# EC/Canada, Russian Federation Agreement: on international standards of trapping, humane trapping standards

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OBJECTIVE: Conclusion of an International Agreement between Russia, Canada and the European Community on humane trapping standards for traps intended to kill or capture certain wild mammals (in particular for the purposes of commercially marketing their fur). SUBSTANCE: Under the terms of Regulation (EEC) No 3254/91, the Community may only import pelts and manufactured products from animals from third countries which prohibit leghold traps or use humane trapping methods in line with the international standard set before 1 January 1996. As at that date no relevant standard had been set at international level, the Council authorized the Community to negotiate a framework agreement on humane trapping methods with Canada, the Russian Federation and the United States. An agreement was reached at the end of 1996 between the Community, Canada and Russia with the following objectives: - to establish harmonized standards on humane trapping methods for traps intended to kill or capture certain species of wild mammal (in particular the species covered by Regulation (EEC) 3254/91), - to improve communication and cooperation between the parties for the implementation and development of these standards, - to facilitate trade between the parties. The Agreement makes it possible to ensure an adequate level of 'welfare' for trapped animals and creates favourable conditions for the trade in traps and pelts between the Community, Canada and Russia. In particular it provides for: - thresholds and indicators to measure the degree of 'welfare' of animals to be caught or killed, - establishment of guidelines to test traps to demonstrate they are in accordance with the standards or if they are not, to replace them by certified traps (implementation schedule: three to five years after entry into force of the Agreement for restraining traps and five years for killing traps), - a total ban on all traditional leghold traps within four years of entry into force of the Agreement and a ban on all traps which are not certified as in accordance with the standards within three years of the deadline laid down in the implementation schedule (derogations are provided permitting the provisional use of some non-traditional traps while research is carried out to identify replacements).