

1. Is it legal to kill baby seals in Canada?

YES. 97% of the seals killed in the commercial seal hunt are between 12 days and 12 weeks old. Sealers prefer to kill the baby seals because their skins fetch the highest prices. It is only illegal to hunt “whitecoat” harp seals between 0 -11 days old.

2. Do aboriginal people depend on the annual commercial seal hunt?

NO. There are no Inuits involved in the commercial seal hunt. They simply do not favour harp and hooded seals.

3. Is the seal hunt humane?

NO. The seal pups are struck over the head with a hakapik (a club with a sharp metal pick attached) or shot with a rifle. Often the animals are struck multiple times, dragged across the ice with a hook and skinned while still alive. Some animals get away after being struck or shot and die a long and agonizing death.

4. Is the seal hunt sustainable?

NO. Over the past 10 years, between 2/3 and 1/2 of the seal pup population have been slaughtered by commercial sealers. The seal population is already threatened by global warming. As the ice cover rapidly disappears, the seal population is facing devastating rates of natural mortalities.

5. Are the seals eating too many fish?

NO. Even the DFO (Department of Fisheries and Oceans) admits that this is a myth. The cod stock has disappeared as a result of poor management of the fishing industry. Seals are a convenient scapegoat, providing a distraction from the destructive commercial fishing practices that continue today.

6. Are you paying for the commercial seal hunt?

YES. Over \$20 million in government subsidies have been provided to the Canadian sealing industry over the period 1995-2001. While tracking subsidies to the sealing industry is difficult (the information is not public), \$400,000 in government subsidies were granted as recently as 2004 to two sealing companies.

7. Are sealers using all parts of the seals as a necessary part of survival?

NO. The seals are killed for their fur to be sold to high-end retailers like Gucci, Prada and Dolce & Gabbana. Seal penises are sold in Asia as aphrodisiacs and seal oil is sold as a health supplement. Since there is no market for the meat, the skinned corpses are left on the ice to rot.

8. Would sealers suffer if the hunt stopped?

NO. The sealers are fishermen who make 95% of their income from the fishing industry. Because of this unpopular seal slaughter, tourists are boycotting Newfoundland and restaurants are boycotting Canadian seafood. Profits could only increase if the seal hunt stopped.

9. Are there more sustainable and profitable alternatives to sealing?

YES. At the rate the seals are being killed, there will be none left to slaughter in a few years. It is much more sustainable and profitable to explore eco-tourism as an attraction for this area.

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What you can do:

- Don't buy seal fur (watch out for real fur trim) and ask stores to stop selling it.
- Ask health stores not to sell seal oil (aka 'marine oil')
- Call or write your MP and ask them to voice your opposition.
- Send a message to the Prime Minister at www.savecanadianseals.ca

The Canadian seal hunt is the largest slaughter of marine mammals on earth...



paid for by your tax dollars.

To get involved locally, please contact:

Liberation BC

info@liberationbc.com

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