



PRESS RELEASE

Animalist groups are threatening the ecosystem

Grindstone, January 5th 2012 – Just before Christmas leave, the news of a Russian embargo on Harp seal products surfaced. Strategically, International Fund for animal Welfare (IFAW) just released a so-called study suggesting that the seals are threatened by climate changes. A small research was sufficient to find out that the author of that research was paid more than 100 000\$ in the last years only.

The president of the Magdalen Islands Sealers Association, Denis Longu  p  e, comments on the news: « After 40 years of lies, nobody should trust their speeches anymore. Unfortunately, mass media publish their press releases without even verifying their sources. By doing so, those same media lose their credibility in the eyes of the public who, nowadays, performs his own researches on the Web », analyse the hunter.

In fact, during a recent meeting with the industry, Doctor Mike Hammill, doctorate in biology of fauna and studying the seal for 30 years for the Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO), confirms that the reproduction rate of 2011 was lower than expected (less female were pregnant), but has never mentioned abnormally high mortality rate among the new born.

Alan Herscovici, executive vice-president for the Fur Council of Canada, condemns the attitude of animalistes: « By damaging the market and by pushing certain countries to wrongly adopt embargoes, animalistes makes believe to the public that they work for animal welfare, but on the contrary. If only for conservation matter, the wildlife populations must be controlled. The fur industry contributes to the best possible treatment of the animals, but if they must be massively slaughtered to keep in balance the ecosystem or if we let them reproduce to a point where diseases and lack of food reduce their populations, that would be cruel. »

Rob Cahill, executive director for the Fur Institute of Canada, share the same opinion: « Canadian seal hunt respect the criteria of true environmental organizations such as the International Union for the conservation of nature (IUCN). Besides, Canada is not the only country using this means in a sustainable way. Russia, Greenland, Norway, Iceland, Finland, Sweden, Estonia, Namibia. The United States, United Kingdom and Australia also have to manage their own populations. Overall, seal represents a significant income for small coastal communities all around. »

Mister Longu  p  e is once again upset about the attitude of animalistes: « The different embargoes on the seal have no scientific foundation. These rich pressure groups have no scruple to destabilize the ecosystem and to threaten the livelihood of our small coastal communities. All that matters to them is to fill their bank accounts with campaign based on lies and twisted truths», he concludes.

For his part, the Canadian Council of Professional Fish Harvesters (CCPFH) works on the sealers professionalization and confirms the statements of Mister Longu  p  e: « It is clear that the growing predation of seal on the declining fish stocks is a growing preoccupation for our members », asserts Mister Pierre Verreault, manager of programs in CCPP. »

According to the last official estimation from DFO, the populations of Harp seal and grey seal in the Gulf of Saint-Lawrence were respectively 7.8 million and 350 000. The herd of Harp seal would therefore have quintupled since the 70's while that of the grey seal would have multiplied by 35. As for fishery, it has suffered a decrease of 10% in catch in the last two decades.

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Source: Gil Th  riault, director
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