

**Submission
No 154**

**INQUIRY INTO IMPACT OF THE PHASE-OUT OF
AUSTRALIAN LIVE SHEEP EXPORTS BY SEA ON NEW
SOUTH WALES**

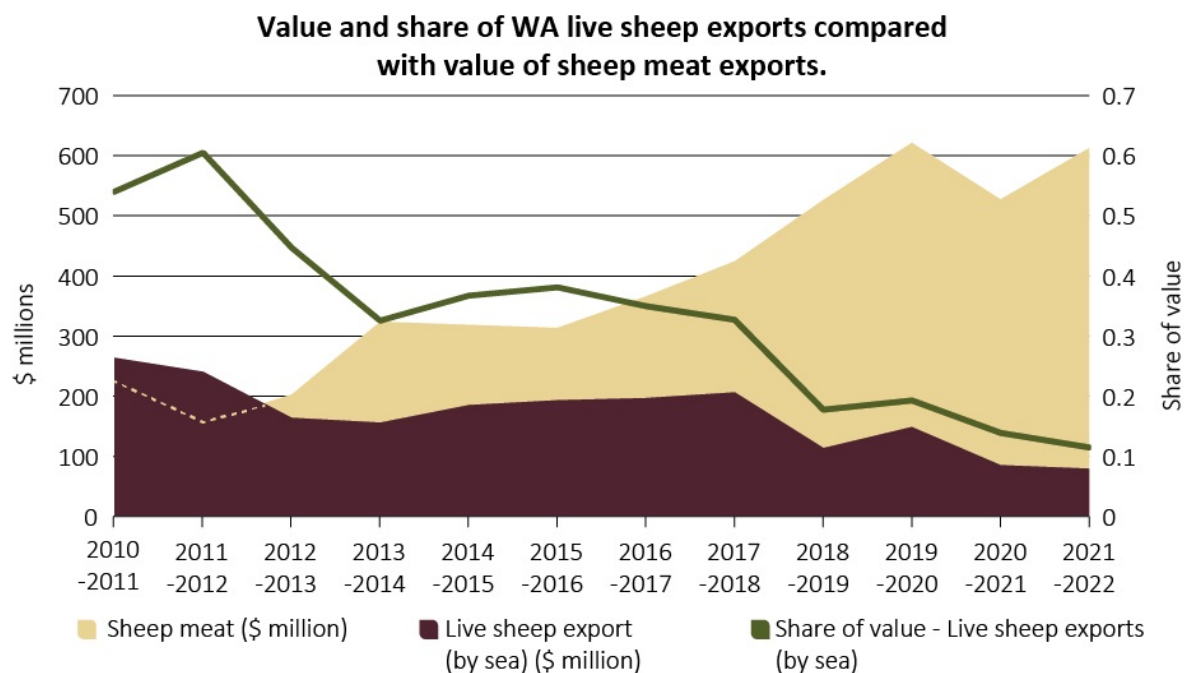
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Submission to the impact of the phase-out of Australian live sheep exports by sea on NSW

Australia produces large amounts of agricultural products and the majority are exported. This includes the contentious practice of live animal export.

Western Australia is the export point for live sheep export. Despite increases in live sheep exports in late 2023, the value of the practice has been steadily declining for some years. See graph below from ABARES trade dashboard:



The animal welfare impact of live animal export is large and negative.

- There is an accepted mortality rate for animals on board ship of 0.2% (low, but significant if you are that sheep).
- Ships may be delayed at sea (eg Suez canal, port issues) or even returned to Australia.
- Some export destinations (eg Kuwait) import live sheep and then sell on, escaping any assurance chain.
- Slaughter in target countries is cruel and prolonged. Exsanguination from slitting of the carotid arteries is slow due to addition blood supply to the brain and sheep are conscious for many minutes after throat slitting.

On animal welfare grounds, combined with the natural decline in live sheep export, there is strong reason to end live sheep export.

To address some of the terms of reference in the inquiry:

Economic impact to NSW in terms of transport/ fodder/other: NSW sheep do not contribute any significant numbers of the live export trade. Grain exports should not be affected.

Impact of no restocking of sheep from WA; Eastern States are considered unreliable markets for WA sheep, especially during drought conditions. Sheep for restocking will not be the wethers that make up the live export trade but will be weaner lambs.

Mutton demand: low in Australia, except for the pet food industry and some niche markets.

Reasons for the Federal Government phase out: The Federal Government's decision is based on animal welfare and the international reputation of Australia. There has already been international rejection of some wool due to the practice of mulesing, and as mentioned above the welfare impact on sheep is large and negative.

Welfare considerations relevant to the decision to phase out live sheep export: as above

Alternative markets; There is significant opportunity to market Australian-slaughtered, vacuum-packed meat. This could provide more jobs in WA with investment in developing abattoirs and processing plants. Most Australian meat is Halal slaughtered so this would meet the cultural requirements of importing countries.

Live sheep export needs to end.

Yours sincerely,

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