

SUBMISSION: SUPPORTING THE BILLS TO BAN LIVE EXPORTS

This Australian does not want Australia to be known as a world leader in a cruel and immoral industry. Stop the boats – to every port, for every animal, forever.

I support the abolition of the Live Export trade because:

1. My opposition to this trade is primarily based around **animal welfare issues**. I accept that slaughter for meat is the way of the world, but I do not accept inflicting blatant cruelty to get it. All animals in the live export trade are sentient beings; they feel pain and emotion, and readily develop emotional attachments to others around them. We as the dominant species should show compassion and respect for the life we are about to take for financial gain and sustenance.
 - a. At a minimum the use of stun guns is preferential, yet for the minister and the industry even this small consideration is deemed unnecessary under the standards they wish to see implemented. These animals deserve respect, the shortest amount of transport time to a slaughter house, followed by the quickest, least traumatic and pain free death possible.
 - b. The cruelty is nothing new. Animals Australia has conducted **eight investigations over the years which have always produced indisputable proof that our animals endure horrific cruelty on their journey and at destination**. This has always raised public outcry yet nothing has changed. The extent of the protest this time indicates that the opposition to the trade is growing and NOW is the time to shut it down, despite the spin or manipulation of morally corrupt importers, exporters and governments.
 - c. The industry bodies responsible for the welfare of these animals and the education of importing countries have repeatedly proven their lack of interest in improving either issue. Budgeting over seven times as much for PR as to animal welfare programs¹, it's obvious that **industry cannot be trusted to self-regulate** (and hasn't done over the past three decades of the trade).
2. Then there is the hypocrisy of the Australian government currently waxing lyrical about a carbon tax and the need for Australia to move toward a 'clean energy future'. The **carbon footprint** generated by this industry is massive. These animals endure such lengthy transport within our own borders, are then loaded onto boats, and trucked off at the other end. The use of resources including fuel, water and additional grain production to produce a kilo of beef at the destination is hugely disproportionate. Processing the animals here, in abattoirs established closer to the paddock has many benefits, one of which would be carbon reduction.
 - a. Economically, were the government to establish initiatives to foster **new processing industries closer to the source**, and support this by protecting Australian owned abattoirs, we would see a development of new industries in regional areas meaning jobs and regional growth.

¹ The Australian, *Cattle welfare ignored as meat body spends big on marketing*, June 16, 2011:

<http://www.theaustralian.com.au/national-affairs/cattle-welfare-ignored-as-meat-body-spends-big-on-marketing/story-fn59niix-1226075964901>

- b. **Exporting a refrigerated product** would greatly reduce the carbon impact as it would involve reduced transport distances within Australia and a higher quantity of processed product per square meter of boat than compared to the unprocessed product (live animal).
- 3. Japan + whales + barbaric 'cultural' slaughter = WRONG
Australia + livestock + barbaric 'cultural' slaughter = Hypocrisy runs amok
On one hand we have the Australian government standing firm (as they should) about opposing Japanese whalers, yet they're okay with endorsing cruelty for cash in the live export industry.
- 4. The argument that **processing onshore and exporting** wouldn't work because the Indonesians (or Middle Eastern peoples) like their meat fresh or to buy it warm or that refrigeration is an issue in these developing nations just doesn't cut it. Using habit or culture is not a good enough reason to inflict such cruelty. If refrigeration is such an issue that could be addressed through aid measures, coupled with education. **Why should we pander to nations whose welfare standards aren't where they should be?** We should be encouraging their development and education in these areas to make the world a better place for all beings.
- 5. I accept that the abolition of the live export trade will cause job losses and economic hardship for many Australian's in the short to medium, term – however the trade that could be developed and replace it would in the longer term prove superior for Australia in terms of jobs, environmental impacts and animal welfare. The same arguments were used when the **abolition of the slave trade** was debated in the late 18th century. The slaves were races ignorantly considered 'inferior' at that time; their labours allowed many businesses to flourish off their pain, degradation and the injustices they suffered. I believe that the live export trade can be viewed similarly and that there can never be a justification for capitalising from cruelty.
- 6. **Finally, the simple truths are this: this trade is ethically wrong, economically questionable and environmentally damaging.** These facts are now known and to allow it to continue makes those who can stop it culpable.

Thank you for considering my submission.

Colleen Curlewis

15 July 2011