

**Question for written answer E-004510/2020
to the Commission**

Rule 138

Aurelia Beigneux (ID)

Subject: Slaughter of pilot whales in the Faroe Islands – the traditional ‘Grindadráp’

‘Grindadráp’ is the annual rounding-up and slaughter of whole families of pilot whales. It has existed since the 16th century. Thousands of pilot whales are killed using harpoons and knives, be this for meat or simply because it is a tradition. Pilot whales are sentient and intelligent creatures at risk of extinction. They are a species protected by the EU¹²³.

While this practice used to be a necessary means of feeding the Faroe Islanders, this is no longer the case. The Faroe Islands have one of the highest standards of living in Europe and supermarkets there are restocked on a daily basis.

It is also scientifically proven that pilot whale meat contains high levels of mercury and persistent organic pollutants that affect the intellectual and neurological development of humans. In fact, the meat is unfit for consumption owing to bioaccumulation.

The Danish authorities have chosen to safeguard these practices. Can the Commission therefore state:

what it intends to do vis-à-vis a Member State which is complicit in a clear violation of the laws and conventions banning the slaughter of cetaceans and which is responsible for such practices being conducted?

¹ <https://www.cms.int/en/convention-text>

² <https://rm.coe.int/1680078aff>

³ <https://www.ascobans.org/en/documents/agreement-text>