

Commissioner Margot Wallström  
DG Environment  
Rue de la Loi 200  
1049 Brussels

25th April 2004

Dear Commissioner,

I am writing to you to demand action from the European Commission against seal hunting. The Canadian government has recently announced plans to expand their seal hunt and permit the deliberate culling of nearly one million seals over the next three years - the highest level of Canadian government-sanctioned cruelty to seals since the 1960s.

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.

Furthermore, I am also writing to express my concern over the continuing slaughter of baby seals in the Russian Federation.

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. Furthermore, I would also be grateful to learn of what the Commission has done, following repeated requests, to ensure that ending of the slaughter of baby seals in the Russian Federation.

I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely

Dr. Caroline Lucas MEP