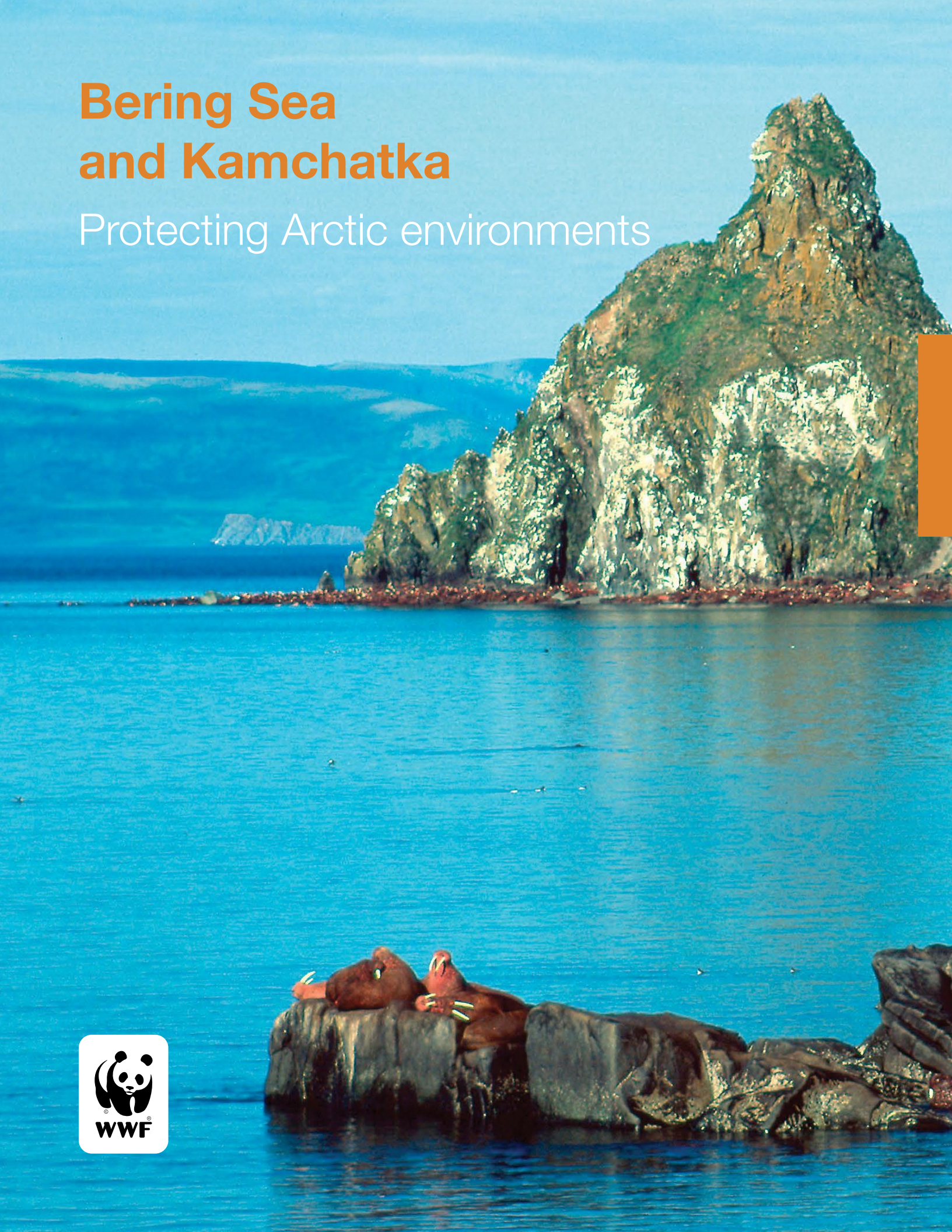


# Bering Sea and Kamchatka

Protecting Arctic environments

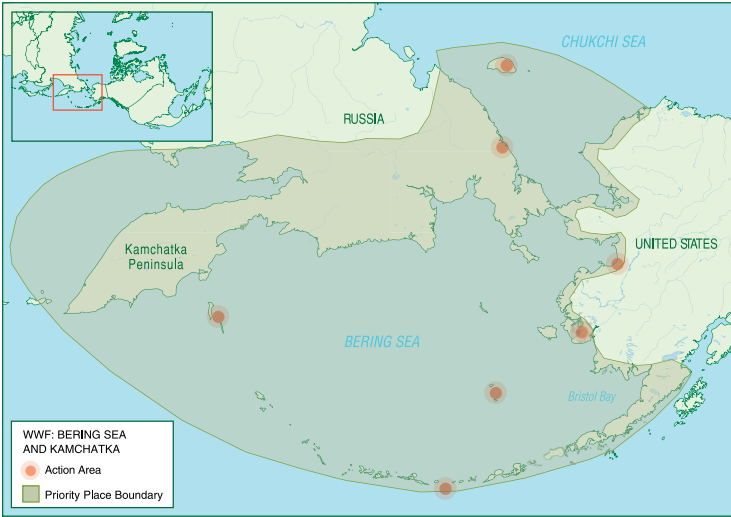




Our vision: Restore and conserve marine, coastal and terrestrial resources through research, education, proactive conservation efforts, and collaboration with local communities, the private sector and government agencies.

# What makes the Bering Sea and Kamchatka extraordinary

The remarkable waters of the Bering Sea and the vast wilderness of the Kamchatka Peninsula together make up one of the world's most biologically productive and diverse environments. The nutrient-rich sea attracts marine mammals, such as humpback and gray whales, that travel great distances to forage and raise their young. These waters provide more than half the seafood caught annually in the United States and a third of Russia's seafood harvest.



On the Kamchatka Peninsula snow sheep claim the alpine environments, while reindeer roam on the tundra. Thousands of rivers throughout the peninsula produce one quarter of the world's Pacific salmon. The salmon provide nourishment to many local communities and species such as the Kamchatka brown bear.

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**The place.** From the volcanoes of Kamchatka to the coral gardens of the Aleutian Islands, the ecoregion is known for its diversity of landscapes and ecosystems. It is rich in environmental, economic and cultural values. Its bounty supports great concentrations of wildlife, and vibrant indigenous communities have thrived here for centuries.



**The species.** The interdependent relationships among land, sea and species support vast populations of migratory and resident wildlife. From the tiniest plankton to the great Arctic icons, the polar bear and walrus, this region is teeming with wildlife. Fish, birds, whales, brown bears, reindeer and fur seals abound.



**The people.** For thousands of years, indigenous peoples have been closely tied to the wildlife and habitats here. Their rich traditions and subsistence practices continue to be part of the human fabric of the ecoregion. Commercial fishermen also make their livelihoods here, contributing to the economies of the United States and Russia.



# WWF delivers lasting results

Since 1994, WWF has worked in this ecoregion developing innovative solutions that are as adaptive and resilient as nature itself. WWF brings together local communities, industries, governments, scientific institutions and other conservation organizations to conserve this vital region.



## Notable Accomplishments

### 1990s

Established the Koryaksky Nature Reserve to protect over 600,000 acres of coastal and wetland habitat on the Kamchatka Peninsula

Aided in the creation of a system of regional parks in Kamchatka to protect vital terrestrial habitats included in a UNESCO World Heritage site

### 2000s

Paired Bering Sea scientists and communities to address local natural resource concerns

Introduced an inexpensive and highly effective method to reduce seabird bycatch in Russian longline fishing

Pushed for ratification and implementation of a United States-Russia treaty for shared conservation of the Alaska-Chukotka polar bear population

Restored the U.S. Oil Spill Liability Trust Fund for oil spill cleanup and habitat restoration



“Huge shifts are under way due to climate change, overfishing, and oil and gas exploration. We need to act now to safeguard these special places and the people and species that depend on them.”

**Margaret Williams**  
Priority Leader, Bering Sea and Kamchatka Ecoregion Program

# WWF is committed to making our vision a reality

The Bering Sea and Kamchatka Peninsula are rare places with a wealth of resources that sustain an abundant diversity of life. Yet wildlife and humans are at risk from climate change, oil and gas exploration, and overharvesting of species, leading to precipitous declines in sea ice, wildlife populations and fish stocks.

WWF is working to achieve a sustainable balance between nature and humans in order to conserve the rich natural heritage of the region, save its endangered species, and transform the global forces that challenge the area's future.



## Maintaining sustainable fish populations

In Russia, destructive fishing practices are depleting vital stocks of salmon and other fish, destroying marine habitats, and snaring marine life such as seabirds in fishing gear. WWF tracks the illegal trade in marine fish products and engages fishermen to implement sustainable fishing practices. On both Russian and United States coasts, we collaborate with governments, communities and industry to improve management of the shared resources of this international sea.

## Managing habitats and protecting species

Brown bears, snow sheep, reindeer and other terrestrial species are threatened by habitat loss, hunting and wildlife trade. WWF improves and expands resource management capacity for over 29 million acres of critical habitat. We collaborate with government agencies and the scientific community to increase funding for conservation, institute best practices for wildlife management, and enhance the economic benefits of conservation to local communities.

## Protecting species from climate change

Climate change is transforming habitats, altering wildlife migrations and behaviors, and jeopardizing species that depend on the now-diminishing Arctic ice. WWF works to stabilize populations by identifying and preserving key habitats, increasing protected areas, and reducing threats, such as shipping and offshore oil and gas development. We work with leading scientists to study the impacts of climate change and develop models to forecast possible changes in the marine environment. We develop and implement adaptation and mitigation strategies for both animals and humans.

## Conserving marine and coastal habitats

Shipwrecks and oil spills have jeopardized critical marine, island and coastal habitats. Marine debris and the introduction of nonnative species, such as rats, are also serious threats. WWF partners with industry, governments and communities to improve safety standards, limit offshore development and protect the most sensitive areas. We advocate for strong legislation in the United States and Russia to permanently protect vital habitats from oil and gas drilling. We support a bilateral monitoring and response plan and increased government funding for cleanups. We are also improving the management and conservation of special island ecosystems, including the Aleutian, Commander and Pribilof Islands.



# WWF builds strong partnerships

Lasting conservation is achieved by collaborating with a range of extraordinary partners from governments to local communities and from businesses to individual supporters. By leveraging the strengths of our collaborations, we are able to accomplish our greatest successes. Our partners include

The Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge  
The Commander Islands Nature Reserve, the  
Kronotsky Nature Reserve, and other  
federal and regional protected areas in  
Kamchatka and Chukotka  
Governments of Kamchatka Krai and Chukotka  
Autonomous Region  
The Institute of Geography of the Russian  
Academy of Sciences  
Kamchatka League of Independent Experts  
National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration,  
U.S. Department of Commerce

The Nature Conservancy  
Pacific Environment  
St. George Traditional Council, the Ecosystem  
Conservation Office of the Tribal  
Government of St. Paul, and other Pribilof  
Island entities  
Shipping Safety Partnership  
United Nations Development Programme  
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
The Wild Salmon Center

## Be part of our work

WWF is leading the most important and ambitious conservation effort the world has ever seen.

By 2015, we will conserve 19 of the world's most important natural places and significantly change global market forces to protect the future of nature.

Together, with your generous support, we can directly influence the course of conservation.

**To learn more, visit [worldwildlife.org/BeringSeaandKamchatka](http://worldwildlife.org/BeringSeaandKamchatka)**



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