

The logo for 'PROTECT SEALS' features the word 'PROTECT' in a large, bold, red, sans-serif font. Below it, the word 'SEALS' is written in a smaller, bold, red, sans-serif font. The letters are closely spaced and have a slight shadow effect.

Fast Facts on Canada's Commercial Seal Hunt

About the Hunt:

- Canada's commercial seal hunt is the largest slaughter of marine mammals on earth. In the past three years, more than one million seals have been killed for their fur.
- Ninety-seven percent of the seals killed were under 3 months, and the majority were younger than 1 month. At the time of slaughter, many of these pups had not yet eaten their first solid meal or taken their first swim.
- The last time sealers killed this many seals—in the 1950s and 1960s—the harp seal population was reduced by as much as two-thirds.
- In 2001, an independent veterinary panel studied the commercial seal hunt. It concluded that in 42 percent of the seals examined there was not enough evidence of cranial injury to even guarantee unconsciousness at the time of skinning.
- HSI/Canada takes no issue with subsistence seal hunting by aboriginal people. Our concern is exclusively with commercial seal hunting.

The Economics of the Hunt:

- In Newfoundland, where more than 90 percent of sealers live, income from the seal hunt accounts for less than one-half of 1 percent of the province's economy. Less than 1 percent of Newfoundlanders participate in the seal hunt.
- Sealers are commercial fishermen who earn only a small fraction of their annual incomes from killing seals—the remainder is from commercial fisheries such as crab, shrimp and lobster.
- Newfoundland's fishery has never been wealthier, earning \$150 million more each year than prior to the 1992 cod collapse.

What the Public Thinks:

- Nearly 70 percent of Canadians holding an opinion are opposed to the commercial seal hunt outright, and even higher numbers oppose specific aspects of the hunt such as the killing of seal pups. (EnviroNics Research, 2005)

- Seventy-nine percent of residents of the United Kingdom believe that the annual Canadian seal hunt should be stopped, and 73 percent support a ban on the import of seal products into Britain. (Opinion Research Business, 2005)
- Ninety-five percent of people in the Netherlands deem the Canadian commercial seal hunt to be unacceptable, and 92 percent support a Netherlands ban on the trade in seal products. (Dutch Institute for Public Opinion and Market Research, 2005)
- Ninety-one percent of people in Germany and 80 percent of people in France who are aware of the Canadian seal hunt oppose it. (MORI, 2002)
- Seventy-nine percent of American voters oppose Canada's seal hunt, and 65 percent are unlikely to travel to Canada as a result. (Penn, Schoen & Berland, 2002)

Global Political Response:

- In January 2006, the Greenland government announced its decision to end imports of Canadian sealskins, and the Mexican government banned all trade in seal products. In February 2006, the Italian government suspended all imports of seal products, and introduced a bill that will permanently end the trade.
- In 2005, a bipartisan U.S. Senate Resolution (S. Res 33) was introduced by Sens. Levin and Collins, urging the Government of Canada to stop the hunt. The resolution has 26 co-sponsors including Foreign Relations Committee Chair Sen. Richard Lugar.
- In 2006, 200 members of the British House of Commons signed an Early Day Motion calling on the U.K. Government to introduce a ban on the import of and trade in all seal products.
- In 2004, the Belgian Government prohibited the import of all seal products, and the Netherlands subsequently announced its intention to follow suit.
- In 2004, a resolution was introduced at the Council of Europe, which would have it advise all bodies under its jurisdiction to prohibit the trade in all seal products.

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