

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

1999



2004

20 October 2003

23/2003

WRITTEN DECLARATION

for entry in the register

pursuant to Rule 51 of the Rules of Procedure

by Mark Watts, Catherine Stihler and Phillip Whitehead

on seal culling

Expiry date: 20 January 2004

- having regard to Rule 51 of the Rules of Procedure,
 - whereas the grey seal and common seal are listed in the EU Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC), Appendix II,
 - whereas in some countries seals are protected by national legislation,
 - whereas last year up to 18 000 seals in the North Sea died from the PDV-virus,
 - noting international concern over seal hunting in Canada, Norway and Russia (White Sea),
 - whereas culling seals cannot be scientifically justified as estimates of food consumption tell us little about whether seals are having direct or indirect effects on various fish stocks or commercial fishing,
1. Calls on the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES) and the Seal Specialist Group of the International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN) to monitor the condition of seal populations in European waters and potential interactions with fisheries, and to review any new proposals to cull seal populations.
 2. Calls on the European Commission to synthesise data on damages to fishing gear and catches caused by seals in European waters and the effects of fisheries on seal populations, with a view to mitigating any conflicts so identified.
 3. Instructs its President to forward this declaration to ICES, the IUCN and the Commission.