

# THE GLOBAL LIFESTOCK FLEET

Tens of millions of animals transported on an ageing and high-risk fleet



## 1 THE FLEET AT A GLANCE



159

LIVESTOCK CARRIERS WORLDWIDE



40

YEARS AVERAGE AGE  
Many vessels are over 50 years old



70%

UNDER BLACK OR GREY FLAGS

Flags associated with poor performance under the Paris Memorandum of Understanding on Port State Control



59%

ARE SUPERVISED BY A NON-IACS MEMBER SOCIETY



Thousands of deficiencies and totalled

565

known detentions in their lifetime  
Recorded by Port State Control



6

CONSECUTIVE YEARS

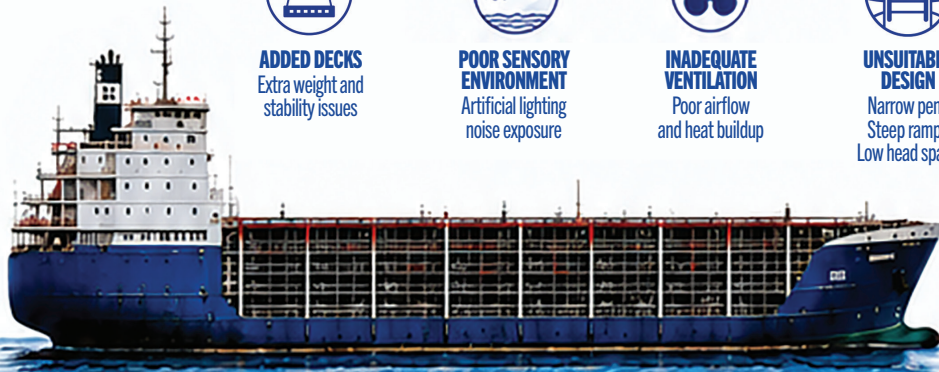
The most dangerous ship category worldwide

## 2 WHAT ARE THESE SHIPS?



84%

OF THE CURRENT FLEET WERE CARGO SHIPS CONVERTED TO LIVESTOCK CARRIERS



ADDED DECKS  
Extra weight and stability issues



POOR SENSORY ENVIRONMENT  
Artificial lighting  
noise exposure



INADEQUATE VENTILATION  
Poor airflow  
and heat buildup



UNSUITABLE DESIGN  
Narrow pens  
Steep ramps  
Low head space



ONLY 16% ARE PURPOSE-BUILT LIVESTOCK CARRIERS

## 3 THE BIGGEST RISKS

### ANIMAL WELFARE PROBLEMS



- Heat Stress & Dehydration
- Injuries, diseases and high mortality
- Overcrowding
- Motion stress
- Births & miscarriages



### CREW SAFETY

- Unpaid wages, labour exploitation, crew abandonment
- Poor living and working conditions
- Human trafficking risks



### ENVIRONMENTAL POLLUTION

- Discharge of manure and waste
- Disposal of dead animals at sea
- Air emissions and fuel pollution
- Threats to marine ecosystems



### MARITIME SAFETY

- Groundings and collisions
- Fires and explosions
- Mechanical failures
- Water ingress and sinking

## 4 A FLEET WITH A HISTORY OF DISASTERS

2015: HAIDAR



5,000

CATTLE DROWNED

after the vessel capsized in Brasil

2019: QUEEN HIND



14,000

SHEEP DROWNED

after the vessel capsized in Romania due to unauthorized structural modifications.

2020: GULF LIVESTOCK 1



5,867

CATTLE & 41 CREW DIED

after the ship sank in the East China Sea during a Typhoon. Only 2 crew members survived.

2021: KARIM ALLAH / ELBEIK



2,500

CATTLE DIED

or were later killed after an import refusal at destination and 3 months at sea.

2025: SPIRIDON II



2,901

CATTLE TRAPPED

and hundreds dead after import refusal and 2 months at sea.

## 5 GLOBAL HOTSPOTS Main livestock sea-transport corridors



EUROPEAN PORTS  
Romania, Ireland, France, Portugal, Spain, Croatia, Greece, Slovenia



SOUTH AMERICA  
Brazil and Uruguay



AUSTRALIA & NEW ZEALAND



BLACK SEA CORRIDOR  
Romania and Ukraine



MIDDLE EAST  
NORTH AFRICA  
EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN  
ARABIAN PENINSULA  
TÜRKİYE



### ADDITIONAL ROUTES AND REGIONAL TRADES

SOUTH AFRICA  
Middle East and Mauritius

SOUTH EAST ASIA & AUSTRALIA  
Especially Indonesia and neighbouring countries

RED SEA AND PERSIAN GULF REGION  
Regional trade within Red Sea and Persian Gulf

## 6 INSPECTION FINDINGS

### CERTIFICATES & DOCUMENTATION

### SAFETY OF NAVIGATION

### FIRE SAFETY

### MARITIME LABOUR CONVENTION (MLC, 2006)

### LIFE SAVING APPLIANCES

### WORKING & LIVING CONDITIONS

### STRUCTURAL CONDITION



14.5%

12.2%

10.7%

9.5%

8.5%

7.6%

6.7%

A FLEET BUILT FOR CARGO,  
NOT ANIMALS.

Source: Global Livestock Fleet Report 2026.  
Robin des Bois / Animal Welfare Foundation / Tierschutzbund Zürich

The global livestock fleet is old, converted, poorly regulated and associated with repeated animal welfare, environmental and maritime safety risks.

It's time for governments to act.

- Ban live exports and end this cruelty.
- Enforce higher standards and close loopholes.
- Protect animals, people and the ocean.



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IN OUR NEW REPORT



AWF ANIMAL WELFARE FOUNDATION

TSB TIER SCHUTZ BUND ZÜRICH

