

Please accept this as my submission on the phase out of live sheep exports by sea. The phase out of live exports, not only those containing sheep, needs to happen immediately. This issue has been raised repeatedly over the decades since I first became aware of this trade in the 1970s. I am not sure of the best mechanism to be applied to end this trade, however I think the time to phase out live export of sheep and other animals needs to start now and needs to be of a short duration. Many Australians have been campaigning for an end to this trade for many decades. We need to implement this immediately. Refrigeration is now widespread and the lack of refrigeration has long been held up as a barrier to the end of live export, this is no longer a relevant argument.

The live export market has damaged local meat processing and many jobs have been lost and abattoirs have closed. In a report prepared in March 2009 by ACIL Tasman, they concluded that:

"Overall, there is unlikely to be a dramatic or sustained impact on the price of mutton or lamb in Australia if the live export market could no longer be accessed by Australian producers. This analysis has assumed no change in the price for sheep meats over the longer term, provided live exporting is phased-out over a 4 or 5 year period."

Primary producers should be supported while they transition from exporting live animals. The government could help to expand domestic processing and increasing chilled meat exports. We need to implement this immediately as too much time has passed while debating this trade, and too many disasters have occurred to continue delaying the cessation of this trade. This trade is cruel and inhumane and if we care to ignore the suffering of these animals, then perhaps if we think about the damage to Australia's reputation as a clean green and fair producer then I think we can cease this trade immediately. I voted for the new Labor government and this issue was a campaign promise, so I believe we need to achieve this in the current parliamentary term.