

Louise Pike

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I commend the Australian Government's commitment to phasing out live sheep exports by sea, following numerous tragic incidents and an increase in public awareness of the cruelty associated with this facet of the industry.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comment on the timing and mechanism of the phase-out.

I am not involved in the live animal export supply chain - my position on this matter arises solely from an animal welfare perspective. Hence, I urge the government to undertake the phase-out as quickly as possible, as every passing week results in the suffering of thousands more animals. Specifically, I ask the government to commit to commencing the phase-out within this term of parliament.

The very fact that the Australian Government has committed to the ending of live sheep export means that it has recognised and acknowledged that this trade is a form of animal cruelty, inflicting pain, suffering and often death in transit, and is unacceptable to all compassionate Australians. If a protracted phase-out were to be put in place in order for farmers and other stakeholders to transition to new business practices, I believe this would undermine the aforementioned acknowledgement; ie. it would say, "Yes, it's cruel and we will stop it, but not yet."

In recognising that there will be an impact on farmers and other stakeholders, I ask the Australian Government to commit to significant funding for the transition process – to both support stakeholders and to speed up the process. I believe the resulting reduction in animal death and suffering is worthy of such commitment. In acting quickly, I believe the Australian government will earn respect for its handling of the issue.

Yours sincerely,

Louise Pike