

It is crucial to initiate and conclude the phase-out of live sheep export as soon as possible. Any delay in this process means subjecting more sheep to unacceptable suffering, from the daily stresses of sea transport to the inhumane practice of fully conscious slaughter in importing countries. In expressing my stance on this matter, I wholeheartedly support the phase-out of live sheep export.

As an Australian citizen, I believe it is imperative to provide certainty to the public regarding the end of this trade. It is crucial that the phase-out be legislated and commence within this term of parliament, ensuring that it both begins and concludes without unnecessary delay. This will not only address the concerns of Australians but also demonstrate our commitment to animal welfare.

In recognizing the potential impact on farmers, it is essential to offer government support to assist them in transitioning away from live sheep export. This support will aid in finding alternative avenues for their livelihood and enable a smooth and sustainable transition for the agricultural sector.

Moreover, the continuation of this trade poses a significant threat to Australia's international reputation as a fair and compassionate nation. Other countries, like New Zealand, have set a precedent by ending live export, and we should follow suit. Defending this trade undermines public trust in our agricultural sector and contradicts the values of compassion and ethics that we strive to uphold.

For those who supported Labor last election due to their stance on this policy, it is worth mentioning that their commitment to ending live sheep export resonated with many. This further emphasizes the widespread support for the phase-out and underscores the importance of addressing this issue promptly.

While the focus of this submission may not be the merits of the government's policy to end the trade, it is crucial to discuss the matter of animal welfare. Live sheep export is inherently cruel, and even when regulations are followed, sheep still suffer from heat stress during sea transport and endure painful un-stunned slaughter overseas. These aspects cannot be overlooked when considering the urgency of the phase-out.

In summary, it is imperative to support the phase-out of live sheep export. This trade not only inflicts unnecessary suffering on sheep but also jeopardizes Australia's international reputation and erodes public trust in our agricultural sector. By legislating and initiating the phase-out as soon as possible, supporting farmers in their transition, and acknowledging the inherent cruelty of the trade, we can move towards a more humane and compassionate future for Australia.