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Homeless Polar Bears Ask for Change

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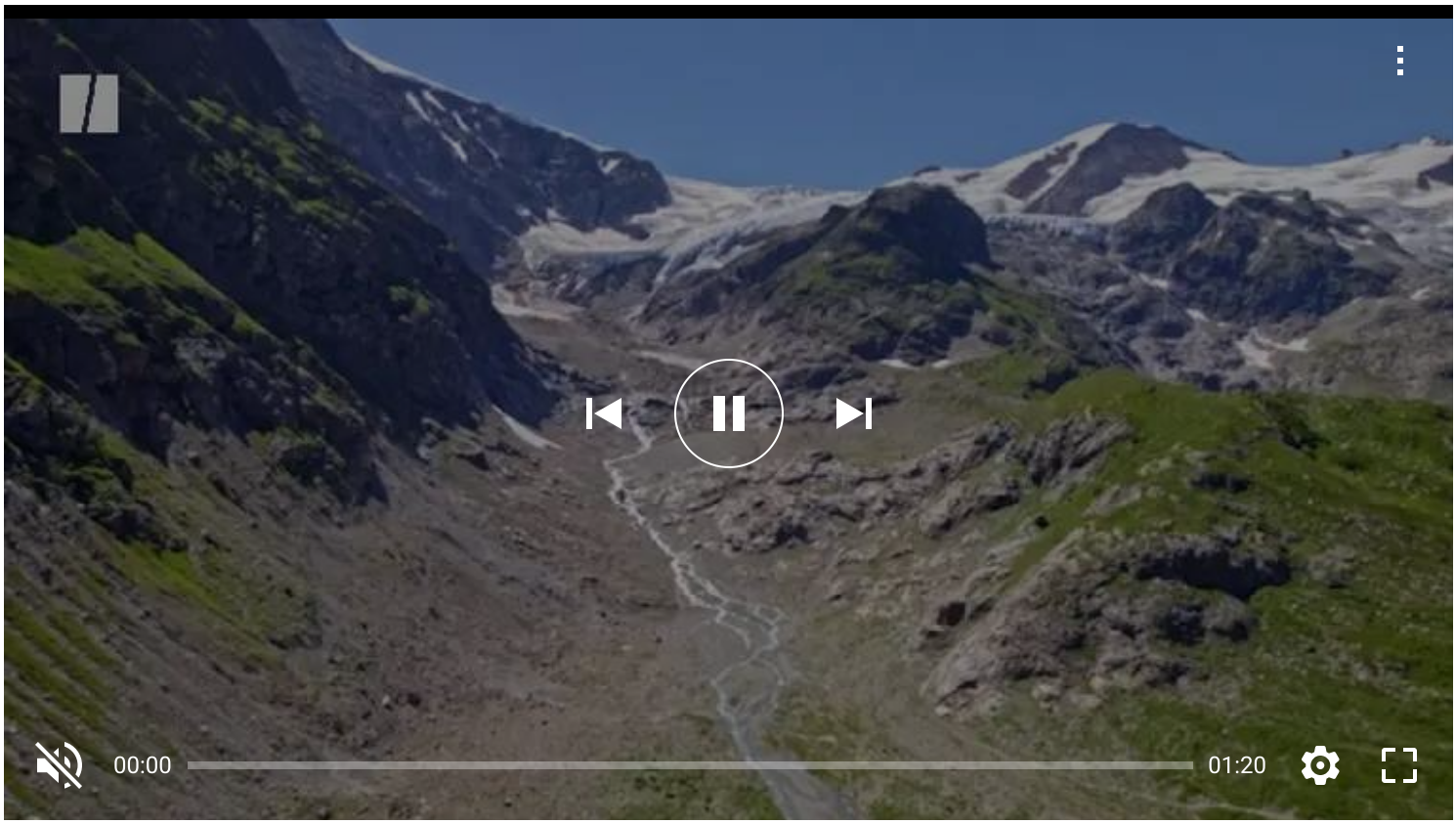
By Daniel Kessler, Contributor

Communications Director at CEL's Climate Lab

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Greenpeace, along with well-known street artist Mark Jenkins, launched a collaborative art project this week that shows the shared plight of polar bears and humanity in the face of global warming. It's particularly timely with Arctic sea ice at near record lows and the House vote to expand oil drilling.

The response by DC police to the project hasn't exactly been sympathetic, but we got our point across: melting sea ice, caused by global warming, is threatening polar bears and humans. Immediate action is needed. And by action, I don't mean more drilling. I mean a comprehensive approach to getting out from under of our carbon-based economy and into a clean and green one that won't put us or the polar bear in jeopardy.

For this series, we added polar bear heads and ragged clothing to these figures to dramatize how global warming is making polar bears homeless by causing the sea ice they rely on to melt, threatening many polar bear populations with extinction. The street art project coincides with an announcement by the National Snow and Ice Data Center that Arctic sea ice has reached its second lowest annual extent in recorded history. The Arctic sea ice has fallen to a low of 1.74 million square miles in September, roughly 860,000 square miles below the long-term average.

Rising tides and severe storms intensified by global warming have already displaced millions of people around the world, from Galveston to Gambia. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change projects that millions more will be displaced by global warming in the next few decades as a result of rising sea levels, extended droughts, and more extreme weather events that force migrations and make returning difficult or even impossible.

Additional photos of the art project are available at Greenpeace's Web site.

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