

# THE GATEWAY

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## colophon

The Gateway is created using Macintosh computers, HP Scanjet flatbed scanners, and a Nikon Super Cool Scan optical film scanner. Adobe InDesign is used for layout. Adobe Illustrator is used for vector images, while Adobe Photoshop is used for raster images. Adobe Acrobat is used to create PDF files which are burned directly to plates to be mounted on the printing press. Text is set in a variety of sizes, styles, and weights of FENICE, Joanna, Kepler and Whitney. The Manitoban is the Gateway's sister paper, and we love her dearly, though "not in that way." The Gateway's games of choice are Ratchet and Clank Future: Tools of Destruction and Free Rice.

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# Polar bears become symbol of climate change debate

JENNIFER HUYGEN  
News Staff

As the debate on climate change continues to heat up, skeptics are using the polar bear as a focal point in the ongoing debate about the realities of global warming.

Polar bears are listed as "vulnerable" under the International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources Red List of Threatened Species, and their classification is currently under review in Canada and United States. Dr Andrew Derocher, a professor of biological sciences at the University of Alberta, believes that polar bear conservation isn't a matter up for debate.

"The only people that say that climate change doesn't have an impact on polar bears are people who have a vested interest in maintaining their current activities without any modification and people that don't know much about the ecology of polar bears," Derocher said via email.

The catalyst for the defense of polar bears comes after a marked rise in skepticism last month on the international level.

At the center of this was the release of a new book titled *Cool It* by global warming skeptic Bjorn Lomborg, who dismissed concerns that polar bear populations were the victims of climate change and stated that instead they're victims of overhunting.

According to Lomborg's book, international leaders are spending too much time and money on cutting greenhouse gas emissions and not enough on addressing on-the-ground problems like the hunt. (Lomborg was unavailable for comment when con-

tacted by the Gateway.)

Dr Ian Stirling, an adjunct professor at the U of A and a research scientist emeritus with the Wildlife Research Division of Environment Canada, warned that one has to be careful when looking at the evidence.

"There's really not much doubt amongst most people who work with polar bears that climate warming is having a negative effect on ice and a negative effect on the bears themselves," he said. "There are one or two people who keep on raising bits and pieces of information—either they tell them out of context or they are reported out of context—but they don't change that picture."

Stirling admits that a lot of this difficulty has to do with the lack of long-term data concerning polar bears and their habitat.

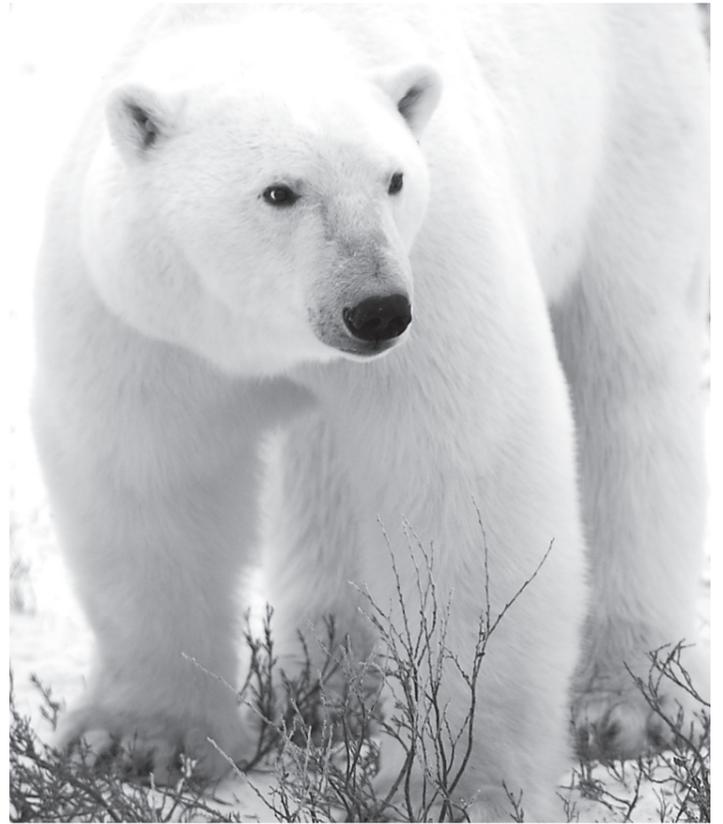
"There are about 19 different populations of polar bears, and [for] many of them we don't have enough information to know if they're increasing, decreasing, or staying the same," Stirling said.

Derocher, who also acts as chair of the World Conservation Union's Polar Bear Specialist Group, has been conducting an intensive study on the bears living in the western Hudson Bay region, an area with more conclusive data.

"The population has declined by 22 per cent over the last decade," he explained. "Some of the decline is directly attributable to a [three-week] decrease in the time that Hudson Bay is covered by sea ice."

Derocher and Stirling both agree that sea ice and habitat is the crux of the matter.

"The sea ice north of Alaska retreated to an all-time low this past summer.



COURTESY OF DR ANDREW DEROCHER

The long-term median amount of sea ice at its minimum level is 6.7 million [square kilometres], but on September 16th, 2007 it dropped to 4.1 million," Derocher said.

Many skeptics, Lomborg included, believe that the polar bear would be able to adapt to a north Atlantic ecosystem, meaning one where there's no ice, but Derocher strongly disagrees.

"Species cannot undo about 200 000 years of evolution in more than 100 years," he said. "Specialized species

that [lose] their habitat go extinct."

Derocher stressed that extinction remains a distinct possibility for the polar bear, an animal that has become a visible icon for climate change and the worldwide debate surrounding it.

"Projection models suggest that about two thirds of the polar bears will be gone by mid-century," Derocher added. "If the pace of change continues, the consequences for polar bears will be dire."

## STREETERS

Compiled and photographed by  
Steve Smith and Krystina Sulatycki

A recent study found that combining energy drinks and alcohol can be harmful to people's health.

### If you were to compose a Streeters question on this subject, what would it be?



Sonya Odsen  
ENCS II



Kaylee Somers  
Phys. Ed./Ed. II



Justin Assburger  
Science V



Cristian Manucci  
Arts Alumnus

"What is the worst situation you can get into while very hyper and very, very drunk?"

"If it's such a bad thing, why do bars sell that in the first place?"

"Is the fuck as good on Red Bull and vodka?"

"Does your heart rate increase when you mix alcohol with Red Bull?"

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