

Brussels,
D 2160

01.12.2005

Dear Dr. Lucas,

The Commission is aware of the incident that occurred in the beginning of 2005 concerning the interception in Greece of dogs being transported to their adoption homes in some European countries. The Commission, of course, deplors all forms of cruelty towards and inhumane treatment of animals and has recently replied to a Parliamentary question (written question n° E-3111/05 by M. Camre) concerning that subject.

Under the Protocol on the protection and welfare of animals annexed to the EC Treaty, the Community and the Member States shall pay full regard to the welfare requirements of animals in formulating and implementing the Community's agriculture, transport, internal market and research policies. Although a considerable body of legislation has been adopted, this is principally concerned with animals on farms, the slaughter or killing of farmed livestock, transport and laboratory animals.

However, responsibility for the general protection of animals from cruelty still remains with the Member States.

As concerns your allegations about the use of stray cats and dogs as shark bait in a number of French territories, the Commission, though being appalled by reports on this practice, has no legal power to intervene as this area falls entirely within the competence of the Member States concerned. I would therefore suggest you to contact the French competent authorities which are responsible for the protection of animals from cruelty.

As it is a duty of the individual Member State to find a solution to the problems mentioned in your letter, the Commission can only call upon the competent authorities to put an end to the cruel practice to which you refer.

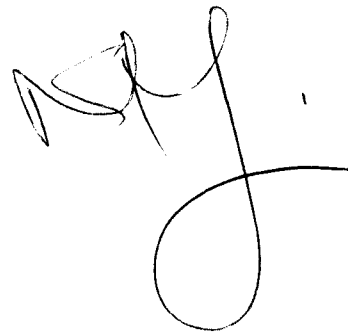
Ms. Caroline Lucas MEP
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It is also worth mentioning that France has ratified the Convention for the protection of pet animals. The Convention lays down provisions concerning pet animals and aims essentially at ensuring the welfare of animals and in particular of pet animals kept for companionship. I am confident that its enforcement may improve the situation of pet animals and stray dogs described in your letter.

With regard to the issue of laboratory animals I would suggest that you address your concerns to my colleague Commissioner Dimas, who is responsible for matters relating to animal experimentation.

I hope the above-mentioned information will prove useful.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of several loops and a long horizontal stroke at the bottom.