

**Progress Report, Action #12**  
**2015-2017 Bilateral and Multilateral Actions,**  
**Circumpolar Action Plan:**  
**Conservation Strategy for the Polar Bear**



<b>Title</b>	Polar Bear Range States' Trade Working Group Recommendations
<b>Timeline</b>	Ongoing
<b>Description of Activity from 2017 Implementation Table</b>	Implement the six recommendations adopted by the Range States based on completion of the Trade Working Group (TWG) project <i>International Cooperation for Better Enforcement, Reporting and Data for Polar Bears</i> to fulfill the statements set forth in the <i>Declaration of the Responsible Ministers of the Polar Bear Range States</i> to counter threat of poaching and illegal trade and to strengthen international cooperation to improve the clarity of legal trade data.
<b>Baseline status</b>	TWG recommendations approved at 2015 meeting. Work on consistent implementation has not started yet.
<b>Planned Outputs</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Use the agreed Terms and Units used by the Range States in their Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) Annual Reports circulated to the CITES Parties for their use in their CITES annual reports.</li> <li>2. Use of the agreed Method to Estimate the Number of Polar Bears in International Trade for Range States when analyzing the CITES trade data.</li> <li>3. Use of the agreed Administrative Procedures to Verify CITES Export Permits for CITES Management Authorities.</li> <li>4. Develop a Polar Bear Range States Wildlife Enforcement Network (WEN) for information sharing between the Range States.</li> <li>5. Implementation of agreed tagging procedures for harvested bears and bears taken in defense of life and property.</li> <li>6. Canada will post an online report of Canadian CITES Export Permits Issued for Bears Harvested in Canada annually.</li> </ol>
<b>Modifications</b>	None
<b>Progress Report Date</b>	November 24, 2017

**Progress Report on Activity**

**Outputs:** No responses were received from Greenland or the Russian Federation. The responses from Canada, Norway, and the United States are below. Also, it is noted which actions are completed or ongoing (in progress still).

Number	Planned Output Description	Output Progress	Output Status
1	Use the agreed Terms and Units used by the Range States in their CITES Annual Reports circulated to the CITES Parties for their use in their CITES annual reports.	<p><b><u>Canada</u></b>  Canada uses the agreed Terms and Units for polar bear in their CITES annual reports, and as described in CITES Notification 2016/032, including the Annex (<a href="https://cites.org/sites/default/files/notif/E-Notif-2016-032.pdf">https://cites.org/sites/default/files/notif/E-Notif-2016-032.pdf</a>). While it is not possible to have a single set of terms for all polar bear imports, exports, and re-exports due to differing requirements of national legislation, the Range States recommend that CITES Parties use terms and units in their CITES annual reports for the polar bear parts in trade as they are used by each Range State.</p> <p><b><u>Norway</u></b>  Generally Norway adheres to the last version of the Guidelines for the preparation and submission of CITES annual reports (re-issued January 2017). This version will be used as basis for Norway’s reporting on the year 2016.</p> <p>“See for reference – the Report from the Range States Trade Working Group Project: Completed Tasks (part Ai) with full list of appropriate terms”. On terms for scientific samples Norway uses the CITES term specimen (SPE) and always indicate in the description section what kind of sample it is (blood, milk, teeth, hair). Trade in claws is very rare, while claws attached to the rug or skin is only described as 'complete rug'. Norway notes the term bone (BON) for uncarved bones and carving (CAR) for carved bones. Trade in such specimens is rare to and from Norway.</p> <p><b><u>United States</u></b>  The United States, to the best extent possible, uses the agreed terms and units for polar bear in its Annual Reports.</p>	<p>All five polar bear Range States are current with their CITES Annual Reports submission.</p> <p><b>Completed.</b></p>

Number	Planned Output Description	Output Progress	Output Status
2	Use of the agreed Method to Estimate the Number of Polar Bears in International Trade for Range States when analyzing the CITES trade data.	<p><b>Canada</b> Canada's CITES Scientific Authority uses the agreed method to estimate the number of polar bears in international trade, to evaluate conservation impact. The method for analyzing the CITES trade data is described in CITES Notification 2016/032 (<a href="https://cites.org/sites/default/files/notif/E-Notif-2016-032.pdf">https://cites.org/sites/default/files/notif/E-Notif-2016-032.pdf</a>).</p> <p><b>Norway</b> Norway concurs that the origin of parts of polar bears as in international trade is not necessarily harvested the same year as of export. For analysis of trade volume focus should be on harvest of whole bears and not on samples or parts of a bear. In its reporting Norway has focus on avoiding double reporting (e.g., skin and skull being two specimens). Such permits will, therefore, be adjusted to calculate the actual number individuals traded, while still mentioning what products are traded (in the description section).</p> <p><b>United States</b> CITES Parties informed of agreed methodology to estimate the number of polar bears in international trade. CITES Notification 2016/032. No recent trade analyses have been done by the United States.</p>	<p>Agreed upon methodology exists and all CITES Parties were informed.</p> <p><b>Completed.</b></p>
3	Use of the agreed Administrative Procedures to Verify CITES Export Permits for CITES Management Authorities.	<p><b>Canada</b> Canada uses and supports other countries' use of the agreed Administrative Procedures for verification of CITES export permits, by following the agreed administrative procedures, including ensuring that Canada's contact information on the CITES website is up to date, and ensuring Management Authorities respond to requests for information within the prescribed time limits, as described in CITES Notification 2016/032 (<a href="https://cites.org/sites/default/files/notif/E-Notif-2016-032.pdf">https://cites.org/sites/default/files/notif/E-Notif-2016-032.pdf</a>).</p> <p><b>Norway</b> CITES Management Authority of Norway regularly updates contact</p>	<p>Agreed upon administrative procedures for verification were developed and CITES Parties were informed in CITES Notification 2016/032.</p> <p><b>Completed.</b></p>

Number	Planned Output Description	Output Progress	Output Status
3, cont'd		<p>information on 'National CITES Authorities' as found on the CITES web pages. This includes police/criminal investigation contact details related to environmental issues.</p> <p>Regarding verification of Polar Bear export permits, the Norwegian CITES MA usually will be able to respond within a week.</p>	
4	Develop a Polar Bear Range States WEN for information sharing between the Range States.	<p><b>Canada</b> Canada has taken action to create a Working Group to advance towards a comprehensive WEN for information sharing. To date, Working Group members from Canada, the United States, Greenland and Norway have been identified. The group will continue work on this item in the months until the 2018 Range States Biennial Meeting of the Parties (MoP). Through the work of this group, Canada has the intention to share information about the recently-developed "3-pronged approach" for improved tracking bears in trade.</p> <p>Further update received from Sheldon Jordan, Director General Wildlife Enforcement Directorate, Environment and Climate Change Canada. Canada organized a half day breakout session of Arctic countries at the upcoming INTERPOL Wildlife Crime Working Group meeting, October 9-13, 2017 in Singapore. Canada, USA and Sweden will be there; still awaiting confirmation from the others.</p> <p>Canada also organized a side enforcement meeting of Polar Bear Range States and other Arctic countries on the margins of the CITES Standing Committee Meeting (SC69) in late November 2017.</p> <p>Our one meeting and one call to date seem to indicate that there are commonalities in trade (legal and not) of Arctic species, mainly going south (various countries) and to China. There is little intra-Arctic trade or compliance issues with the exception of Canada - USA. Ensuring compliance</p>	Progress made, but implementation of recommendation is still <b>on-going</b> .

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4, cont'd		<p>and traceability will be key to ensuring harvest is sustainable – of any species.</p> <p>The working Group members feel that organizing meetings on the margins of other, connected events, is the most efficient way to start to share initial data and explore the possibility of forming a Polar Bear Range states or larger Circumpolar WEN.</p> <p><b><u>Norway</u></b> Norway reported that the national wildlife authorities (NEA) act as their national WEN contact.</p>	
5	Implementation of agreed tagging procedures for harvested bears and bears taken in defense of life and property.	<p><b><u>Canada</u></b> Canada and other Range States have shared information on their tagging procedures with each other, and this action item is complete. The tagging system in Canada allows for reliable tracing of the exported specimens back to individual harvested bears, and ensures that export of every bear is based on legal and non-detrimental harvest. A detailed description of the tagging procedures used by Canada was provided to other range states in the TWG Final Report.</p> <p><b><u>Norway</u></b> The Norwegian CITES permitting authority generally wants to see a correlation between specimens and permits, e.g., via tagging or other marking and through better description of specimens on the permits. Tagging will be mainly for products such as whole skins. Norway supports the notion of tag remaining on the specimens from harvest and to the final destination if possible.</p> <p>A new national CITES regulation is now proposed (autumn 2017) and awaits final Government endorsement. This new regulation makes it mandatory for skins of polar bears to be tagged upon import or to be tagged soon after.</p>	<p>Action appears to be completed by Canada and the United States. For Norway, new regulations are pending.</p> <p><b>Partially completed.</b></p>

Number	Planned Output Description	Output Progress	Output Status
5, cont'd		<p>The tagging requirement is also applicable to polar bear skins inside the country. Locking tags are deemed to be the cheapest method and can be more easily checked. Copies of CITES permits stating tag number (including permits issued by other Parties) or a new NEA issued certificate will also be mandatory. Records of tagged specimens will be kept by NEA.</p> <p><b>United States</b>  A detailed description of the United States tagging procedures was provided in the TWG Final Report. United States domestic law only allows coastal dwelling Alaska Natives to harvest polar bears for subsistence or handicraft purposes. Once harvested Alaska Natives must report and register the hide and skull of the bear with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) or its representative within 30 days, at which time a uniquely numbered tamper-resistant tag is placed on both the hide and skull and that tag must remain with the hide through the tanning process. At time of tagging the Service collects a pre-molar from the harvested animal but no hair is currently collected. Additionally, the Service does not allow the commercial sale or export of raw or tanned hides or mounts of polar bears. Any polar bear taken in defense of human life or illegally harvested must either be transferred to the Service or in the case of an illegal harvest is seized by the Service. Such specimens are tagged by the Service and remain the property of the Service. United States domestic law does not allow a polar bear to be taken (killed) in defense of property.</p>	
6	Canada will post an online report of Canadian CITES Export Permits Issued for Bears Harvested in Canada annually.	<p><b>Canada</b>  Canada annually publishes a summary of wildlife trade in our WAPPRIITA (Canada's Wildlife Trade Act) annual report. The most recent WAPPRIITA annual report can be found here: <a href="http://www.ec.gc.ca/cites/default.asp?lang=En&amp;n=85694F95-1">http://www.ec.gc.ca/cites/default.asp?lang=En&amp;n=85694F95-1</a>. The WAPPRIITA annual report for 2016 will contain a summary of information on polar bear exports, and is expected for publication in late 2017. Canada continues to work to make data available in an accurate timely and</p>	<p>Action still in progress by Canada and under consideration.</p> <p><b>In progress.</b></p>

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6, cont'd		<p>transparent way that respects legal and privacy concerns, in order to facilitate cooperation and ensure transparency and use of polar bear trade data in an efficient way.</p> <p>Canada also provides an annual trade data report to the CITES Secretariat. The latest published (2015) CITES polar bear trade data can be found here: <a href="http://trade.cites.org/">http://trade.cites.org/</a>. The recommended methods for analyzing these data are outlined in Recommendation #2 of the Circumpolar Action Plan (CAP) Implementation Plan and can also be found in CITES Notification 2016/032 (<a href="https://cites.org/sites/default/files/notif/E-Notif-2016-032.pdf">https://cites.org/sites/default/files/notif/E-Notif-2016-032.pdf</a>).</p> <p><b>Norway</b></p> <p>Norway reported to monitor trade the focus should be on whole skins and exempt scientific samples or smaller items. There is no regular harvest of polar bear in Norway and a database containing requested information has therefore not been established. The off-take of polar bear in Norway averages one a year and are animals causing danger. These specimens are usually traded on the domestic market.</p>	