



PEOPLE FOR  
THE ETHICAL  
TREATMENT  
OF ANIMALS

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Mark Davies  
Chair  
British Rowing

23 March 2023

Via E-mail: [mark.davies@britishrowing.org](mailto:mark.davies@britishrowing.org)

Dear Mr Davies:

I'm writing on behalf of People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) and our more than 1 million members and supporters – including many sports fans – with a request: please consider encouraging coaches, commentators, and rowers to replace the common rowing phrase “catching a crab” with an animal-friendly alternative. We suggest “liberating a lobster”, which would go some lengths towards encouraging compassion towards crustaceans.

Words matter, and the phrase “catch a crab” normalises hurting animals and may inadvertently encourage people to pull these sensitive animals from the safety of their watery homes. In the process, crabs are likely to lose their fragile legs or sustain other painful injuries, and most who are hauled out of the water will ultimately be killed in crude ways, including by being boiled alive.

Crabs – who, along with lobsters and other animals, were recently recognised in UK law as sentient – feel pain and fear, care attentively for their young, keep their homes clean, and sometimes greet each other by waving their claws. These animals deserve to be protected, not persecuted, and using the phrase “liberate a lobster” would surely inspire the public to spare countless crustaceans a trip to the boiling pot.

British Rowing has an opportunity to help animals and send a message that harming them is unacceptable. We therefore hope you'll take our suggestion on board.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Elisa Allen  
PETA UK Vice President of Programmes

PEOPLE FOR THE ETHICAL  
TREATMENT OF ANIMALS (PETA)  
FOUNDATION – a charitable  
company limited by guarantee,  
with its registered office at  
Cannon Place, 78 Cannon Street,  
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**Affiliates**

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