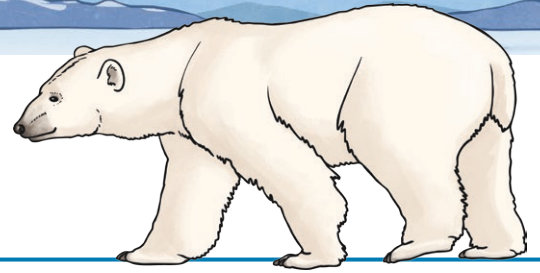




## Canada's Arctic and Climate Change

# The Polar Bear



40% of Canada's land is in the Arctic. The Arctic is located at the most northern part of Canada where it is very cold. In fact, it goes all the way up to the North Pole. Canada's north is comprised of the three territories, Yukon Territory, Northwest Territories and Nunavut. The 'true Arctic' is located north of the Arctic Circle, which is in Nunavut. A large part of the Arctic is primarily made up of ice and tundra, located north of the tree line, an area that is too cold for many trees to grow. There is usually very little vegetation in this area. Canada's



north is divided into two parts, the subarctic (otherwise known as the near north) and the Arctic (otherwise known as the far north), which is located above the subarctic. The subarctic has more forested areas and therefore its wildlife differs from the Arctic. It includes the boreal forest, which is home to many animals and vegetation. There are four ice regions in the Arctic. These regions are defined by climate and some regions have ice that melt quicker than others.

### What Is Climate Change?

Climate change is the overall warming of the Earth. Our planet is warming up more than it has in our history. This concerns all of us because this affects our whole planet. This includes ice melting in Canada's north and sea levels consequently rising. This is a problem because ice is home to many different animals that require it to survive.

### The Polar Bear

60% of all polar bears in the world live in Canada's Arctic! Unlike many other animals, polar bears may need to travel long distances (over 1,000 km) to find a place to settle and call home. Their home can also change from season to season because they live on ice in the Arctic where it is easy to hunt for seals.

### How Climate Change Affects the Polar Bear

The seasonal ice region of the Arctic is located in the most southern part. This sea ice melts faster and therefore polar bears that live there are more at risk of dying. If the ice melts, polar bears are sometimes forced to swim to another iceberg that is far away. Polar bears cannot survive in the water for very long and sometimes drown. The World Wildlife Federation lists polar bears as a vulnerable species.