

## Canada's Cruel Seal Hunt

Most Americans think that Canada's seals have been safe from slaughter for decades, but *nothing* could be further from the truth. In fact, Canada's seal hunt is now the largest commercial slaughter of wildlife in the world. Last winter the Canadian government announced that seal hunters could legally kill nearly one million harp seals over the following three years.

While hunters cannot legally kill seal pups who still have their white coats, the vast majority of seals clubbed or shot last year were only 12 days to 12 weeks old. And despite the Canadian government's claims that the hunt is humane and well regulated, independent veterinarians observing in 2001 estimated that 40 percent of the seals were skinned while they were still alive!

The veterinarians also saw sealers drag live seals across the ice with sharpened steel hooks, stockpile living animals with dead ones, and shoot seals only to leave them to suffer agonizingly slow deaths from blood loss.

Canada's Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) officials specifically designed the hunt to reduce the seal population, blaming the seals for preventing the recovery of devastated cod stocks. But there is *no* scientific basis for this justification—the cod population's collapse and failure to recover are actually the result of the government's decades-long mismanagement of the fishery. And killing a million seals over the next three years may lead to a serious decline in the population, with unknown ecological consequences.

To add insult to injury, the Canadian government financially *supports* the hunt with taxpayer money, using more than \$20 million (Cdn) between 1995 and 2001 to subsidize it.

This horrific slaughter is a disgrace. Let's send a message to the Canadian government, the only entity that can end it. Please think twice before spending your tourism—or education—dollars in Canada while the killing continues. And Senator Carl Levin has introduced a resolution urging Canada to end the hunt, S. 269, in the U.S. Senate. Please ask your senators to support this resolution. You can reach them through the U.S. Capitol switchboard at 202-224-3121, or visit [www.senate.gov](http://www.senate.gov) to send them an e-mail.

You can also help The Humane Society of the United States campaign to end Canada's seal slaughter by visiting [www.protectseals.org](http://www.protectseals.org) or e-mailing [protect-seals@hsus.org](mailto:protect-seals@hsus.org) to request postcards you can send the Canadian embassy or to order a seal campaign T-shirt, sweatshirt, or poster.

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