

Thank you for your commitment to phase out live sheep exports which was made during the 2022 election campaign as part of your *Plan for Strengthening Animal Welfare*. I commend the current Government's decision and look forward to seeing an implementation plan evolve from the current consultation process.

Whilst recognising consideration needs to be given to those affected by the phase out, consideration of the blatant animal cruelty on display must be forefront in this consultation process to bring a speedy outcome.

I support some financial compensation be given to those affected and alternate avenues of income be explored. Farmers could utilise land to host wind turbines to generate renewable energy as an opportunity to create income and contribute to a more sustainable environment. The environmental payback period is the amount of time it takes for a wind turbine to generate the amount of energy used during manufacturing and installation. For most wind turbines, the time it takes to offset this energy use is between 6 months to a year.

Other articles on line state developers are offering farmers up to \$30,00 per year for every turbine they 'host' on their property. To meet the national target of cutting emissions by 43 per cent by 2030, Federal Energy Minister Chris Bowen estimates Australia needs to install 40 wind turbines every month, and 22 thousand solar panels every day, backed by at least 10,000 kilometres of additional transmission lines.

Back to the sheep. Numerous incidents and subsequent inquiries into, and reviews of the trade include the 2003 Keniry Review, 2011 Farmer Review, and 2018 McCarthy and Moss reviews. Live sheep exports are inherently cruel, even when all regulations are followed, sheep still suffer heat stress at sea beyond their physiological tolerance, as well as an incredibly cruel passage across the sea followed by painful slaughters overseas that do not meet Australian standards. This practice is unacceptable from an animal welfare perspective and is supported by the Australian community, who overwhelmingly wish to phase out live exports.

Phasing out live sheep exports and supporting farmers to transition to more humane and sustainable alternative markets is the best way forward. Now is the time for a phase out of live export, a steady reduction in the number of animals being exported and exposed to unacceptable conditions and increasing temperatures, in favour of a chilled and frozen meat trade only, **if we have to trade sheep at all**. This will at least mean that sheep are slaughtered humanely here in Australia.

That's what the community wants and expects. And it's what's best for the future of Australian farming and our international reputation. It's time for change.

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04 May 2023

