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MEDIA RELEASE

Australia to ban live sheep exports in 4 years

The Minister for Agriculture Minister Murray Watt today released the Government's plan to phase out live sheep exports setting an end date of 1 May 2028 and providing an adjustment package of \$107 million. The intention is to legislate the phaseout in this term of parliament. The decision follows the recommendations of the Independent Panel to end live sheep exports and transition the industry towards chilled meat exports.

VALE Spokesperson Dr Sue Foster welcomed the announcement saying "The Government has responded to the justifiable concerns of the majority of Australians is consistent with animal welfare science. The investment of \$2.6 million in animal welfare measures as part of the transition package further demonstrates the Government's recognition of the importance of ethical treatment of animals."

"The live export trade is in long-term structural decline and only accounts for 0.1% of Australia's agricultural exports. Australian chilled sheep meat exports were 58 times the value of the live sheep export trade in 2022-2023. (\$4.5 billion versus \$77 million). The adjustment package should give further confidence to the domestic processing sector and assist with a smooth transition to the chilled and frozen lamb and mutton trade."

VALE remains concerned about the length of the phase out and the lack of interim measures to ensure an orderly decline in export numbers towards the 2028 end date.

"Four years seems an unnecessarily long phaseout for an industry concentrated in one state of Australia. New Zealand phased out a larger and more lucrative national live export cattle industry in two years. There is no doubt that sheep will continue to suffer for as long as this trade continues."

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For information contact Dr Sue Foster on 0423 783 689