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COVER

A young polar bear (*Ursus maritimus*) on a piece of ice that is drifting in the Barents Sea, northeast of Svalbard, Norway. Polar bears depend on sea ice as a platform for hunting seals, but current melting and retreat of sea ice is increasingly forcing them onto land. A recent study has found polar bears to be evolutionarily older and genetically more distinct than was previously thought. See page 344.

Photo: Florian Schulz, www.visionsofthewild.com

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