

Winnipeg Free Press - PRINT EDITION

European hypocrisy stinks worse than fish guts

By: **The St. John's Telegram**Posted: **10/12/2012 3:19 AM** | Comments: **0g**

Organized seal culls are bad -- unless they're in Europe.

Seals don't threaten fish stocks -- unless they're European seals.

It appears what most fishermen on this side of the Atlantic have known all along is now being taken seriously by politicians on the other side.

And the sheer hypocrisy of seal culls in northern Europe stinks worse than last week's fish guts festering on a beach.

Canadian Sealers Association president Frank Pinhorn certainly thinks so.

"It's two-faced," he told CBC News on Oct. 9. "Individuals making decisions that are not thought out, and it doesn't demonstrate any... common sense."

He's referring to the 2009 European Union ban on seal products, a ban Canada is challenging through the World Trade Organization.

As it turns out, Scotland already culls some seals to protect its farmed salmon operations. Seals are also culled in Finland and Sweden.

Last month, the European Parliament approved a motion to investigate the effect on fish populations of "natural predators such as sea lions, seals and cormorants," with an eye to possibly expanding culls.

So, where does the mighty International Fund for Animal Welfare stand on this?

It's hard to tell. They'll respond to media questions, but their website is still obsessed with Canadian seals.

Check their seal news section. The top two items by Sheryl Fink are about Zak and Mika, two young harp seal pups at the Aquarium des îles de la Madeleine in Quebec.

An international petition led to a stay of execution for the cuddly twosome. When the aquarium closes, they will be released into Canadian waters rather than slaughtered.

Well, the IFAW certainly has its priorities straight.

In fact, the IFAW has succeeded in hopelessly muddying the waters when it comes to seals. It has played on people's emotions and spread false and misleading information around the globe.

To get an idea how poorly people understand the issue, you need only look at the Toronto Sun's headline for the European cull story: "Canada opposes EU seal cull."

Um, not quite. Read that story again.

Canadian officials have merely highlighted the hypocrisy of European parliamentarians pondering the exact same activity they condemned Canada for in word and deed only three years ago.

That's what happens when common sense is usurped by emotion and propaganda.

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