



Foreign &
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Office

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By email: stephenawiggins@iwbond.org

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Dear Mr Wiggins,

Thank you for your letter of 21 September 2015 to the Minister for Europe about the Kingdom of Denmark and grindadráp. I am replying on his behalf.

The UK is strongly opposed to the hunting of whales and other cetaceans (including dolphins and porpoises), other than some limited activities by indigenous people for clearly defined subsistence needs. We believe that the hunting of cetaceans involves unacceptable cruelty, and that well managed, responsible tourism is the only truly sustainable conservation of these animals.

The UK government regularly raises its concerns over these hunts with the Faroe Islands government and with Denmark, which represents the Faroe Islands at the International Whaling Committee. In April 2014, Her Majesty's Ambassador to Denmark, Vivien Life, visited the Faroe Islands and raised the UK's concerns with the Faroese Prime Minister, highlighting the benefits of alternatives, such as responsible cetacean watching, to coastal communities. In March 2015, during a visit to the Faroe Islands, the then Secretary of State for Scotland also raised the UK's concerns with the Faroese Prime Minister. The UK Commissioner to the International Whaling Committee wrote to the Faroese Government in May 2014 and June 2015 to reiterate the UK's position on this issue. As a result of this continued outreach, officials from the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs met officials from the Representation of the Faroes on 15 October for an initial exchange of views on this issue. We will continue our efforts to engage with them in order to raise our concerns and press for improvements in the conservation and welfare of all cetaceans.

Yours sincerely,

Sam Hayes
Desk Officer for Denmark
Europe Directorate - Internal