



Department  
for Environment  
Food & Rural Affairs

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Minister-Counsellor, Aki Johansen,  
Foreign Service, Faroe Islands  
By email: [akij@tinganes.fo](mailto:akij@tinganes.fo)

15 June 2015

Dear Minister-Counsellor Aki Johansen,

I am writing to follow up on my correspondence of May 2014, copy attached for ease of reference.

The UK Government continues to receive pressure from the general public and non-government organisations on the Faroese drive hunts and I am keen to ensure that I am in possession of all the facts.

As you will be aware, there does remain concern in the international community and within the UK about the welfare and sustainability of these pilot whale hunts. We receive reports regarding the large numbers and variety of species taken each year, as well as concerns over the methods being employed and how the hunts are regulated. I understand that the Government of the Faroe Islands has been taking important steps to address these concerns and intends to introduce new controls during 2015 including mandatory training for all participants and restrictions on the tools that can be used.

We very much welcome these positive steps by the Faroese Government and I would be grateful for any further detail you can provide me on these new measures, their enforcement, and their monitoring. I would also very much welcome any information you can provide on the level of catches from the most recent 2013 and 2014 hunts and any cetacean population assessments and sustainability assessments that have been undertaken by the Faroese Government to support them. Further, I note that there has been a more recent, large take of pilot whales, and I would also encourage data on these recent catches to be made available.

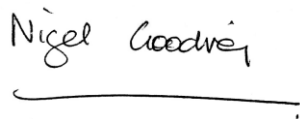
The collation and provision of such data is important to improving scientific understanding and ensuring effective conservation and management based on the best available evidence is in place across the entire range of all the species taken during the Faroese drive hunts. With this in mind, I would encourage you to provide these data to experts and to the International Whaling Commission (IWC). I would

also urge you to engage in regional agreements such as ASCOBANS where pertinent discussions on the threats facing cetaceans take place.

I look forward to receiving the information requested above. I appreciate that these are sensitive issues but please do not hesitate to contact me if there are any points raised in this letter that you would like to discuss.

I am sending a copy of this letter to the Fisheries Minister Jacob Vestergaard and Gitte Hundahl, the Danish IWC Commissioner.

Yours sincerely

Handwritten signature of Nigel Gooding in cursive script, with a horizontal line underneath.

Nigel Gooding