MEDIA RELEASE

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NORTHERN FARMERS STILL PAYING FOR COMMONWEALTH INCOMPETENCE

Northern Australia's live cattle export industry is still being punished for the federal government's bungled live export ban in May 2011, according to John Shipp, Director of the ANDEV/IPA North Australia Project.

This comes in response to the Indonesian government's moves to apply old regulations regarding the documentation of cattle parentage in order to restrict Australian imports.

"If we can't find a way through this mess, the Australian live cattle export industry is set to lose another 10 per cent of its business on top of the reductions last year," Mr Shipp said.

"Indonesia is already moving towards self-sufficiency in beef by 2014 to ensure its supply isn't affected by decisions like the live export ban. And who can blame them?"

Mr Shipp put the blame squarely on the Gillard government's decision to suspend live- exports after a May 2011 investigative report on ABC's *Four Corners* found instances of inhumane practice in Indonesian abattoirs.

"Rather than working with the Indonesian government and domestic industry to reform practices, the government pulled the plug unilaterally after a bit of pressure from talkback radio and calls to MP's electorate offices," Mr Shipp said.

"That decision was the worst example yet of what happens when a government is too focused on the 24-hour media cycle and not enough on providing good government."

"So now even after 12 months, the Indonesian government is doing everything it can to reduce its reliance on Australian beef.

"The cattle industry in North Australia knows who to blame, and it's not the Indonesian government, it's our own federal government," Mr Shipp said.

The North Australia Project is a joint project of Australians for Northern Development and Economic Vision and the Institute of Public Affairs. For more information visit www.andev-project.org.

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