



# PHASING OUT LIVE ANIMAL EXPORTS

## End the cruelty and boost local jobs

### Local livestock, local jobs

The live export trade is inherently cruel. Australia can provide a more economically robust and humane alternative to the live export trade by boosting boxed meat exports. This will create thousands of jobs across regional Australia.

Each year Australia typically exports between 500,000 and one million cattle mainly to Indonesia, and between two to three million sheep mainly to the Middle East. Most of these animals come from Northern and Western Australia.

The horrific mistreatment of animals in the live export trade continues unabated. Evidence shows Australia's minimal live export welfare regulations do not work, with Australia losing any control of conditions once the animals leave our shores. The barbaric cruelty suffered by animals in the live export chain is not uncovered by the industry or government officials, but by independent investigations and our courageous non-profit animal welfare investigators.

There is overwhelming public demand for humane and accountable treatment of animals and an end to this inherently cruel commercial trade in suffering.

However, Australian governments continue to sanction the cruelty by refusing to change woefully inadequate minimum animal welfare standards and making industries transparent and accountable.

The Greens are deeply committed to phasing out the shockingly cruel live export trade. Our *Live Animal Export (Slaughter) Prohibition Bill*<sup>1</sup> was reintroduced into the parliament in 2014. If passed it would end live exports from Australia.

The Greens also have a plan<sup>2</sup> that identifies five key issues governments should undertake to transition away from this cruel trade and to support our domestic meat processing sector by growing our more economically sustainable chilled meat trade.

The Greens are the only federal parliamentary party to have a specific portfolio responsibility for animal welfare. We are deeply committed to improving the welfare and wellbeing of animals, and will continue working with Australia's animal welfare and rights organisations to achieve this.

## > LIVE EXPORTS ARE INHERENTLY CRUEL

### The sea voyage

Evidence shows the long sea voyages are a horrendous experience for stressed and frightened animals, with journeys lasting up to 25-35 days if stopping at various ports. Thousands of cramped animals endure ship motion with its noise and vibrations, high levels of ammonia, lying down in their own urine and faeces, high temperatures and humidity, illness, injuries, exhaustion and malnourishment or starvation when they don't eat the pellets provided having been grazing in paddocks previously. All these factors add to their already often stressed long journeys from farms to the port.

Over 2.1 million sheep have died during the long sea voyage from Australia in the past 10 years alone.<sup>3</sup>

### Regulations don't work

In 2011 the Exporter Supply Chain Assurance System (ESCAS) was introduced in response to public outrage at the barbaric cruelty suffered by Australian cattle in Indonesian abattoirs.

The ESCAS is supposed to make exporters legally accountable for ensuring Australian animals remain within approved supply chains. However there is no government oversight in importing countries and the scheme is self-monitoring. Blatant disregard of regulations by exporters and importers continues, causing terrible suffering for our exported livestock.

Between 2011 and 2015 at least 40 legal complaints about horrific treatment of animals were lodged with the Department of Agriculture with over 100 ESCAS breaches lodged in total since 2012.<sup>4</sup> Despite extensive evidence of ongoing breaches and failures no export company has been prosecuted by the government.

<sup>1</sup> <http://lee-rhiannon.greensmps.org.au/live-animal-exports>

<sup>2</sup> <http://lee-rhiannon.greensmps.org.au/content/materials/end-live-animal-export>

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.agriculture.gov.au/export/controlled-goods/live-animals/live-animal-export-statistics/reports-to-parliament>

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.agriculture.gov.au/export/controlled-goods/live-animals/livestock/regulatory-framework/compliance-investigations/investigations-regulatory-compliance>

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## > LOCAL LIVESTOCK, LOCAL JOBS

### Meat industry to the Australian economy

Sheep exports have declined considerably since the 1980s. Australian livestock producers receive only 6 to 7% of their income from the sale of live export livestock.<sup>5</sup>

Meanwhile frozen and chilled mutton meat exports to the Middle East grew by 29% in 2014. This is 12 times more than what live sheep exports bring in. This is likely to increase further as the middle class becomes more widespread in importing countries. Indonesia already imports our chilled meat which is sold in wet markets there.

ABARES estimates that the global demand for sheep meat will double between 2007-2050 and that the value of Australian sheep meat exports will triple in that time.<sup>6</sup>

The global demand for beef is set to double in this same period and the value of Australian beef exports will do the same.<sup>7</sup>

Over a decade of ABS and ABARES data shows Australia's chilled meat trade is consistently worth around seven times more to the Australian economy than the live export trade.

### The live export trade is killing Australian jobs

The live export industry has caused the loss of thousands of jobs as abattoirs in northern Australia have been forced to close. Previous reports from Western Australia and Queensland indicate that the live export industry is directly responsible for seriously damaging the meat processing sector.<sup>8</sup>

Despite this, the domestic processing industry is now the largest manufacturing workforce in Australia after the demise of the domestic auto manufacturing, with about 55,000 workers across the industry nationwide, and at least the same number again in ancillary services directly dependent on the meat processing/export sector.<sup>9</sup>

With drought across Australian states, the Australian national cattle herd is sitting at its lowest level in 23 years and is predicted to fall even further. This is causing downward pressure on the number of cattle available to domestic processors, with the live export trade poaching those available cattle and further risking local abattoir jobs.

However the Agriculture Minister, Barnaby Joyce, recently ignored the importance of these Australian workers by announcing he would do everything in his power to grow the live export industry.

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<sup>5</sup> Deards et al Live Export trade assessment 2014 Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics and Sciences (ABARES).

<sup>6</sup> Linehan V et al (2012) Food demand to 2050. Opportunities for Australian agriculture ABARES, Department of Agriculture, Fisheries & Forestry, Australian Government

<sup>7</sup> ibid

<sup>8</sup> Cattle and Sheep Meat Processing in Western Australia. Ministerial Taskforce Final Report. Nov 2004. and The Future of the Queensland Beef Industry and the Impact of live Cattle Exports. See also SG Heilbron Economic & Policy Consulting. June 2010.

<sup>9</sup> [http://www.amic.org.au/content\\_common/pg-processors--exporters.seo](http://www.amic.org.au/content_common/pg-processors--exporters.seo)

## Boosting regional economies

Economic research shows domestic processing of livestock is worth more to the Australian economy per animal than live exports. For example a sheep processed in Australian abattoirs is worth 20% more to the Australian economy than one exported live.<sup>10</sup>

The Greens' five point plan<sup>11</sup> identifies the key issues governments should undertake to transition away from this cruel trade and to support our domestic meat processing sector by growing our more economically sustainable chilled meat trade. The Australian Government can and should:

- Support the development of new meat processing facilities in northern Australia to support local producers and boost regional economies, with a ripple effect right through the local supply chain.
- Work with industry to actively lobby for an end to subsidies and tariffs that favour the live export trade in importing countries.
- Work with industry and unions to provide assistance to help attract and train Indigenous and other meat processing workers in skilled and semi-skilled jobs in regional areas.
- Smooth the transition for farmers and the meat processing sector by re-prioritising investment in R&D, transport services and roads, and helping farmers adapt to a domestic slaughter market with sustainable production systems that suit their landscapes and local logistics.
- Establish new division within the Department of Agriculture and Water and within Austrade to help drive the reform and grow domestic processing and meat export markets.

## > OTHER PARTIES' POSITIONS

Labor and the Liberal/National Party support growing the live export trade, despite its cruelty and proven damage to Australian jobs.

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<sup>10</sup> ACIL Tasman, Australian live sheep exports - Economic analysis of Australian live sheep and sheep meat trade, 2009.

<sup>11</sup> <http://lee-rhiannon.greensmps.org.au/content/materials/end-live-animal-export>