

Phase out of live sheep exports by sea

My name is Ann-Maree McKee. I am an Australian, and I am ashamed of my country's continued export of live animals by sea. Like many people, I have witnessed the atrocious conditions for sheep, both on board the ships and on arrival at destinations. It is reprehensible that we not only allow, but profit from, such cruel treatment of sentient beings.

The Australian public, including farmers with whom I have spoken, are appalled at the realities of live export. Australia does not want to be party to this inhumane practice. It impacts our own sense of pride in our progressiveness regarding animal welfare, and also impacts our international reputation. Other countries, like New Zealand, are moving forward with banning live export, and Australia is lagging behind.

Our transition away from live exports needs to begin immediately so that Australia is fully invested in the phase out within this term of Parliament. If Labor is not re-elected, there is no guarantee that another political party will pick up the baton and proceed with a ban. Not taking action now to safeguard the progress of the phase out effectively makes Labor's promise an empty one.

Plant-based agriculture and industries would be logical and innovative choices of activities into which to transition. They are burgeoning economically, and also better for the environment.

I hope you will listen to the Australian public and choose a course of action of which we can be proud instead of being ashamed.