

SUBMISSION: END LIVE SHEEP EXPORT

I am writing this submission because it is a moral responsibility to end the live sheep export industry and honour the Labor government's commitment. There is absolutely no reason to justify the unacceptable suffering of hundreds of thousands of innocent victims. Therefore, please consider the key 10 points below as valid and justified reasons to end live sheep export as immediately as possible.

1. **Animal welfare:** transport is [one of the deadliest](#) elements of animal agriculture. Overwhelming evidence confirms that the live export trade involves [unacceptable suffering and cruelty](#). This is notably so during long sea journeys; sheep exported from Australia to the Middle East are sent on [one of the world's longest](#) sea journeys. [Most Australian sheep](#) are exported to the Middle East. Though voyages to the Middle East take an average of [between 20-21 days](#), some can take up to [five weeks](#). During that time, sheep leave the Australian winter and arrive in the Middle East's summer, where [temperatures can climb over 40°C](#). Industry reports indicate that mortality rates on these voyages are approximately [four times greater](#) than for shorter voyages.
2. **Ethical considerations:** the live export industry has been plagued by [numerous cases](#) of animal cruelty which have caused significant public outrage, both domestically and internationally. It's been [over a decade](#) since the shocking cruelty of the live export trade was exposed on national TV. In response, the government implemented [the Exporter Supply Chain Assurance System \('ESCAS'\)](#) - a system that requires approval before animals can be live exported internationally. Since ESCAS started in 2012, Australia has exported [over 23 million](#) farmed animals. It has been an utter failure - cruelty on live export ships and overseas abattoirs [continues unabated](#). Yet, the suffering doesn't end for those who survive the journey; because there are virtually no laws protecting animals in the countries they're sold to, they're often subjected to abuse and methods of slaughter that are illegal in Australia.
3. **Environmental impact:** the long-distance transportation of sheep by sea consumes [substantial amounts](#) of fossil fuels, contributing to greenhouse gas emissions and environmental degradation. Phasing out live export by sea aligns with Australia's goals to combat climate change, reduce carbon footprint, and transition to more sustainable industries. By reducing the carbon footprint associated with long-distance transportation and the environmental impacts of large-scale live export

operations, Australia can contribute to mitigating climate change and preserving its natural resources.

4. **Live export is a dying industry:** the live export trade has experienced a significant downturn. Live sheep [exports fell](#) from over 7 million sheep in the late 1980's to just over 1 million in 2018. Between 2016 and 2020, this figure decreased even further by [more than 50%](#). The Australian government has spent decades - and millions of taxpayer dollars - trying to review and reprimand an industry that systemically abuses animals. Yet they continue to suffer. The government has had ample opportunity to crack down on this irredeemable industry, yet the abhorrent suffering continues. We must not allow any more animals to endure this agony. The Albanese Government must stand by their word and ban live export - not in the next term, right now.
5. **The Albanese Government must honour its commitment:** ending the live export of sheep has been a policy of the Labor party [since 2018](#). It was made in response to footage of a voyage that [killed over 2,000 sheep](#) the previous year. More recently, Labor [recommitted](#) to its policy of phasing out the live export of sheep if elected in the lead-up to the 2022 Federal election. Yet, the new Labor government has [already backflipped](#) on this promise. Rather than following through, the Albanese government has [pushed back its ban](#), saying that [it won't happen before 2025](#). The industry has seen this as an opportunity to [reverse the decision](#) entirely. Two years out from the next federal election, Labor is already banking on winning the next election, and gambling with the lives of thousands of animals during the interim years. This isn't what we were promised.
6. **Ending the trade is urgent:** Since January 2023, there have been [60 live export voyages](#). Of these, 39 were by sea and 11 were sheep. The end use for the overwhelming majority of these sheep is slaughter. Though the elected Albanese Government has reaffirmed this commitment, Labor has [refused](#) to commit to a timeline. In order for the Albanese Government's commitment to be met, it must be accomplished within their first term in government. Delaying the phase-out would result in prolonged suffering for sheep.
7. **Ensure a just transition:** the success of the phase-out of live sheep exports from Australia hinges on the support provided to farmers during the transition process. It is [essential](#) to ensure that farmers receive adequate assistance and resources to navigate this significant change effectively. By offering comprehensive support,

including financial aid, access to alternative markets, and guidance on transitioning to more sustainable agricultural practices, we can facilitate a successful transition away from live sheep exports. This support will not only protect the welfare of animals but also help farmers adapt to new opportunities and maintain their livelihoods in the evolving agricultural landscape.

8. **Economic opportunities:** while the transition away from live export by sea may present initial challenges, it also opens up opportunities for the development of alternative industries and export markets. By transitioning away from an industry whose [social licence](#) is deteriorating, Australia can enhance economic resilience, create jobs, and meet the growing demand for ethically sourced products. Embracing alternative industries, including plant-based production, can foster innovation, create new jobs, and stimulate economic growth. By investing in technologies and practices that prioritise animal welfare and sustainability, Australia can position itself as a global leader in producing and exporting ethically sourced products. By supporting farmers in this transition, we can ensure a just and inclusive process.
9. **Broad-based support from stakeholders:** the Australian Government's decision to phase out live export by sea has generated widespread support and mobilised various stakeholders who share a common commitment to animal welfare. This broad-based support encompasses [animal welfare organisations](#), [veterinarians](#), and [the general public](#). This broad-based support from various stakeholders underscores the significance of the government's decision to phase out live export by sea. It highlights a shared vision that upholds the highest standards of animal welfare, ethical considerations, and sustainable practices. By embracing this support and working collaboratively, Australia can lead the way in setting a new standard for responsible and compassionate agricultural practices, inspiring other nations to follow suit.
10. **Protecting Australia's international reputation:** the continuation of the live export trade puts Australia's international reputation at risk and undermines the country's credibility. Australia [ranks poorly](#) when compared to other countries' animal welfare performance. By implementing this policy, Australia affirms its commitment to ethical practices, reinforcing its positive image and maintaining trust in its agricultural sector.

Thank you for your serious consideration.