Trade in seal products

2008/0160(COD) - 02/03/2009

The Committee on the Internal Market and Consumer Protection adopted the report drawn up by Diana WALLIS (ALDE, UK) amending, under first reading of the codecision procedure, the proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council concerning trade in seals products.

The main amendments were as follows:

Purpose of the Regulation: MEPs aim to clarify that this Regulation establishes harmonised rules **prohibiting** the placing on the market and the import to, transit through, or export from, the European Community of seal products. Only products derived from the subsistence hunting of seals conducted by **Inuit** or other aboriginal communities may be traded as part of a commercial exchange between such communities for cultural, educational and/or ceremonial purposes.

In addition, this regulation shall apply to all species of seals.

Imports: an amendment clarifies that imports for personal use must be of a non-commercial quantity and nature.

Comprehensive ban: provisions concerning conditions of placing on the market, import, transit and export, as well as those on derogations, certificates, labelling and marking have been deleted.

MEPs consider that commercial seal hunts are inherently inhumane because humane killing methods cannot be effectively and consistently applied in the field environments in which they operate. Moreover, seal hunts occur in remote locations, and are conducted by thousands of individuals over large, inaccessible areas, making effective monitoring of seal hunting impossible. As such only a comprehensive ban without the derogation drafted by the Commission would meet citizens' demands to see an end to the trade in seal products.

Consequent to deletion of derogation for certain killing methods, **the annexes** have also been deleted.

Reports: Member States shall send by two years from the date of entry into force of this Regulation and thereafter every three years to the Commission a report outlining the actions taken to enforce this Regulation (the Commission proposed that this report be sent every five years).