

## Submission: phase-out of live sheep exports by sea

I am writing to you as a concerned Australian citizen in relation to how and when the phase-out of live sheep exports by sea should end

### How

The government should implement the phase-out of live sheep exports by sea with animal welfare front of mind.

While it's commendable that the government is considering the needs of all stakeholders and providing support to industry during the transition, it concerns me how little animal welfare has featured in the panel deliberations. There must be a balance. Afterall, a long history of animal welfare violations is the reason behind the trade coming to an end.

The inherent risks associated with transporting live animals over extended periods are incompatible with Australia's commitment to animal welfare and compassionate treatment. There is a growing global consensus that the export of live animals for slaughter or further \*fattening is an outdated and inhumane practice.

It is crucial that we prioritise the animals' welfare and take swift measures to transition to a progressive and ethical alternative that looks after producers and their farm animals too.

### When

I urge the government to reconsider its reluctance to begin the phase-out during the current term of Parliament, and legislate the date this term. This is due to the real threat of the phase-out being reversed should the Labor government not win the next election.

The phase-out must begin and end as soon as possible. Every delay - including the industry's tactic of refusing to engage with the panel in an attempt to interfere with the phase-out - means more sheep are subjected to inexcusable suffering - from the daily stresses of sea transport to fully conscious slaughter in importing countries.

The trade is inherently cruel - and even when all regulations are followed, sheep still suffer heat stress at sea and painful un-stunned slaughter overseas.

Along with many Australians, I voted for Labor because they committed to ending live animal exports. We will remember if they don't uphold their election commitment and get " the legislation set in stone while they have the chance.

### Benefits to stakeholders

Many countries, including New Zealand, the United Kingdom, and several European nations, have already taken steps to end or restrict this trade due to its ethical concerns and associated environmental impacts.

By promptly phasing out live animal exports by sea, Australia can make a profound statement to the international community about its commitment to animal welfare and responsible trade practices. A quick transition will not only safeguard the welfare of countless animals but also strengthen Australia's global reputation as a leader in animal protection and ethical standards.

Public sentiment surrounding live animal exports has undergone a significant shift, with the majority of Australians voicing their concerns about animal welfare. By implementing the public's call for change now, the government has an opportunity to demonstrate strong leadership and respond to the ethical expectations of a compassionate society.

The live animal export trade is an industry in decline, with live sheep export numbers • dropping from 6.2 million in 2001 to just 502,758 in 2022 - a reduction of 92%. Australia has the resources and expertise to lead the way in investing in developing and expanding alternative industries that prioritise the export of processed or chilled meat products. Such a shift will not only create new economic opportunities but also foster sustainable and responsible agricultural practices.

I implore you to act swiftly in phasing-out live sheep exports by sea in Australia. By taking this bold step sooner rather than later, we can position ourselves at the forefront of global animal welfare initiatives, protect the lives of countless animals, and foster a more sustainable and compassionate future.

I trust you will give due consideration to the concerns raised in this submission and take decisive action for the benefit of animals, our nation, and our international standing.

Thank you,

Brenda, Fremantle