

U.S., Russia make pact about polar bears

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The U.S. Senate is expected to ratify an agreement with Russia on protection of polar bears in Alaska and eastern Siberia.

The pact includes a census of the population of bears in Alaska and the Chukotka area of Russia, the Itar-Tass news agency reported. Both countries restrict the hunting of polar bears, known as white bears in Russia, but the United States allows hunting by the Inuit and Aleut peoples of Alaska.

Igor Mikhno, one of the authors of the agreement, said that a commission to organize the census and other scientific studies will include government representatives and representatives of the indigenous peoples of both countries.

The document was signed in 2000 and ratified by Russia in March. The Senate is expected to act soon.

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