

## Student Worksheet

### DIRECTIONS

Read the following news story and answer the reading comprehension and discussion questions. Use additional paper if necessary.

### STORY

**Polar Bear Listed As Threatened Species**, 05/14/08

[http://www.pbs.org/newshour/extra/features/us/jan-june08/pbear\\_5-14.html](http://www.pbs.org/newshour/extra/features/us/jan-june08/pbear_5-14.html)

### READING COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. What did the U.S. government decide about the polar bear?
2. What did wildlife activists hope would happen as a result of the listing?
3. What provisions were put on the decision?
4. What is happening to Arctic sea ice?
5. Why are polar bears dependent on sea ice?
6. Why was there some controversy around the sale of off shore drilling leases earlier this year?
7. Why are some Inuit concerned about the polar bear status decision?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS (more research might be needed)

**1. Do you agree with the polar bear's new threatened status? Why or why not?**

**2. Should the listing force the government to curb greenhouse gas emissions and other causes of global warming, as activists had hoped, or is that outside of the scope of the Endangered Species Act, as the government has said? Explain your answer.**

**3. Should the Inuit be allowed to hunt polar bears? Does it matter if they kill bears for subsistence living or for profit? Why or why not?**

**4. Visit a local nature center or national forest and find out if there are endangered species in your area. What are they? What is affecting their habitats? Is there anything your school can do to help?**

**Extension Activity**

Have students write a 300-500 word essay on this topic providing clear examples. Send your completed editorial to NewsHour Extra (extra@newshour.org). Exceptional essays might be published on our Web site.