

Brussels,
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09. 12. 2008

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Dear Dr. Lucas,

Thank you for your letter of 16 October 2008.

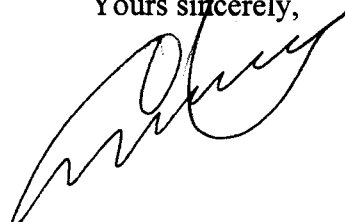
The pilot whale hunt you refer to is conducted in the Faroe Islands; and therefore, the Commission has limited possibilities to directly intervene in this case. I will, however, look into possibilities to raise this sensitive issue with the relevant authorities.

As you are aware, the European Community is very committed to the protection of all cetaceans. Within the EU, the capture and the introduction of cetaceans such as whales and dolphins into the EU for primarily commercial purposes is prohibited by strict EC legislation.

At the international level, whales are protected by the International Whaling Commission (IWC). However, the hunting of pilot whales is not regulated by the IWC, since there is no agreement to date on the IWC's competency with regard to small cetaceans, such as pilot whales.

The European Commission continues to aim, together with the Council, at developing a common EU position on the issues dealt with by the IWC. To that effect, the Commission adopted on 6 November 2008 a proposal for a Council Decision. The European Commission, along with the EU Member States, will make all possible efforts to ensure effective protection for all cetaceans worldwide.

Yours sincerely,



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