



MANDATE FOR THE *AD HOC* GROUP CONCERNING ANIMAL WELFARE ASPECTS OF THE KILLING AND SKINNING OF SEALS

The European Commission has asked the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) to issue a scientific opinion on:

1. the animal welfare aspects of the methods currently being used , particularly non-traditional methods, for killing and skinning seals in respective range states and,
2. in addition, to assess, on the basis of current scientific knowledge including other available information on different killing and skinning practices, the most appropriate/suitable killing methods for seals which reduce as much as possible unnecessary pain, distress and suffering.

EFSA has asked for data from member states and observer countries at the Advisory Forum meeting in Berlin 19th of April 2007.

The Norwegian Scientific Committee for Food Safety, panel on Animal Health and Welfare, on contact with EFSA has been asked to provide such information as: data on number of animals killed, methods used, misses and reasons for misses, and timings from shooting to stunning to bleed out to skinning or carcase dressing.

Data on how long it takes for the animals to become irreversibly unconscious, with description of killing methods and bleed time are also asked for.

The *ad hoc* group is asked to conclude whether seals suffer in traditional hunt.

The report should be in English and be completed within September 10th 2007.