



making tracks



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Welcome to Jean and Keith's first edition of Making Tracks. Since joining the European Parliament last year, Keith has worked with Jean on a number of animal rights issues, including the maltreatment of sharks and bears for human profit, the testing on animals in scientific research and the cosmetic industry, and the use of battery cages in egg farming. The Green MEPs have pledged to 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

Don't delay the animal testing ban

Keith and Jean are calling for the EU ban on the sale of cosmetics containing ingredients tested on animals to be fully implemented without further delay. While this kind of testing has been banned within the EU since 2009, cosmetics containing ingredients tested on animals outside the EU can still be sold. This sales ban has already been delayed three times and the current March 2013 deadline could be extended again, due to pressure from the cosmetics industry. Keith has submitted a written question to the European Commission asking for their assurance that the ban will be fully

implemented without delay. Keith said: "There are already thousands of ingredients approved for use in cosmetics and there is significant public opposition to further animal testing which is inhumane, unnecessary and only serves to boost the profits of already rich corporations. If companies haven't developed non-animal tests in the ample time allowed, I do not think they should be granted any extensions."

Caroline Lucas, Green MP for Brighton Pavilion, has also tabled an Early Day Motion in the UK Parliament, calling for the ban to be fully implemented without further delay.



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Rescued from painful captivity – a moon bear at the Animals Asia China Bear Rescue Centre.

Protect our endangered sharks



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Finning is a barbaric practice. Sharks are hauled on board fishing vessels, their fins are cut off and they are then discarded overboard, often still alive. Jean and Keith have been working to bring about

an end to this cruelty and have recently signed a Written Declaration which calls on the EU to close a loophole in the ban which currently allows fishing fleets to continue finning sharks, as long as they don't dump the bodies overboard.

Shark finning is driven by high demand for shark fin soup, a so-called delicacy.

At a time when one third of European shark species are threatened with extinction, finning is contributing to extreme declines in slow-growing populations. The finning ban is currently being reviewed and proposals should come to parliament this year. Keith and Jean will use this opportunity to fight for further protection for Europe's vulnerable shark population.

Stop bear cruelty

In countries across Asia, thousands of endangered moon bears are kept caged in cruel conditions on bear farms, where their bile is extracted for use in traditional medicines.

The process of 'milking' bears for their bile, often through a catheter implanted in the gall bladder, is severely painful and should be stopped. There are already around 50 herbal and synthetic alternatives that are not only as effective as bile but cheaper, rendering the horrific practice completely unnecessary.

Outraged, Jean and Keith wrote a joint letter to the Chinese authorities calling on them to put an end to bear bile farming. The letter urged the Chinese authorities to build on the commendable start by various conservation groups in Asia who are working to rescue and protect moon bears.

Better welfare for laying hens



Keith with the pupils of Robsack School, winner of two green flags in the Eco Schools programme.

Keith and Jean welcome EU law which bans the use of conventional battery cages in the egg industry. It comes into force next January and will stop the use of these cages which prevent hens carrying out the most basic of natural

behaviours. The ban is a firm step in the right direction towards more humane farming practices across Europe.

Jean and Keith have been keeping up the pressure by asking the EU Commission what it is doing to ensure that all member states have switched to alternative farming methods by the end of 2011. They want a guarantee that no eggs from conventional battery cages will be sold in Europe next year.

Across the South East region, 25 local authorities have already switched to using barn and free-range eggs in council services, including schools and care homes. Keith visited Robsack School in St Leonards on Sea, the only school in East Sussex to have won two green flags for its work in the Eco-Schools programme. Eco-Schools encourage their pupils to learn about sustainability and the school has a garden and keeps its own chickens. The children gave Keith a box of six eggs as a special 'thank you' for his visit.

Animal experiments law is not strong enough

Around 12 million animals are used for scientific purposes in the EU every year.

Unfortunately in 2010, the European Parliament missed a huge opportunity to push for stronger provisions to protect animals. Parliament voted against amendments to new EU laws on animal experiments and testing, tabled by the Green group. The proposed legislation, *The Protection of Animals used for Scientific Purpose*, updates an EU directive which is now over 20 years out of date.

The group put forward three amendments: to allow national governments to introduce higher animal welfare standards than those required under EU law; to restore parliament's original demand that an alternative to animals must be used when available; and to strengthen restrictions on the use of non human primates.

All three were defeated, however the new law is a significant improvement on the previous law and the Greens

will continue to press for the strict implementation of this law.

In London, Jean has joined the campaign against the development of a 'superlab' in Camden. The UK Centre for Medical Research and Innovation will cost £600 million and cover a 3.6 acre site in a densely-packed residential area adjacent to one of the biggest transport hubs in Europe, St Pancras train station. The lab will study

dangerous human viruses and conduct animal testing. Camden Council and the Mayor of London, Boris Johnson, recently approved the plans.

Jean said: "This is an utterly unsuitable development. This land should be used for desperately needed council housing and community facilities, not for a medical research laboratory that poses a significant health and safety risk, where animal testing will be conducted."



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