



Chris Heaton-Harris
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Dear Constituent,

Thank you for contacting me about dolphin hunting in the Faroe Islands.

I would like to assure you that my ministerial colleagues and I are committed to the highest standards of animal welfare. The UK is strongly opposed to the hunting of any cetaceans, and Ministers believe that the hunting of cetaceans is unacceptably cruel. I share your concerns about the hunting of dolphins in the Faroe Islands, in particular the hunt of the 12th September 2021, where over 1,400 Atlantic white-sided dolphins were killed.

The Minister for the Pacific and the International Environment, Lord Goldsmith, wrote to the Fisheries Minister of the Faroe Islands to express Britain's opposition to the specific hunt that took place.

The Government continues to engage with their Faroese counterparts on this important issue. I understand that the Faroese Government has started to review the regulations on the catching of Atlantic white-sided dolphins. Ministers in the UK have also advocated to the Faroese Government that it expand the scope of the evaluation to incorporate all species of cetacean that are hunted and consider the wider benefits of cetaceans to the ecosystem.

I would like to assure you that Ministers remain strongly opposed to the killing of any dolphins and will continue to call on the Faroese Government to stop the practice.

Since the UK left the EU, the UK has agreed trade agreements with 70 countries. I am aware that this specific agreement, which dates back to 2019, exactly mirrors the text and the abilities that the UK had under the European Union, where member states had less power to act bilaterally as we do now. I understand that the Government has reformed these deals with these countries, which allows the UK to deepen relationships because they become bilateral relationships. It gives the UK a greater ability to influence crucial issues such as animal welfare. That is why I know that the Government's position is that removing the deal—aside from the legality—would be counterproductive.

The Government continues to encourage the Faroe Islands to engage in the International Whaling Commission and the Agreement on the Conservation of Small Cetaceans of the Baltic, North East Atlantic, Irish and North Seas.

Thank you again for contacting me.

Yours faithfully,

CHRIS HEATON-HARRIS MP
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT FOR DAVENTRY

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