

March 26th 2003

Dear Commissioner,

I am writing to you to draw your attention to the recent announcement made by the Canadian government to significantly increase its annual seal hunt. The hunt in itself is already a cruel and inhumane practice, but for this massacre to become the biggest seal hunt in history is utterly unacceptable. I therefore urge you to extend EU legislation to cover all harp and hooded seal products.

Currently, the products of 'whitecoats' - harp seal pups up to their first moult which happens after just a few days - and 'bluebacks' - hooded seal pups up to their first moult which happens much later at around 18 months are prohibited from entering the EU under Regulation (83/129/EEC). To avoid this legislation the Canadian hunters now simply kill the seals a bit later. As a result fur and seal oil are currently being imported into the EU market.

It is important that Regulation (83/129/EEC) is extended to cover all harp and hooded seal products. There is already international precedent for such a move - the US Marine Mammal Protection Act, as well as the EU ban on whale and certain seal products.

I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,

Dr. Caroline Lucas MEP