How can we help Polar Bears in 2022?

By Wiktoria Maksim

Polar bears are in an incredible amount of danger. Global warming caused by burning fossil fuels is melting the sea ice polar bears depend on. They use it as a platform to travel, hunt and rest. Changes in the timing of sea formation and break up, limits the amount of time bears can feed off of seals during late and early summer. For this reason, it limits the amount of fat they are able to store for later seasons.

Their population size is decreasing quickly due to shorter hunting seasons. Since there are fewer hunting opportunities there is a decreased amount of food, which will cause polar bears to go hungry longer. As the ice breaks up, the animals are forced to roam for long distances or on to shore, where they struggle to find food and feed their cubs. Climate change has resulted in warmer water temperatures which negatively affects cold-water fish which the polar bears feed on. Due to the lack of food polar bears have recently started to engage in cannibalism and hunt one another making the species becomes extinct faster.

Sixteen year old [Greta Thunberg](https://quillette.com/2019/04/23/self-harm-versus-the-greater-good-greta-thunberg-and-child-activism/), [told party leaders](https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-london-48023800)in the UK House of Commons that she had been shown pictures of starving polar bears in school. She had previously told Guardian reporter Jonathan Watts how upsetting those images were for her:

“I remember when I was younger, and in school, our teachers showed us films of plastic in the ocean, starving polar bears and so on. I cried through all the movies. My classmates were concerned when they watched the film, but when it stopped, they started thinking about other things. I couldn’t do that. **Those pictures were stuck in my head.”**

Our impact on their ice home and their livelihood is broader and more complex. We can’t build a fence around the polar bears melting habitat and we can’t assign wildlife officers to guard the gate. So, what can we do?

To save the ice, we must move away from burning fossil fuels like oil, coal and gas because these fuels produce gases that act like a blanket around the earth, heating up our planet and causing the ice to melt, leaving the polar bears without a home. Is this really a world you want your future kids and grandchildren to live in?

The most important action you can take is, open up and talk about climate change and climate solutions with friends, family members and colleagues. Promote clean transportation. Support community projects aimed at reducing the number of vehicles overall and support the shift to electric and hybrid cars.

By early 2040, it is very likely that polar bears will start to experience reproductive failure, leading to extinctions, according to a study published in Nature Climate Change. Remember if we don’t act on this now polar bears could be lost by 2100.