

11 September, 2017

Re: Initiating the Polar Bear Action Network

Dear colleagues,

1. Initiating the Polar Bear Action Network (PBAN)

There are many important issues that we (and our organisations) are each, and often together, working to progress. The polar bear is an iconic arctic species that has become one of the global symbols for all of the species (and their habitats) increasingly under threat from human-driven (anthropogenic) actions.

Currently, there is insufficient credible public scientific evidence:

- to support the many polar bears needlessly killed each year by so-called 'legal killing' ("trophy hunting") and by 'illegal killing' (poaching);
- to support an accurate total global polar bear population number.

Almost 2 years ago, the limited public information available then, already indicated a 30% decline in global polar bear population by 2050 (<http://www.iucnredlist.org/news/new-assessment-highlights-climate-change-as-most-serious-threat-to-polar-bear-survival-iucn-red-list>).

The PBAN is being initiated now - because we can not wait - until it is too late to act.

World Heritage International (WHI) is initiating the Polar Bear Action Network (PBAN) as a critical campaigning tool for the global NGO community to promote urgent polar bear public policy progress.

Public policy progress is needed via a CITES Appendix I 'uplisting' of all 19 polar bear subpopulations across the world, that are increasingly under threat from anthropogenic (human driven) causes, including: climate change (CC), persistent organic pollutants (POPs), habitat degradation via fossil fuel exploration / extraction / transportation; trophy hunting and poaching.

Progressing a CITES Appendix I 'uplisting' for polar bears is part of a broader global initiative to apply an effective "precautionary principle" (PP) - please see 1.1 PP definition below in *red text* - across all environmental issues.

In the interim, until sufficient credible scientific evidence across all 19 polar bear subpopulations is publicly available - at least - an immediate moratorium on all polar bear trophy hunting must be urgently applied by all polar bear states (Canada, Russia, United States, Norway, Denmark-Greenland).

The integration and application of the PP is intended to generate and promote the necessary scientific research, innovation and high-value detailed information on biodiversity for the development and formulation of public policies.

Any scientific research must be available to all stakeholders across civil society - far in advance of the decision-making process affecting environmental outcomes (as well as for inclusion and dissemination across educational programs to promote maximum transparency and participation).

1.1 Importance of the integration / application of the 'precautionary principle' (PP) across all proposals that may potentially degrade the viability of -m or otherwise affect - ecosystems.

"...In order to prevent the detrimental impact of harmful activities on biological diversity and ecosystems - in the absence of credible, fully-detailed, scientific evidence proving 'cause and effect' outcomes - it is crucial to apply the 'precautionary principle' (PP).

The PP is based on the reasonable and prudent scientific premise - that before any potentially harmful activity is undertaken, full detailed assessments must provide objective detailed credible scientific evidence that no detriment to biodiversity or degradation of ecosystems will occur.

And, that this credible detailed scientific evidence must be publicly distributed to all interested stakeholders far in advance of a decision-making process - to promote full engagement with civil society and full opportunities for the identification, development and presentation of additional credible evidence and subsequent discussion.

Until this credible detailed assessment for potential detriment to biological diversity and ecosystem viability is publicly accessible, existing unassessed activity has to immediately cease through moratorium.

This means taking full preventive action (as necessary) before conclusive scientific proof regarding cause and effect between the potential actions and the potential outcomes - e.g. degradation / damage - will be available...."

2. The purpose of the following public NGO statement via the PBAN, is to support:

- an immediate moratorium on all polar bear trophy hunting; CITES Appendix I 'uplisting';
- full implementation of the 'precautionary principle', re: all contemplated actions affecting any of the 19 polar bear subpopulations across the world.

2.1 "....We, the following signatory NGOs - in recognition of the unprecedented urgent anthropogenic threats affecting all 19 polar bear subpopulations (including: climate change; persistent organic pollutants; fossil fuel exploration / extraction / transportation; trophy hunting and poaching) - are strongly supporting urgent action from the five polar bear states (Canada, Russia, United States, Norway, Denmark / Greenland) to:

- **apply an immediate moratorium on all trophy hunting across all 19 polar bear subpopulations;**
- **support CITES Appendix I polar bear 'uplisting' for all 19 polar bear subpopulations;**
- **integrate and apply the 'precautionary principle' across all and any contemplated actions affecting any of the 19 polar bear subpopulations...."**

3. The polar bears survival depends upon all of our NGO voices coming together via the PBAN to change polar bear public policy into a process for proactive protection, rather than the current habitat degradation and species destruction.

WHI World Heritage International

3.1 Please join us by adding your voice to this public campaign initiative (PBAN) by emailing to contact@WHINT.org your:

- full NGO name (e.g. World Heritage International - WHI);
- the full name of your NGO representative / NGO title (e.g. Mr. Tony Sadownichik / Chair, Board of Directors - WHI)
- full email address of your NGO representative (e.g. Tony.Sadownichik@WHINT.org)

The PBAN is being initiated now - because we will not wait - until it is too late to act.

Thank you in advance and best regards,



Tony Sadownichik

Board Chair, World Heritage International
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www.whint.org

cc:

Dr. Ivan Blokov via iblokov@whint.org (Moscow, Russia) – WHI Board Director

Dr. Geert Drieman via gdrieman@whint.org (Amsterdam, Netherlands) – WHI Board Director