

SÉNAT



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*L'honorable Céline Hervieux-Payette, c.p.  
(Bedford, Québec)*

*The Honourable Céline Hervieux-Payette, P.C.  
(Bedford, Quebec)*

CANADA

Ottawa, April 28<sup>th</sup>, 2009

To the Members of the European Parliament  
European Parliament  
Allée du Printemps,  
67000 Strasbourg  
France

Dear colleague in the European Parliament,

I am writing to put before you “We Care”, the draft Universal Declaration on the Ethical Harvest of Seals, which was released on April 23.

The Declaration is the result of extensive work by several Canadian, French and American scientists (a biologist, a veterinarian, an anthropologist, a pathologist) as well as by members of Aboriginal and seal hunting communities.

Its principles are based on those of the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity, on the wise use of natural resources called for by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), the most important and respected conservation body in the world, and on the ecological expertise of Canada’s Aboriginal peoples.

The Declaration’s principles have already earned the support of IWMC World Conservation Trust, a Swiss NGO working for species conservation.

We are putting this draft before all European parliamentarians and governments, in the hope of obtaining their help in improving its content and, ultimately, their support.

The text will enable us to reopen a constructive dialogue between Canadian and European parliamentarians on the issue of the seal hunt, so that together we can formulate international ethical principles based on animal welfare, the well-being of human communities and the conservation of species and ecosystems.

That the reason why I would ask to consider my request, in the spirit of openness and the good relations between our peoples, **to delay the vote on seal products** until the conclusion of our upcoming dialogue.

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We are well aware that you are the victim of pressure groups that promote vegetarianism. Apparently they have succeeded in mobilizing European public opinion against the seal hunt, in the face of all scientific logic. We are proposing a unique opportunity for all of us to neutralize the threats of these pressure groups – which for the time being are attacking only the most vulnerable hunters and fishers – while satisfying public opinion in our countries and helping to put the relationship between human beings and the rest of the animal world on a better footing.

We will also be submitting the Declaration to seal hunt associations on both sides of the Atlantic, so that all concerned can eventually agree to work on the basis of shared ethical principles.

Once we have reached consensus on a shared ethical framework within which the seal hunt can take place, the finalized document will be tabled to the European Parliament, the Parliament of Canada and the United Nations.

Please visit our Internet site, [www.sealsonline.org](http://www.sealsonline.org), for more information, and contact my Ottawa office if you have any questions or need clarifications.

Together, we can do more and better for animal welfare, the well-being of human communities and the protection of species and ecosystems.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Celine Hervieux-Payette'.

The Honourable Céline Hervieux-Payette, P.C.  
Senator