

Russia to make polar bear hunting legal

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The Russian government is set to allow residents in the town of Vankarem to legally hunt polar bears that have been moving into the region.

In response to the increasing number of polar bears traveling into the eastern Russian region due to the changing climate, officials are set to permit legal hunting of the animals for the first time in more than 50 years, the New York Times said Monday.

"The normal life space for the polar bears is shrinking," Pacific Scientific Research and Fisheries Center biologist Anatoly A. Kochnev said. "They come in search of food on the shore, and the main sources of food are where people live."

The move comes as other nations have begun classifying polar bears as an endangered species.

Before the hunting ban, established in 1956, can be lifted in the Chukotka region, a census of the animals must be conducted to determine the true population in the area.

The Times said even if the hunting ban is lifted, it would only include that specific region and would only include subsistence hunting.

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