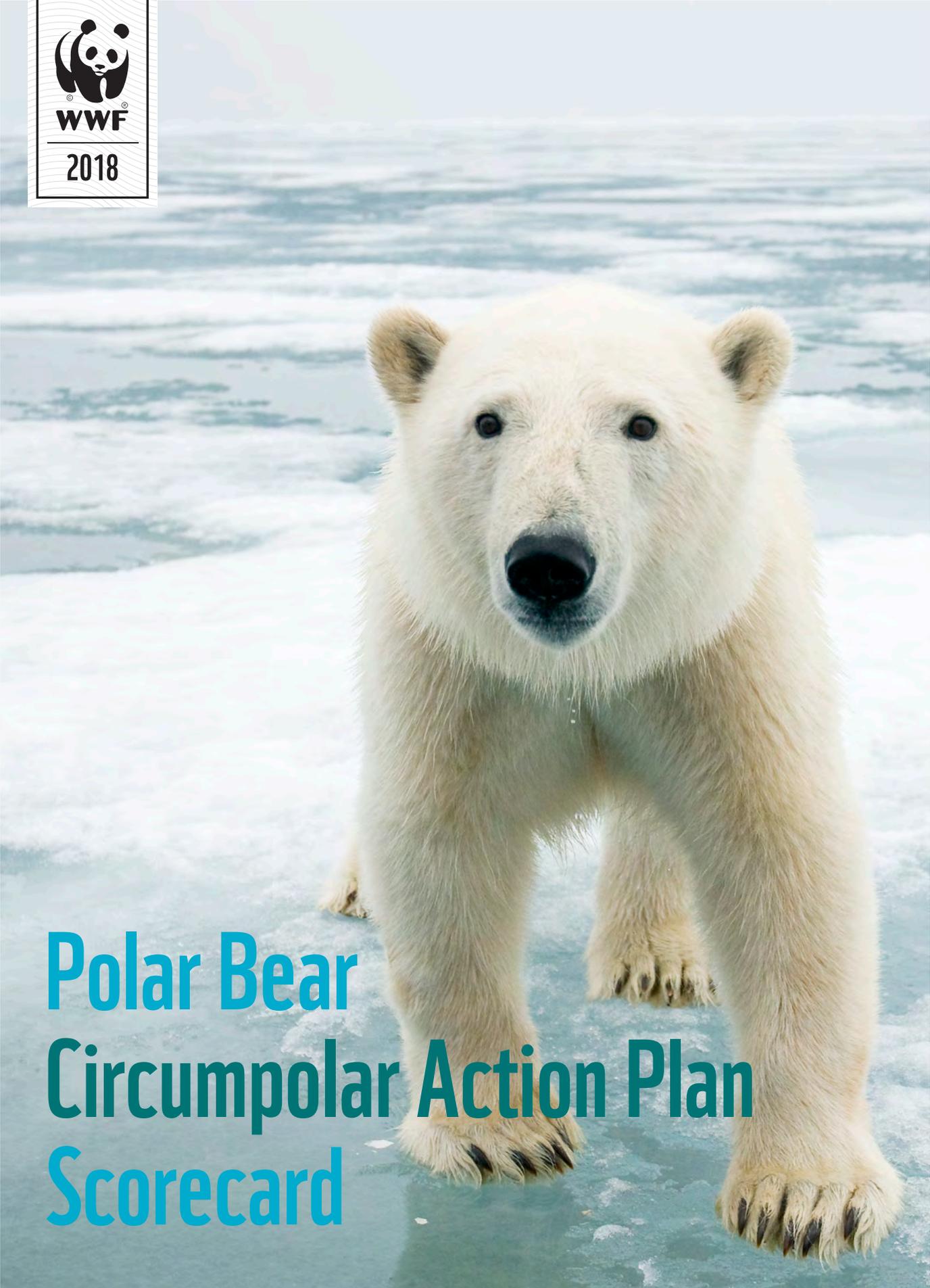




WWF

2018

A photograph of a polar bear standing on a large, flat piece of ice. The bear is facing the camera directly, with its front legs slightly apart. The background shows the ocean with white-capped waves breaking against the ice. The sky is a pale, overcast blue.

Polar Bear Circumpolar Action Plan Scorecard

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Suggested citation

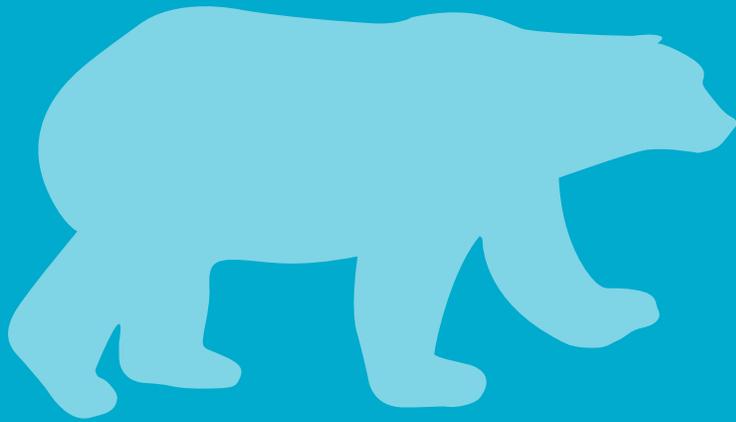
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About WWF

Since 1992, WWF's Arctic Programme has been working with our partners across the Arctic to combat threats to the Arctic and to preserve its rich biodiversity in a sustainable way.

WWF's mission is to stop the degradation of the planet's natural environment and to build a future in which humans live in harmony with nature, by conserving the world's biological diversity, ensuring that the use of renewable natural resources is sustainable, and promoting the reduction of pollution and wasteful consumption.

panda.org/arctic



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POLAR BEAR CAP SCORECARD: A SUMMARY

Overall recommendations

1. Take a more strategic and structured approach moving forward
2. Enhance accountability for implementing the CAP
3. Improve collaboration among Range States
4. Secure timely input and use of scientific data
5. Meaningfully engage Indigenous Peoples in the use of traditional ecological knowledge
6. Urgently bring global focus to the threat climate change poses for the Arctic and polar bears

Why a Scorecard

Polar bears are found only in the Arctic, are highly specialised to their environment and are threatened by a loss of sea ice habitat. Sea ice is melting earlier and freezing later due to climate change. Without urgent action to reduce global greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, scientists predict that about a third of the world's polar bears will be lost within the next 30 years.

One third of polar bear populations cross national boundaries requiring circumpolar collaboration to ensure a future for the species. Management and conservation of polar bears is the primary responsibility of the five countries where polar bears live. Those countries are known as the polar bear Range States: Canada, The Kingdom of Denmark (Greenland), Norway, the Russian Federation, and the United States of America. These countries have worked together for almost half a century to ensure that polar bears thrive in the Arctic, their only home.

The Range States first came together to declare their commitment to polar bear conservation in 1973, when they signed the first international, legally binding treaty: the *1973 Agreement on the Conservation of Polar Bears*. In 2013 with a growing concern over the effects of climate change on polar bear habitat, the Range States came together once again to renew and refocus their commitments¹. From these commitments, they developed a coordinated 10-year plan for polar bear conservation and management called the *Circumpolar Action Plan (CAP): Conservation Strategy for the Polar Bear*.

In 2015 implementation of the CAP began with the aim, “to secure the long-term persistence of polar bears in the wild that represents the genetic, behavioural, life-history and ecological diversity of the species.”

WWF's long-term vision for polar bears is that by 2050, viable populations roam freely across their available range, maintaining their ecological and cultural importance for the Arctic and Arctic peoples. Both WWF and the Range States believe cooperative action by the Range States is needed to enable effective polar bear conservation at the pan-Arctic scale. To encourage this cooperation, WWF has produced the first Scorecard assessment of the Range States' progress on the CAP, focusing on the first two years of implementation, 2015-2017.

¹ 2013 Declaration of the Responsible Ministers of the Polar Bear Range States

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

From 2015 to 2017, the Range States prioritised and commenced implementation of 19 actions out of a total 62, created five working groups, and gathered baseline information on the status of the CAP's Key Objectives. We commend Range States for acting in all areas of implementation across a broad range of issues towards their common vision.



Improve implementation

After two years of work, the completion status of the CAP is 5% or three actions. Range States have a demanding workload to achieve the remaining 95 % of the CAP's actions in the next eight years. Three-quarters, or 9 out of 12 actions due for completion were unfinished at the time of WWF's assessment. Range States report that these actions will be carried over to the next two-year implementation period. **At the current rate of implementation, Range States will not meet their 10-year target.**



RECOMMENDATION 1:

Take a more strategic and structured approach moving forward

To complete the CAP within 10 years, Range States need to raise their level of ambition and ensure the necessary leadership, coordination and financial support. The Range States have yet to decide on a structured administrative approach (e.g., rotating Chair, secretariat) to implement the CAP. We recommend a decision be made before the next period of implementation regarding structure and suggest additional coordination capacity is required for implementation to stay on track.

WWF recommends the Range States use conservation planning tools to identify the steps required to achieve their Key Objectives. From that framework, they can prioritise actions for 2017-2019 and develop milestones that can be used to assess their overall progress towards completion of the CAP.



Standout examples of leadership

Individual Range States are to be commended on their achievements in this first two-year implementation period.

CANADA

is home to approximately two-thirds of the world's polar bears and made significant headway with assessments of eight subpopulations – a huge effort that is essential for successful polar bear management. Canada also leads the way developing tools to ensure the legal trade of polar bear parts is regulated and not a threat to the species.

THE UNITED STATES

made headway to address threats to polar bears by publishing an “Oil spill response plan for polar bears in Alaska” and an oil spill response model that can simulate potential impacts of offshore oil spills on polar bears in the Chukchi Sea. The United States also provided leadership in the Conflict Working Group, both technically and financially.

THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION

is commended on its identification of essential habitat for polar bears within all four Russian subpopulations. This work was a collaborative effort between scientists and managers and included identification of polar bear denning areas, migration routes and the most important feeding areas, as well as an analysis of the current status of protection of these habitats.

NORWAY

showed great leadership addressing the potential threat of tourism to polar bears through an extensive consultative process with tour operators. The results were used to create a set of rules of conduct specific to polar bears that will be used for all tourism in Svalbard.



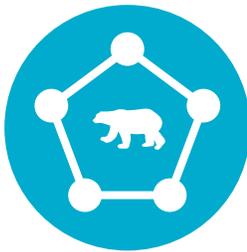
Provide access to information

A major challenge compiling this report was a lack of publicly available information. There is a paucity of even basic information available on the Range States' progress and no central point for accessing documents at the time of our assessment. In the case of Greenland, a lack of access to information made assessment particularly challenging and even impossible for some actions.

RECOMMENDATION 2

Enhance accountability for CAP implementation

WWF recommends the Range States increase disclosure of information on implementation of the CAP. Better access to information will enable stakeholders and the public to objectively evaluate whether Range States are meeting their commitments. Information should be available upon completion of specific actions and when notable progress is made.



Work cooperatively

Range States achieved higher scores on individual work compared to joint work. There are fewer than expected pan-Arctic outputs generated from cooperation across all five Range States, with only 55% of joint actions achieved from 2015-2017. Intended circumpolar reports on oil spill response capacity and human-polar bear conflict were not completed at the time of this assessment.

RECOMMENDATION 3

Collaboration is key to success

WWF urges Range States to work more collaboratively and beyond the national scale wherever possible. The scale of collaboration will determine the scale of successful conservation.



Work with scientists

WWF is concerned the Polar Bear Specialist Group (PBSG), the scientific body advising the Range States, only completed 58% of its work. This shortfall suggests a lack of capacity within the PBSG.

RECOMMENDATION 4 Secure timely science

Reliable support from scientific experts is crucial for the CAP's implementation. The PBSG of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Species Survival Commission is a scientific authority on polar bears and is the advisory body to the Range States. WWF understands the Range States will work to engage the PBSG more formally going forward. WWF urges the PBSG to take a leadership role in identifying key knowledge gaps and science priorities for the Range States to implement the CAP. Further, the PBSG needs to support the Range States by providing timely assessments of subpopulation trends as surveys are completed. This information is particularly important for subpopulations where subsistence harvests occur. If polar bear populations are to be successfully managed into the future, adaptive management supported by scientific expertise is needed. There is no time for extensive deliberations before reaching consensus on science needed to inform management of polar bears.



Work with Indigenous Peoples to integrate Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK)

Initial progress was made towards incorporating TEK into polar bear management. Range States developed a definition for TEK and collated existing guidelines for collection and use of TEK. The full integration of TEK to achieve the conservation objectives of the CAP is not yet apparent, with only Canada and Greenland specifying TEK studies to be completed during the life of the CAP.

RECOMMENDATION 5 Meaningfully engage Indigenous Peoples in the use of TEK

Consensus on science is needed to inform management of polar bears. It is essential that Indigenous Peoples are central to decisions made on the use of TEK in polar bear management. Beyond development of guidelines for the collection and use of TEK, polar bear management benefits from the systematic incorporation of TEK studies into the CAP priority work areas to complement scientific research. WWF recommends that Range States and Indigenous Peoples, or their designates, develop standards for collection and use of TEK. TEK must also be incorporated into subpopulation assessments, harvest management, habitat identification and understanding of the effects of industry and climate change.



Talk about the biggest threat to polar bears

Range States did not complete their communication and outreach strategy on climate change and its impact on the Arctic and polar bears. This is stated as their main approach to raise awareness about the link between the changing Arctic environment and polar bear conservation and to influence the global community to address GHG emissions.

RECOMMENDATION 6

Range States need to urgently deliver on their mandate to “bring global focus to the threat of climate change to the Arctic and polar bears”.

Sea ice loss from climate change is the biggest threat to polar bears. An urgent priority for the Range States is to complete their communications strategy and work cooperatively at an international scale to mitigate/reduce GHG emissions.

Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) and the CAP

Effective polar bear management and conservation depends upon the participation of Arctic Indigenous Peoples.

In the 2013 Declaration, the following statements were made by Range States in recognition of the importance of engaging of Arctic Indigenous Peoples and incorporating TEK in polar bear management.

The Range States:

- Recognise the polar bear as a significant resource that plays an important role in the social and cultural well-being of Arctic local people.
- Recognise the subsistence needs of Arctic Indigenous people, such that conservation will be best achieved with the engagement of communities traditionally dependent on the polar bear in management decision-making processes.
- Recognise the importance and value of Traditional Ecological Knowledge in informing management decisions.
- Acknowledge the need for the Range States to develop a common understanding of what constitutes Traditional Ecological Knowledge and how it should be used in polar bear management decisions.

Polar bear patrol members, Wales, Alaska, US.



5 COUNTRIES

ARE HOME TO POLAR BEARS: CANADA, THE KINGDOM OF DENMARK (GREENLAND), NORWAY, THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION AND THE UNITED STATES

22,000 - 31,000

POLAR BEARS ESTIMATED WORLDWIDE, ACCORDING TO A 2015 ASSESSMENT BY THE IUCN

19

SUBPOPULATIONS

6

SUBPOPULATIONS ARE SHARED BETWEEN RANGE STATES

Roaming polar bears... It's complicated!

Canada is home to 13 of the 19 polar bear subpopulations: about two-thirds of the global population. Four of these are shared, one with the United States and three with Greenland. Greenland has sole jurisdiction over a fourth subpopulation.

Russia is responsible for two subpopulations spread over a very large geographic area, and shares management of two additional subpopulations; one on its eastern border with the United States and one on its western border with Norway.

Neither Norway nor the United States has sole jurisdiction over any polar bear subpopulations. Norway shares management of one and the United States, two.

TIMELINE OF GLOBAL POLAR BEAR CONSERVATION

The conservation journey of the five polar bear Range States spans nearly half a century. Over that time, polar bears experienced multiple pressures, but the two most significant are unregulated hunting and more recently, a loss of their sea ice habitat due to climate change. While most subpopulations are now recovering from overhunting, scientists predict that unless urgent global action is taken to address climate change, the future looks bleak for polar bears.

1973

Canada, Denmark, Norway, the former USSR and the the United States sign the Agreement on the Conservation of Polar Bears, strictly regulating commercial hunting.

1975

Polar bears listed on Appendix 2 of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Flora and Fauna (CITES).

Today

Polar bears are among the few large carnivores still found in roughly their original habitat and range. Although most of the world's 19 populations are at healthy numbers, there are differences between them. Some are stable, some seem to be increasing, and some are decreasing due to various pressures.

The Future

By 2040, scientists predict only a fringe of ice will remain in Northeast Canada and Northern Greenland and all other large areas of summer ice will be gone. This "Last Ice Area" is likely to become important for polar bears and other life dependent on ice.

A projection of sea ice in the archipelago, supported by WWF, shows much of the region is facing significant ice loss in the coming decades - with potentially serious consequences for polar bears.

2015

Re-assessed as "Vulnerable" by the IUCN with a significant probability that a third of the world's polar bears will be lost by 2050 without urgent action to address climate change.

The five Range States unanimously endorse the Conservation Action Plan and commence implementation.

2013

Ministers and other leaders from the five polar bear range states meet in Moscow for the first International Forum on Polar Bear Conservation, with support from WWF. The leaders make significant commitments to address issues of polar bear habitat, research and trade.

2006

Upgraded to "Vulnerable" status by the IUCN.

1996

Polar bears are downgraded to "Lower Risk / Conservation Dependent" status by the IUCN.

UNDERSTANDING WWF'S POLAR BEAR CAP SCORECARD

1 Scorecard assessment

WWF's Scorecard assesses three areas:

- Conservation performance is assessed through implementation of 10 actions towards six Key Objectives of the CAP. These actions are the responsibility of the Range States (7 actions) and the PBSG (2 actions). One action is the responsibility of both the Range States and the PBSG.
- Incorporation of TEK into the CAP is assessed through two actions initiated by the Range States.
- Management activities are assessed through seven actions in three areas that support the CAP's implementation – CAP operations, performance measurement and transparency.

2 Key Objective

The CAP consists of six Key Objectives. Many of the actions in the CAP contribute to more than one Key Objective. To visualise progress across the different Objectives, we listed each action under the objective to which it will contribute most. For example, Action 13 addresses Key Objectives 1 and 3, however, in the Scorecard it is under Objective 1.

3 Action

The CAP's six Key Objectives require 62 actions be completed by 2025. Nineteen of the 62 actions were initiated between 2015 and 2017 and are the focus of this Scorecard.

4 Duration

Of the 19 actions initiated in the first two-years, 12 were to be completed by 2017 and seven had a duration of 10 years (to be completed by 2025).

5 Criterion

For each of the 19 actions, we developed criteria to objectively score progress. Our criteria are derived directly from language used by the Range States to describe their outputs. Assessment of each action is based on whether set criteria are met, using two-way closed questions, with Yes (1 point) or No (0 points) being the possible answers. Fractional points are awarded if a criterion is deemed partially met, for example, a report was drafted but not finalised, or a Range State partially participated in a working group.

1 CONSERVATION PERFORMANCE

2 Minimize threats to polar bears and their habitats

3 ACTION 13

Assess the adequacy of existing oil and contaminant spill emergency response plans to protect essential polar bear habitat and prevent polar bears from being exposed to oil. Range States to lead.

4 DURATION: 2 YEARS (2015-17)

INDIVIDUAL RANGE STATE ACTIVITY

5	1	Range State compile existing national information on oil spill emergency response plans for use in a circumpolar report.	1
		MAXIMUM	1

JOINT ACTIVITY

	2	Adequacy of oil and contaminant spill emergency response plans across the Arctic are assessed in a circumpolar report.	1
		MAXIMUM	1

6 Individual Range State

Range States are assessed individually and jointly on the implementation of actions, depending on whether the work is the responsibility of the individual Range State to complete, or that of the group.

	<40% of maximum score	Little or no progress on implementation
	40-60% of maximum score	Some progress on implementation
	60-80% of maximum score	Encouraging progress on implementation
	> 80% of maximum score	Full or substantive implementation
	No data	Data not publicly available or not shared with WWF

RANGE STATE	POINTS SCORED		TOTAL SCORE	RATING
	ACTION 13	ACTION 19		
Canada	6	7	1.5/3 50%	 8
Greenland	1/1	0/2	1/3 33%	
Norway	1/1	2/2	3/3 100%	
Russia	1/1	1/2	2/3 67%	
United States	1/1	1.5/2	2.5/3 83%	
Joint action by Range States	0.5/1	None	0.5/1 50%	
Overall Score			10.5/16 66%	

7 Points

Points are awarded if criteria are met. This is determined through multiple sources: an assessment report provided to WWF by the Range States on the 27th November 2017, government websites, reports and other materials, the PBSG website, direct interviews with representatives at different levels of government and scientists, and the scientific literature.

8 Score

Points are tallied, divided by the maximum number of points scorable, and multiplied by 100 to give a percentage.

Six Key Objectives of the CAP

- 1. Minimise threats to polar bears and their habitat** through adaptive management based on coordinated research and monitoring efforts, use of predictive models and interaction with interested or affected parties;
- 2. Communicate** to the public, policy makers, and legislators around the world the importance of mitigating Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions to polar bear conservation;
- 3. Ensure the preservation and protection** of essential habitat for polar bears;
- 4. Ensure responsible harvest management systems** that will sustain polar bear subpopulations for future generations;
- 5. Manage human-bear interactions** to ensure human safety and to minimize polar bear injury or mortality.
- 6. Ensure international legal trade of polar bears** is carried out according to conservation principles and that poaching and illegal trade are curtailed.

The WWF Polar Bear CAP Scorecard at a Glance

These scorecards summarise the overall performance of Range States and the PBSG on delivering 19 actions from 2015 to 2017. They include assessments of their conservation performance towards the six Key Objectives, incorporation of TEK and implementation of management activities essential for the CAP's success.

Overall performance by Range States across all assessment areas

	OVERALL	JOINT ACTION*	PBSG
Conservation performance			
Minimise threats			N/A
Communicate climate change			N/A
Preserve polar bear habitat		N/A	
Monitor populations & manage harvest		N/A	
Manage human-polar bear conflict			N/A
Ensure sustainable trade		N/A	N/A
Traditional Ecological Knowledge			
Incorporate TEK			N/A
Management activities			
CAP operations			
Performance measurement			N/A
Transparency			N/A
Overall score	 76%	 55%	 58%

* Note these scores do not include points awarded for work that is the responsibility of individual Range States (see facing page).

Individual performance by Range States across all assessment areas

	CA	GL*	NO	RU	US
Minimise threats					
Communicate climate change					
Preserve polar bear habitat					
Monitor populations & manage harvest					
Manage human-polar bear conflict					
Ensure sustainable trade					
Incorporate TEK			N/A		
Overall Range State score	 86%	 69%*	 97%	 71%	 88%

Note these scores do not include points awarded for joint work and are based only on the work that the Range States completed individually.

*Greenland could not be fully assessed due to a lack of data.

What the WWF Polar Bear CAP Scorecard does

- This Scorecard only **assesses the implementation of the 19 actions** specified by the Range States for implementation from 2015-2017. Additional activities toward polar bear conservation carried out by the Ranges States are not captured or assessed. The Scorecard is focused on the pan-Arctic level because coordinated action, as outlined in the CAP, is necessary for the global conservation of polar bears.
- This Scorecard **provides recommendations and concrete next steps** to encourage active implementation of the CAP based on WWF's analysis of actions taken during the 2015-2017 period.

What the WWF Polar Bear CAP Scorecard does not do

- Any work completed by Range States **after 27 November 2017 is not included** in the Scorecard assessment.
- This Scorecard is **limited to accessible information**. Our assessment is based on information from a combination of publicly available sources, interviews with government representatives and scientists, and materials provided by the Range States. For the national assessment of Greenland, a lack of access to information made assessing progress particularly challenging and even impossible for some actions.
- This Scorecard only evaluates the Range States on the work to which they themselves prioritised and committed. The Scorecard **does not reflect the actions WWF thinks are a priority** for polar bear conservation.
- This Scorecard **does not evaluate the quality of the CAP itself or the outputs** produced from actions, unless specific quality or content is specified by Range States.
- Scores are **not weighted** according to their conservation impact or the relative amount of work required to complete an action. For example, communicating about the need for climate action has the same weight as having an active representative on a working group.



FROM COMMITMENTS TO IMPLEMENTATION

Conservation performance

In this section, we examine the implementation of 10 of the 19 actions that directly contribute to the six Key Objectives of the CAP. Seven of the 10 are to be implemented through individual and joint work by the Range States. Two actions were the sole responsibility of the PBSG, and one action was to be implemented by the Range States and the PBSG. The remaining actions for 2015-2017 are assessed in the two sections that follow: Incorporation of TEK and Management activities.

THREATS MOST LIKELY TO HAVE AN IMPACT ON POLAR BEARS IN THE NEXT 10 YEARS

1. Climate change and extent and composition of sea ice
2. Prey abundance or availability
3. Loss of denning habitat or access to denning habitat
4. Disease and parasites
5. Poaching
6. Unsustainable harvest
7. Human-bear conflicts
8. Mineral and energy resource extraction and development (oil and gas, mining) and associated infrastructure
9. Oil spills
10. Contaminants and pollution
11. Shipping (not related to natural resource development)
12. Tourism

Source: Table 2, CAP.

KEY OBJECTIVE 1



MINIMISE THREATS TO POLAR BEARS AND THEIR HABITATS

The CAP identifies and ranks 12 potential threats likely to impact polar bear populations across the Arctic within the next 10 years. The CAP acknowledges many of those threats may be cumulative, are likely to increase in severity over time and several may even interact with one another to amplify their negative impacts.

Range States committed to actions in 2015-2017 that address threats to polar bears from the oil and gas and tourism sectors. These actions focus on oil and contaminant spills for Action 13 and current management practices used in tourism for Action 19. Our assessment criteria come directly from the descriptions of activity outputs stated by the Range States.

ACTION 13

Assess the adequacy of existing oil and contaminant spill emergency response plans to protect essential polar bear habitat and prevent polar bears from being exposed to oil.

RANGE STATES TO LEAD

DURATION: 2 YEARS (2015-17)

#	CRITERION	PTS
INDIVIDUAL RANGE STATE ACTIVITY		
1	Range State compiles existing national information on oil spill emergency response plans for use in a circumpolar report.	1
	MAXIMUM	1
JOINT ACTIVITY		
2	Adequacy of oil and contaminant spill emergency response plans across the Arctic are assessed in a circumpolar report.	1
	MAXIMUM	1

ACTION 19

Establish working relationships with tourism organisations.

RANGE STATES TO LEAD

DURATION: 2 YEARS (2015-17)

#	CRITERION	PTS
INDIVIDUAL RANGE STATE ACTIVITY		
1	Range State established working relationships with key tourism operators on current practices to minimise impacts on polar bears and risks to humans.	1
2	Range State developed a baseline of information about tourism operator practices around polar bears.	1
	MAXIMUM	2

Table 3. Scores for Key Objective 1: Minimise threats to polar bears and their habitats

RANGE STATE	POINTS SCORED		TOTAL SCORE	RATING
	ACTION 13	ACTION 19		
Canada	1/1	0.5/2	1.5/3 50%	
Greenland	1/1	0/2	1/3 33%	
Norway	1/1	2/2	3/3 100%	
Russia	1/1	1/2	2/3 67%	
United States	1/1	1.5/2	2.5/3 83%	
Joint action by Range States	0.5/1	None	0.5/1 50%	
Overall Score			10.5/16 66%	

Key findings

All Range States contributed their national information to a pan-Arctic analysis on oil spill response capacity. The final output – a collective analysis in the form of a circumpolar status report – was not completed at the time of our assessment.

Norway was the only Range State to receive full points for its work with the tourism industry.

Norway undertook a comprehensive consultation with tourism operators and together they developed a set of Best Management Practices (BMPs) for polar bear tourism in Norway (Svalbard).

Recommendations for next steps

Both tourism and oil and gas activities are predicted to increase in the Arctic, so timeliness of completion and prioritisation of next steps is very important.

On polar bear tourism, WWF recommends:

1.1 Norway share its successful pilot process with the other Range States.

1.2 All Range States instigate relationships with tour operators and co-develop best management practices for tourism that consider time of year, age, sex and reproductive condition of polar bears, include stringent polar bear avoidance protocols, and are tailored to land-based and sea-based (cruise) tourism.

1.3 Range States engage local communities in the development of best management practices to ensure they are culturally appropriate and accepted.

1.4 Best management practices are made publicly available by Range States and tour operators.

1.5 Range States monitor adherence to best management practices over time; for example, through discrete studies or the presence of conservation officers during tourist seasons.

On the threat of oil spills, and with the knowledge there is currently no adequate clean-up method for oil spills in Arctic waters, WWF recommends:

1.6 The circumpolar report on oil spill response capacity be completed and made publicly available.

1.7 Range States undertake necessary action to ensure that oil spill response capacity is adequate in areas where oil extraction is currently occurring.

1.8 As a matter of urgency and as done by the United States, analysis be completed by all Range States to understand and spatially identify the vulnerability of polar bear populations and habitats to oil and gas exploration and development.

1.9 Range States analyse current oil spill prevention measures and practices.

1.10 Range States develop a pro-active strategy for oil spill prevention in essential habitats and ensure that oil and gas exploration and extraction is kept out of such areas.

On next steps towards Key Objective 1, WWF recommends:

1.11 Range States continue to address the most widespread and concerning human-caused threats to polar bears, based on their threat rating assessment as provided in Table 2 of the CAP.



KEY OBJECTIVE 2

COMMUNICATE CLIMATE CHANGE

© WWF / Richard Stonehouse

Communicate to the public, policy makers and legislators around the world the importance of mitigating greenhouse gas emissions to polar bear conservation.

The Range States recognise the loss of sea ice habitat due to climate change as the most significant, long-term threat to polar bears across much of their range. They committed to communicating about the need to reduce GHG emissions with the global community and engaging organisations that deal with polar bear management and threats to polar bears, including the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

For the first two years of CAP implementation, the Range States committed to working on Action 59 for this Key Objective. Action 59 is ongoing, but Range States specified a joint output by the end of the first two years. Our assessment criteria come directly from the descriptions of activity outputs stated by the Range States.

ACTION 59

Develop and implement a communications strategy on climate change in order to bring global focus to the threat to the Arctic and to polar bears and the need for the global community to reduce GHG emissions.

Specified activity and output by end 2017:

A Range States Communications Working Group will be created to develop a report which strategically identifies appropriate messages regarding climate change threats to polar bears and the means to communicate these messages to the global audience.

RANGE STATES TO LEAD
DURATION: 2 YEARS (2015-17)

#	CRITERION	PTS
INDIVIDUAL RANGE STATE ACTIVITY		
1	The Range State has a representative on the Communications Working Group.	1
	MAXIMUM	1
JOINT ACTIVITY		
2	A communications strategy is developed and tabled at the 2017 Meeting of the Parties to create global focus on climate change threats to polar bears.	1
	MAXIMUM	1

Table 4. Scores for Key Objective 2: Communicate the importance of mitigating greenhouse gas emissions to polar bear conservation.

RANGE STATE	POINTS SCORED	TOTAL SCORE	RATING
ACTION 59			
Canada	1/1	1/1 100%	
Greenland	1/1	1/1 100%	
Norway	1/1	1/1 100%	
Russia	0.5/1	0.5/1 50%	
United States	1/1	1/1 100%	
Joint action by Range States	0.5/1	0.5/1 50%	
Overall Score		5/6 83%	

Key findings

Action 59 was only partially completed within the 2015-2017 implementation period.

The Range States formed a Communication Working Group and provided national representatives to the group to implement this action. Russia did not have a permanent participant on the Working Group so was awarded partial points.

The main output for this action – a strategy on how to communicate and create global focus on climate change threats to polar bears – was not completed at the time of WWF's assessment. According to the Range States, it is still under development and work will continue beyond the Biennial Meeting of the Parties.

Recommendations for next steps

Given that climate change and associated sea ice loss is recognised as the most serious threat to polar bears, WWF recommends:

2.1 As a matter of urgency, the Range States complete their strategy and commence implementation towards their goal: to raise awareness about the link between the changing Arctic environment and polar bear conservation, and to influence the global community to address GHG emissions.

2.2 Range States explore options to cooperate with working groups of the Arctic Council, for example, the Conservation of Arctic Flora and Fauna (CAFF) and Arctic Monitoring and Assessment Programme (AMAP) on joint communication opportunities to strengthen and amplify their message.



KEY OBJECTIVE 3

PROTECT ESSENTIAL HABITAT

Ensure the preservation and protection of essential habitat for polar bears.

In the 2013 Declaration, Range States committed to protecting ecosystems of which polar bears are a part. The Range States identified that land-based habitats are likely to become increasingly important for polar bears as sea ice loss continues. Terrestrial habitats are potentially vulnerable to degradation and disturbance, due to an increasing industrial footprint.

One action was initiated towards this objective in the first implementation period, Action 3. Delivery is the responsibility of the Range States and the PBSG. It was very difficult to assess Range States and the PBSG on their progress because this action is ongoing and there are no outputs specified for delivery within the first two-years. We developed our scoring criteria from the action's title and description as stated by the Range States.

ACTION 3

Identify essential polar bear habitat and redefine it as changes occur over time.

RANGE STATES AND PBSG TO LEAD

DURATION: 10 YEARS (2015-25)

#	CRITERION	PTS
INDIVIDUAL RANGE STATE ACTIVITY		
1	The Range State identifies essential polar bear habitat and redefines it as changes occur over time.	1
	MAXIMUM	1
PBSG ACTIVITY		
1	The PBSG develops a suite of sea-ice metrics to identify and measure changes in polar bear habitat.	1
2	The PBSG develops an outline for future work and a work plan for identifying essential terrestrial habitat.	1
	MAXIMUM	2

Table 5. Scores for Key Objective 3: Preserve and protect essential polar bear habitat

RANGE STATE	POINTS SCORED	TOTAL SCORE	RATING
ACTION 3			
Canada	0.5/1	0.5/1 50%	
Greenland	0.5/1	0.5/1 50%	
Norway	0.5/1	0.5/1 50%	
Russia	0.5/1	0.5/1 50%	
United States	0.5/1	0.5/1 50%	
Overall Score		0.5/1 50%	
PBSG	0.5/1	0.5/1 50%	

Key findings

At a national level, all Range States made progress towards defining and identifying essential polar bear habitat. Norway and the United States identified important denning habitat across subpopulations within their jurisdictions. Canada mapped all known denning habitat in the territory of Nunavut. Russia completed a gap analysis identifying the status of protection of polar bear denning and feeding habitats and migration routes across four subpopulations.

Satellite tracking of polar bears from 2015-2017 including in Canada (Southern Hudson Bay, Western Hudson Bay), Greenland (East Greenland), Norway (Svalbard), and the United States provided important insights into how habitat use is changing with sea ice conditions.

Protection of essential habitat occurred in most of Norway (Svalbard) and parts of Canada, Greenland, Russia and the United States.

Without two-year milestones or deliverables, it is challenging to score progress, however given the above findings, Range States and the PBSG are awarded partial points towards this action.

Recommendations for next steps

3.1 Range States develop milestones for this action. Not having milestones made our assessment challenging and will likely make it difficult for the Range States to assess their own progress.

3.2 Range States work together to develop a spatially explicit report on the status of identification and protection/management of essential habitat across the circumpolar range of polar bears. This report should incorporate TEK and be used to identify priority areas for research, protection and management.

3.3 Range States work with the PBSG to understand how sea ice changes could lead to more contact or break points between subpopulations, and as needed, redefine subpopulation boundaries to be biologically meaningful; for example, using the IUCN criteria for what constitutes a subpopulation of a species. This is particularly important to inform boundaries for subpopulations that experience harvest to enable accurate and responsible harvest management.



KEY OBJECTIVE 4

MONITOR POPULATIONS AND ENSURE RESPONSIBLE HARVEST

Ensure responsible harvest management systems that sustain polar bear subpopulations for future generations.

The *1973 Agreement on the Conservation of Polar Bears* upholds the traditional rights of local people to harvest polar bears. In the 2013 Declaration, Range States recognise the polar bear as a significant resource that plays an important role in the social and cultural well-being of Arctic local people. At the current time, there is legal hunting of polar bears by Indigenous Peoples in Canada, Greenland and the United States (Alaska). A small sport hunt of polar bears is also permitted in Canada. Hunting of polar bears was banned in Russia in 1956 and Norway in 1973. However, discussions are underway in Russia at federal and regional levels that could result in the implementation of a legal quota for the Indigenous Peoples of Chukotka (Russia) following the provisions of the bilateral agreement between the United States and Russia.

The stated intention for this objective by the Range States is to ensure the opportunity for harvest of polar bears is available for future generations of Indigenous Peoples living within the range of the polar bear. WWF listed Action 29 as the Range States' contribution to this Key Objective. Actions 33 and 63 are also scored here as they relate to this Key Objective and are the responsibility of the PBSG to implement.

Range States committed to conducting field programs to obtain accurate and current subpopulation estimates as per the CAP Inventory Schedule found in Appendix V of the CAP. Due to the ongoing duration of this action over the life of the CAP, this Scorecard only assesses surveys for 11 subpopulations that were to be started or completed during 2015-2017. Assessment is at the individual Range State level and is based on the Range States' stated commitments for this action (criterion 1). Range States are scored against two additional criteria that WWF considers essential to achieve responsible harvest management systems.

ACTION 29

Obtain population size estimates for all 19 subpopulations of polar bears according to the Inventory Schedule provided in the CAP (Appendix V).

RANGE STATES TO LEAD

DURATION: 10 YEARS (2015-25)

#	CRITERION	PTS
1	Each Range State completed (or is in the process of completing, in the case of multi-year surveys) required subpopulation surveys in accordance with the timing stated in the inventory schedule.	1
2	New subpopulation information is made available to relevant harvest management authorities in a timely manner (note: not applicable for Norway and assessed only for the Chukchi Sea subpopulation in Russia).	1
3	Adequate funding is allocated to subpopulation surveys.	1
MAXIMUM		3

ACTION 33

Have the relevant scientific authorities conduct regular population assessments.

PBSG TO LEAD

DURATION: ONGOING (2015-25)

#	CRITERION	PTS
1	The PBSG re-assesses the status of subpopulations annually and as new survey information is available.	1
2	The PBSG produces annual assessment reports and makes them available in a timely period.	1
MAXIMUM		2

ACTION 63

Improve design of polar bear population studies.

PBSG TO LEAD

DURATION: 2 YEARS (2015-17)

#	CRITERION	PTS
1	The PBSG developed recommendations to improve the design of population studies/assessments to increase the efficiency of how resources are utilised and submits a progress report to the Range States.	1
MAXIMUM		1

Table 6. Scores for Key Objective 4: Population monitoring and ensuring responsible harvest management systems

RANGE STATE	POINTS SCORED			TOTAL SCORE	RATING
	ACTION 29	ACTION 33	ACTION 63		
Canada	2.75/3	N/A	N/A	2.75/3 92%	
Greenland	3/3	N/A	N/A	3/3 100%	
Norway	2/2*	N/A	N/A	2/2* 100%	
Russia	2.5/3	N/A	N/A	2.5/3 83%	
United States	2.5/3	N/A	N/A	2.5/3 83%	
Overall Score				12.75/14 91%	
PBSG	N/A	0.5/2	1.5/1	2/3 67%	

* Norway was not scored on criterion 2 of Action 29 because hunting of polar bears was banned in 1973.

Key findings

- **All Range States scored highly on implementation of population surveys.** Of the 11 subpopulation surveys scheduled for 2015-2017 (Barents Sea, Chukchi Sea, Davis Strait, East Greenland, Foxe Basin, Gulf of Boothia, M'Clintock Channel, Norwegian Bay, Southern Beaufort Sea, Western Hudson Bay and Southern Hudson Bay), nine were carried out according to the timelines specified.
- **The Barents Sea subpopulation survey was only completed on the Norwegian side in 2015** due to insufficient cooperation between Norway and Russia.
- **Canada had by far the greatest number of subpopulations to survey** compared to all other Range States. They were responsible for eight out of 11 subpopulation surveys, compared to Greenland, Norway and the United States, which were each responsible for one subpopulation. Russia was responsible for two surveys.
- **The federal government of Canada allocates funding to polar bear surveys annually**, while funding for polar bear surveys in Russia is sourced through oil companies and other societies. Given the immense survey requirements of both countries funding is not adequate to fulfil their responsibilities, so both were awarded partial points.
- **Neither of the two actions that are the responsibility of the PBSG were fully completed.** Action 63 is substantially delayed and will be carried over to 2017-2019. Action 33 is ongoing and an assessment was completed in early 2017. However, since March 2017 the PBSG website no longer displays subpopulation trends in its population status table (<http://pbsg.npolar.no/en/status/status-table.html>). The trend category defines whether subpopulations are stable, increasing or declining and is important for making management decisions. At the time of our assessment this issue was not resolved on the PBSG website.

Recommendations for next steps

Given the rapid changes in the Arctic and the potential for cumulative impacts on subpopulations, it is crucial that subpopulation assessments are done regularly and released in a timely manner to inform harvest management.

WWF recommends:

4.1 Range States share information with one another on analysis methods for new survey techniques; for example, infra-red aerial survey and genetic mark-recapture, to expedite assessment and release of results.

4.2 Two Russian subpopulations - the Laptev Sea and Kara Sea - must be included on the inventory schedule and assessments of their status prioritised by Russia. They are currently data deficient.

4.3 Range States continue to work together to assess shared polar bear subpopulations, as per Article VII of the Agreement on the Conservation of Polar Bears.

4.4 Declining subpopulations, especially those that are subject to additional pressures such as harvest and industrial activities, are monitored regularly. For example, Canada and the United States need to work together to complete an assessment of the Southern Beaufort Sea subpopulation as a matter of priority, given its declining status.

4.5 Range States include an assessment of the Arctic Basin subpopulation in the CAP inventory schedule.

4.6 Range States continue their good work with scientists to trial less intrusive, more efficient and innovative methods to assess subpopulations where possible. This includes the use of remote infra-red technology, genetic mark-recapture and vital rates (body condition, cub production, survival).

4.7 As a matter of urgency the PBSG must come to agreement on how to assign trends to subpopulations and publish that information on its website. WWF understands the group was working towards this in 2017.



KEY OBJECTIVE 5

MANAGE HUMAN-POLAR BEAR CONFLICT

Manage human-polar bear interactions to ensure human safety and minimise polar bear injury or mortality.

The Range States recognise in the 2013 Declaration that as polar bears spend more time on land, there is a heightened risk of human-polar bear interactions that can lead to conflicts. Range States committed to working together to ensure the safety of people living or working around polar bears and minimise the number of bears injured or killed in defense of life or property.

Range States committed to working on Actions 7 and 22 in 2015-17 towards this Key Objective. Both actions have a duration of two years. Some outputs are the joint responsibility of the Range States while others are the responsibility of individual Range States. Our assessment criteria come directly from the descriptions of activity outputs stated by the Range States.

ACTION 7

Develop strategies for responding to the potential for large numbers of nutritionally-stressed bears being close to communities and consider the consequences including those for human safety and transmission of disease between bears.

RANGE STATES TO LEAD

DURATION: 2 YEARS (2015-17)

#	CRITERION	PTS
JOINT ACTIVITY		
1	Produce a report summarising existing information on nutritionally-stressed bears.	1
2	Report identifies the geographic areas where the likelihood of such events is higher.	1
3	Report defines a strategy to respond to nutritionally stressed bears being close to communities.	1
	MAXIMUM	3

ACTION 22

Reduce the risk of injury and mortality to humans and bears as a result of their interactions by continuing to support the work of the Range States Conflict Working Group towards a fully-functioning, international database.

RANGE STATES TO LEAD

DURATION: 2 YEARS (2015-17)

#	CRITERION	PTS
INDIVIDUAL RANGE STATE ACTIVITY		
1	Range State has a representative on the Conflict Working Group	1
2	Range State has populated the PBHIMS database with its national information on human-polar bear conflict.	1
	MAXIMUM	2
JOINT ACTIVITY		
3	Terms of Reference are completed.	1
4	Data-sharing agreement is completed and signed by the Range State.	1
5	A requirements document is completed.	1
	MAXIMUM	3

Table 7. Scores for Key Objective 5: Manage human-polar bear interactions.

RANGE STATE	POINTS SCORED		TOTAL SCORE	RATING
	ACTION 7	ACTION 22		
Canada	N/A	1.5/2	1.5/2 75%	
Greenland	N/A	1/2	1/2 50%	
Norway	N/A	2/2	2/2 100%	
Russia	N/A	1/2	1/2 50%	
United States	N/A	1.5/2	1.5/2 75%	
Joint action by Range States	0/3	2/3	2/6 33%	
Overall Score			9/16 56%	

Key findings

- **Neither of the two actions were complete** at the time of our assessment.
- **The joint activity of the Range States to produce a circumpolar report** summarising conflict hotspots, existing strategies and best management practices to reduce human-polar bear conflict under Action 7 was not carried out. Range States stated this action will be carried over to the next implementation period in a modified format, where they will each develop their own strategies for responding to bears near communities and developments.
- **Terms of Reference for the Polar Bear-Human Information Management System (PBHIMS) database** and a requirements document stating the types of data to be collected by each Range State were completed.
- **A data-sharing agreement was drafted**, however, the Working Group decided that data-sharing will be negotiated between Range States on a case-by-case basis.
- **Population of the PBHIMS database is the responsibility of each Range State.** Norway is awarded full points for completion of this activity. Russia, Canada and the United States are awarded partial points. To our knowledge, Greenland has not entered their national data into PBHIMS.
- **Financial support to maintain the PBHIMS database** is an ongoing issue and alternative database platforms are being explored.

Recommendations for next steps

Given predicted increases in human-polar bear conflict across much of the Arctic and the essential need for local communities to live as safely as possible together with polar bears, WWF recommends:

5.1 Range States decide on which platform to use for their international database as a matter of urgency. Once this decision is made, outstanding data entry should be completed and made available with the following actions prioritised:

5.1.1 A complete analysis of all known human-polar bear conflict incidents, including the severity of the issue, trends over time and geographical variance.

5.1.2 Development of the most appropriate interventions (best management practices) that can be trialled across the Arctic.

5.1.3 Identification of the highest priority regions and communities in need of governmental support to prevent and mitigate future conflicts.

5.2 Wildlife managers, such as rangers and polar bear patrol guards, weather station personnel, etc., are trained adequately in polar bear conflict management techniques and are equipped with adequate non-lethal resources.

5.3 Sea-borne and especially land-based tourism is subject to stringent polar bear avoidance protocols as in Recommendation 1.2.

5.4 Attractants in public places, such as waste dumps, are made inaccessible for polar bears. This is preceded by a full overview of the status of attractants for which Governments have responsibility, and a full costing for appropriate disposal that is compatible with the reality of polar bears being in the vicinity.

5.5 Range States consider measuring their success in reducing human-polar bear conflict by monitoring polar bear deaths and injuries, but also through monitoring people safety indicators developed in conjunction with communities.



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KEY OBJECTIVE 6

ENSURE SUSTAINABLE TRADE

Ensure the international legal trade of polar bears is carried out according to conservation principles and that poaching and illegal trade are curtailed.

Parts and derivatives of hunted polar bears are traded domestically and internationally. International trade of polar bears is regulated by the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES)¹ and national regulations.

In their 2013 Declaration, Range States committed to address the threat of poaching and illegal trade in polar bears and polar bear parts, and to ensure that legal trade is sustainable through sound monitoring, reporting and cooperation.

For this assessment period, the Range States committed to initiating Action 12, which includes implementation of six recommendations to improve polar bear trade reporting and monitoring. These recommendations were developed by the Range States Trade Working Group and made publicly available in March 2016 through a CITES Notification to the Parties². The purpose of the recommendations is to facilitate international cooperation for better enforcement, reporting and data for polar bears. This is an ongoing action. Implementation is the responsibility of individual Range States and criteria are developed directly from their stated outputs.

¹ Polar bears are listed under Appendix II of CITES. Trade in Appendix II specimens requires a CITES export permit issued by the exporting country, which is only to be granted after the exporting country has made a number of determinations, including a finding that the export will not be detrimental to the survival of the species. In the event of re-export a CITES re-export permit is required.

² <https://www.cites.org/sites/default/files/notif/E-Notif-2016-032.pdf>

ACTION 12

Consider and implement as appropriate, recommendations from the Range States' Trade Working Group to improve trade reporting and monitoring.

RANGE STATES TO LEAD

DURATION: ONGOING (2015-25)

#	CRITERION	PTS
INDIVIDUAL RANGE STATE ACTIVITY		
1	Range State has a representative on the Trade Working Group.	1
2	Range State uses agreed Terms and Units in CITES Annual reports.	1
3	Range State uses agreed method to estimate the number of polar bears in International Trade.	1
4	Range State uses agreed administrative procedures to verify CITES export permits.	1
5	Range State uses agreed tagging procedures for harvested bears and bears taken in defense of life and property.	1
6	Range State is part of a Wildlife Enforcement Network that facilitates information sharing among the Range States.	1
7	(Canada only) An online report is published on Canadian CITES export permits issued for bears harvested in Canada annually	1
MAXIMUM		6 (7 for Canada)

Table 8. Scores for Key Objective 6: Ensure trade is in line with conservation principles

RANGE STATE	POINTS SCORED	TOTAL SCORE	RATING
ACTION 12			
Canada	7/7	7/7 100%	
Greenland	5/6	5/6 83%	
Norway	6/6	6/6 100%	
Russia	4.5/6	4.5/6 75%	
United States	6/6	6/6 100%	
Overall Score		28.5/31 92%	

Key findings

- **All Range States showed promising progress** in the implementation of this ongoing action.
- **Canada, Greenland, Norway and the United States were awarded full points** for having representatives on both the Trade Working Group and the Wildlife Enforcement Network. Russia did not have a permanent representative on the Working Group or a representative on the Wildlife Enforcement Network, so was only awarded partial points (0.5/2).
- Wherever possible, **all Range States use the agreed Terms and Units** in CITES Annual reports and the agreed method to estimate the number of polar bears in International trade, although the last estimate was completed in 2014.
- **Agreed tagging procedures** are used by Canada, Norway and the United States. Russia is developing such procedures for polar bears that will potentially be taken through subsistence hunting of the Chukchi Sea subpopulation, when harvest will be allowed. Greenland does not currently use the agreed tagging system; procedures are based on licences.
- **Canada is commended on its progress tracking polar bear products** in international trade by innovatively applying techniques like stable isotopes, implantable microchips and genetic markers.

Recommendations for next steps

Given the importance of monitoring trade to ensure sustainable use of polar bears, WWF recommends:

6.1 Range States produce a full and updated analysis of trade in polar bear parts, including auction prices available, market analysis and harvest information from Canada, Greenland and the United States, approximately every three years. The last report was completed in 2014. Regular analyses such as this will enable timely identification of new markets and any concerns over sustainable trade.

6.2 Range States, including Russia, continue their work to develop the Wildlife Enforcement Network and consider expanding to trade in other Arctic species.

6.3 Russia prioritises curtailing of illegal trade in polar bear parts in Russia. A useful action towards this prioritisation is a full domestic and international trade analysis of polar bear parts in Russia.

6.4 Russia cooperates with Canada to strengthen trade control for specimens imported to Russia, re-exported from Russia, and sold on the Russian domestic market.





TRADITIONAL ECOLOGICAL KNOWLEDGE

This section of WWF's Scorecard assesses the incorporation of TEK into the CAP; an over-arching objective of the Range States. Range States recognise that both science and TEK be considered in each of the strategic approaches identified to address threats facing the polar bear.

Leo Ikakhik, a member of the highly successful polar bear patrol in Arviat, Nunavut, uses a variety of techniques to reduce human-polar bear conflict.



TEK

INCORPORATION OF TRADITIONAL ECOLOGICAL KNOWLEDGE

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The Range States committed to addressing two actions from 2015-2017. Actions 34 and 35 have ongoing timelines and will not be completed by 2017. Delivery is through individual and joint work by the Range States.

It is important to reiterate that this Scorecard is only assessing whether the Range States implemented the actions to which they committed. The Scorecard does not assess the quality of outputs produced by Range States, or the extent to which Indigenous Peoples are engaged in decision-making.

Our assessment criteria are based directly on stated outcomes for this two-year period. Norway is not assessed in this section as it does not use TEK in polar bear management¹. Further, Russia and the United States did not include any TEK studies in the TEK Acquisition and Assessment Schedule found in Appendix VI of the CAP, so we did not assess them individually for Action 34.

¹ In modern times, polar bears have not been present in Norway where traditional knowledge has relevance for nature management.

ACTION 34

Obtain TEK as per the Acquisition and Assessment Schedule of the CAP (Appendix VI) and consider, in conjunction with scientific data, in management decisions, where appropriate.

RANGE STATES TO LEAD

DURATION: ONGOING (2015-25)

#	CRITERION	PTS
INDIVIDUAL RANGE STATE ACTIVITY		
1	TEK is obtained by the Range State as per the TEK Acquisition and Assessment Schedule.	1
	MAXIMUM	1
JOINT ACTIVITY		
2	A circumpolar status report is presented at the 2017 Range States meeting outlining the collected TEK.	1
	MAXIMUM	1

ACTION 35

Determine what kinds of TEK are most useful for conservation and management and develop objectives, guidelines, and standards for collection and reporting of such information to maximise its utility.

RANGE STATES TO LEAD

DURATION: 2 YEARS (2015-17)

#	CRITERION	PTS
INDIVIDUAL RANGE STATE ACTIVITY		
1	The Range State has a representative on the TEK working group.	1
	MAXIMUM	1
JOINT ACTIVITY		
2	A definition of TEK is established	1
3	A compendium of existing guidelines is compiled for the use of TEK in decision-making.	1
	MAXIMUM	2

Table 9. Scores for the Incorporation of Traditional Ecological Knowledge into polar bear management

RANGE STATE	POINTS SCORED		TOTAL SCORE	RATING
	ACTION 34	ACTION 35		
Canada	1/1	1/1	2/2 100%	
Greenland	NO DATA**	1/1	1**/2	
Norway	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Russia	N/A*	1/1	1/1 100%	
United States	N/A*	1/1	1/1 100%	
Joint action by Range States	0/1	2/2	2/3 67%	
Overall Score			7**/9 78%	

* Russia and the United States are not assessed individually for Action 34 because according to the TEK Acquisition and Assessment Schedule of the CAP, they had no TEK studies to complete in 2015-2017.

** Due to a lack of accessible information, Greenland is not assessed on Action 34.

Key findings

- **Range States made some joint progress** towards developing a framework to incorporate TEK into management of polar bears. They are awarded points for developing a definition of TEK and compiling a compendium of existing guidelines for the use of TEK in polar bear management.
- **The current TEK Acquisition and Assessment Schedule** for all polar bear subpopulations does not include any contributions from Russia or the United States. Greenland and Canada were the only Range States with TEK studies scheduled for 2015-2017.
- According to the TEK Acquisition and Assessment Schedule, **Canada proposed TEK studies across five subpopulations**: Baffin Bay and M'Clintock Channel in 2015, and Gulf of Boothia, Southern Hudson Bay and Western Hudson Bay in 2016. For this assessment period, Canada is awarded a full point for completion of three out of five proposed TEK studies (Baffin Bay, Southern Hudson Bay and Western Hudson Bay) as well as partial completion of an additional study in Davis Strait. TEK studies in Gulf of Boothia and M'Clintock Channel are delayed to 2018.
- **We are unable to verify** whether Greenland's proposed TEK study in East Greenland from 2015-2016 was completed.

Recommendations for next steps

The importance of including Arctic Indigenous Peoples and traditional knowledge in polar bear management is paramount and is recognised by the Range States in the 1973 Agreement and again in the 2013 Declaration. Going forward, WWF recommends:

7.1 Arctic Indigenous Peoples are fully engaged with the incorporation of TEK in polar bear management including through co-management arrangements. WWF understands the Range States are considering developing a TEK Advisory Committee as a separate entity to the TEK Working Group and looks forward to understanding more about the role and membership of this committee.

7.2 Together with Arctic Indigenous Peoples, Range States urgently develop guidelines for the collection and use of TEK in polar bear management.

7.3 Together with Arctic Indigenous Peoples and the PBSG, Range States systematically incorporate TEK studies into CAP priority work areas to complement scientific research. If Range States continue to use the TEK Acquisition and Assessment Schedule it should be linked to the Subpopulation Inventory Schedule found in Appendix V of the CAP, which maps out the timing of subpopulation assessments. Additionally, we suggest TEK be incorporated into harvest management, habitat use analysis, and understanding the effects of industry and climate change to complement scientific research (see also Recommendation 8.2).

7.4 Russia and the United States specify the TEK studies they will support and add them to the TEK Acquisition and Assessment Schedule.

ASSESSMENT OF MANAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

This section of the Scorecard assesses seven actions that will create conditions to enable the successful implementation of the CAP. The actions are grouped into three categories: operations, performance management and transparency. Five of the seven actions are the joint responsibility of the Range States and one is the responsibility of the PBSG. A further action is to be undertaken by the Range States and the PBSG together.





MANAGEMENT

CAP OPERATIONS



Actions 17, 18 and 27 are assessed in this implementation period under the broad area of operations. Action 17 focuses on making the operations of the Range States effective. Work is carried out through an Operations, Protocols and Procedures Working Group.

Action 18 is led by the PBSG and entails the prioritisation of science-related actions of the CAP. Action 27 is an ongoing action co-led by the Range States and the PBSG, with the overall aim to improve consistency in research techniques and data reporting.

Our assessment criteria are based directly on stated outcomes for this two-year period for Actions 17 and Action 18. It is very difficult to assess Range States and the PBSG on their progress towards Action 27, with no outputs specified for delivery during this implementation period. Scoring is based on criteria developed from the wording of Action 27 by the Range States in their 2-year Implementation Table.

Table 10. Scores for CAP Operations

RANGE STATE	POINTS SCORED			TOTAL SCORE	RATING
	ACTION 17	ACTION 18	ACTION 27		
Joint action by Range States	1.5/2	N/A	0.5/1	2/3 67%	
PBSG	N/A	0.5/1	0.5/1	1/2 50%	

ACTION 17

Develop Range States operations, protocols and procedures.

RANGE STATES TO LEAD

DURATION: 2 YEARS (2015-17)

#	CRITERION	PTS
1	An Operations, Protocols and Procedures Working Group is formed.	1
2	Recommendations to standardise/formalise operations of the Range States are presented at the 2017 Range States Biennial Meeting of the Parties.	1
MAXIMUM		2

ACTION 18

Determine two- and ten-year priorities for science-related actions

PBSG TO LEAD

DURATION: 2 YEARS (2015-17)

#	CRITERION	PTS
1	The PBSG identified and prioritised all science-related actions necessary to fulfil the items of immediate importance in the CAP	1
MAXIMUM		1

ACTION 27

Share research plans among jurisdictions to encourage consistency of methods and data.

RANGE STATES AND PBSG TO LEAD

DURATION: 10 YEARS (2015-25)

#	CRITERION	PTS
1	Researchers from the Range States and through the PBSG developed and applied common research techniques and data reporting.	1
MAXIMUM		1

Key findings

- We understand **Range States are active in defining options** to optimise how they cooperate amongst themselves and with supporting bodies like the PBSG and invited scientists. They are also active in considering administrative and financial support to enable implementation. At the time of our assessment, a set of recommendations was developed in draft form, so Range States are awarded partial points for this activity.
- By the time of our assessment, **the PBSG had not determined two- and ten-year priorities** for all science-related activities, although work had commenced.
- **Having no milestones for Action 27** made our assessment challenging. However, there are notable examples of inter-jurisdictional collaboration on research. These included a cooperative research program on the Chukchi Sea subpopulation between the United States and Russia, and joint assessments by Canada and Greenland of Kane Basin and Baffin Bay subpopulations.

Recommendations for next steps

8.1 Range States consider the recommendations to be presented by the OPP Working Group at the Biennial Meeting of the Parties and decide on a structured administrative approach to assist with implementation of the CAP before the next period.

8.2 Range States and the PBSG prioritise science-related actions for the CAP before the 2017-2019 implementation period and consider presenting them in a schedule that shows clear incorporation of TEK studies; for example, through modifying the current TEK Acquisition and Assessment Schedule or by creating a new Schedule that incorporates Science and TEK.

8.3 Range States rigorously analyse current funding for implementation of the CAP and ensure adequate allocations or strategies to obtain capacity, funds and other necessary resources. This should include support for working groups to complete their work plans and for the demanding scientific and population monitoring schedules ahead.



MANAGEMENT

PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT

Range States committed to develop their own processes for monitoring the implementation of the CAP: a self-review to be completed every two years and presented at each Biennial Meeting of the Parties. The stated format of the review is to document which actions are implemented and their effectiveness, and enable opportunity to add or change actions based on new information and lessons learned. Range States committed to making reviews and action tables publicly available following each Meeting.

Range States prioritised working on Actions 60 and 61 from 2015-2017. Action 60 is ongoing, while Action 61 is to be completed by 2017. Both actions have stated outputs for the first implementation period and these are used to develop our assessment criteria.

Table 11. Scores for Performance Measurement

RANGE STATE	POINTS SCORED		TOTAL SCORE	RATING
	ACTION 60	ACTION 61		
Joint action by Range States	1/1	1.5/2	2.5/3 83%	

ACTION 60

Regularly report the results of the Plan.

RANGE STATES TO LEAD

DURATION: ONGOING (2015-25)

#	CRITERION	PTS
1	A biennial review based on Table 4 of the Action Plan is completed by November 2017.	1
MAXIMUM		1

ACTION 61

Establish baselines for measurement of action plan performance.

RANGE STATES TO LEAD

DURATION: 2 YEARS (2015-17)

#	CRITERION	PTS
1	A set of indicators for all actions is agreed upon.	1
2	A complete set of baseline values is developed for all indicators of the performance measurement system of the plan.	1
MAXIMUM		2

Key findings

- **Range States are awarded full points** for successfully completing their first report on progress against their committed actions. Further, this report was made available to us 27 November 2017, to assist with our Scorecard assessment.
- **There is still work to be done by the PBSG** to develop baselines for scientific indicators; an action that will be carried over to 2017-2019.

Recommendations for next steps

Given the status of CAP completion (5%, or 3 out of 62 actions) and the likelihood that Range States will need to increase their pace of implementation to meet their 10-year target, WWF recommends:

9.1 Range States expand their current reporting template to include a section for reporting on progress towards their final target.

9.2 Range States develop milestones for achieving their Key Objectives and use them as the basis of their progress reporting.

9.3 Range States are fully accountable for the timely sharing of their progress to enable comprehensive assessment of implementation. This includes making reports and updates available to the public as they are completed, see also Recommendations 10.1 – 10.3.



MANAGEMENT

TRANSPARENCY

Governments are accountable to their public and disclosure of information is a mechanism by which their stakeholders can objectively evaluate whether they are fulfilling their mandate and spending public funds in a responsible manner.

Communication with and outreach to the public on the implementation of the CAP is the focus of two actions by the Range States in 2015-2017. Our assessment criteria are based directly on stated outcomes for this two-year period. As with their operations work, Range States carried out work towards these actions through a Working Group.

Table 12. Scores for Transparency

RANGE STATE	POINTS SCORED		TOTAL SCORE	RATING
	ACTION 53	ACTION 55		
Joint action by Range States	0.5/2	1/1	1.5/3 50%	

ACTION 53

Establish and maintain CAP website to disseminate information and provide links to relevant information sources.

RANGE STATES TO LEAD

DURATION: 2 YEARS (2015-17)

#	CRITERION	PTS
1	Permanent Range State website is in place.	1
2	Website contains current information and resources.	1
MAXIMUM		2

ACTION 55

Develop and implement a communications plan for the CAP.

RANGE STATES TO LEAD

DURATION: 2 YEARS (2015-17)

#	CRITERION	PTS
1	A communications plan is developed and presented at the Biennial Meeting of the Parties.	1
MAXIMUM		1

Key findings

- **There is a paucity of publicly available and collectively situated information** about the CAP and its implementation. This results in challenges with the quality and completeness of our assessment and a need to rely on direct interviews with government contacts in all Range States. The exception was Greenland, where we were not permitted to interview a government representative, despite a shortage of publicly available information.
- **The successful completion of Action 55** – the development of a plan to communicate about the CAP – is a solid first step to improving information sharing and Range States are awarded full points for their work.
- **A permanent Range State website was not in place** at the time of our assessment and access to CAP documents on the temporary website (hosted by the Government of Greenland) was restricted by password protection. However, we are aware that the Range States are in the process of developing a permanent website through cooperation with the Arctic Council working group on the Conservation of Arctic Flora and Fauna (CAFF), and hence allocated partial points for Action 53.

Recommendations for next steps

To fulfil their responsibility to the public, Range States need greater transparency and a mechanism to communicate publicly about their progress on polar bear conservation. Because Range States already committed to using a website, WWF recommends:

10.1 The Range States complete their website and make it live as soon as possible.

10.2 The website becomes a central and current repository for activities and outputs related to the CAP's implementation, for example, circumpolar reports, publications and best management practices; and supplements national information resources.

10.3 Range States consider additional platforms for future communications to keep the public informed of their important work.

APPENDIX: ALL RECOMMENDATIONS

1.1 Norway share its successful pilot process with the other Range States.

1.2 All Range States instigate relationships with tour operators and co-develop best management practices for tourism that consider time of year, age, sex and reproductive condition of polar bears, include stringent polar bear avoidance protocols, and are tailored to land-based and sea-based (cruise) tourism.

1.3 Range States engage local communities in the development of best management practices to ensure they are culturally appropriate and accepted.

1.4 Best management practices are made publicly available by Range States and tour operators.

1.5 Range States monitor adherence to best management practices over time; for example, through discrete studies or the presence of conservation officers during tourist seasons.

1.6 The circumpolar report on oil spill response capacity be completed and made publicly available.

1.7 Range States undertake necessary action to ensure that oil spill response capacity is adequate in areas where oil extraction is currently occurring.

1.8 As a matter of urgency and as done by the United States, analysis be completed by all Range States to understand and spatially identify the vulnerability of polar bear populations and habitats to oil and gas exploration and development.

1.9 Range States analyse current oil spill prevention measures and practices.

1.10 Range States develop a proactive strategy for oil spill prevention in essential habitats and ensure that oil and gas exploration and extraction is kept out of such areas.

1.11 Range States continue to address the most widespread and concerning human-caused threats to polar bears, based on their threat rating assessment as provided in Table 2 of the CAP.

2.1 As a matter of urgency, the Range States complete their strategy and commence implementation towards their goal: to raise awareness about the link between the changing Arctic environment and polar bear conservation, and to influence the global community to address GHG emissions.

2.2 Range States explore options to cooperate with working groups of the Arctic Council, for example, the Conservation of Arctic Flora and Fauna (CAFF) and Arctic Monitoring and Assessment Programme (AMAP) on joint communication opportunities to strengthen and amplify their message.

3.1 Range States develop milestones for this action. Not having milestones made our assessment challenging, and will likely make it difficult for the Range States to assess their own progress.

3.2 Range States work together to develop a spatially explicit report on the status of identification and protection/management of essential habitat across the circumpolar range of polar bears. This report should incorporate TEK and be used to identify priority areas for research, protection and management.

3.3 Range States work with the PBSG to understand how sea ice changes could lead to more contact or break points between subpopulations, and as needed, redefine subpopulation boundaries to be biologically meaningful (i.e., using the IUCN criteria for what constitutes a subpopulation of a species). This is particularly important to inform boundaries for subpopulations that experience harvest to enable accurate and responsible harvest management.

4.1 Range States share information with one another on analysis methods for new survey techniques; for example, infra-red aerial survey and genetic mark-recapture, to expedite assessment and release of results.

4.2 Two Russian subpopulations - the Laptev Sea and Kara Sea – must be included on the inventory schedule and assessments of their status prioritised by Russia. They are currently data deficient.

4.3 Range States continue to work together to assess shared polar bear subpopulations, as per Article VII of the Agreement on the Conservation of Polar Bears.

4.4 Declining subpopulations, especially those that are subject to additional pressures such as harvest and industrial activities, are monitored regularly. For example, Canada and the United States need to work together to complete an assessment of the Southern Beaufort Sea subpopulation as a matter of priority, given its declining status.

4.5 Range States include an assessment of the Arctic Basin subpopulation in the CAP inventory schedule.

4.6 Range States continue their good work with scientists to trial less intrusive, more efficient and innovative methods to assess subpopulations where possible. This includes the use of remote infra-red technology, genetic mark-recapture and vital rates (body condition, cub production, survival).

4.7 As a matter of urgency the PBSG must come to agreement on how to assign trends to subpopulations and publish that information on its website. WWF understands the group was working towards this in 2017.

5.1 Range States decide on which platform to use for their international database as a matter of urgency. Once this decision is made, outstanding data entry should be completed and made available with the following actions prioritised:

5.1.1 A complete analysis of all known human-polar bear conflict incidents, including the severity of the issue, trends over time and geographical variance.

5.1.2 Development of the most appropriate interventions (best management practices) that can be trialled across the Arctic.

5.1.3 Identification of the highest priority regions and communities in need of governmental support to prevent and mitigate future conflicts.

5.2 Wildlife managers, such as rangers and polar bear patrol guards, weather station personnel, etc., are trained adequately in polar bear conflict management techniques and are equipped with adequate non-lethal resources.

5.3 Sea-borne and especially land-based tourism is subject to stringent polar bear avoidance protocols as in Recommendation 1.2.

5.4 Attractants in public places, such as waste dumps, are made inaccessible for polar bears. This is preceded by a full overview of the status of attractants for which Governments have responsibility, and a full costing for appropriate disposal that is compatible with the reality of polar bears being in the vicinity.

5.5 Range States consider measuring their success in reducing human-polar bear conflict by monitoring polar bear deaths and injuries, but also through monitoring people safety indicators developed in conjunction with communities.

6.1 Range States produce a full and updated analysis of trade in polar bear parts, including auction prices available, market analysis and harvest information from Canada, Greenland and the United States, approximately every three years. The last report was completed in 2014. Regular analyses such as this will enable timely identification of new markets and any concerns over sustainable trade.

6.2 Range States, including Russia, continue their work to develop the Wildlife Enforcement Network and consider expanding to trade in other Arctic species.

6.3 Russia prioritises curtailing of illegal trade in polar bear parts in Russia. A useful action towards this prioritisation is a full domestic and international trade analysis of polar bear parts in Russia.

6.4 Russia cooperates with Canada to strengthen trade control for specimens imported to Russia, re-exported from Russia, and sold on the Russian domestic market.

7.1 Arctic Indigenous Peoples are fully engaged with the incorporation of TEK in polar bear management including through co-management arrangements. WWF understands the Range States are considering developing a TEK Advisory Committee as a separate entity to the TEK Working Group and looks forward to understanding more about the role and membership of this committee.

7.2 Together with Arctic Indigenous Peoples, Range States urgently develop guidelines for the collection and use of TEK in polar bear management.

7.3 Together with Arctic Indigenous Peoples and the PBSG, Range States systematically incorporate TEK studies into CAP priority work areas to complement scientific research. If Range States continue to use the TEK Acquisition and Assessment Schedule it should be linked to the Subpopulation Inventory Schedule found in Appendix V of the CAP, which maps out the timing of subpopulation assessments. Additionally, we suggest TEK be incorporated into harvest management, habitat use analysis, and understanding the effects of industry and climate change to complement scientific research (see also Recommendation 8.2).

7.4 Russia and the United States specify the TEK studies they will support and add them to the TEK Acquisition and Assessment Schedule.

8.1 Range States consider the recommendations to be presented by the OPP Working Group at the Biennial Meeting of the Parties and decide on a structured administrative approach to assist with implementation of the CAP before the next period.

8.2 Range States and the PBSG prioritise science-related actions for the CAP before the 2017-2019 implementation period and consider presenting them in a schedule that shows clear incorporation of TEK studies; for example, through modifying the current TEK Acquisition and Assessment Schedule or by creating a new Schedule that incorporates Science and TEK.

8.3 Range States rigorously analyse current funding for implementation of the CAP and ensure adequate allocations or strategies to obtain capacity, funds and other necessary resources. This should include support for working groups to complete their work plans and for the demanding scientific and population monitoring schedules ahead.

9.1 Range States expand their current reporting template to include a section for reporting on progress towards their final target.

9.2 Range States develop milestones for achieving their Key Objectives and use them as the basis of their progress reporting.

9.3 Range States are fully accountable for the timely sharing of their progress to enable comprehensive assessment of implementation. This includes making reports and updates available to the public as they are completed, see also Recommendations 10.1 – 10.3.

10.1 The Range States complete their website and make it live as soon as possible.

10.2 The website become a central and current repository for activities and outputs related to the CAP's implementation; for example, circumpolar reports, publications, best management practices, and supplements national information resources.

10.3 Range States consider additional platforms for future communications to keep the public informed of their important work.

+100

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+5 M

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1961

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