

AGREEMENT ON THE CONSERVATION OF POLAR BEARS

THE GOVERNMENTS of Canada, Denmark, Norway, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the United States of America,

RECOGNIZING the special responsibilities and special interests of the States of the Arctic Region in relation to the protection of the fauna and flora of the Arctic Region;

RECOGNIZING that the polar bear is a significant resource of the Arctic Region which requires additional protection;

HAVING DECIDED that such protection should be achieved through co-ordinated national measures taken by the States of the Arctic Region;

DESIRING to take immediate action to bring further conservation and management measures into effect;

HAVE AGREED AS FOLLOWS:

ARTICLE I

1. The taking of polar bears shall be prohibited except as provided in Article III.
2. For the purpose of this Agreement, the term "taking" includes hunting, killing and capturing.

ARTICLE II

Each Contracting Party shall take appropriate action to protect the ecosystems of which polar bears are a part, with special attention to habitat components such as denning and feeding sites and migration patterns, and shall manage polar bear populations in accordance with sound conservation practices based on the best available scientific data.

ARTICLE III

1. Subject to the provisions of Articles II and IV, any Contracting Party may allow the taking of polar bears when such taking is carried out:
 - (a) for *bona fide* scientific purposes; or
 - (b) by that Party for conservation purposes; or
 - (c) to prevent serious disturbance of the management of other living resources, subject to forfeiture to that Party of the skins and other items of value resulting from such taking; or
 - (d) by local people using traditional methods in the exercise of their traditional rights and in accordance with the laws of that Party; or