

# Hungry polar bear has people talking about global warming

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A polar bear walks over sea ice floating in the Victoria Strait in the Canadian Arctic Archipelago, Friday, July 21, 2017. Photo by: AP Photo/David Goldman

A picture of a very skinny polar bear came out this week. It has now been seen more than 3 million times.

The bear looks weak. It has trouble moving on ice. It is hunting for food.

The photo has people talking about global warming.

## **A Warmer Earth Melts North Pole Ice**

The Earth is heating up. Most scientists think that it is because of the fuel that people use. People burn these fuels to make energy. Things like cars and electric lights run on this energy.

Scientists say a hotter Earth is melting ice on the North Pole.

Polar bears depend on the ice. They live there. Polar bears also hunt on the ice. They eat seals and whales.

Paul Nicklen is a photographer. He took the video of the bear. He takes pictures for National Geographic magazine.

He leads a nonprofit group. It tells stories and shows pictures to make people think about the environment.

## **"What Starvation Looks Like"**

The polar bear shown has patchy fur. It looks very sick. It searches for food in an old garbage can.

The polar bear photo was shared on the social media site Instagram. Soon, many TV stations and newspapers talked about it.

Nicklen said he cried as he watched the bear. He hopes the image makes people think more about the environment. "This is what starvation looks like ... It's a slow, painful death."

The photo was shot on Somerset Island, in northern Canada. Nicklen grew up nearby. He said he had never seen a polar bear like this one.

There are about 25,000 polar bears on Earth. Experts expect this number to go down. One out of three polar bears could die in the next few years. As the ice melts, more polar bears will likely starve.

Scientists warn that climate change could make polar bears gone forever. They say this might happen before the year 2050.

A recent study came out. It said that a warmer Earth means that polar bears might come into contact with humans more. Bears may even attack people.

## **No Food And Nowhere To Live**

Some were not convinced the bear's health was linked to climate change. One was a commenter on the National Geographic's Facebook page. What if the bear was just sick because of something else?

Dr. Donald Moore is a polar bear expert. He said he could not tell much about the bear's age or health from the video.

But he believes that the bear was starving because it did not have a place to hunt or live. He said climate change is to blame.

Bears need a huge amount of food, he said. They normally eat about one seal each week.