

## Climate at a Glance: Polar Bears

### **Bullet-Point Summary:**

- **Polar bear populations are *increasing dramatically*** during recent decades as the planet has warmed.
- The estimated polar bear **population has *quadrupled since 1950***, rising from 10,000 bears in 1950 to 39,000 bears today.
- Polar bears evolved between 6 million years ago and 350,000 years ago, **surviving and thriving in much warmer climate than today.**
- Speculation that polar bears are facing imminent demise defy polar bear evolution, polar bear history, and the present state of polar bear populations.

### **Short Summary:**

Polar bears evolved hundreds of thousands of years ago and have thrived during much warmer global climate than today. After dropping to a low of 10,000 bears in 1950, during the middle of a global cooling period, polar bear numbers have quadrupled to 39,000 today.

Climate alarmists often speculate that just a modest amount of warming will sufficiently reduce Arctic ice and food availability to push polar bears to extinction. However, we know for a fact that will not be the case because polar bears have survived periods of much warmer climate than today. For example, the [Holocene climatic optimum](#), from 9000 to 5000 years ago.

Polar bear scientist Dr. Susan Crockford documents in a comprehensive [paper](#) how and why global polar bear numbers continue to rise in our modestly warming world. See Figure 1.

The best way to ensure polar bear survival is to enforce and expand the international polar bear treaty of 1973 that finally protected many of the existing bears from hunting.

**Figure 1: Global polar bear population size estimates to 2018.**

## Global polar bear population size estimates to 2018

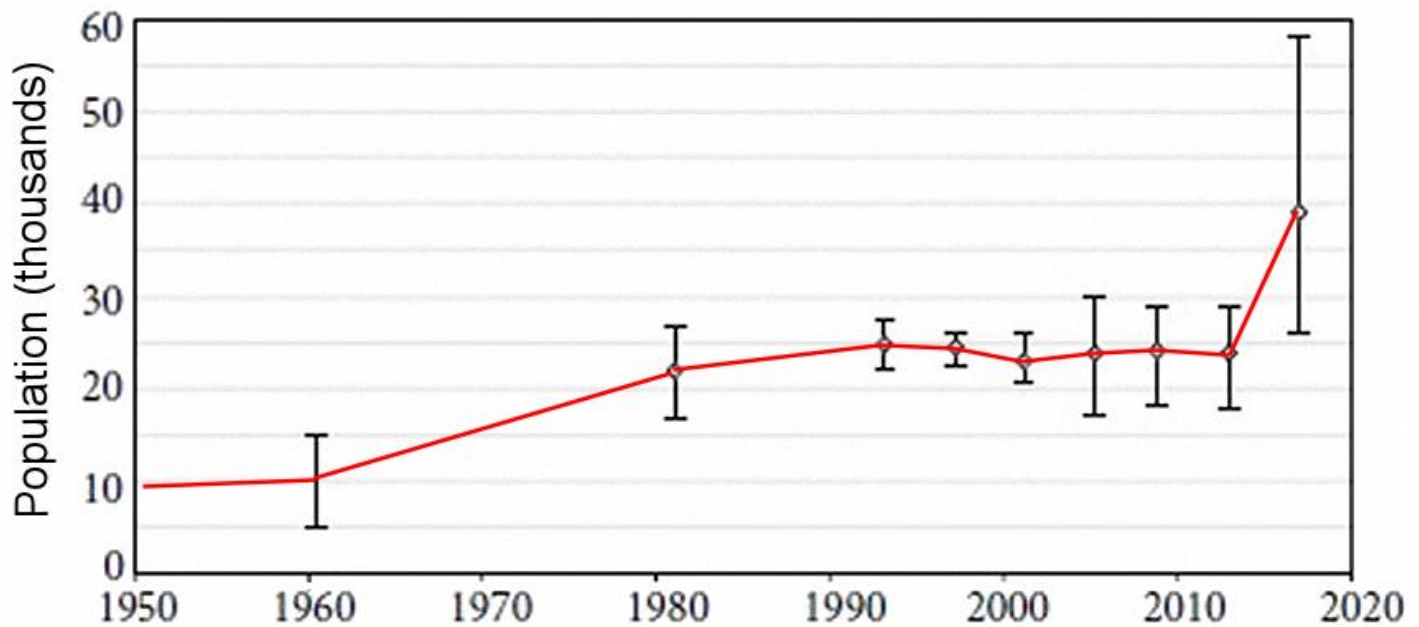


Figure 1, source: [Chapter 10 of The Polar Bear Catastrophe That Never Happened](#) (Dr. Susan Crockford 2019).

As you can see in Figure 1, claims of declining polar bear populations essentially vanish when all data is considered.

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### References:

1. **Crockford, S.J. 2020.** State of the Polar Bear Report 2019. Global Warming Policy Foundation Report 39, London. pdf [here](#).
2. **Aars, J., Marques, T.A., Lone, K., Anderson, M., Wiig, Ø., Fløystad, I.M.B., Hagen, S.B. and Buckland, S.T. 2017.** The number and distribution of polar bears in the western Barents Sea. *Polar Research* 36:1. 1374125. doi:[10.1080/17518369.2017.1374125](https://doi.org/10.1080/17518369.2017.1374125)
3. **Regehr, E.V., Laidre, K.L., Akçakaya, H.R., Amstrup, S.C., Atwood, T.C., Lunn, N.J., Obbard, M., Stern, H., Thiemann, G.W., & Wiig, Ø. 2016.** Conservation status of polar bears (*Ursus maritimus*) in relation to projected sea-ice declines. *Biology Letters* 12: 20160556. <http://rsbl.royalsocietypublishing.org/content/12/12/20160556>
4. **The Polar Bear Catastrophe That Never Happened** The Global Warming Policy Foundation (March 17, 2019) <https://www.amazon.com/dp/0993119085>

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