

Russian islands declare emergency after mass invasion of polar bears

Experts deployed to remove dozens of hungry bears besieging Novaya Zemlya

Analysis: what the polar bears reveal about the climate crisis

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Polar bears invade Russian islands – video report

Russian environmental authorities have deployed a team of specialists to a remote Arctic region to sedate and remove dozens of **hungry polar bears** that have besieged the people living there.

The move came after officials in the Novaya Zemlya archipelago, with a population of about 3,000 people, appealed for help.

“There’s never been such a mass invasion of polar bears,” said Zhigansha Musin, the head of the local administration. “They have literally been chasing people.”

Alexander Minayev, the region’s deputy head, added: “People are scared, and afraid to leave their homes. Parents are unwilling to let their children go to school or nursery.” A state of emergency has been declared in the region.

Other footage shows the polar bears feeding on rubbish at a local dump. Attempts to scare off the polar bears using car horns and dogs have all failed, the Tass news agency said.

Russia classes polar bears as an endangered species and shooting them is prohibited by law. Officials warn, however, that a cull may be necessary to ensure the safety of the local population, if attempts to remove the animals fail.

In 2016, five Russian scientists were besieged by polar bears for nearly two weeks at a remote weather station on Troynoy Island, east of Novaya Zemlya.

