



making tracks



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Over the last six months, Jean and Keith have continued to work on a number of animal rights issues, including the global trade of seal products, the transportation of animals to slaughter and animal testing in the cosmetics industry. They have also campaigned for better welfare standards in British pig farms, highlighted poor conditions in Europe's zoos and called for an end to the wasteful practice of throwing dead fish back into the sea. The Green MEPs will continue to push for improved protection of animals across the world.

Animal rights from Jean Lambert and Keith Taylor, Green Party MEPs for London and the South East

Defending the EU ban on seal products

Keith and Jean supported a recent European Parliament resolution calling on the Canadian Government to drop its fight against the European Union's ban on seal products.

In 2009 the EU took a stand against the barbaric and cruel practice of killing baby seals in Canada by passing legislation prohibiting the trade of seal products. The majority of MEPs voted in favour of the ban, a move strongly supported by the majority of both EU and Canadian citizens.

This year alone, the Canadian Government has sanctioned the slaughter of 400,000 baby harp, grey

and hooded seals which will be clubbed and shot to death for their fur. In February, the Canadian Government launched a formal dispute with the World Trade Organisation in response to the European ban.

After the vote on the resolution which called for the European Commission to take a tough stance against Canada's seal trade, Jean Lambert said: *"The Canadian Government's WTO challenge flies in the face of European animal welfare law. The European Union must continue to take a firm stance on this cruel practice in any Europe-Canada trade negotiations."*



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Keith Taylor added: *"It is high time the Canadian government accepted that the ban should not be overturned by the WTO and stopped trying to challenge the democratic decision of the European Parliament."*

Supermarkets must improve pig welfare

Over the last six months Keith has been calling on British supermarkets to take action to improve conditions in pig farms. Keith attended a screening of the film 'Pig Business' which highlights the failure of some pig farmers to enforce adequate welfare standards.

As Chair of the 'Fair Play: Retailers and

the Food Supply Chain' working group Keith has written to British Supermarkets calling for them to sell free range pork or meat produced to RSPCA 'Freedom Food' standards.

Keith said: *"Consumers have a right to know that the supermarkets they buy from do not support industrial pig farming which has a detrimental impact on animal welfare. I will continue to put pressure on retailers to adopt better farming practices."*

Keith has written to the EU Commission to ask them to ensure member states fully enforce the Pigs Directive, which sets welfare standards. He has also asked the Commission to extend the EU ban on sow stalls and to ban the use of farrowing crates.



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Europe's zoos are failing

Many of Europe's zoos are failing to meet the most basic standards of animal welfare and conservation, as required under the EC Zoos Directive, which sought to end animal exploitation in zoos.

A new study commissioned by captive wildlife charity Born Free reveals that across Europe animals are still being kept in substandard and inadequate conditions, perpetuating suffering.

Shocked by the findings of the report, Jean has called on the European Commission to take a tough approach with those member states that are found to be in breach of the legislation and to go further in ensuring countries comply with the Directive.





Photo: Phil Dillon

Keith making friends with one of the Ani-mates residents.

Animals find sanctuary in Kent

Earlier this year Keith visited Ani-mates animal sanctuary in rural Kent. He was concerned to hear how many of the animals had been previously kept and pleased to see that they are being well treated in their new home. Keith said: "It's really important that places like Ani-mates exist as they provide animals with somewhere to live where they are safe and well looked after. When you hear about the conditions some of the animals were living in it's heartening to see that they are now so well cared for."

Limit animal transport times

Every year, millions of animals are transported for thousands of miles en route to slaughter. During these journeys, often through several countries, animals suffer from extreme exhaustion, dehydration, serious injuries and, in extreme cases, die in transit.

Since 2003, journey times have been governed by EU law. Under the current rules, journeys of up to several days are permitted as long as the haulier fulfils simple demands, such as providing food, water and rest. Sadly, research from a number of animal welfare organisations suggest that standards are not being met, with millions of animals suffering as a result.

Jean and Keith believe that this is unacceptable and have written to the European Commission to call for significantly reduced journey times as a step towards ending live exports all together.



Photo: Compassion in World Farming



Keith hosts an event in the European Parliament on animal testing.

End animal testing event

Keith recently hosted a European Parliament event about animal testing with the European Coalition to End Animal Experiments. The event focused on the delay of the ban on cosmetics containing ingredients tested on animals. Later this year, the European Commission may put forward a legislative proposal calling for the ban to be delayed. The decision will depend on whether they judge there to be enough alternatives to animal testing available. Keith and Jean will continue to argue that there are already enough alternatives and that animal testing, a cruel and unnecessary practice which the parliament has already voted to ban, must be banned without delay.

Time to stop overfishing

Half of all the fish caught by fisherman in the North Sea are thrown back into the water, dead. Jean and Keith have been working to bring about an end to this wasteful practice and have recently called on the Commission to take a tougher stance on ending fish discards following the announcement of new proposals to overhaul Europe's fishing policy.

Under current EU rules, fishing fleets are forbidden from landing more than their catch quota. Often, the only option is for unwanted fish to be thrown back into the sea. This and other damaging practices, such as overfishing, have seen

stocks plummet to less than ten per cent of post-war levels.

The new proposals will see discarding prohibited but, disappointingly, the ban will only apply to a limited number of fish species that are commercially exploited. Jean and Keith believe this measure fails to make the necessary improvements in fishing practices which would ensure that unwanted fish are not caught in the first place.

The European Parliament will now be working on the proposals before they are made law next year, and Jean and Keith aim to see that the rules are strengthened.



Photos: Jean and Keith meet with Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall as he launches his Fish Fight campaign in Brussels.

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