



## **World-renowned Polar Bear Scientist Accepts Leadership Position with Polar Bears International**

August 4, 2010 (Bozeman, MT): Dr. Steven C. Amstrup, a prominent polar bear scientist and an active member and past chair of the IUCN Polar Bear Specialist Group, has joined the staff of the conservation group, Polar Bears International, as senior scientist. Dr. Amstrup is known worldwide for his 30 years of research on polar bears and their changing habitat. In 2007, he led an international research team in the preparation of nine reports that projected the expected future status of polar bears in a warming world. Those reports provided much of the foundation for the 2008 decision, by the U.S. Department of the Interior, to list the polar bear as a threatened species.

“Attracting the talents of this world-class biologist full-time speaks to the reputation of our organization,” said PBI President Robert Buchanan. “This solidifies our role as a conservation group based upon science. Governments, other nonprofits, and the public look to PBI as a trustworthy source of information—and inspiration.”

Dr. Amstrup said that PBI is a remarkable organization that has earned the respect of scientists and others who work with polar bears. He sees his role as a critical one given the challenges that polar bears face in a warming Arctic.

“PBI's motto is ‘Conservation through research, stewardship, and education’ and I'm very excited to bring my experience to a team which prides itself not only for its sound approach to science, but also its ability to reach so many people and inspire change,” he said. “As the new senior scientist for PBI, I look forward to helping assure that research and education efforts of the organization are founded in the best available science. And I look forward to sharing the message—with the broadest population possible—that efforts made to conserve polar bears and their habitats also will benefit the ecosystem of the entire world.”

As PBI's senior scientist, Amstrup will:

- Help develop strategic, research-based stewardship programs, including those connected with the new **International Polar Bear Conservation Centre (IPBCC)** in Winnipeg, Manitoba
- Share his expertise through PBI programs including our **Leadership Camps** and **Tundra Connections** broadcasts
- Take part in public outreach to communicate the state of science concerning polar bears
- Pinpoint and prioritize needed research projects and direct field research

- Ensure that all PBI educational and interpretational statements are scientifically sound

Dr. Amstrup's first public speaking engagement representing PBI will be at the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA) Conference in Houston in September. He'll lead a panel of distinguished scientists—including renowned climate scientist Dr. Michael Mann, and polar bear experts Dr. Andrew Derocher, Dr. Tom Smith, and Dr. Ian Stirling. PBI is participating in this conference as part of its partnership with AZA to help make climate change education and conservation top priorities with its members.

Before coming to PBI, Dr. Amstrup was polar bear project leader for the United States Geological Survey at the Alaska Science Center, Anchorage, Alaska. He is also an adjunct professor at the University of Wyoming, and an associate professor at the University of Alaska. Amstrup earned a B.S. in Forestry from the University of Washington (1972), a M.S. in Wildlife Management from the University of Idaho (1975), and a Ph.D. in Wildlife Management from the University of Alaska Fairbanks (1995). He has been conducting research on all aspects of polar bear ecology in the Beaufort Sea since 1980. He is a past chairman of the IUCN Polar Bear Specialist Group and has been an active member of the group throughout his career.

His interests include distribution and movement patterns as well as population dynamics of wildlife, and how information on those topics can be used to assure wise stewardship. He is particularly interested in how science can help to reconcile the ever-enlarging human footprint on our environment with the needs of other species for that same environment.

Dr. Amstrup has authored or coauthored more than 100 peer reviewed articles and dozens of other reports on movements, distribution and population dynamics of large mammals. The recent text on population estimation methods, for which he was senior editor, was chosen by the Wildlife Society as best edited volume in 2006.

*Polar Bears International is a nonprofit organization dedicated to the worldwide conservation of the polar bear and its arctic habitat through research, stewardship, and education. For more information, visit <http://www.polarbearsinternational.org>.*

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