Session AS5: Conflict between people and polar bears:
how to address an increasing issue?

Chair: Dr Melanie Lancaster
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Our panel

Human-polar bear conflict

In the context of climate change

Property destruction

Dogs killed by polar bears

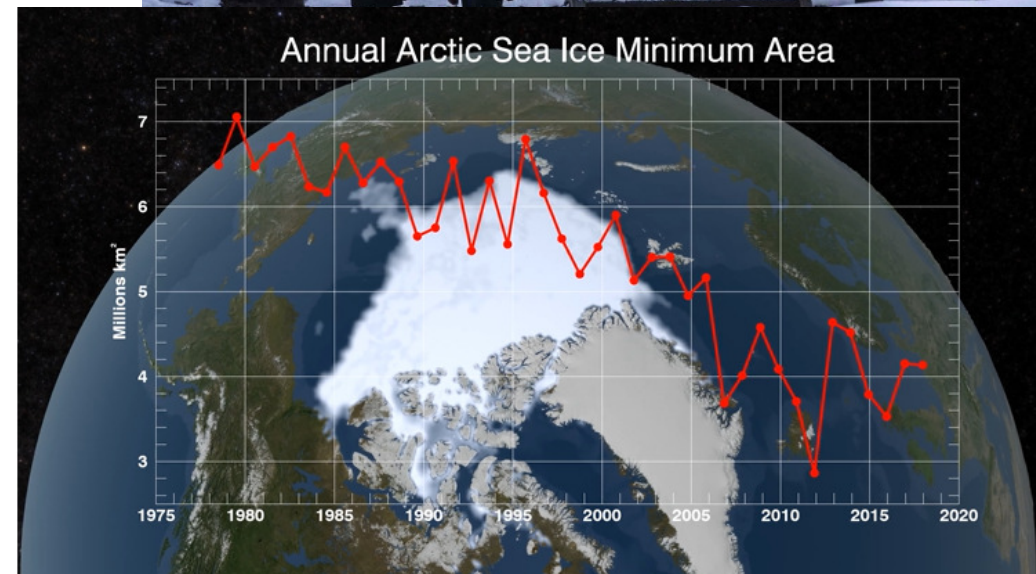People injury and death

Polar bears killed in defense

WWF

2014

Germany won the world cup

Malaysia airlines flight 370 disappeared

Niagara Falls froze

Arctic sea ice reached its 6th lowest on record

Annual Arctic Sea Ice Minimum Area

2014 CAFF Congress

Community conservation: human-polar bear conflict management

Date/time: December 4, 13:00-14:30

Room: Utsikten

Session organizer: **Femke Koopmans, WWF Netherlands and Gert Polet, WWF Netherlands**

In this session several presentations will discuss the status of polar bears and human-polar bear conflict reduction projects in Arctic communities. The session will end with a panel discussion in which the roles of local communities, national and regional government authorities and institutions, universities and NGOs in human-polar bear conflict reduction will be explored. This includes new approaches and technology, the importance of strong regional and national mechanisms, and transboundary cooperation.

- **Femke Koopmans, WWF Netherlands:** Community based human-polar bear conflict management
- **Geoff York, Polar Bears International:** Global status and trends: it's not black and white
- **Eric Regehr, Range States' Human-Polar Bear Conflict Working Group:** Polar Bear-Human Information Management System
- **Rascha Nuijten, Radboud University Nijmegan:** Relative importance of the multiple stressors faced by polar bears
- Panel discussion questions

Session theme: Mainstreaming biodiversity: linking Arctic ecosystems to society

Are polar bears spending more time near people?

Reductions in sea ice in Western and Southern Hudson Bay have resulted in polar bears spending more time fasting on land and as a consequence, human– bear interactions have increased
- Stirling & Parkinson 2006

"It is no longer safe to let children walk to school or play by themselves in and on the outskirts of town. That is quite different now than from when I was a child."

Johannes, retired hunter
Ittoqqortoormiit, East Greenland

Halloween polar bear patrol out in full force in Churchill
Patrol keeps watch to ensure migrating polar bears, hungry trick-or-treaters don't cross paths
By Erin Brohman, CBC News   Posted: Oct 31, 2015 4:02 PM CT | Last Updated: Nov 01, 2015 9:48 AM CT

Ice melt forces polar bears into paths of Alaska schoolchildren

More polar bears are entering communities in East Greenland, hunters say in new survey

In 2022, the study will esti

Sara Frizzell · CBC News · Posted: May 19, 2018 4:00 AM CT | Last Updated: May 21

N.L. polar bears damage snowmobiles, hot tub as they head north early

Kevin Bissett , The Canadian Press
Published Friday, March 16, 2018 7:16AM EDT

Tiny Alaskan village hit with polar bear tourism boom
AP
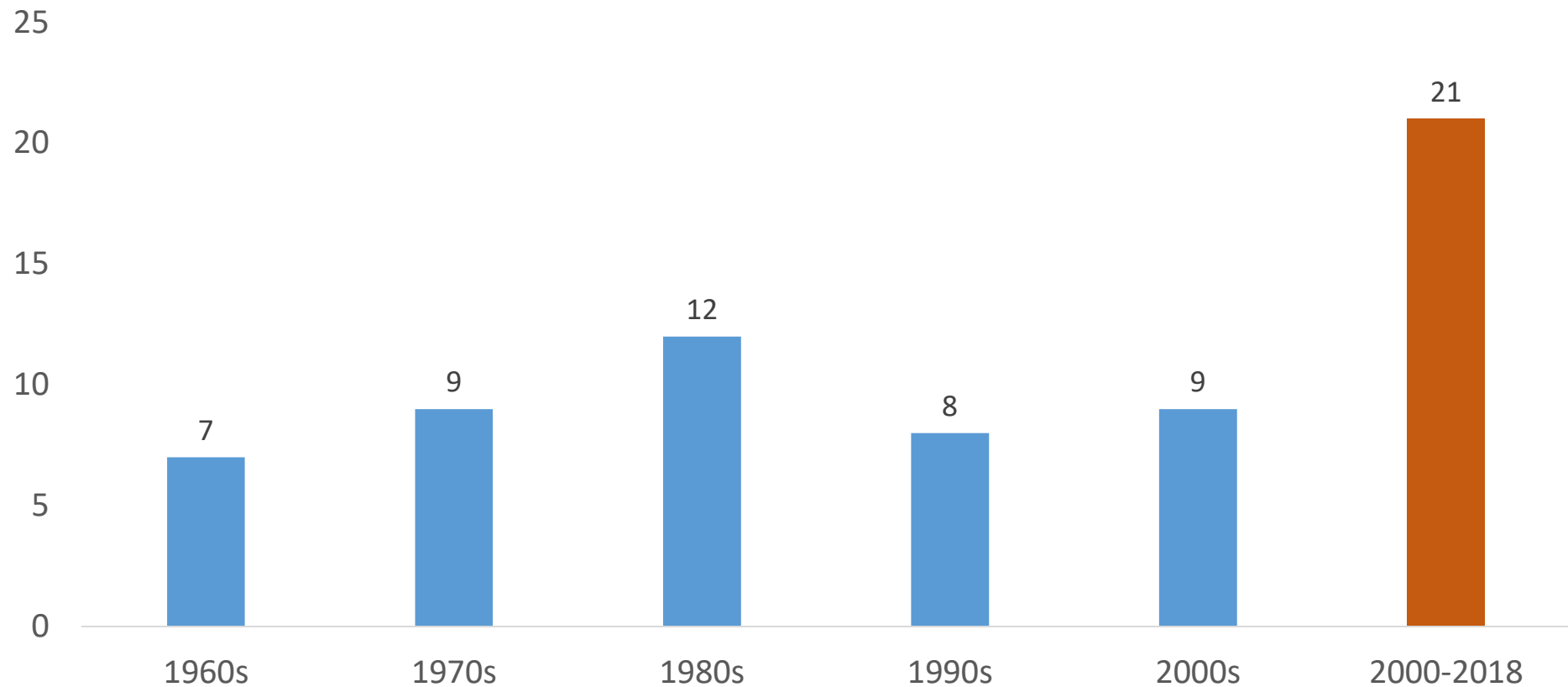9:46PM SEPTEMBER 6, 2018
21 COMMENTS

Polar bears have always been a common sight on sea ice near Kaktovik, but residents started noticing a change in the mid-1990s.

Is the level of conflict increasing over time?

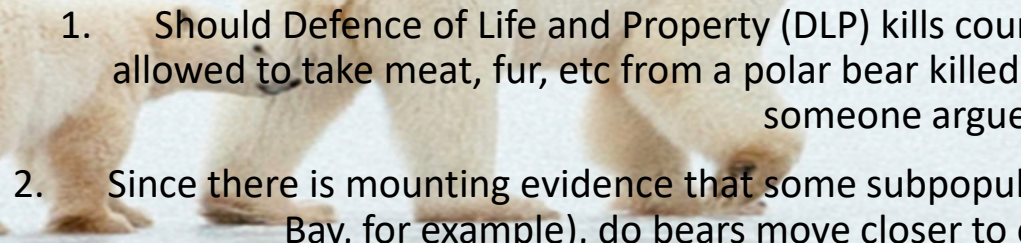Range-wide attacks of polar bears on people by decade, 1960-2018

Solutions and scale

Polar Bear Conflict is a local issue at a pan-Arctic scale

1. Should Defence of Life and Property (DLP) kills count against a management Quota? Since Inuit are allowed to take meat, fur, etc from a polar bear killed for Defense of Life and Property (DLP), why would someone argue otherwise?

2. Since there is mounting evidence that some subpopulations are nutritionally stressed (Southern Hudson Bay, for example), do bears move closer to communities in an attempt to find food?

3. If bears represent are an important seasonal resource for Inuit, and are also a real danger - shouldn't Inuit buy-in to adopt non-lethal deterrents be an easy step? This way mortality during sub-optimal harvest seasons would be avoided, leaving more harvest for the optimal seasons.

4. How can solutions and management of conflict be scaled up?

5. What's the best way to transfer knowledge and practices?

6. Are there other needs for tech development to manage conflict?

7. Are there locally used tools or approaches that could use some technological support to become more generally applicable in more sites?

...towards workable solutions