



making tracks



Photo: Shutterstock © Eric Issele

Over the last six months, Jean and Keith have continued to work on a number of animal rights issues, including the need for better conditions in Britain's abattoirs, the transportation of animals to slaughter and the maltreatment of sharks. They have also campaigned for better welfare standards in Europe's zoos, improved conditions for egg-laying hens and called for an end to Japan's appalling whale trade. 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

CCTV needed in all slaughterhouses

Secret filming by leading animal rights organisation, Animal Aid, has uncovered systematic cruelty and brutality inside Britain's slaughterhouses. Footage taken from just one Essex abattoir in April 2011 showed pigs being burnt with cigarettes, animals being punched in the face and seriously injured pigs forced to drag themselves to slaughter.

Covert recordings from eight randomly chosen slaughterhouses across the country tell a similar, devastating story and reveal serious breaches of animal welfare laws.



Appalled by the findings of Animal Aid's investigation, Jean has written to the UK Agriculture and Food Minister, James Paice MP, to demand the installation of CCTV cameras in all UK slaugh-

terhouses and for the footage to be made freely available to independent monitors. Jean also believes that there should be better independent training and retraining for slaughterhouse employees, including casual staff.

Jean said: *"The shocking scenes uncovered by Animal Aid prove that current abattoir legislation is not being properly implemented. Animal welfare is of the highest importance, and it is the responsibility of the industry and of government to ensure that effective monitoring takes place and prosecutions are brought."*

European sharks face extinction

Keith has called on fisheries ministers across the EU to take action to secure the future of the depleting number of sharks in European waters. One third of European sharks are threatened with extinction but the EU Shark Action Plan which was introduced to protect them has failed to do so.

Targeted shark fisheries continue without limits, many endangered species remain unprotected and the EU finning ban still has huge loopholes that make it possible to fin sharks without detection or punishment. In particular Keith believes that the practice of removing shark fins at sea hinders enforcement and must be ended. He urged ministers to work to ensure that the current plan is fully implemented and strengthened.

Exporting live animals is cruel and unnecessary

Jean and Keith have backed the '8Hours' campaign to introduce this time limit for transporting live animals in the EU, as a step towards ending all live exports. The European Commission has recently rejected this call, but the campaign continues to build support with its petition gathering over a million signatures.

Keith has been supporting campaigners in his constituency who are calling for an end to live exports from Ramsgate port, Kent. He's visited the port and spoken at a public meeting in Broadstairs alongside other politicians, the RSPCA and Compassion in World Farming.

Keith has also written to Agriculture Minister, James Paice MP, to urge him to ensure that transportation conditions



Photo: Shutterstock © David Lude

at Ramsgate are monitored and that EU animal transportation standards are effectively enforced. Keith said: *"Transporting live animals in terrible conditions for hours on end is cruel, unnecessary and must be stopped. I don't believe that there's any public appetite for this kind of cruelty to animals and consumers would be appalled by what is going on in Ramsgate. The EU sets welfare standards over animal transport and these must be better enforced."*





Students highlight poor zoo welfare standards

Conditions in zoos must be improved. This was the message which students from Downlands Community School in Hassocks, West Sussex, gave to Keith when they visited him in Parliament. Keith shares their concerns about the poor animal welfare standards in many of Europe's 3500 zoos.

After their visit he tabled a formal written question in the Parliament to

raise the students' concerns with the European Commission.

The students have been working with the Sussex based charity, the Born Free Foundation, on their EU Zoo Inquiry which has shown that there are hundreds of zoos that are not currently meeting the required welfare standards, causing millions of animals to suffer unnecessarily.

Greater protection for Europe's cattle and sheep

The EU already has specific legislation on welfare standards for pigs, laying hens, chickens and calves, yet the Directive, which concerns the protection of farm animals, does not extend the same levels of protection to either cattle or sheep.

The inadequacy of the current law has resulted in the widespread abuse of animal rights across Europe, with painful practices such as tail-docking and castration going unregulated in sheep and cattle farming to the extent

that these procedures are often carried out with anaesthetic. The failure to provide for the specific concerns of dairy cows has also led to a prevalence of distressing health problems, including lameness and mastitis.

Jean and Keith have called on the European Commission to introduce species specific animal welfare legislation for both sheep and cattle to ensure that all of Europe's farm animals receive the highest possible level of protection.

Demanding better standards for laying hens

The EU ban on battery cages which outlaws the keeping of hens in conventional barren cages for egg production has now come into force. Yet it is estimated that around 84 million egg laying hens are still being kept in these cages which the EU has agreed to ban.

Jean and Keith believe that this is unacceptable and have written to the Commission to demand that tough action, including severe financial penalties, is taken against countries that have failed to implement the Directive. The Green MEPs have also called for a Europe-wide trade ban to stop illegally produced eggs from entering the market and for an end to all battery farming.



Japan's appalling whale trade must be stopped

Keith is calling on the European Commission to use its role in trade negotiations to put pressure on Japan to end its current whaling practices and abide with international environmental agreements. As a member of the European Parliament's International Trade committee Keith has tabled a formal written question which asks the Commission to raise the issue of whaling during current negotiations between the EU and Japan over the possible introduction of a free trade agreement. Keith's question points out that Japan's whaling practices are unsustainable and that they undermine the European Commis-



Photo: Shutterstock © Robert Fullerton

sion's own efforts to reverse the loss of biodiversity. Keith said: *"I have personally told Japanese ministers of the strength of feeling against whaling, yet still they expect to enter into profitable trade talks with the EU. I want to see progress toward an outright ban on industrial whaling first."*

In Japan although commercial whaling is prohibited under the International Whaling Commission, they have continued to hunt whales under an exception for scientific research. Japan also has a reservation under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora, which allows it to trade in whale products, an otherwise prohibited activity. The European Commission has condemned lethal whaling for scientific purposes while the European Parliament is opposed to whaling, having voted overwhelmingly for the EU to promote an end to so-called 'scientific whaling'.

Contact us

Jean Lambert, MEP for London • 020 7250 8416 • jeanlambert@greenmeps.org.uk • www.jeanlambertmep.org.uk

Keith Taylor, MEP for South East England • 020 7250 8415 • keithtaylor@greenmeps.org.uk • www.keithtaylormep.org.uk