

To the Live Sheep Export Panel

I provide my submission on behalf of myself and my family as we look to the Albanese government to commit to their election promise to end the live sheep trade. Instead, we have a moratorium without any guarantee that this inhumane trade will be stopped. It is respectfully requested that it be stopped permanently and in the shortest possible turnaround time with a commitment made to the timeframe during this term of parliament. While there are many competing practicalities, adequate information was given to sheep farmers and other sectors involved that this phase-out was to be imminent.

Evidence available includes investigative reports by credible authorities that strongly suggest there is little economic value in subsidising this sheep export (livestock) industry. These reports include those by ABARE, the RSPCA, Animals Australia / The Pegasus Report.

1. Sheep meat - DAFF (agriculture.gov.au)
2. RSPCA Animal Welfare update, Live Exports Science Update Issue 76
Godde CM, Mason-D'Croz D, Mayberry DE et al (2020) Impacts of climate change on the livestock supply chain; a review of the evidence. Global Food Security 28, 100488
3. Live Export | Animals Australia <https://animalsaustralia.org/our-work/live-export>
4. Shutting down sheep trade would have little economic impact on farmers (afr.com)

The substantial Australian taxpayers' subsidies that prop up this industry can more usefully and successfully be redirected to best practice in transitioning from live sheep exports to developing alternative options. New Zealand and other countries have already enacted this change. Australia is a clever country and is proving innovative in advancing our economies but needs to improve and be more respectful to our international social standing especially in regard to animal welfare.

Farmers and rural communities concerned about their future livelihoods will need to receive inducements to help them adapt to new opportunities and maintain their livelihoods in the evolving agricultural landscape. Non-meat products and intensive plant based agricultural products and processing is a frontier with limitless applications for a variety of our geographical regions. It can generate both employment and trade opportunities for Australia.

We owe it to ourselves and our future generations to recognise the abysmal failure of the Exporter Supply Chain Assurance System ('ESCAS'). It is an affront to our ethics and values, that we surrender control over practices that are illegal in Australia, that is the dreadful conditions that our sheep endure en-route to overseas destinations, with their end fate in abattoirs where their slaughter is not regulated to Australian standards.

I respectfully ask that everything possible be done to assure the wider electorate that there is no covert breach of trust by our government's election platform, and that it is legislating against the continuance of all future live sheep export negotiations and contracts. We want certainty please and expect that the timeframe is to be committed to and agreed upon NOW.

Thank you for the opportunity to contribute our views to this important inquiry.

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