

## Canada and Norway challenge EU measures to prohibit sale of seal products



### EU Regulation prohibiting the sale of seal products in the EU

In recent years several EU Member States have voiced concerns about methods used for hunting seals – such as shooting, netting and clubbing – that can cause avoidable pain and distress. Many Member States have also considered or have already introduced national legislative measures to ban the import and use of seal skins and seal products. In addition to this, the European Parliament has pushed for an import ban on these products in the EU.

On 16 September 2009 the European Parliament and the Council of the European Union adopted a Regulation that prohibits the placing on the EU market of seal products ([Regulation \(EC\) No 1007/2009](#)). Its [implementing Regulation](#), which sets out the conditions for the placing on the EU market of seal products thus ensuring a uniform application of Regulation (EC) No 1007/2009, was adopted by the European Commission on 10 August 2010 and entered into force on 20 August 2010.

The Regulation applies both to seal products produced in the EU and to imported products.

The Regulation makes exceptions to the sales prohibition to respect the fundamental economic and social interests of Inuit and other indigenous communities, and to allow for the sale of seal products for personal and non-commercial use. It also makes exceptions for goods derived from seals that have been hunted – on a non-profit basis and for non-commercial reasons – to ensure the sustainable management of marine resources.

More information about relevant [EU legislation on sale of seal products in the EU](#)

### Canada and Norway challenge the EU Regulation

When the European Parliament and the Council of the European Union adopted the Regulation prohibiting the sale of seal products in the EU on 16 September 2009, this raised concerns in Canada and Norway.

On 2 and 5 November 2009 Canada and Norway requested consultations with the EU regarding the Regulation. A first round of joint consultations was held within the framework of the WTO dispute settlement procedures, on 15 December 2009.

The adoption of the Implementing Regulation by the European Commission on 10 August 2010, prompted Canada and Norway to request supplementary WTO consultations with the EU respectively on 18 and 19 of October 2010.

On 11 February 2011 Canada requested that a WTO dispute settlement panel be set up. The panel was established on 25 March 2011. On 14 March 2011, Norway requested the establishment of a WTO dispute settlement panel. This panel was established on 21 April 2011.

China, Colombia, Iceland, Japan, Mexico, Argentina, Ecuador, Namibia and the United States have requested third party status in this WTO dispute settlement case.

### **Follow the WTO dispute settlement process**

The EU will request that the WTO dispute settlement panel hearings be open. If Canada and Norway accept this, details of the open hearings will be posted on the Trade website of the European Commission and the website of the WTO.

The EU's written submissions to the panel will be available on the WTO dispute settlement page of DG Trade's web site.

Additional [information on the WTO dispute settlement process](#) is available at the WTO website.