

It's time for the Albanese Government to fulfill its election promise

— *An open letter from Australia's leading animal welfare organisations*

18 April 2024

Dear Prime Minister

On 8 April 2018, Australians were shocked to their core as the suffering that Australian sheep have experienced for decades during export to the Middle East was exposed on national television for all to see.

On 3 May 2018, in acknowledgement of the community's demands for action, and the indisputable scientific evidence showing that live sheep export is not compatible with the most basic standards of animal welfare, the Australian Labor Party promised to phase out the trade.

"From day one in government, we will develop and implement a strategic red meat industry plan which will focus on more processing and more jobs in Australia and begin that transition away from live exports," said Labor's Shadow Agriculture Minister.ⁱ

Four years later, during the 2022 federal election, the Australian Labor Party again promised the Australian community that it would phase out the trade if elected to government.ⁱⁱ

On each occasion, these promises were applauded by the community. Australians know there's a better way. They know that processing sheep here on Australian shores better protects animal welfare and value-adds to local economies at the same time.

There was also a deep sense of relief that finally a government would act, and we would no longer have to witness the litany of disasters and horrifying incidents of cruelty that have become synonymous with this trade.

As you approach your third year in power, we are still waiting for the Australian Labor Party to fulfil its promise to the Australian people.

We acknowledge that the trade will not come to an end before the next election, but the phase out must commence and be enshrined within legislation within this term.

The Australian community supports a phase outⁱⁱⁱ and expects the Government to act decisively, especially considering this is a policy of six years standing, and one that has been taken to two federal elections.

The federal budget on 14 May presents the ideal time for the Albanese Government to act by announcing the end date, allocating funds to support the transition, and introducing legislation. This will provide certainty to farmers and demonstrate to the community the true commitment of the Australian Labor Party to end this trade.

It's time to deliver on your promise. It's time to legislate the date.

Yours sincerely,



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Ms Glenys Oogjes
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Dr Bidda Jones AM
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Animal Welfare.
Worldwide.

Ms Rebecca Linigen
National Director
FOUR PAWS Australia



HUMANE SOCIETY
INTERNATIONAL
AUSTRALIA

Ms Erica Martin
Chief Executive Officer
Humane Society International Australia



for all creatures great & small

Mr Richard Mussell
Chief Executive Officer
RSPCA Australia



Dr Rosemary Elliot
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Ms Rebecca Tapp
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Vets Against Live Export



Ms Ondine Sherman
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Voiceless



Mr Ben Pearson
Country Director
World Animal Protection
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ⁱ Fergus Hunter, 'Labor announces it would phase out live sheep exports' *Sydney Morning Herald*, 3 May 2018
<https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/labor-announces-it-would-phase-out-live-sheep-exports-20180503-p4zd4c.html>

ⁱⁱ Kath Sullivan et al. 'Labor confirms plan to end live sheep exports if Albanese becomes PM' *ABC News*, 5 May 2022
<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2022-05-05/labor-federal-election-win-would-end-live-sheep-exports/101041416>

ⁱⁱⁱ McCrindle Research, RSPCA Public Perceptions Brand Tracking Report (survey conducted 2022, n=1999).