

Dear [Party Leader's Name],

The UK has a proud history of commitment to protecting sea life and our oceans. From the ambitious pledge to safeguard 30% of the ocean by 2030 to the recent advocacy for the UN Ocean Treaty, the UK has shown leadership in marine conservation.

However, the practice of grindadráp in the Faroe Islands remains a stark contradiction to these commitments. The Faroe Islands' government encourages this killing and refuses to take notice of our calls to end this barbarism. Yet the UK government failed to insist on a ban on grindadráp as part of the conditions of its trade agreement with the Faroe Islands. This trade deal is worth £1.1 billion to the Faroes and just £33 million to the UK.

The 'grindadráp', a barbaric practice in the Faroe Islands, slaughters, on average, 1,100 cetaceans every year. According to a recent survey of 2,000 people (nationally representative) in Britain, 70% of Brits oppose the continuation of the grindadráp under the guise of tradition, while nearly 90% view it as barbaric.

Iceland has also just granted another permit to hunt the vulnerable fin whale, with a maximum take of 128 animals permitted. Despite the Icelandic public's lack of support for the industry and evidence showing the vital role that whales play in supporting ocean productivity.

Statements made by the Icelandic Minister of Food, Agriculture, and Fisheries have made it clear that the only grounds possible to refuse a permit to hunt whales are those of international obligations. Iceland is also the greater beneficiary in their free trade agreement with the UK, worth £1.0 billion to Iceland and £963 million to the UK.

Businesses across the UK buy fish caught or farmed in the Faroe Islands and Iceland. Fish and shellfish are the major imports from these nations, accounting for 67.3% and 52.6%, respectively.

These unequal trade deals are propping up the economies of whaling nations – and every item imported sends a message to the Faroes and Iceland that the UK will turn a blind eye to the deliberate killing of dolphins and whales.

British tourism is another key element in both the Faroese and Icelandic economies.

Cruise companies promote 'cultural tours' of the Faroe Islands, selling it as a must-see destination, despite failing to tell passengers that the Captain of the cruise liner they travel on is legally required to inform the authorities if dolphins are seen, in order that they can be driven in and killed, and refusing to inform passengers of the horrific hunts that can occur at any time at over 20 sites around the islands.

Just 288 miles further on, Iceland is revered for its whale-watching opportunities, and the UK is its second-largest tourism market. Travel companies fail to advise visitors that they may also see dead fin whales being dragged through the water and whale meat containing pollutants for sale in restaurants.

The governments of Faroes and Iceland have shown they are not willing to end the killing on the grounds of animal welfare, and the time has come to show that the UK can and will go further, applying economic pressure to these nations in order to bring the killing to an end.

We need your help and action. The time to act is now. We urge you to commit to giving notice to cancel the current trade agreements with the Faroe Islands and Iceland, insisting on a ban of the 'grindadráp' and commercial whaling as a condition to any future trade agreement. .

Your party has a unique opportunity to make a significant difference.

The incoming government must prioritise the cessation of the grindadráp and commercial whaling in its negotiations and use its influence to ensure that these outdated and cruel practices are ended once and for all. Only then can we, in good conscience, continue to engage in trade and tourism that does not support the brutal and unnecessary killing of whales and dolphins.

Sincerely,

[Your Name]

[Your Address]

[City, Postcode]

[Email Address]

