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Our ref: MC107322

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23rd November 2008

From Rt Hon Jane Kennedy MP
Minister for Farming and the Environment

Dear Dr Lucas

Thank you for your letter of 21 October to Hilary Benn about the Canadian seal hunt and the trade in seal products.

The Government's opposition to the annual Canadian seal hunt is well known and remains unchanged. We have lobbied to promote EU-wide action and we are pleased that on 23 July 2008, the European Commission proposed an EU-wide ban on the import, export and sale of seal products from a range of species where it cannot be proved that the seals were killed humanely. The Government welcomes this proposal which was discussed by the Council of Ministers for the first time on 20 October. We intend to work with the European Commission to introduce effective legislation as quickly as possible. Our aim is for a complete ban on the commercial trade in all pinniped products (i.e. seals, sea lions and walrus).

Yours sincerely
Jane Kennedy

RT HON JANE KENNEDY MP