

Diamonds; aren't a seal's best friend

In the south, a seal colony is situated in the Sperrgebiet restricted diamond area No. 1, land controlled by Namdeb Diamond Corporation (Pty) Limited, which is in turn owned in equal shares by the Government of the Republic of Namibia and De Beers Centenary AG. According to De Beers, "Neither Namdeb nor any of its associated companies are involved in any seal culling activities anywhere. No support, logistic or otherwise, is provided to the sealers". However, sealers are actively supported by De Beers. Sealers are ushered through security check-points and allowed into the restricted area every day in order to kill seals. Where mobile phones and cameras are banned from the restricted zones, sealers are allowed to bring in guns, knives and clubs. Furthermore, observation and documentation of the slaughter is not possible, due to the activity taking place within the restricted zone where passage is barred and cameras are not allowed. Animal protection groups and/or journalists have tried to get video footage of the slaughter through surreptitious means, but the government of Namibia has been prevalent in stopping this.

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Let's put an end to the

Fur Industry!



**Namibian Seal
Slaughter**

"The greatness of a nation and its moral progress can be judged by the way its animals are treated."

-Mahatma Gandhi

The Facts

Activists have had much success in bringing attention to the Canadian seal hunt. While this is great news, there is also the need to bring attention to a lesser known, but still as inhumane, hunt that transpires in Namibia, which is quickly becoming the largest and cruelest seal hunt in the world, even overshadowing Canada.

In recent years, Namibia has had the distinction of killing the most seal pups, in fact, the most marine mammals of any nation. Despite a declining population of Cape fur seals and high mortality rates among the seal population, the hunting quota increases every year. Anywhere from 50,000 to 90,000 Cape fur seals are killed annually in Namibia, with 90% being pups.



The Cape fur seals are coveted for a few reasons: their furs and skins, which are used to make a variety of fashion items; their blubber, which is used to make oils, low-grade margarine and omega-3 capsules; and the penises of older bulls, which are dried and exported to Asian countries, where they are still considered to be an aphrodisiac.

Namibia is the only country in the Cape fur seal's range in which commercial hunting is permitted. Sealing occurs on two mainland colonies, Cape Cross and Wolf/Atlas Bay, where 75 percent of the pups are born. From July 1 through Nov. 15, commercial hunters hire approximately 160 part-time workers to round up and kill 80% of the seals, most pups between the ages of 7 and 11 months. The pups are bludgeoned on the head with large, icepick-like clubs, then stabbed in the heart and left to die a slow agonizing death, while the much larger bulls are shot.

It is a horrendously cruel slaughter, mainly targeting babies still nursing their mothers' milk as their fur is the most valuable. The nursing young vomit up freshly drunk white mother's milk in shock, before, during and after being clubbed and stabbed. Pup's chests are cut open while they are still alive.

At Cape Cross, seal slaughter and seal watching intertwine in a sickening mockery of eco-tourism. Hunters descend on the herd at dawn, separating the nursing babies from the mothers, rounding them up and butchering them in front of each other. At 10:00 a.m. the carnage is cleaned up, the blood is covered with more sand and tourists are let in to admire the seals in their natural habitat - the survivors from that morning's slaughter.

