

Dear panel,

I would like to applaud the Government's decision to phase out live sheep exports by sea. This was a major reason I voted for Labor at the last election.

Phasing out live sheep exports is a fantastic opportunity for Australia to forge a reputation as a global leader in animal welfare and build trust in Australia's agricultural sector. That is why a phase-out must be legislated in this term of parliament. If it is not enshrined in legislation, the phase-out is at far greater risk of being reversed after the next election. New Zealand swiftly phased out live animal exports after accepting the dreadful risks to animal and human welfare.<sup>1</sup> If it can be done in New Zealand, it can be done here as well.

Until the phase-out occurs, it is crucial that the welfare of each and every sheep is protected. The Government should allocate resources to a taskforce, which would track welfare outcomes for sheep and workers in the live export industry and implement the recommendations of an independent animal welfare advisory body, such as the RSPCA.

As an economist, I believe it is crucial to provide transitional support to farmers affected by the phase-out, such as job matching programs. Setting a clear date for the phase-out would also ease the transition for farmers by reducing uncertainty. With the live sheep export industry already in decline<sup>2</sup>, delaying the transition date will merely prolong the challenges for affected parties.

The Government has taken a promising step towards reducing suffering in our communities. To ensure this opportunity is not wasted, the Government should provide a clear phase-out date in this term of parliament, monitor sheep welfare until the phase-out occurs, and support farmers during the transition.

Thank you for your consideration of this submission.

Yours sincerely,

Lucas

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/sep/29/new-zealand-bans-live-animal-exports-from-april-2023>

<sup>2</sup> [https://oia.pmc.gov.au/sites/default/files/posts/2020/04/final\\_ris\\_-\\_live\\_sheep\\_exports\\_to\\_the\\_middle\\_east\\_-\\_northern\\_hemisphere.docx](https://oia.pmc.gov.au/sites/default/files/posts/2020/04/final_ris_-_live_sheep_exports_to_the_middle_east_-_northern_hemisphere.docx)