Arctic foxes have a circumpolar distribution. They are small, carnivorous mammals adapted to the Arctic with short lifespans. There are two ecotypes of arctic foxes, which vary in habitat, diet, and coat color. Lemming foxes are typical of inland locations, have mostly white coats, and feed on lemmings and other small rodents. Coastal foxes live along the coasts of the Arctic, have mostly “blue” coats, and feed on migratory birds, eggs, and fish.

Most populations throughout the arctic foxes’ distribution are considered stable. However, some populations are considered critically endangered such as populations in mainland Norway. Greenland’s arctic fox population is currently stable. As climate change is predicted to affect Arctic communities more so than temperate communities, I investigated the potential impacts of climate change on arctic fox populations in the Arctic. Climate change poses three main threats to arctic fox populations: 1) Changes in resource availability, 2) Interspecific competition with the red fox, and 3) loss of sea ice.

Questions Emailed to Greenlandic and Norwegian Officials

1) Who or what agency decides policy concerning the trapping of arctic foxes in Greenland and/or Norway?

2) How is the arctic fox trapping limit decided in Greenland and/or Norway?

3) Who enforces restrictions on arctic fox trappings in Greenland and/or Norway?

4) What are the penalties for violating trapping limits in Greenland and/or Norway?

5) Is climate change a factor in arctic fox wildlife policy in Greenland and/or Norway?

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