

NOTIFICATION FROM THE FISHERIES DIRECTOR (translation)

Regulation on seal hunting in Vesterisen (the Western Ice) and Østisen (the Eastern Ice)

J-34-2003

Valid from: 11 February 2003

Bergen, 15 November 2004

On 11 February 2003, Fiskeridepartementet (the Ministry of Fisheries) stipulated the following regulation in accordance with Section 4f and Section 24 Clause 2 of Law No. 40 on saltwater fishing etc. of 3 June 1983:

Section 1 Main rule for hunting

When hunting, hunters must show the greatest consideration and use hunting methods which prevent unnecessary suffering of animals. Injured animals must be killed as soon as possible.

Section 2 Definitions

1. Pups are seals, which are less than one year old. Animals that are older are considered to be adult.
2. Selected hunting (plukkfangst) indicates hunting of individual animals from the vessel (while it is advancing among the ice floes).

Section 3 Requirements for hunters

Anyone taking part in seal hunting must complete a course and pass the tests specified by the Fiskeridirektorat (Fisheries Directorate). Only shooters who have passed a specific shooting test may shoot seals during hunting. A new test must be taken before each hunting season.

The test must be taken using the same weapon and type of ammunition that will be used during hunting.

Anyone taking part in seal hunting must pass a specific test on using a hakapik (steel pointed tool).

The Fiskeridirektorat may stipulate more detailed provisions on the implementation of the above rules.

Section 4 Requirements regarding weapons and ammunition

When shooting adult seals, the firearms used must have rifled barrels and ammunition with expanding bullets and impact energy of a minimum of 2,700 joule (275 kilogram-metres) for 9g bullets and 2,200 joule (225 kilogram-metres) for 10g bullets at a range of 100 metres.

When shooting seal pups, the firearms used must have rifled barrels and ammunition with expanding bullets and impact energy of at least 981 joule (100 kilogram-metres) at a range of 100 metres.

During hunting, firearms and ammunition approved for adult seals must always be available on board.

Firearms must be approved by a gunsmith prior to departure and tested with the ammunition that will be used during hunting.

Section 5 Requirements relating to the hakapik and club hook

1. The hakapik must have a straight wooden shaft made of birch, which is 110cm to 150cm long with a diameter of 3cm to 5cm. The hakapik must have an iron shoe which weighs at least 400g and has a 12cm to 18cm long slightly bent spike. The blunt end of the iron shoe may be a hammer-shaped projection but no longer than 4cm. The iron shoe must be securely fastened to the shaft. The spike of the hakapik must be kept sharp at all times.

2. The club hook must be 50cm long, with a thickness of 1/2 inch and a weight of at least 1,000g, of which the additional weight of the welded-on hook accounts for at least 250g.

3. The shape and material of the hakapik and club hook must comply with the resolution of the SelfangstraÅäd (Seal Hunt Committee) of 4 November 1970 and the drawings of the same date.

Section 6 Hunting prohibitions

1. It is prohibited to hunt:

- a) any seal species other than harp seals and hooded seals
- b) female adult hooded seals and adult harp seals in breeding grounds
- c) seals that are in the water.

2. It is prohibited to shoot seals under conditions that prevent their subsequent clubbing with the hakapik or club hook and bleeding on the ice. Exceptions are hunting of seal pups if the conditions of Section 10 are fulfilled and selected hunting (plukkfangst) if the conditions of Section 7 Clause 5 are fulfilled.

Section 7 Killing procedure

Killing must be carried out so as to prevent unnecessary suffering of animals.

Adult animals must be shot. Pups must be shot or struck with the hakapik or club hook.

Animals that have been shot must then be struck with the hakapik as soon as possible. The club hook may also be used on pups.

When using the hakapik or club hook, the seal must be struck on its skull. The seal must first be struck with the blunt end of the tool or the hammer to shatter the top of the skull. Then the spike of the tool must be used to strike deep into the brain. With animals that have been shot and are lying still, it is sufficient to use the spike of the tool.

Seals must be bled on the ice immediately after the hakapik or club hook has been used. With selected hunting (plukkfangst), bleeding may take place on board, provided that the animal is taken on board immediately and conditions require this.

Seals must be bled by making a cut from below the jaw to the lower end of the sternum. Then the blood vessels to the front flippers must be cut.

Section 8 Special regulations for shooting seals from the ice and from hunting vessels

When shooting seals from the ice or from hunting vessels, all animals must be struck with the hakapik and bled as soon as this is possible in view of the ongoing hunt. During such hunting, at least 1 person must accompany each shooter to club and bleed the animals which have been shot.

Section 9 Fastening lines and slipknots

It is prohibited to fasten lines or slipknots (loop) to animals on the ice before they have been struck with the hakapik or club hook and bled. The exception is selected hunting (plukkfangst) where it is evident that the animal is dead.

Section 10 Hooking

It is prohibited to drag animals that have not been bled on board using a pole (hook). Pups that are shot may be dragged on board using a pole where there is no doubt that they are dead and ice conditions make it inadvisable to walk on the ice. In such cases, the animals must be struck with the hakapik or club hook and bled as soon as they are on board.

Section 11 Prohibited hunting methods

It is prohibited to:

- a) catch or kill seals using lines, nets, steel-jawed traps, funnel-shaped basket traps or any other trap
- b) use firearms with a smooth barrel
- c) use the hakapik on adult animals that have not been shot
- d) use the club hook on adult animals
- e) strike animals with the hakapik or club hook anywhere but on the skull
- f) kill animals in artificial light.

Section 12 Using aircraft

It is prohibited to use aircraft or helicopters for the purposes of hunting. Aircraft or helicopters may however be used from land for the purposes of scouting the hunting grounds.

Section 13 Exceptions from the regulations in an emergency

Deviation from the hunting regulations is permitted where necessary

- a) to kill injured animals
- b) to ensure the safety of the hunters and vessels.

Section 14 Responsibility

The skipper must ensure that the hunters comply with the hunting provisions.

Where hunting is carried out on the ice or from the hunting vessel, the leader of the hunting team is also responsible for ensuring the above.

In addition, each sealer is responsible for complying with the hunting provisions.

Section 15 Punishment

Wilful or negligent breach of these provisions will be punished in accordance with Section 53 of Law No. 40 on saltwater fishing etc. of 3 June 1983.

Section 16 Coming into force

This regulation comes into force with immediate effect.

At the same time, Regulation No. 117 of the Fiskeridepartement on seal hunting in Vesterisen and .stisen of 20 February 1991 is abolished.

HØ/EW