

**Question for written answer E-000241/2024  
to the Commission**

Rule 138

**Johan Nissinen (ECR)**

Subject: EU ban on the trade in seal products

In 2015, the EU – eagerly cheered on by animal rights and environmental activists – banned all trading in seal products. The protective hunting of seals is OK, but the sale of seal products is not. Basically you're allowed to hunt seals, but you're not allowed to sell them.

This has posed major problems for Sweden. Seals destroy fish farms by tearing the nets and eating the fish. The protective hunting of seals is therefore absolutely crucial. If hunters cannot sell the products, however, there is no great incentive for them to help the fishing industry with protective hunting. Seal hunting takes time and costs hunters money.

Only half the quota of 4 000 seals were shot in Sweden in 2020/2021, and one of the reasons given for that poor figure was the EU ban on the trade in seal products.

The ban has led to an exponential increase in the seal population. Seals are now having such a major impact on fish stocks that it probably won't make much difference if we stop fishing altogether. There is a risk that even calling a halt to cod fishing will not be enough to revive fish stocks when the seal population is so large.

In the light of the foregoing:

1. Does the Commission realise that the ban on the trade in seal products has had a negative impact on Sweden's fishing industry?
2. Is the Commission considering lifting the seal trade ban?

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