



U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Arctic

National Wildlife Refuge

Helping polar bears helps us all.

I pledge to take the following actions to contribute to a better world:

(Select actions from the back page, or create your own.)

Signed _____

Dated _____



Place this on your refrigerator or desk to remind yourself of these easy ways you can contribute to a better world.

What's happening to polar bears at Kaktovik, Alaska?

Polar bears traditionally hunt across arctic sea ice for seals. In order to grow strong and stay healthy, the bears need the large amounts of fat and nutrition that seals provide.

But warming temperatures in the arctic are causing sea ice to retreat many hundreds of miles away from the north coast of Alaska, and far from the shallow waters near land that the seals prefer.

Now polar bears must decide whether to stay on the distant ice, with less chance to find seals, or to stay on land, where they need to locate new types of foods.

In Kaktovik, the polar bears on land feed on the remains of whale carcasses during the village's fall whaling season. This is not the bears' preferred food, but it is the best alternative they can find.

What can you do to help polar bears?

Most of us live a long way from polar bears, but we can all take actions that help the bears, and help our own neighborhoods as well.

The problem: Humans are burning large amounts of the ancient plants we call "fossil fuels" (including oil, gasoline, natural gas, and coal). When these fuels burn, they add carbon to the atmosphere, which traps heat and warms the earth's surface.

Actions you take to reduce your fossil fuel use will ease the problem. Select a few below that you can do. Then list them on the other side of this sheet, and make your pledge to contribute to a better world.

- Use less gasoline. Some ideas include: combine your errands so you drive less; carpool, take public transportation or walk whenever possible; try hypermiling (using energy efficient driving techniques); keep tire pressure correct.
- Reduce the heating or cooling in your home. Some ideas include: Lower the thermostat a few degrees in cool months, insulate your windows, and wear a jacket or sweater indoors; raise the

thermostat a few degrees in warm months to reduce air conditioner use, and use window shades to reduce the sun's heat indoors.

- Include food in your energy saving mix: Some ideas include: Purchase foods grown locally to reduce transportation demands (and support local businesses); heat foods hot, then turn off stove/microwave and insulate the pan to finish cooking; if eating beef, purchase grass-fed meat from sustainable farms (because effective livestock grazing pulls carbon out of the atmosphere and stores it in plant roots).
- Include household items in your energy mix: Some ideas include: Change light bulbs to compact florescent or LEDs; unplug electronics when not in use; air-dry clothes when possible; purchase energy efficient appliances.

This is a brief list of ways we can reduce fossil fuel use. If you have other ways to reduce your fossil fuel use, add them to your pledge, too.

A warming world is a problem for all of us.

Our society depends on the energy we get from fossil fuels. But each one of us can find ways to reduce our fossil fuel use a bit, which may help keep the Arctic cool enough for polar bears, and help us, too.

A warming world is not only a problem in the arctic. It may also be causing problems closer to our own homes. Some examples you may

be noticing include increases in: extreme weather events, droughts or floods; insect outbreaks; coastal erosion; wildfires; and plants blooming at unusual times.

This pledge to take actions to reduce fossil fuel use will help all of us. Thank you!

Arctic Refuge and the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service have additional information about polar bears at <https://www.fws.gov/refuge/arctic/mammals.html>, <https://www.fws.gov/refuge/arctic/pbvmanagement.html>, <https://www.fws.gov/refuge/arctic/visitquicklinks.html> (scroll down to Polar Bear Information), <https://www.fws.gov/alaska/fisheries/mmm/polarbear/pbmain.htm> .