

De Voorzitter van de Tweede Kamer
der Staten-Generaal
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_____ Geachte Voorzitter,

Hierbij treft u aan een afschrift van de brief die ik naar mijn ambtgenoot in Namibië heb gestuurd, de heer A. Iyambo, minister voor Visserij en Marine Zaken.

In de brief uit ik de zorgen die de Nederlandse regering heeft ten aanzien van de commerciële jacht aldaar en het gebrek aan diervriendelijkheid van die jacht. Tevens licht ik mijn collega in over het ophanden zijnde importverbod van de Kaapse pelsrob naar Nederland.

Ik kom hiermee tegemoet aan mijn toezegging aan uw Kamer. Ik verwijs u naar mijn brief aan uw Kamer van 12 september jongstleden (Kamerstuknr. 30800 XIV nr. 146).

DE MINISTER VAN LANDBOUW, NATUUR EN
VOEDSELKwaliteit,

G. Verburg

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Mr. Abraham Iyambo
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I would like to inform you that the Government of the Netherlands is in the process of implementing a permanent ban on the import of the species *Arctocephalus pusillus* (cape fur seal) and products thereof. This ban is expected to come into force later this year.

Dutch national waters are home to two species of seals, *Phoca vitulina* (common seal) and *Halichoerus grypus* (grey seal). A ban on hunting and trading these species has been in place for many years. In October of this year an import ban is likely to come into force for *Phoca groenlandica* and the *Cystophora cristata*, two species of seals found in Canada.

These magnificent animals are much loved by the general public. The Netherlands believes that the method used to kill them, which involves clubbing and subsequent stabbing, is not ethical from an animal welfare perspective. Prolonged suffering of seal pups regularly occurs as a result. Surveys have shown that the vast majority of Dutch people are against the killing of seals. The Government of the Netherlands has therefore called for a ban on all imports of these species and products thereof.

Furthermore, the Netherlands is also concerned that the commercial nature of the hunt may put too much pressure on the species and its sustainability. Over the years quotas have increased and the hunting season has started earlier, while the size of the seal population shows a clear downward trend.

I would be very grateful if you could address these concerns by initiating discussions with the relevant fisheries bodies in order to take appropriate measures aimed at more humane killing methods, and to ensure a sustainable future for the cape fur seals in your country.

Gerda Verburg