

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

2004



2009

15.5.2006

0038/2006

WRITTEN DECLARATION

pursuant to Rule 116 of the Rules of Procedure

by Carl Schlyter, Paulo Casaca, Karl-Heinz Florenz, Mojca Drčar Murko and
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on banning seal products in the European Union

Lapse date: 15.9.2006

0038/2006

Written declaration on banning seal products in the European Union

The European Parliament,

- having regard to Rule 116 of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas more than one and a half million harp seal pups have been slaughtered in the North West Atlantic over the last four years and the vast majority of these animals were less than three months old,
- B. whereas the last time the annual number of seals now being killed were slaughtered in the 1950s and 1960s the seal population was reduced by two thirds,
- C. whereas, on average, sealers receive less than 5% of their income from sealing which provides only a few days' work each year,
- D. whereas a team of international veterinarians concluded that 42% of the slaughtered seals they examined may have been skinned whilst still conscious,
- E. whereas the import of whitecoat harp seal and blueback hooded seal furs and furskin products was banned within the EEC in 1983 (83/129/EEC), whereas sealers now wait a few days until harp seal pups have moulted and whereas the products of these animals are still imported into the European Union,
- F. whereas a number of EU countries (Belgium, Luxembourg and Italy) have already taken steps to ban the trade in seal products, and others (the UK and the Netherlands) are considering action,
- G. whereas the USA, Mexico and Croatia have banned the trade in seal products,
- H. whereas the Council of Europe is currently considering a motion that calls for a ban on the import and use of seals and seal parts,
 1. Requests the Commission to immediately draft a regulation to ban the import, export and sale of all harp and hooded seal products;
 2. Considers that this regulation should not have an impact on traditional Inuit seal hunting which, however, only accounts for 3% of the current hunt;
 3. Instructs its President to forward this declaration, together with the names of the signatories, to the Council and the Commission.