



Cutting global greenhouse emissions might yet save the polar bear and its Arctic habitat, according to scientists in the US. It has been suggested that emissions of greenhouse gases have already put the Arctic ice cap and the polar bear on an irreversible path towards extinction.

But a new study suggests rapid emission cuts could help preserve ice cover to save the iconic bear. Details are published in the academic journal *Nature*.

A US Geological Survey team led by Dr Steven Amstrup predicted back in 2007 that two-thirds of the world's 22,000 polar bears would disappear by half way through the next century. This was based on industrial emissions continuing on a "business as usual" basis.

Elsewhere, a study suggested industrial emissions of greenhouse gases might have already put the world on target for temperature rises which would result in rapid and perhaps irreversible ice loss in the Arctic.

Dr Amstrup and colleagues now say that such dire forecasts might be avoided if industrial societies act quickly to cut emissions.

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