

BREAKFAST MEETING

Towards sustainable management and trade possibilities of seal products

15 April 2015

08:00-09:30

Room A3F383

European Parliament, Brussels

Co-chaired by:

Christel Schaldemose MEP

Chair of the “Arctic” Working Group of the Intergroup

&

Nils Torvalds MEP

Vice-Chair of the Intergroup

AGENDA

Following the decision by the WTO Appellate Body the EU must now change its seal trade regime and comply with the decision at the latest by 18 October 2015. In February 2015 the European Commission has presented a proposal to ban trade in products from seals taken in EU waters.

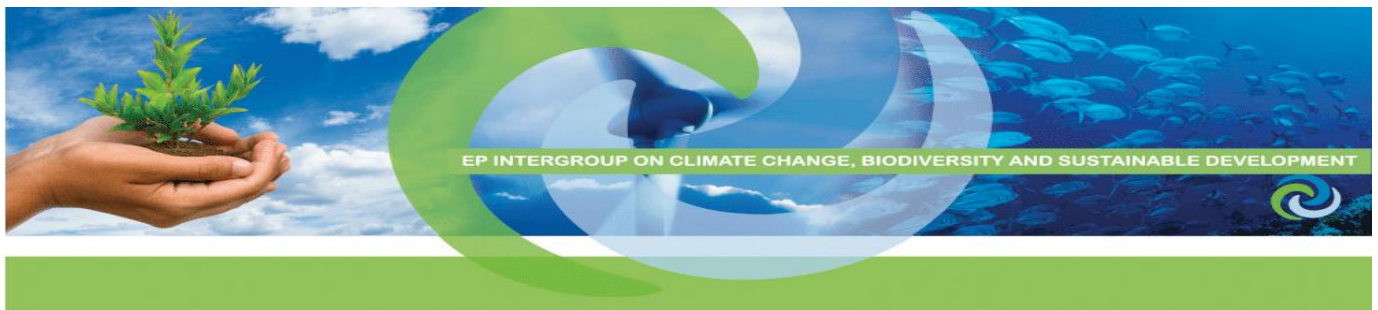
However, hunting and trading in seal products is at the core of the Arctic’s Inuit societies. Despite the Inuit Communities (IC) exemption export of seal products from Greenland to the EU has decreased dramatically. The number of hunters has gone down and hunting patterns have changed. The Inuit communities have been seriously affected, socially, economically and culturally.

Furthermore, a complete ban is of concern to the countries around the Baltic Sea, which claim that this would have a negative impact on the management and sustainable use of seals as an abundant natural resource in the EU as well as on fisheries, as seal populations would grow out of good management. The proposal encourages the hunt of seals in EU waters, while at the same time restricting the use of what is being hunted, thus encouraging waste of natural resources.

The aim of this breakfast meeting will be to bring up-to-date knowledge on this issue to the Members of European Parliament who will have to provide an opinion in the months to come, and to provide a platform for debate between the 3 institutions.

Contact:

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- 08:00-08:05** Welcome and introduction by Christel Schaldemose MEP
- 08:05-08:15** Karl-Kristian Kruse, Minister of Fisheries, Hunting and Agriculture, Greenland
- 08:15-08:20** Henrik Sandgreen, Chairman for Fishermen and Hunters Organization
- 08:20-08:25** Ambassador Ole Toft, Deputy Permanent Representative of Denmark to the EU
- 08:25-08:35** Jyri Ollila, Counsellor on Fisheries and Natural Resources, Permanent Representation of Finland to the EU
- 08:35-08:45** Comments and questions by Rapporteurs:
- Cristian-Silviu Buşoi
 - Bendt Bendtsen
- 08:45-08:50** Comments by Hans Stielstra, Acting Head of Unit, Global Sustainability, Trade and Multilateral Agreements
- 08:50-08:55** Comments by Normunds Struve, EU Presidency (Latvia)
- 08:55-09:25** Discussion
- 09:25-09:30** Closing remarks by Nils Torvalds MEP

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