

Progress Report, Action #63
2015-2017 Bilateral and Multilateral Actions,
Circumpolar Action Plan:
Conservation Strategy for the Polar Bear



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| Action | Explore methods for improving the design of improving polar bear population studies |
| Timeline | 2015-2019 |
| Description of Activity from 2017 Implementation Table | International Union for the Conservation of Nature/Species Survival Commission (IUCN/SSC) Polar Bear Specialist Group (PBSG) to develop recommendations for improving the design of population studies/assessments in order to increase the efficiency of how resources are utilized. |
| Baseline status | Recommendations not developed. |
| Planned Outputs | Progress report at the 2018 Range States Biennial Meeting of the Parties (MoP). Peer-reviewed publication in 2019. |
| Modifications | Work has progressed slower than the Range States initially estimated; therefore, the timeline has been modified above. |
| Progress Report Date | November 24, 2017 |

Progress Report on Activity

Work is underway on the project to improve the design of polar bear population studies. Two years of funding were obtained for a postdoctoral researcher (Dr. Nathan Hostetter) to lead this project. Dr. Hostetter is employed by the U.S. Geological Survey (adviser Dr. Sarah Converse) in collaboration with the University of Washington (adviser Dr. Eric Regehr) and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. As part of this project, a working group of international polar bear scientists has been formed to identify the key challenges and questions associated with the design of population studies. This will ensure that results are applicable to population studies across multiple jurisdictions.

Next Steps

Dr. Hostetter is currently developing a simulation-based approach to evaluate different study designs for the estimation of abundance, survival, and reproductive parameters. Initial results are anticipated in 2018.