

# Canada's polar bear sport hunt not targeted: environmental groups

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[CBC News](#)

U.S. environmental groups pushing to have polar bears protected as an endangered species say they're not seeking an end to Canadian sport hunting.

The [Center for Biological Diversity](#), the Natural Resources Defence Council and Greenpeace want polar bears listed under the U.S. Endangered Species Act.

They say the bears are vulnerable due to the decline in Arctic sea ice caused by climate change. About 60 per cent of the world's 22,000 to 27,000 polar bears live in Canada's North.

**'What we're concerned about is the conservation of the species.'** -*Greenpeace's Melanie Duchin*

The groups are lobbying the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to add polar bears to the endangered list.

Melanie Duchin, who is with Greenpeace in Anchorage, Alaska, says listing the bears as endangered would pressure the U.S. government to cut back on greenhouse gas emissions.

Duchin says her group is not against hunting or opposed to the aboriginal polar bear hunt.

"What we're concerned about is the conservation of the species," Duchin told CBC News.

"If the species of certain populations against the backdrop of global warming can sustain a commercial hunt, than we're not going to oppose it."

## Sustainable hunting supported

[Kassie Siegel](#), a lawyer for the [Center for Biological Diversity](#), says if polar bears are listed under the Endangered Species Act, it might affect the importation of polar bear trophies to the United States.

However, there are precedents whereby trophies have been allowed for animals listed under the legislation.

"We want the sport hunting to be sustainable," [Siegel](#) said.

"We have some concerns about hunting levels in Greenland, in parts of Russia and in some parts of Canada, but it was not the intent of this petition to impact sport hunting in Canada."

[Seigel](#)'s group is worried about polar bear hunting in the southern Beaufort Sea and the western Hudson Bay.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is reviewing the polar bear's status and must make a decision by Dec. 27.