

Dear Committee,

I thank you for the opportunity to be a voice for the beautiful, gentle sheep who have suffered horrendously for decades in the live animal export trade. I thank you from the bottom of my heart for finally bringing this evil trade to an end.

From all the sheep – thank-ewe

When I was a 10-year-old girl, my journey into the world of animal activism began – I wrote my first letter to the Prime Minister of Canada about the horrific clubbing of baby seals – I was inconsolable. It was the beginning of my trauma, my heartbreak, my disbelief, my loss of faith and my utter disgust in my species, for the horrific cruelty and suffering they inflict on gentle, innocent animals. I just couldn't comprehend how this could be happening and no-one was doing anything about it! I felt helpless, sad, angry and betrayed. I spent the next four decades fighting injustice and the exploitation of humans and non-humans alike. To me it seemed so simple – why didn't everyone get it – we all deserve a decent life – not just some – everyone! Not just humans; non-human animals too – This is their home too!

Not one of us was born cruel or evil – our innate nature is one of kindness and compassion; cruelty is a learned behaviour, and just as it has become a societal norm in so many areas of life, it can also become a societal norm to treat all living beings with kindness and respect. Speciesism has afforded the human species the right to decide who is exempt from suffering and legalised cruelty and who is not. That is a right that shouldn't exist – there is absolutely no excuse for cruelty or abuse of any living being – nobody has that right to decide – nobody! Because it is unjustifiable and wrong that any sentient being should not be protected by law from all forms of abuse. Their bodies, their babies, their flesh, their lives, their rights.

I have signed countless petitions; I have written countless letters and emails; I have made countless calls to politicians; and I have also lived in the hope that one day humanity will become 'HUMANE'. What else do I have? I must believe that my species will one day see the error of their ways and do what is right and good. When I first learned of the Live Animal export trade I was absolutely horrified and sickened by the cruelty, suffering and horror before me. The footage I saw can never be unseen and it has traumatised me for life – innocent, gentle, trusting, sentient beings crammed into floating ovens to endure incredible, unimaginable suffering for months on end; then meeting a fate so horrendous at the end of that shocking journey, that I cannot believe anyone could ever knowingly send any living being to – a hellhole of pain and suffering so utterly beyond comprehension.

In every way that matters – in their capacity to suffer and feel pain, to love and care for their babies, companions, and families, to seek shelter from the harsh elements, to feel joy in living their lives on this beautiful planet, and to desperately want to live their lives free from human inflicted pain and suffering, non-human animals are no different to human animals. THEIR LIVES MATTER TO THEM – and shouldn't this alone be enough for us to care about them and treat them with the kindness and respect they deserve. Imagine a world without them – how eerie and desolate would it feel? Just because they don't speak our language, and we don't understand them fully, doesn't mean they deserve less of a life – how do we think we even know anything about what they think and feel. In many ways,

their senses are far more developed and acute than our own; we just know so little, yet we assume we should have dominion over them and use and abuse them for our own selfish gains. If only we could see how much they enrich our lives and our planet – see the beauty before us – really watch how amazingly they interact with each other and the planet and us – I am truly in awe. I hope one day you may see what I see – it is truly incredible.

So once again I thank you for ending this era in sadness, extreme suffering and misery. I ask; I plead, and I beg that you do everything to ensure it ends now – these animals have suffered enough and even though the suffering of the past cannot be undone, the future can forge a path of kindness and compassion – one where we agree that no living being should be subjected to such gruesome treatment.

How can we ever hope to create a kinder, better world for our children and theirs to follow if we allow such cruelty toward other living species to be acceptable and legal?

A kinder world is not only possible, it is just around the corner; on a quiet day I can hear her breathing.

Love, Peace and a Kinder world for all living beings.

With Love and Kindness

Kim