



NOTIFICATION TO THE PARTIES

No. 2016/032

Geneva, 23 March 2016

CONCERNING:

Trade in Polar Bears (*Ursus maritimus*)

1. This Notification to the Parties was submitted by Canada on behalf of the parties to the *1973 Agreement on the Conservation of Polar Bears*.
2. The *Agreement on the Conservation of Polar Bears* was concluded in Oslo, Norway, on 15 November 1973. The Polar Bear Range States comprise Canada, Denmark (Greenland), Norway, the Russian Federation and the United States of America. The Range States have held meetings every two years beginning in 2007.
3. The Range States met in December 2013 in Moscow, Russian Federation, and reaffirmed their commitment to work together to ensure the survival of the species through the signing of the Declaration of the Responsible Ministers of the Polar Bear Range States¹. This Declaration contains two paragraphs related to trade in polar bears as follows:

...

Understanding the importance of the issues we face and their possible impacts on future generations, we, the representatives of polar bear range states declare our commitment to continue to work actively to implement the 1973 Agreement on the Conservation of Polar Bears in order to:

...

- *Explore mechanisms to counter the threat of poaching and illegal trade in polar bears and polar bear parts, including enhanced cooperation among law enforcement agencies at the national, regional and global levels;*
 - *Strengthen international cooperation to improve the clarity of legal trade data through the adoption of more effective reporting and monitoring practices and help address illegal trade through the adoption of procedures to better identify legally traded specimens and to verify the authenticity of trade documents.*
4. The Polar Bear Trade Working Group, co-Chaired by Canada and the United States of America, was formed to implement these two aspects of the Declaration. Its work resulted in six recommendations relating to facilitating international cooperation for better enforcement, reporting and data for polar bears. The recommendations were endorsed by the Parties to the Agreement on the Conservation of Polar Bears at their meeting in Ilulissat, Greenland, in September 2015.
 5. The purpose of this Notification is to make public the recommendations of the Polar Bear Trade Working Group of the Polar Bear range States so that all Parties can be made aware of these procedures as

¹ <https://www.ec.gc.ca/nature/default.asp?lang=En&n=33E9D90B-1>

agreed to by polar bear range States. This information will be provided to the United Nations Environment Programme – World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP-WCMC) as well. The Notification contains:

- a) Recommendations on the terms for Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) Parties to use in their CITES annual reports;
 - b) The appropriate method to estimate the number of polar bears in international trade; and
 - c) Administrative procedures to verify CITES export permits.
6. On behalf of the parties to the *1973 Agreement on the Conservation of Polar Bears*, Canada commissioned a report, entitled *Review and Analysis of Canadian Trade in Polar Bears from 2005–2014*, to facilitate the understanding of the supply chain and consumer demand dynamics for polar bears. This report informed the parties to the *Agreement* about these recommendations, and can be obtained from the Polar Bear Range States website at: <http://naalakkersuisut.gl/en/Naalakkersuisut/Departments/Fiskeri-Fangst-og-Landbrug/Isbjorn/Trade-Working-Group-Report>.

a) Terms for CITES Parties to use in CITES Annual Reports

- i) To improve the clarity of legal trade data, consistency is needed regarding the terms and units used by exporters and importers in the CITES annual reports which are provided to and compiled by UNEP-WCMC. Consistent use of terms will help avoid confusion and double-counting of polar bears in international trade. The range States recommend that exporters and importers use the terms that are used by the range States.
- ii) While it is not possible to have a single set of terms for all polar bear imports, exports, and re-exports due to differing requirements of national legislation, the range States recommend that CITES Parties use terms and units in their CITES annual reports for the polar bear parts in trade as they are used by each polar bear range State. This information is provided to the CITES Parties as an Annex to this Notification. An explanation of terms is available in *Guidelines for the preparation and submission of CITES annual reports (February 2011, <http://www.cites.org/eng/notif/2011/E019A.pdf>)*.
- iii) Further, it is recommended that the most precise term available be used to describe the specimen, and specifically:
 - Whenever possible, not use imprecise terms, for example: ‘plate’ and ‘derivatives’;
 - When the specimens traded for scientific purposes are hair or teeth, use the terms ‘hair’ and ‘teeth’ instead of the term ‘scientific specimen’ in order to be more precise;
 - Only use the term ‘claw’ when the claw is not attached to the hide or body; and
 - Use the term ‘bone’ for uncarved bones and the term ‘carving’ for carved bones.
- iv) Finally, it is recommended that the specimen code (as per the terminology used in the *Guidelines for the preparation and submission of CITES annual reports*) be included in the box provided on the CITES permit or certificate to describe the specimen (Box 5).

b) Method to estimate the number of Polar bears in international trade

- i) The range States adopt and recommend the use of the following method when estimating the number of polar bears in international trade. A shared method is critical for understanding and avoiding confusion on the number of polar bears in trade. The range States further recommend that when estimating the number of polar bears in international trade using the CITES trade data, it is recognized that polar bear parts in international trade are not necessarily from polar bears

- harvested in the same year they are exported. The parts in international trade may be from harvests in many different hunting seasons which can date back several decades.
- ii) The ultimate goal in trade data analysis is to inform an evaluation of conservation impact. Information most useful for evaluating conservation impact is the number of polar bears in international trade. The CITES Trade Database offers two report types: a Gross/Net Trade Tabulations report and a Comparative Tabulations report. It is imperative that the Comparative Tabulations Report type is used for the analysis as the gross data sums all trade transactions including re-exports and cases where the same transaction is simply reported differently (e.g., 100 skins reported by the exporter and the same 100 skins reported as trophies by the importer would be summed as 200). The recommended approach to arrive at the number of bears in trade is outlined below and uses the trade terms “bodies”, “skins” and “trophies”. In order to provide the best estimate of the number of polar bears in trade, the approach only includes those specimens that indicate harvested whole polar bears. Specimens from non-lethal collection (e.g., hair) are not included as they do not represent a harvested bear and do not have a conservation impact. The rationale for choosing bodies, skins and trophies takes into account:
- larger specimens are more representative of a harvested polar bear (a whole skin for example vs. a skin piece); and
 - specimens infrequently traded have little impact especially when not the main product that is also in trade.
- iii) Skulls are sometimes traded separately from a skin or a body. Typically, however, the body is also in trade along with the skull and already accounts for one bear. The number of skulls in international trade in 2012–2013 was approximately 9% of the trade compared to 88% of the trade represented by skins, bodies, and trophies (CITES export data from the Canadian Permit Database for 2012–2013 (accessed September 29, 2014). The report Review and Analysis of Canadian Trade in Polar Bears 2005–2014 also shows that the inclusion of skulls is not important for estimating the number of polar bears in international trade. In the case of hunting trophies, skulls accompany hides, and in other cases, tag numbers for exported skulls could be matched to tag numbers for exported hides. Thus, it is not recommended to take skulls into account to avoid double counting. Finally, trade of live animals is not taken into account because the trade is not frequent, and when it occurs, it usually involves specimens bred in captivity (e.g., zoo) and not polar bears taken from the wild.
- iv) Steps for data analysis to estimate the number of bears in trade from each range State (getting the report):
1. Open the CITES Trade Database at: <http://trade.cites.org/>
 2. Select a year range
 3. Select “Canada”, “Denmark”, “Greenland”, “Norway”, “Russian Federation” and “United States of America” for exporting countries
 4. Select “All countries” for importing countries
 5. Select “All sources”
 6. Select “All purposes”
 7. Select “bodies”, “skins” and “trophies” for trade terms
 8. Search by taxon: *Ursus maritimus*
 9. Select output type “csv”
 10. Select report type “Comparative Tabulations”
 11. Get the report
- v) Steps for data analysis to estimate the number of bears in trade from each range State (in the report):
1. Select a year
 2. Sort the data by origin
 3. Delete all the records where the origin is provided (these data represent re-exports)

4. Sort the data by exporter

Auto sum the “exported reported quantity” for each exporting range State (Canada, Greenland, Denmark, Norway, Russian Federation and United States of America).

c) Administrative procedures to verify CITES export permits

Consistent with the standard procedure adopted by CITES, the range States agree that they will facilitate verification of permits in the following ways:

- Management Authorities from polar bear range States will ensure accurate contact information for the Management Authority on the CITES website under “National Contacts and Information”;
- Any Party that wishes to verify the authenticity of CITES documentation for a polar bear export should make a request for verification of CITES documentation to the relevant Management Authority of the range State of export;
- On request, the Management Authority of the range State of export will provide information to allow permit verification (e.g., provide a copy of the permit or certificate as issued, or verify a copy of the document provided by the importing country); and
- The Management Authority will provide information within 15 business days of the request for verification. If this is impossible, the Management Authority shall reply within 15 business days and indicate a date by which they consider it will be possible to provide the information requested.

Trade in Polar Bears (*Ursus maritimus*)

Terms used by each range State for polar bear specimens traded and reported in CITES annual reports (Part A) and general comments about trade not associated with a particular specimen term (Part B).

Part A. Terms, frequency of use and units used for polar bear specimens traded and reported in CITES annual reports, as reported by each range State.

Term Description and Code	Exporting country	Use	Equals one polar bear?	Frequency	Comments
Trophy (TRO)	Canada	Not used			The term 'trophy' is not used by Canada because it is not precise enough and it is not consistently applied by both exporters and importers. The CITES term 'trophy' is not always applied to whole animals. When the term trophy is applied to separate parts of an animal, it suggests that each part represents a separate animal.
	USA	Sport-hunted polar bear trophy (special circumstances usually apply)	Yes	Infrequent	The term trophy is used to describe a non-commercial, sport-hunted polar bear in accordance with the following definition in United States law: <i>Trophy = "all parts of one animal, if they are exported together; e.g., horns, skull, cape, backskin, tail and feet constitute one trophy."</i> This definition only applies if the specimen is being traded for trophy purposes. A whole dead animal traded for other purposes would be treated as a "body" by the United States. Polar bear skulls are usually not attached to the polar bear trophies. Unit: no. (number)
	Russia	Not used for description, only for information on purposes; see general comments			
	Norway	Preferred category for sport-hunted polar bears		Frequent	Exemption from restrictions (e.g., EU) applies if sport-hunted. The difference between trophy (TRO) and other products (e.g. SKI) depends on the applicant information. A trophy must be exported either by the hunter or by the handler on behalf of the

Term Description and Code	Exporting country	Use	Equals one polar bear?	Frequency	Comments
					hunter, from the country of origin to a destination country. In terms of trophies, imports into Norway usually contain both skin and skull and preferably should be covered by the term TRO. Unit: no.
	Greenland	Not used			
Body (BOD)	Canada	Whole stuffed polar bear	Yes	Frequent	For body and skin, Canada also includes the dimensions of the skin (length, width) within the description on the permit. Unit: no.
	USA	Substantially whole dead animal	Yes	Infrequent	Unit: no.
	Russia	Only for re-export from Canada	Yes	Infrequent	
	Norway	Whole stuffed polar bear		Infrequent	For body and skin, Norway also includes the dimensions of the skin (length, width and weight) in the description on the permit. Unit: no.
	Greenland	Not used			WHO has been used for one whole dead animal
Skin (SKI)	Canada	Whole polar bear skin, raw or tanned	Yes	Frequent	For body and skin, Canada also includes the dimensions of the skin (length, width) within the description on the permit. Unit: no.
	USA	Substantially whole dead polar bear skins	Yes	Infrequent	Unit: no.
	Russia	Only for re-export from Canada	Yes		
	Norway	Substantially whole polar bear skins, raw or tanned		Frequent	For body and skin, Norway also includes the dimensions of the skin (length, width and weight) in the description on the permit. Unit: no.
	Greenland	Substantially whole skin, raw or tanned; with or without skull	Yes	Infrequent	Infrequent after abolishment of procedure of issuance of export permits for household effects of Polar bear in 2012) Skin SKI has been used for skins with or without skulls, mostly as household effects prior to 2012.

Term Description and Code	Exporting country	Use	Equals one polar bear?	Frequency	Comments
Skin piece (SKP)	Canada	Polar bear skins that are not whole		Infrequent	Unit: no.
	USA	Pieces of <u>unprocessed</u> skin; range in size from very small pieces to panels (large pieces)	No	Infrequent	Unit: kg or no.
	Russia	Up to present in practice has not been used			
	Norway	No distinction between unprocessed or processed (i.e., dyed)		Infrequent	Unit: Numbers and description (i.e., size of each piece - cm x cm)
	Greenland	Skin pieces – including scraps, raw or tanned; from small pieces to large pieces of skin		Infrequent	Frequency: Infrequent (after abolishment of procedure of issuance of export permits for household effects of polar bear in 2012) Skin pieces SKP have been used for all types of skin pieces of polar bear, such as drums, skin pants etc. prior to 2012. Unit: no.
Leather product (Large) (LPL)	Canada	Not used			
	USA	Large pieces of <u>processed</u> skins	No	Infrequent	
	Russia	Up to present in practice has not been used			
	Norway	Not recorded			
	Greenland	Not used			
Leather product (Small) (LPS)	Canada	Not used			
	USA	Small pieces of <u>processed</u> skins	No	Infrequent	Unit: no.
	Russia	Up to present in practice has not been used			
	Norway	Not recorded			

Term Description and Code	Exporting country	Use	Equals one polar bear?	Frequency	Comments
	Greenland	Not used			
Garment (GAR)	Canada	Articles of clothing made with polar bear skin (i.e., hats, dresses)		Infrequent	While the term garment is used by Canada for articles of clothing, garments with polar bear skin have not been in trade from Canada for some time (about 5 years). Unit: no.
	USA	Garments that are manufactured either from whole or pieces of processed polar bear skins	No	Infrequent	Unit: no.
	Russia	Up to present in practice has not been used			
	Norway	Garments either whole or with pieces of polar bear skins (i.e. trimmings/decorations)		Infrequent	Description: e.g. anorak, gloves, boots.
	Greenland	Not used			Skin pieces have been used as a term for all small or large pieces of skin, regardless of use.
Plate (PLA)	Canada	Not used			
	USA	Large pieces of polar bear skin (processed) that have been or are intended to be sewn together (further processed)	No	Infrequent	Unit: m ² or no.
	Russia	Up to present in practice has not been used			In a few instances explanation done for description of specimen suggests double interpretation. So, description of plate is: plates of fur skins – includes rugs IF MADE OF SEVERAL SKINS. At the same time description of re-exported specimen usually is the same as description of this specimen accepted when it was imported. And if specimen was described as “carpet”, but was made of one skin (with cape, but without skull), this description is not fully correct. Such precedent appeared in Russia in 2013,

Term Description and Code	Exporting country	Use	Equals one polar bear?	Frequency	Comments
					when a carpet made of only one skin was re-exported.
	Norway	Not recorded			
	Greenland	Not used			
Bone (BON)	Canada	Any size of polar bear bones (including baculum)	No	Infrequent	The term bone is not used for skulls Regarding bones and carvings, we (Canada) note that 'bone carvings' is also a term that appears in the CITES trade database. For clarity, it is recommended that bone be used for uncarved bones and carvings used for carved bones. Unit: no.
	USA	Essentially whole/ unprocessed polar bear bones (including baculum)	No	Infrequent	Term not used for skulls or scientific specimens. Unit: no.
	Russia	Up to present in practice has not been used			
	Norway	Any unprocessed bone		Infrequent	Not used for skull
	Greenland	Bones, including jaws			For scientific use usually categorized as scientific specimen.
Piece-bone (BOP)	Canada	Not used			
	USA	Unprocessed pieces of polar bear bones	No	Infrequent	Term not used for skulls or scientific specimens. Unit: kg or no.
	Russia	Up to present in practice has not been used			
	Norway	Not used			
	Greenland	Pieces of bone, unprocessed		Infrequent	
Carving (CAR)	Canada	Polar bear bones that have been carved		Infrequent	While the term carving is used by Canada, carvings have not been in trade from Canada for some time (about 5 years). Unit: no.
	USA	Polar bear bones that	No	Infrequent	Unit: no.

Term Description and Code	Exporting country	Use	Equals one polar bear?	Frequency	Comments
		have been carved			
	Russia	Up to present in practice has not been used			
	Norway	Polar bear bones that have been carved		Infrequent	Unit: no. + description
	Greenland	Carvings (mostly ornaments)		Infrequent	Frequency: Infrequent (after abolishment of procedure of issuance of export permits for household effects of Polar bear in 2012)
Skull (SKU)	Canada	Polar bear skull	Yes	Frequent	Unit: no.
	USA	Polar bear skull	Yes	Infrequent	Unit: no.
	Russia	Only re-export from Canada	Yes	Infrequent	
	Norway	Polar bear skull		Frequent	Unit: no.
	Greenland	Polar bear skull		Infrequent	Frequency: Infrequent (after abolishment of procedure of issuance of export permits for household effects of polar bear in 2012). For scientific use usually categorized as scientific specimen. Unit: no. or kg
Claw (CLA)	Canada	Polar bear claw when the claw is <u>not</u> attached to the body or the skin	No	Infrequent	Unit: no.
	USA	Polar bear claws that are not attached to the body or skin	20 claws = one polar bear	Infrequent	Polar bear claws that are a part of a body, skin, or trophy are not itemized or counted separately. Claws that are exported/imported for scientific research would be identified as claws. Claws could also be attached to various handicraft items (e.g., bones, carvings, leather products etc.). The term used in those situations would depend on the perception of the permit officer or the wildlife inspector. Unit: no.
	Russia	Up to present in practice has not been used			Polar bear claws that are a part of a skin are not counted separately.
	Norway	Polar bear claws that are not attached to the		Infrequent	Unit: no.

Term Description and Code	Exporting country	Use	Equals one polar bear?	Frequency	Comments
		body or skin			
	Greenland	Polar bear claw, not attached to the body or the skin		Infrequent	Frequency: Infrequent (after abolishment of procedure of issuance of export permits for household effects of Polar bear in 2012) For scientific use usually categorized as scientific specimen Unit: no.
Tooth (TEE)	Canada	Teeth not attached to the skull		Infrequent	Unit: no.
	USA	Teeth that have been removed from the skull		See Comments	Frequency: Teeth for personal purpose infrequent; Teeth for scientific purpose frequent Unit: no.
	Russia	Up to present in practice has not been used			
	Norway	Teeth that have been removed from the skull		See Comments	Frequency: Teeth for personal purpose infrequent; Teeth for scientific purpose frequent Unit: no.
	Greenland	Teeth, not attached to the skull		Infrequent	For scientific use usually categorized as scientific specimen. Unit: no.
Hair (HAI)	Canada	Hair used to make fly fishing lures or used as a research sample (e.g., DNA testing)		Infrequent	Unit: g or no. (of sample which may be one or more hairs)
	USA	Hair, usually used for scientific research	No	Infrequent	Unit: no. or kg.
	Russia	Hair used only as research sample for scientific purposes	No		Unit: number or weight.
	Norway	Hair used for fly fishing lures or as research samples (cf DNA testing)		Infrequent	Unit: kg or g
	Greenland	Hair		Infrequent	For scientific use usually categorized as scientific specimen.

Term Description and Code	Exporting country	Use	Equals one polar bear?	Frequency	Comments
Live (LIV)	Canada	Live polar bear	Yes	Infrequent	Unit: no.
	USA	Live polar bear	Yes	Infrequent	Unit: no.
	Russia	Only live animals from zoos or circuses	Yes		
	Norway	Not recorded			
	Greenland	Not used			
Specimen (scientific) (SPE)	Canada	Scientific samples that are not hair samples (e.g., blood, tissue samples)		Frequent	Unit: kg, l, ml, or no.
	USA	Tissues, body parts, or blood to be used for scientific research	No	Frequent	Unit: no. (commonly) or g/kg (rarely) For scientific specimens, the number of items could mean many things, for example, the actual number of vials/samples/slides (potentially several samples from each of several polar bears) or the actual number of polar bears sampled (with multiple vials/samples/slides from each polar bear). The term used could also depend either on the permit officer or the wildlife inspector.
	Russia	Not used for description, only for information on purposes; see general comments			The term "scientific specimens" is not used by Russia up to present: partly because it indicates the purposes of export/re-export and is used for describe them, partly because that to date no cases of export of such scientific specimen as blood, tissue (e.g. kidney, spleen, etc.), histological preparations, preserved museum specimens, etc. are registered, only hair that counted separately .
	Norway	Scientific samples that are not hair samples (e.g. blood, tissue samples)		Frequent	For scientific specimens a description will be included (e.g. vials) Unit: kg, l, ml or no.
	Greenland	Scientific specimens – includes blood, tissue (e.g., kidney, spleen, etc.)			All scientific samples have been categorized under this category (skull, tissue, hair, teeth, blubber, claw, blood, organs). Unit: No. or kg

Term Description and Code	Exporting country	Use	Equals one polar bear?	Frequency	Comments
Derivatives (DER)	Canada	Not used			The term 'derivatives' are not used by Canada because it is a general term and all the traded items should already be covered under other more specific applicable terms.
	USA	Not used to date			
	Russia	Not used			The term "derivatives" is not used by Russia because this is a general term that covers more specific applicable terms
	Norway	Not recorded			
	Greenland	Not used			

Part B. General comments about trade not specific to a specimen term.

Exporting Country	Comments
Canada	None.
USA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – In a few instances the United States has used the term ‘unspecified’ when there were problems clearing the shipment at the port (e.g., misplaced documents or human error) or during data entry (e.g., multiple items from a single polar bear). – Bones, bone pieces, claws, hair, teeth, skins, and skulls could be reported as such or as scientific specimens. The term used could depend either on the permit officer or the wildlife inspector. – Current trade in polar bears from the United States consists primarily of hair, teeth, and specimens. – Polar bear items carried as personal effects (non-commercial export) by Alaskan Natives for cultural exchanges or similar activities with counterparts in other countries are not always reported on import by the importing country if the importing country recognizes the CITES exemption whereby personal effects do not require a CITES export permit. – The terminology applied by the United States to polar bear specimens is defined in a protocol that is used by the wildlife inspectors at a designated port (i.e., U.S. officials who inspect CITES shipments).
Russia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – In Russia, hunting of polar bears is not allowed, so only samples obtained in other countries can be imported and re-exported (only samples from Canada are registered to date). – Regarding the term “trophy” and “scientific specimen”: in accordance with Resolution Conf. 12.3 (Rev. CoP16 of CITES) when permits and certificates are completed, different information is provided, including description of specimens and purpose of export / re-export separately. So, “trophy” and “scientific specimen” indicate for description of the purposes of export/re-export, and the skin/ hair/ skull, etc. – for description of specimens. For description of specimens “trophy” and “scientific” are not used. – Up to present the main purposes of export/re-export from Russia are Zoo and Circus (living animals), rarely - scientific (hair) and personal (skin). – For the last 7 years permits and certifications were provided for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 20 cases of export of living polar bears in Zoos and Circuses, 1 case of re-export of living polar bear in a Zoo, 3 cases of export of hair for scientific purposes, 1 case of re-export of skin from Canada, 1 case of re-export of carpet (1 skin with cape and claws without skull).
Norway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – For description of products, Norway basically follows the CITES Notification to the Parties 2011/019 (http://www.cites.org/sites/default/files/eng/notif/2011/E019A.pdf) on definitions to be used in CITES permits.
Greenland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Export from Greenland is not allowed for polar bear, except for scientific specimen, due to a voluntarily export ban since 2008. – Due to the abolishment of procedure of issuance of export permits for household effects of Appendix II and III species (including polar bear) in 2012, only permits for scientific specimens are now issued for polar bear.