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|               |                |               |                 |                             |            |                       |                     |         |
|---------------|----------------|---------------|-----------------|-----------------------------|------------|-----------------------|---------------------|---------|
| NOT EVALUATED | DATA DEFICIENT | LEAST CONCERN | NEAR THREATENED | <b>&lt; VULNERABLE &gt;</b> | ENDANGERED | CRITICALLY ENDANGERED | EXTINCT IN THE WILD | EXTINCT |
| NE            | DD             | LC            | NT              | VU                          | EN         | CR                    | EW                  | EX      |



Geographical range

The **Polar Bear**, *Ursus maritimus*, is classified as 'Vulnerable' on the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species™. The polar bear is the largest living land carnivore in the world today and they live throughout the ice-covered waters of the circumpolar Arctic.

It is recognised that climate change has already had an impact on some polar bears and their sea-ice habitat, affecting access to their prey and to den areas. Persistent Organic Pollutants (POP) also pose a threat to polar bears - if accumulated at elevated levels, these compounds can cause neurological, reproductive and immunological changes. Hunting of polar bears is now controlled, although in some places over-harvesting is a concern that is being addressed.

A number of countries have signed the 'International Agreement on the Conservation of Polar Bears' which identifies the right of local hunters to harvest polar bears sustainably, and to outlaw hunting from aircraft and large ships. The threats caused by climate change are now the main concern – the complexity of these issues will demand international cooperation if this species is to survive.

[www.iucnredlist.org](http://www.iucnredlist.org)  
<http://pbsg.npolar.no>



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