

Committee Secretary Senate Standing Committees on Rural Affairs and Transport

This submission supports the continuation of the Live Export Industry.

My name is Gehan Jayawardhana and I'm a vet in Darwin. I spent 22 years (1986 to 2008) as a research vet specialising in cattle production with the NT Department of Primary Industry and Fisheries.

Between 1988 and 1992 (pre large scale live export) I led a project looking at the relationship between stocking rate, number of weaning musters and cow death rate in the Victoria River District of the NT. The data from this project allows the quantification of the number of extra cows that will die per year if live export to Indonesia is banned and properties are unable to muster, supplement or turn off stock due to lowered income.

As an example in a population of 2.5 million cows the retention of 500,000 live export animals on fully stocked properties (20% increased stocking rate) coupled with only one weaning muster in the year (instead of 2 musters) and reduced supplement will lead to an extra 10% deaths. This means 250,000 extra cows and most of their calves dying under horrific conditions, reduced welfare for the survivors and significant rangeland degradation.

In my opinion live export is vital for animal welfare in north Australia as large numbers of cows and calves starving to death causes far worse cruelty than that occurring in a minority of Indonesian abattoirs as shown on 4 Corners.

I have attached the following paper for your information

Jayawardhana, G.A., McCool, C.J., Zuill, D.W. and Olm, T.C. (1992). The Effect of Stocking Rate on Breeder Productivity in the Victoria River District . Proceedings of the North-West Australia Pastoral Conference. Katherine, NT.

Gehan Jayawardhana BVSc., MACVS (Epidemiology), Grad. Cert . Rur.Sci. (Genetics),
Grad.Cert.Pub.Sect.Mgmt.