

Submission on Ending the Live Export of Sheep by Sea

I acknowledge that the government has already decided that the live export of sheep by sea will end, the question now being, when and how.

It is disappointing that the political decision was made not to implement the cessation of this barbaric trade during this current term of government. Other important reforms are being implemented, but not this. As always, the concern for the welfare of animals is subordinate to political considerations.

Like many concerned members of the public, I have been lobbying for an end to the trade in the live export of animals for many years. One of the reasons I supported the election of the Labor government was its stance on this issue.

In the next term of government, action to end the live export trade in sheep by sea should be implemented as a matter of priority and without delay. Any phasing out period should be absolutely minimal.

There is no excuse whatsoever for the government to delay or drag out an end to this form of animal export. That it has continued into the 21st century raises the very sad question of how little humanity has evolved that it can continue to allow sentient creatures to suffer in the way that we know they do on live export ships, and at the end of their journey, in the horrific way that they do at the hands of the importers, who treat them as inanimate objects.

The industry that relies on this form of trade has known for some time that an end to this form of export is inevitable. As such, those involved should already have been making plans to deal with how they will transition away from live export. This is another reason that the government should not implement any lengthy phasing out period.

The government should not delude itself into thinking a lengthy phasing out will endear them to those involved in this trade, if that is a factor in their decision.

The swift phasing out of this trade will demonstrate that this government is really serious about animal welfare. It will be a great start, and serious consideration should now be given to an end to the equally barbaric and unnecessary trade in the live export of cattle.

