

## **Submission on The Phase Out of Live Sheep Exports by Sea**

I am submitting my viewpoint on the Australian Federal government's proposal to phase out live sheep exports by sea not during the current parliamentary period. This intention means that the next election would take place at the earliest 3<sup>rd</sup> of August 2024 and at the latest 17<sup>th</sup> of May 2025; in effect we are considering a time frame of approximately two years before the phasing out would officially be implemented.

It may be necessary to ensure a smooth transition by using that time to establish new supply chains and markets for the sheep meat trade. It will be crucial to assist farmers in Western Australia, South Australia and Victoria who are most affected by this proposed cessation of live sheep exports from Australia.

Assistance would take the form of provision of alternative methods of processing at local abattoirs, the expansion of the refrigerated trade and consultation about alternative farming opportunities and subsequent financial benefits. Several investigations by consulting firm ACIL Tasman into the live export trade have indicated that 'moving away from live exports would offer opportunities for Australian livestock producers'. It is up to the Federal and State agriculture ministers and farming bodies to confer and consult and ensure that sheep farmers are prepared and compensated for the changes they need to implement with the conclusion of live sheep exports by sea from Australia.

From an animal welfare perspective the sooner the live sheep export trade is ended, the less suffering occurs to our livestock, and the greater certainty of the way they are processed within this country. With export there is the possibility of heat stress, dehydration, overcrowding and incidents such as the Cormo Express disaster in August 2003.

I believe that our Government in implementing this final ban on live sheep exports ought to confer and consult with the New Zealand agriculture minister, Damien O'Connor who has seen the implementation of a ban on export shipments on animal welfare grounds. The movement to ban exports of live sheep and cattle was instigated two years after the death of two New Zealanders among the crew of the Gulf Livestock 1 which sank in a typhoon in September 2020. Damien O'Connor stated that The Animal Welfare Amendment Bill would protect New Zealand's reputation as consumers become more 'ethically conscious'.

We need to follow the example of New Zealand in thinking of 'the farmers of the future'. We have to believe that the majority of our sheep farmers are ethical in their approach to farming and will therefore accept and embrace the transition from live exports of sheep by sea, as soon as it is implemented.

My early childhood was spent on a small farm where my parents had a Ryeland sheep stud; my father had studied animal husbandry and co-managed a family property [REDACTED] before buying a property [REDACTED]. Each year he would show his sheep at the [REDACTED] Show, [REDACTED] Show and occasionally [REDACTED] [REDACTED] with the purpose of selling his rams and ewes for breeding purposes mainly. My mother milked a cow daily and supported my father during the lambing season particularly each year; this involved keeping lambs alive with hot water bottles and hand rearing many lambs over the years.

I imagine my parents and most sheep farmers no matter on what scale, would be morally opposed to animals they had reared and cared for, being shipped off to suffer unnecessarily on board ships and to face the possibility of heat stress, overcrowding and a cruel ending once arriving at their destination.

Mrs Anne Musgrove [REDACTED]

