

Dear Panel

We must have the dates for this phase out legislated as soon as possible, in this term of Parliament. Otherwise if a Liberal Coalition government returns after May 2025 all the hard work by the more compassionate Albanese government could be overturned. Obviously, a transition period of a few years will occur, but it must have a legislated end date soon preferably this year. As Prime Minister Albanese has said, 'live sheep exports won't be phased out before 2025 and that they are committed to ending the trade after consulting with sheep farmers and the WA government.' **The phase out must begin in this current term of government and be as short as possible. Every day of delay sheep will continue to suffer on lengthy voyages and in these imported countries where they are slaughtered cruelly.**

I thoroughly support the end of the live sheep export trade and support the phase-out.

The reasons are-

- Australians want certainty that this trade will end. Even the industry have commented that the live sheep export trade is declining, and the industry is slowing down. Public sentiment here and around the world is already strong and increasing to see an end to this trade.
- The trade must have a legislated end date in this term of parliament. It must begin and end as soon as possible with 'an orderly transition for farmers and markets to adapt.'
- I wholeheartedly support the concept for farmers to receive financial government support and assistance to help them to transition out of the industry or to alternative markets.
- The impact of ending this cruel trade will be a positive one on Australia's international reputation as a fair and compassionate nation. Currently we are known as a nation with poor animal welfare standards and a country that destroys its forests and its wildlife. New Zealand's image and reputation is in sharp contrast to Australia.
- We are a developed country; we therefore have the financial means to support farmers to transition away from this industry. The big fossil fuel companies get billions in taxpayer money -they plunder and destroy our environment, yet they avoid paying their fair share of taxes. Stop the fossil fuel subsidies, get these fossil fuel industries to pay tax and use the money to support farmers to transition away from live sheep export. There are ways to do things better. We are so entrenched in the old ways that we cannot see a way out. Start with the fossil fuel industry and this will free up billions to save and protect nature, save our climate and save animals like sheep from suffering in the live animal export trade.
- Wrong decisions were made decades ago. Just because the industry is so stuck in the concept of live animal export does not make it acceptable to continue animal cruelty. This is a new century, times have changed, condoned animal suffering and cruelty is abhorrent to most Australians. Defending this trade undermines the public's trust in Australia's agricultural sector.
- This trade is inherently cruel; animal welfare standards cannot be enforced on these transport ships or in the imported countries. Even when all regulations are followed, sheep still suffer heat stress at sea and painful un-stunned slaughter overseas. This will never change because it cannot be fixed. Reducing stocking densities, some enforcement and oversight improvements with Independent Observers, banning shipments in the Middle Eastern summer, exporting sheep with less wool, minor improvements in the supply chain are **just band aid solutions only** and will never address the real issues- there is no way an unfixable industry can be fixed to end animal suffering.
- The most important thing is that the **phase-out must begin and end as soon as possible. Australians want certainty that this trade will end;** and that **the phase-out must commence in this term of parliament. A legislated end date of the industry MUST be passed in Parliament also in this term of government.**

How the government should phase out live sheep exports by sea

- A ban period must include all of May, June, July, August, September, and October to minimise heat stress of our exported sheep in the Middle East summer. **Ban periods must not be reduced but increased from May to October** to reflect the 'science' during the phase out period of live sheep export.

- Our exported sheep must have **more protections genuinely enforced on these export ships**- every ship must have a Vet, Independent Observer, reduced stocking densities, adequate ventilation, proper access to feed and water. ***ESCAS must be more effective of their protections in the supply chain for our exported animals. There must be increased inspections of overseas slaughterhouses to ensure compliance and raise animal welfare standards at point of slaughter- sheep must therefore be stunned prior to slaughter. No backyard or kitchen slaughters with sheep fully conscious.***
- The industry and the government must have a legal robust framework that protects sheep in transit and at point of slaughter so that they are treated humanely as possible throughout the whole export process. This standard must be maintained whilst we transition to end live sheep exports by sea.

The timeframe to implement the phase- out.

The government must legislate a clear **END DATE** to be determined in this term of government to make closure of this industry a reality and a promise to the electorate that the industry is ending. The phase out must begin and end as soon as possible. New Zealand is a model for ending the live animal export trade in its entirety. A 2–3-year transition period should be adequate when the government is already starting to build alternative markets in the frozen sheep meat trade. Whilst the Labor government has said live sheep export won't end in this term of government, the government must legislate an end date very soon. The phase-out must not be a long-drawn-out process. Otherwise more sheep will be subjected to inexcusable suffering – from the daily stresses of sea transport to fully conscious slaughter in importing countries.

In summary there are 6 reasons why live sheep exports should and must be **legislated to end in this term of government.**

1. **Sheep spend days and even weeks travelling.**
2. **Sanitary and welfare conditions are terrible on ships.**
3. **Many sheep die on the way usually through heat stress, lambs are born on ships only to die.**
4. **It's dangerous** with past export ships capsizing with thousands of live sheep drowning (incident of 14,000 live sheep drowned off the coast of Romania).
5. **Inhumane techniques of slaughter.**
6. **There are huge environmental impacts**-increased greenhouse gas emissions through farming. Increased water pollution as sheep excrement and dead and dying sheep are shovelled overboard into our oceans. We **MUST** end animal suffering on live animal export ships.

Yours sincerely

Kim Gambrill