



22nd February 2020

RE: SELECT COMMITTEE ON ANIMAL CRUELTY LAWS IN NEW SOUTH WALES

Response Questions Taken on Notice

Transcript Page 27:

The Hon. EMMA HURST: I put on notice, just to clarify something you said that the Animal Justice Party has put things out that the independent office would be a replacement of the RSPCA. On notice, will you provide the Committee those posts?

Mr DONNELLY: I will definitely take that on notice, the primary documentation that I am referring to were previous policy documents of the AJP.

The Hon. EMMA HURST: Previous policy documents?

Mr DONNELLY: Even current. As far as we are aware they are still current. We are happy to provide those to which we are referring, yes, for sure.

Response:

Copies of social media posts made by Animal Justice Party are included as Annexures.

Annexure 1: Screenshot entitled AJP - OIW – 1

This screenshot clearly shows Ms Emma Hurst promoting an Independent Office of Animal Welfare. The dialogue continues to state:

“We need a well-resourced and funded enforcement agency”

This statement does not imply an over-seeing ‘ICAC-style’ Commission. It clearly implies a full enforcement agency.

Annexure 2: Screenshot entitled AJP - OIW – 2a and Screenshot entitled AJP - OIW – 2b

Screenshot AJP - OIW – 2a highlights Mr Mark Pearson stating

“This is why we cannot have a charitable-organisation responsible for holding up the shield and the sword to protect animals”

Screenshot AJP-OIW-2b highlights one of his followers stating:

“We have been calling for an Independent Office of Animal Welfare since the eighties”

The follower is interpreting Mr Pearson’s statement as the intention of the Animal Justice Party to implement & create an Independent Office of Animal Welfare.

Additionally the Independent Office of Animal Welfare is cited on The Animal Justice Party’s website within their Animal Law Policy statement:

“Key Objective 3: To introduce a publicly-funded Independent Animal Protection Agency (IAPA) in each state to enforce the new legislation.”

(<http://animaljusticeparty.org/policieslist/humans/animal-law>)

This refers to an Agency - this is not an overseeing committee or commission.

Facebook Link: <https://www.facebook.com/MarkPearsonMP/videos/688827511630250/?t=140>

Within this link Mr Pearson states

“... no other criminal legislation in NSW has the main administrator and prosecutor a charitable organisation ...” going on to add “... so we cannot have a charitable organisation in my view with all of it’s vulnerabilities, limited resources, with the capacity to be influenced in a negative way – is that the correct body which our community would want to look up to to uphold the shield and the sword to protect animals ...”

This statement is very clear – the intention is to replace the RSPCA & AWL as the organisations enforcing POCTAA.

At Ms Hurst’s request Animal Care Australia has also provided a copy of The Animal Justice Party’s Companion Animal Policy document file entitled: **AJP-Companion-Animal-Action-Paper-FINAL1**

Please note highlighted on page 4: **Transfer of Statutory Responsibility for Animal Welfare - Animal Protection Office (APO) and NSW Police**. This is an entire section outlining the creation of a new Office to be taken away from the charitable organisations.

At Ms Hurst’s request Animal Care Australia has also provided a copy of The Animal Justice Party’s Companion Animal Policy document file entitled: **AJP Policies- 2019**. Page 6 of this document highlights the policy to implement a single publicly-funded IAPA that will be empowered to protect animals through AJP’s uniform animal rights legislation.

All of the above make a clear and concise intention that the Independent Office of Animal Welfare would be the replacement of the inspectorate functions of the RSPCA NSW and AWL.

Transcript Page 32:

The Hon. WALT SECORD: Mr Davis, you have Parliamentary privilege. I find it extraordinary that someone would come in and have a list of 20 infractions and the person behind the counter be surprised by that. If you have such materials I would like you to provide that to the Committee.

Mr DAVIS: I am happy to do that

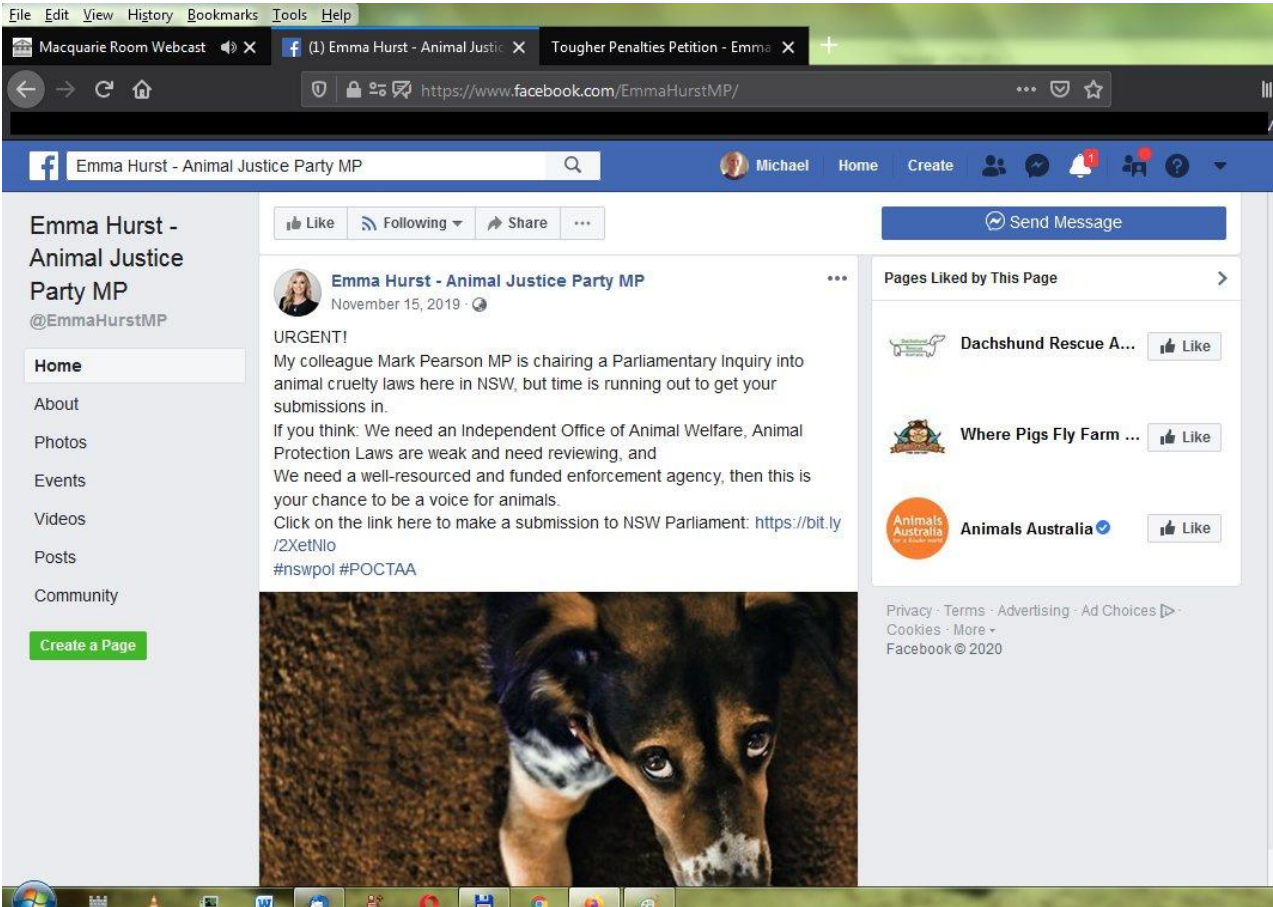
Response:

From Mr Davis: This case illustrates the inappropriateness and inefficiency of many of the current enforceable standards. The attached list (Annexure 3) includes 15 (not 20 as I recanted in my testimony) potential “non-compliant” standards, yet no animal welfare issues were detected in any of the hundreds of birds. This clearly illustrates the inefficient use of compliance officer resources that could more effectively be directed towards education to raise animal welfare outcomes in NSW.

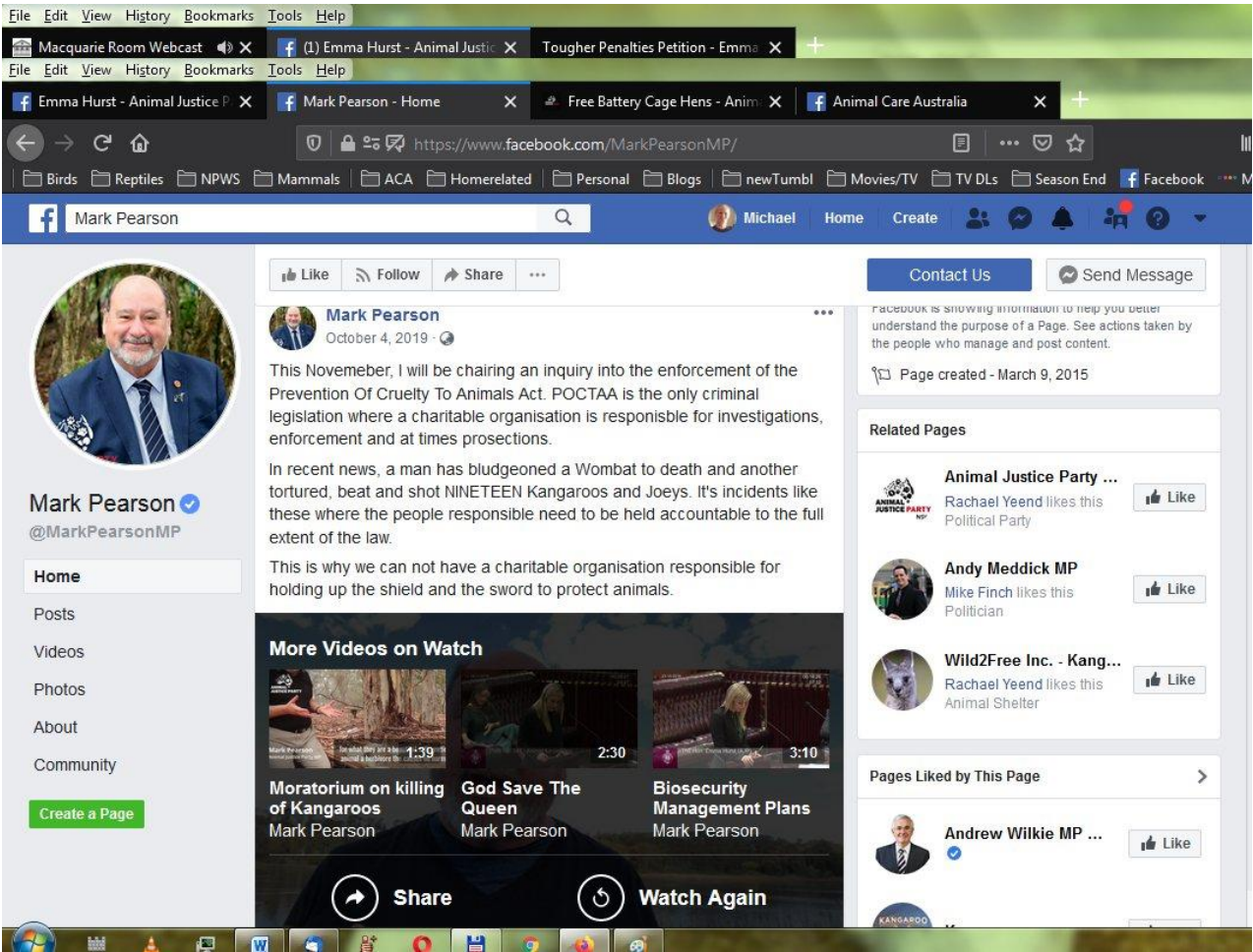
Kind regards,

Michael Donnelly
President
Animal Care Australia

Annexure 1 - Screenshot entitled AJP - OIW – 1



Annexure 2 - Screenshot entitled: AJP - OIW – 2a and AJP - OIW – 2b



File Edit View History Bookmarks Tools Help

Macquarie Room Webcast X (1) Emma Hurst - Animal Justice X Tougher Penalties Petition - Emma X

File Edit View History Bookmarks Tools Help

(1) Emma Hurst - Animal Justice X (1) Mark Pearson - Home X Free Battery Cage Hens - Anim X (1) Animal Care Australia X

https://www.facebook.com/MarkPearsonMP/

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Mark Pearson @MarkPearsonMP

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Brady Cody We have been calling for an Independent Office of Animal Welfare since the eighties.(in a previous life of course)..Thank you Mark for bringing this to the attention of the community. An animal welfare agency that have the powers to enforce an act of parliament should never be placed in the hands of a charity organisation that has to rely on public empathy to generate publicity to further generate donations to survive. RSPCA have been privileged to have this power, with state governments sitting back granting a lousy pittance(grants) for work that should be done by an Independent office arm or police as most states in America have successfully done. The POCTAA is a professional well defined act of parliament that should only be enforced by a team of trained professionals full stop!. I believe that the RSPCA have a role to play like the rescue of animals that they do not do now as they used to and other animal related tasks, adoptions, education to mention a few but should never have powers of prosecution under any act of parliament! The best and only solution would be a task force of animal welfare within the police forces nationally as Mark well knows we tried that back 3 years ago anyway. Stick to this it is fantastic work that you and your party do and believe me the sentiments feel 100% better now Thank you BRT

Like · Reply · 18w

3 Replies

Carolyn McDonald At last, a much needed inquiry. Thank you, Mark.

Like · Reply · 18w

Not Compliant

✓ 4.1.1.2 – The person in charge of the facility must ensure a copy of this Code and any operating procedures are kept at the facility and are accessible to all staff

5.1.1.3 – All animal enclosures must meet the minimum requirements for size, as provided in Appendix 1 of the Animals in Pets Hop Code or Practice

5.3.1.4 – Each pet shop must have a documented procedure for the swift removal of animals from the premises in case of emergency. This document must be kept in a prominent place on the premises.

✓ All staff must be able to produce the document and must be familiar with its content. Any methods detailed in the emergency plan must allow for ready access to animals and ready exit for staff and animals from the premises in the event of an emergency

6.1.1.5 – Before new animals are introduced, vacant enclosure (except aquariums) must be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected

✓ 6.1.1.6 – The Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) for all chemicals held must be available to staff

6.2.1.1 – The pet shop must have a documented program in place to control pests such as flea, flies, lice, mosquitoes and wild rodents. This document must be kept on the premises. All staff must be able to produce the document and must be familiar with its content

7.1.1.1 – Animals must be protected from distress or injury caused by other animals

7.1.1.7 – Animals must receive behavioral enrichment recognizing the physiological status and special needs of differing ages and species, to ensure good psychological health

8.1.1.4 – Newly acquired animals must not be mixed with existing stock for a minimum of 48 hours

8.2.1.1 – The person in charge of the pet shop must establish a liaison with a veterinary surgeon who is able to attend to animals and is able to advise on disease-prevention within the pet shop

8.2.1.2 – For the benefit of staff, the contact details for the veterinarian must be displayed in a prominent position within the pet shop

8.2.1.4 – Sick or injured animals must be kept isolated and away from public view

9.1.5 – Animals that are co-housed must be monitored during feeding to ensure that all animals are eating

~~13.1.2 – Wooden gnawing blocks must be provided~~

15.1.7 – Perches must be of a diameter, construction and material appropriate to the species held and must be placed to prevent contamination of food and water containers. Perches must also be positioned to ensure that birds' tails are not in contact with the cage substrate and to provide easy access to food and water

Animal Justice Party Policies



The policies and supporting information in this document are subject to frequent analysis and can be changed at any time by the Animal Justice Party (AJP) National Committee.

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Animals

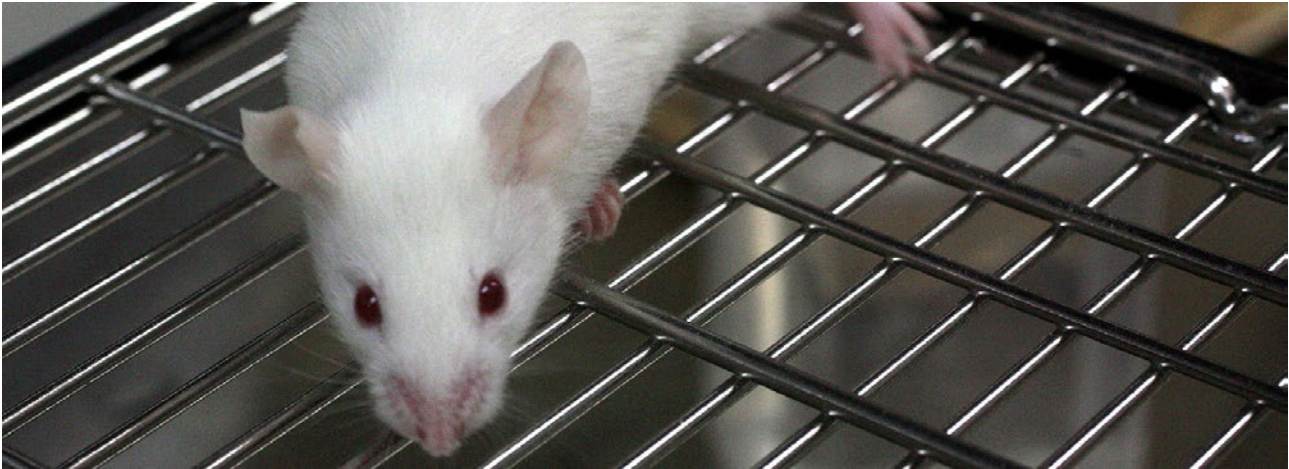
The AJP focus on animals will provide a better life not just for them, but also for us. This is not an ideological position, but one based in science and rational argument. Animals are very much like us. They feel, they think, they form relationships, they mourn, they get stressed, they play, they get excited, they play tricks on each other and can be spiteful and get angry. All of the reasons we abhor cruelty to people apply to other animals also.

Apart from the ethical reasons for opposing exploiting animals for food and fibre, eating them can be harmful for health and is not required in any modern society. Factory farms in particular pose a serious health risk to humans as well as being appalling for animals. The health risks from factory farms aren't just in the products they produce but in the real potential for spawning more pandemics like the 2009 swine flu which killed 284,000 people globally¹ in it's first 12 months. Unlike normal flu, 80% of the victims were younger than 65.

Animal agriculture is also a major contributor to climate change. The extra land required to farm animals and, more importantly to produce their feed is urgently required to be reforested to draw down carbon.

¹[https://www.thelancet.com/journals/laninf/article/PIIS1473-3099\(12\)70121-4/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/laninf/article/PIIS1473-3099(12)70121-4/fulltext)

Animal Experimentation



If animals are close enough mentally and physically to substitute for humans in research, then that's a powerful reason not to use them.

Policy

The Animal Justice Party will strive to put an end to the confinement, pain and distress inflicted on animals for scientific experimentation. We oppose the use of animals in experimentation unless it can be demonstrated that the experimentation will not harm the animal *and* will benefit research and the individual animals involved.

Animals as models for humans in medical science is frequently misleading and we support new technologies with improved predictive power. As an interim measure, Governments at all levels have a responsibility to prevent the suffering of animals of any species for research, whether it be for scientific, commercial or military purposes.

Key Objectives

1. To review ARC and NHMRC funding to ensure suitable support is being provided for non-animal experimentation.

2. To implement educational programs at all levels that replace current animal models with new and effective technologies; many of which already exist.
3. To review project funding priorities of the Federal Government's Rural Industries Research and Development Corporation to ensure there is no support for animals used as resources.
4. To ensure that commercial chemical products, including cleaning agents and toiletries are clearly labelled to indicate whether they have or have not been tested on animals.
5. To immediately ban the use of stray dogs and cats in animal research.
6. To phase-out ARC and NHMRC funding towards experiments that involve the use of animals, except where there are net benefits to the animals concerned.

Background

[under construction]

Animal Law



Codes of Practice work to entrench animal mistreatment by legalising actions that would be illegal if done to a companion animal.

Policy

We seek a new legal system for animals which protects their right to live free from human harm.

Key Objectives

1. To establish a federal Animal Rights Commission to investigate commercial animal exploitation and promote animal rights.
2. To abolish the property status of animals and introduce uniform legislation protecting animals from human interference or harm.
3. To introduce a publicly-funded Independent Animal Protection Agency (IAPA) in each state to enforce the new legislation.
4. To facilitate information sharing between law enforcement agencies to stamp out animal abuse and interpersonal violence.
5. To assert Australian sovereignty over all laws protecting animals, regardless of international trade treaties, until trading nations sign a Universal Convention of Non-Human Animal Rights.

Background

The AJP aims for a legal system that will protect the rights of both humans and other animals. We will create a justice system that respects the rights, interests and bodily security of all.

²Goodfellow, J. (2014). *Speciesism and the Law: How the legal system entrenches animal discrimination*. Presentation at Voiceless' *Rethinking: Speciesism*, The University of Queensland.

Currently, animal welfare laws are anthropocentric, meaning they are more preoccupied with human concerns and human gains than they are with the experiences of animals. The various existing state-based welfare laws are designed to only give animals *some* protection to the extent that humans may still exploit or consume them.

There are many problems with the current legal system so that what "appears at first glance to be a fairly robust framework of protections quickly fades away when the myriad of qualifying terms, defences and exemptions are taken into account".² The result is that no animal is adequately protected by law.

From welfare to rights

There is a substantial difference in the protections given to wild animals, companion animals and farmed animals.

1. Wild animals (so long as they are not considered a "pest") are protected by various laws concerning environmental conservation.
2. Companion animals and farmed animals are promised protection from "cruelty" and neglect by the "Five Freedoms" of welfare under state-based legislation. This includes freedom from hunger and thirst; from discomfort; from pain, injury or disease; from fear and distress; and to

express normal behaviour. But the law only requires humans take “reasonable steps” to provide these freedoms. This means that acts done in the pursuit of some socially accepted goal (like business) are not likely to be considered cruelty.

3. But farmed animals have their legal protections removed by Industry Codes of Practice which condone “standard” harms. If an animal is harmed in a way that is covered by one of these Codes, then that harm is legally neither neglect nor cruelty. Codes exist which permit acts that would be punishable under welfare legislation when done by farmers, slaughterhouses, breeders, racing clubs, and scientists.

These codes are written by the same people who profit from that animal exploitation. They are designed to place such industries beyond any real public or legal scrutiny.

The AJP will introduce new uniform legislation across Australia that guarantees the bodily security of non-human animals with protection from undue human interference. Animals should be seen as individuals, not property. The transition from exploited commodity to respected individual will require new laws and new thinking. We will work with other sovereign nations to work towards an international agreement and Universal Declaration of Animal Rights.

From weak enforcement to solid protection

Currently, in the vast majority of cases, breaches of animal welfare laws go unpunished.

Welfare laws for companion animals are enforced by the RSPCA and other agencies in the not-for-profit sector. These agencies are provided with minimal resources and little statutory power to do the role. In the vast majority of cases, animal neglect is dealt with by attempts at education instead of prosecution. Animal welfare agencies refrain from spending money on prosecution unless they know they will win. Even violence goes unpunished. As the animal victims cannot speak or provide testimony it is nearly impossible to prosecute animal abusers.

Meanwhile, industries which exploit animals are typically regulated by government bodies that are also responsible for the economic success of those same industries. This arrangement creates pressure to keep enforcement at a bare minimum. Profit is prioritised, with enforcement agencies preferring education and gentle attempts at industry compliance. Prosecution is reserved only for notorious cases which are usually exposed to the media by community and animal rights groups.

Animals like cats, foxes, kangaroos, and birds, who are seen as vermin or competitors for resources are hunted, poisoned and treated with contempt regardless of whether they are native or introduced. Sadly, cruelty suffered by these animals is applauded, not punished.

The first step in the transition to a new, kinder Australia, is the introduction of a federal Animal Rights Commission (ARC). Relying on the Commonwealth’s constitutional power to regulate corporations, ARC will be created to independently investigate and objectively report on the commercial exploitation of animals in Australia. ARC will provide Australians with reliable information about the lives of animals exploited for profit. At the same time, ARC will educate the public about links between animal rights violations and other societal harms, including environmental destruction and interpersonal violence. This will enable consumers to make informed and kind choices while putting increasing pressure on governments to facilitate a rapid transition away from animal exploitation. ARC will actively investigate and facilitate opportunities for commercial operations to switch to a cruelty-free business model. Into the future, ARC will be tasked with promoting respectful and mutually beneficial relationships between humans and other animals as equals.

At the state level, the AJP will replace existing regulatory bodies with a single, publicly-funded Independent Animal Protection Agency (IAPA). These IAPAs will not have any conflicts of interest and will be empowered to protect animals through AJP’s uniform animal rights legislation. In the transition phase, IAPAs will actively enforce outgoing welfare legislation. As the economy moves away from systemic animal exploitation, IAPAs will increasingly focus on the protection of individual animals.

Animals In Entertainment



Dominating animals as sport is part of a savage past which has largely been put behind us. Human circuses have ways to delight and entertain that make animal parades and snarling lions look crude and barbaric in comparison.

Policy

Formidable animal welfare challenges exist around Australia with regard to the unnatural use of animals in commercially-operated entertainment enterprises. These enterprises include: performing animal circuses; rodeos; horse and greyhound racing; jumps racing; horse drawn carriage rides; marine parks; zoos and other exhibits such as travelling farm shows (with animals for petting). Broadly defined, *entertainment* also covers such pursuits as recreational hunting.

The Animal Justice Party believes that animals should be enjoyed, appreciated, respected and cared for in as close to their natural state as possible. They should never be terrified as they perform unnatural behaviours or goaded into violent action to provide opportunities for humans to demonstrate “skills” in taunting and subduing them for audience amusement.

Key Objectives

1. To work towards ending all animal racing, beginning with greyhound and jumps racing. To also

immediately ban recreational hunting, game fishing, rodeos and horse-drawn carriage rides.

2. To immediately ban animals in circuses and marine theme parks.
3. To fund programs to ensure all animals involved in the above industries can be safely rehomed.
4. To redirect government funding and subsidies from the above industries and other forms of entertainment that use animals such as thoroughbred racing into education and awareness raising of the cruel realities that exist in these industries with the goal being towards a legislative ban [reword].
5. To create government funded educational initiatives that promote alternative cruelty-free forms of entertainment and allow deductible gift recipient status (DGR) for approved not-for-profit organisations working in this area.

Background

[under construction]

Bats And Flying Foxes



Bats are like a climate change *canary in the coal mine* and they are paying a high price. They start dying when the temperature hits 42 degrees. They are also killed by wind farms.

Policy

The AJP will offer a fresh approach that respects flying foxes and other bats for their intrinsic worth and will protect their basic needs, instead of seeing them as “pests”.

Key Objectives

1. To address misinformation focusing on flying foxes and other bats as dangerous pests to be culled or relocated. A positive image should be promoted focusing on bats’ irreplaceable ecological benefits.
2. To outlaw the killing of flying foxes including by landholders for damage mitigation (whether deliberately by shooting and electrocution or from being entangled in nets).
3. To increase flying fox habitat.
4. To require the use of wildlife friendly netting or other non-harmful alternatives to protect orchards where flying foxes are a problem.
5. To ban the use of barbed wire and electrified fencing in rural residential areas where they are a hazard to flying foxes and bats as well as to birds, kangaroos, gliders, possums, wallabies and people.

Background

Australia has both big bats and little ones; called mega-bats and microbats³ respectively.

Many people are familiar with the bigger bats, also called fruit bats and flying foxes. These are intelligent animals with strong family bonds. They travel long distances to feed at night and carry their infants with them until they are too heavy. There are 4 different kinds of fruit bats and they all play a critical role in spreading plant seeds and pollination. They eat fruit, nectar and pollen, but get pollen on their fur and spread it to other plants. When they eat fruit, they can either spit out the seeds or the seeds pass through their systems. Without bats, our native vegetation would look very different.

Bats face multiple threats⁴ from our changes to the climate. Temperatures above 42 degrees⁵ can kill the bigger bats in large numbers. In 2014, over 5000 died⁶ in northern NSW and in 2017 thousands more⁷ died in another heatwave.

But windfarms also kill bats. In Australia, most bat deaths from wind turbines are to small bats, but as wind farms spread, deaths of all species are expected.

³<http://bats.org.au/about-bats/flying-foxes.php>

⁴<http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/mam.12064/full>

⁵<http://rspb.royalsocietypublishing.org/content/275/1633/419>

⁶<http://www.dailytelegraph.com.au/news/nsw/heatwave-hell-as-5000-dead-bats-drop-from-trees-in-casino-northern-nsw/news-story/21af4e024867a2c7ef9197a9fbca8e56>

⁷<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2017-02-13/heatwave-kills-thousands-of-bats-nsw/8265530>

Dying for a feed

The climate and wind farm risks are in addition to the long standing risk of being killed for feeding in orchards. In a changing landscape, orchards are often an easier source of food to traditional native fruits. Particularly as native vegetation which would have been good for bats has often been cleared. For high value fruit crops, nets are increasingly common. But killing with shotguns is still used. Shotguns are terrific weapons for wounding and crippling animals, but a terrible killing

tool. In the only study of its kind⁸, dead and wounded flying foxes were collected every morning after a week of evening shooting. Of 164 animals located, 30 percent were still alive with all manner of horrific wounds. One young flying fox was located in a tree and calling for their mother for four days after being shot. Obviously, such a study couldn't count or locate any wounded animals who could still fly.

Both Queensland and NSW allow this cruel and inefficient killing and maiming to occur.

⁸<http://www.wildlife-arc.org.au/newsletters/Divljan%20etal.pdf>

Biosecurity



Biosecurity isn't about terrorism. The risks of global infectious diseases from factory farming are far more serious. Keeping animals in crowded and stressful conditions is the perfect way to breed new diseases.

Policy

Biosecurity is a word describing procedures to protect people from biological dangers such as infectious diseases, includes newly evolving diseases.

Factory farms pose significant biosecurity risks to all Australians. Phasing them out will prevent many infectious disease threats to humans and animals. It will also reduce the risks of new diseases emerging.

The AJP advocates a reduction in the interference with wildlife and its habitat. This reduces conflict which risks spreading infectious diseases carried by wildlife.

Key Objectives

1. To establish programs to inform the public about the inherent biosecurity risks associated with intensive animal industries.
2. To establish programs to inform the public about the inherent biosecurity risks associated with reducing wildlife habitat.
3. To support research into bat habitat protection with a goal of reducing conflicts which can be dangerous to both us and bats.
4. To roll back and actively oppose all "ag-gag" laws that use bio-security as a justification for attempts to silence activists and whistle blowers

attempting to prevent or expose poor treatment of animals.

Background

Infectious diseases were once thought to have been defeated by antibiotics and vaccination. We now appreciate the substantial risks of new diseases that can strike faster than vaccines can be developed and of antibiotics losing their effectiveness.

In its first 12 months following its appearance in 2009, Swine flu killed 284,000 people⁹ globally. "Normal" seasonal influenza kills mainly the sick, elderly and infirm, but 80 percent of Swine flu deaths were in people younger than 65. Swine flu is a mixture of pig, chicken and human flu¹⁰ which emerged in factory pig farms in the US and spread across the world.

The avian influenza known as "bird flu" (H5N1) can also kill people, but doesn't easily spread from person to person. A chance mutation could give it this capacity and spark a global pandemic similar or worse than swine flu.

Other diseases have jumped from wildlife to people as we destroy or invade their habitat. These include the hendra, nipah and ebola viruses. Nipah¹¹ spread to pigs from bats in Malaysia in 1998 as farms invaded bat habitat. It also jumped directly from bats to people.

⁹[http://www.thelancet.com/journals/laninf/article/PIIS1473-3099\(12\)70121-4/abstract](http://www.thelancet.com/journals/laninf/article/PIIS1473-3099(12)70121-4/abstract)

¹⁰http://www.humanesociety.org/issues/swine_flu/facts/flu_factories.html

¹¹<http://www.who.int/csr/disease/nipah/en/>

ple in Bangladesh with people drinking sap from date palms where bats were roosting. Ebola¹² can kill both gorillas and people in large numbers. Thousands of gorillas were killed by the disease in 2002-2003 and thousands of people in 2014-16. Hendra¹³ jumped from bats to horses to people in Queensland in 1994 killing 13 horses and a trainer. Since then there have been dozens of outbreaks killing horses, but only one other human death. It took 18 years to develop a vaccine.

Apart from new diseases associated with animal production, animal products cause existing diseases via

food poisoning. Most of Australia's 4 million cases of food poisoning annually come from animal products; salmonella, campylobacter and E. coli. All come from animal products.

Factory farms keep animals in crowded and stressful situations and are frequent users of antibiotics. The evolution of antibiotic resistant strains of bacteria is a major global health problem and antibiotic use on farms is a significant cause.

¹²<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4456362/pdf/pntd.0003652.pdf>

¹³<http://www.ava.com.au/hendra-virus>

Bow Hunting



Some things are just barbaric, and bows used for anything other than shooting inanimate objects fall into that category. Whether an animal lives or dies and how it dies shouldn't be down to luck.

Policy

The AJP is opposed to all forms of hunting.

Background

[under construction]

Key Objectives

An immediate prohibition on using bows to hunt any animal.

Brumbies



Brumbies have recently been given legal protection in NSW, but not Victoria. The fight to protect them will continue. (Photo: Claire Charters)

Policy

A brumby is a wild horse. Early white arrivals bought horses and there have been wild populations in many parts of Australia ever since. The role of these horses in history, both during war and peace, has given them a special place in many Australian hearts.

But their rights are equal to any other introduced animals and are covered in [our Introduced Animals policy](#).

Where environmental degradation from brumbies is demonstrated then non-lethal control measures should be implemented if proven necessary.

The current killing campaigns in some states impose horrific suffering on these animals by using helicopter shooting; this impacts not only the animals shot, but those who may endure severe injuries during efforts to escape.

National legislative protection is required as a matter of urgency.

Key Objectives

1. Give brumbies full legal protection. In particular aerial shooting of brumbies must cease; it is unjustified and inhumane.
2. Support programs that educate the public on the cruel and environmentally negative impacts of killing brumbies. Brumbies digestive processes do not destroy seeds and can spread them over large distances and encourage revegetation. Their droppings make good fertiliser. Education

should focus on their beauty and historic significance.

Background

Australia's Wild Horses (known as Brumbies) have a unique, iconic historical significance in this country. They were transported to Australia in 1788 with the arrival of the First Fleet for use in farm and utility work and they were put to work in the earliest cultivation of the land and the building of townships. Their resourcefulness and intelligence was instrumental in the building of early Australian settlements but two factors were at work in setting them free from servitude – the abandonment of the arid landscape by the pastoralists and the growth of industry which led to a decline in the demand of horses for labour. Many horses escaped from these early settled areas and were left free to roam in Australia's wilderness areas.

Australia's Brumbies live in remote, rugged and semi-arid areas of the country. There are significant populations of Brumbies in Qld, NT and Queensland, medium numbers in SA and NSW. Victoria has the lowest population of around 2,500. There are no Brumbies in Tasmania. Unlike the United States whose wild horse and burros' populations have been protected by law since 1971, Australia's Brumbies have no protections. There is no long-term national management policy in place in Australia to protect the rights of the Heritage Brumby. Two states, NSW and Victoria have short term management plans but they are not uniform and do not value or promote the Brumby as a vital part of Australia's social heritage.

Companion Animals Short



Policy

The AJP encourages people and animals to share their lives in ways that enrich both groups.

Companion animals are recognised and cherished by the majority of Australians for their friendship, comfort and devotion. Indeed, some 60 percent of Australian households include a companion animal. Companion animals can be pets that share our house, but they can also be animals that are companions from a distance, such as free-living cats, and birds. All these animals deserve consideration and respect - they provide us with many benefits, but also with obligations.

The Animal Justice Party believes that the requirements of companion animals are inadequately understood. Nationally, over 250,000 mostly healthy dogs and cats are put to death each year in pounds and shelters. Around 50,000 cruelty complaints against companion animals are lodged with only a few hundred successfully prosecuted. It is clear then, that existing acts, regulations, codes of practice, law enforcements, and educational initiatives are failing to protect these animals. The Animal Justice Party will promote reform to protect the best interests of companion animals with the aim of achieving consistency across all levels of government: state, territory, and federal.

Species that haven't been domesticated should be free from exploitation and are not suitable as companion animals.

Key Objectives

1. To provide shelters with adequate funding to cater to lost and unwanted animals

2. To increase desexing levels through government/veterinary subsidy programs and to mandate desexing at point of sale.
3. Animals such as rabbits, guinea pigs, rats and animal assistants like mareema, donkeys, and guide dogs must only be bred by licenced breeders under strict controls.
4. To phase out the breeding and sale of all companion animals other than from shelters or rescue groups.
5. To phase out the breeding of companion animals until shelters achieve no-kill status with no turn-away, then work with companion animal NGO's on only using breeding schemes that benefit the animals involved.
6. To implement and regulate adoption procedures that will better ensure suitable human/non-human compatibility outcomes
7. To manage urban free-living cats humanely via trap, neuter and feed while recognising the conflicts between their interests and those of wildlife.
8. To repeal breed-specific legislation throughout Australia.
9. Birds in cages are unacceptable, aviaries can be used only where release is inhumane.
10. To legislate ensuring tenants can not be discriminated against for having companion animals in their care where the property is appropriate for the animal/s involved.

Background

[under construction]

Dingo



Policy

The AJP sees dingos as a valuable part of the ecosystem; being a native apex predator.

The economic impact of dingos on meat producers has driven their persecution since white arrival. The modern scientific view is that increasing dingo numbers is essential¹⁴ to protect what little biodiversity remains. This requires dingos be protected and have more habitat. At present there are only a few protected areas for dingoes; the Blue Mountains NSW World Heritage Area and habitat protection listed under the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act. The World Heritage listed Fraser Island National Park also provides dingo habitat, but gives them inadequate protection from well meaning but ill-informed tourists.

Key Objectives

1. To elevate dingoes from *Vulnerable* to *Protected Native Dog* status and removing any pest status.

Background

[under construction]

2. To legislate giving dingos full protection and use non-lethals controls where required.
3. To minimise the threat of continued hybridisation by controlling wild dog populations through non-lethal methods. in order to protect dingoes' genetic integrity.
4. To inform Australians, especially rural landowners, of the ecological benefits of dingoes.
5. To increase penalties for killing dingoes.
6. To develop a program for schools teaching children how to act around wild animals, helping them understand the difference between wild dingoes and domestic dogs.
7. To ban 1080 poison.

¹⁴<http://www.cambridge.org/au/academic/subjects/life-sciences/zoology/australias-mammal-extinctions-50000-year-history>

Duck Shooting



Did you know that “good” duck shooters wound more ducks than poor shooters? This is because their aim is better, so their shots get closer more often. The poor shooters more frequently don’t get close enough to wound the duck.

Policy

The AJP is opposed to shooting flying birds with shotguns, regardless of the purpose. The most frequent example of this activity is duck shooting. *Recreational* duck shooting, as opposed to killing ducks for causing crop or other damage, has been banned in Queensland, Western Australia and New South Wales, but is still practiced elsewhere.

Key Objectives

1. That recreational duck and quail shooting be immediately banned.
2. That an enquiry be established to consider the cruelty aspects of any use of shotguns in killing animals. We are confident that the scientific evidence will lead such an enquiry to recommend a ban on the use of shotguns for the killing of any animal.

Background

Catch a sample of ducks in any area in which shooting occurs and X-ray them. What will you find? The first such study was in 1947¹⁵ and describes their astonishment at finding ducks with pellets throughout their bodies.

They found ducks with healed wing fractures and even ducks who had been wounded multiple times as revealed by different types of shot in their bodies. In following decades, similar studies kept finding the same things. Shotguns fire between 150 and 200 pellets and many ducks will be hit, but keep flying. Some will succumb after minutes, hours, or weeks, but others will recover to become representatives in such studies. If you think about it, these studies can only ever reveal the tip of the wounding ice-berg. Obviously, ducks who die from their wounds won’t be around to be found in such studies.

In the 1970s and 1980s, US shotgun ammunition makers hung up living ducks¹⁶ by the thousand and shot them from a variety of ranges with a variety of types of shotgun shells. These macre studies show clearly that even with perfectly aimed shotguns, wounding is both unavoidable and significant.

Many studies by wildlife authorities estimate wounding rates by asking hunters. There are two problems with this approach. The first is that hunters can’t know whether or not they hit a duck unless it falls from the sky. If it keeps flying, then they can’t know if they hit or missed. The second problem is that hunters may not remember or confess to all the ducks they know they hit but didn’t pickup. A Canadian study¹⁷ in the 1980s is the only study where scientists watched duck shooters from hidden observation posts and found the hunters

¹⁵ https://www.jstor.org/stable/3796289?seq=1#page_scan_tab_contents

¹⁶ http://www.jstor.org/stable/3830469?seq=1#page_scan_tab_contents

¹⁷ https://www.researchgate.net/publication/297382726_Monitoring_hunter_performance_in_Prairie_Canada

typically admitted to less than half the number of ducks that the scientists scored as being hit but not retrieved. But even this study will have missed the ducks which keep flying but are wounded.

Imagine a slaughterhouse where about half of the animals that arrive to be killed escape wounded. This is the reality of duck shooting. The reasons that shotguns don't kill reliably come down to the basic physics of the way shotguns operate can't be fixed by any kind of legislation. You can't legislate to change the laws of physics.

Where does it happen?

Recreational duck shooting is banned in Western Australia, Queensland and New South Wales. Some crop-protection shooting still occurs but this has declined steadily as farmers change their methods of producing rice so that less water is used. Shooter numbers have also declined significantly in recent decades in all states which still allow the sport. This is due to duck rescue campaigns and continued public opposition.

Farming



Australia has 28 million cattle, 80 million sheep and kills some 600 million chickens per year. Our heavy consumption of animal products determines the size of our environmental impact and the health of our human population.

Policy

Farming and food choices are intimately connected and so are the corresponding Animal Justice Party (AJP) policies. We advocate a plant based diet but recognise that animal industries are not all the same.

We recognise that some animal industries inflict less pain than others however all involve significant suffering and ultimately the taking of life. The AJP understands that widespread dietary change will be a lengthy process and that animal production methods must be improved urgently as an interim measure; so we will prioritise the phase out of factory farming.

It is the aim of our **dietary policy** to provide programs that inspire people to change. Changes in diets will prompt changes in what and how we farm. Some farmers will have to change their production methods and others will shift from producing animals to producing plant foods. We expect a significant drop in the number of farm animals, an increase in new plant-based industries, and an improvement in human health.

However, whilst the Animal Justice Party will advocate for incomplete reform when the immediate suffering of animals is involved, it will always recognise that such reforms are not enough in isolation and must occur in tandem with a long-term, total transition to plant-based agriculture.

Related policies:

1. **Human diet**
2. **Climate change**
3. **Marine animals**

Key Objectives

1. The withdrawal of Government financial support for animal product industries except for research into welfare improvements.
2. A prohibition on the advertising of animal products and where applicable for health warnings on animal products.
3. Increased funding for research into effective ethical, environmental and health advertising. This should be followed by active Government support for advertising campaigns based around the ethical, environmental and health advantages of plant based diets.
4. To provide financial support and education opportunities where required that will encourage farmers to transition to plant based farming.
5. To introduce a tax on animal products commensurate with their adverse environmental and health impacts.
6. To allow deductible gift recipient status (DGR) for approved not-for-profit animal protection organisations.
7. The rapid phase out of live export and the slaughter of animals without pre-stunning for any reason; including religious beliefs.

8. The rapid phase out of all farm animal mutilations, including tail docking, castration, branding, ear marking, teeth clipping, de-horning and mulesing.
9. The rapid adoption of an 8 hour upper limit on any journey, and restrictions on the climatic conditions under which animals can be transported. Where animals must be transported over longer distances, then as an interim measure, each leg must not exceed 8 hours and the animals must be unloaded, watered and cooled.
10. As the uptake of plant based diets increases, we will work towards laws that abolish breeding and rearing for slaughter or other exploitation.

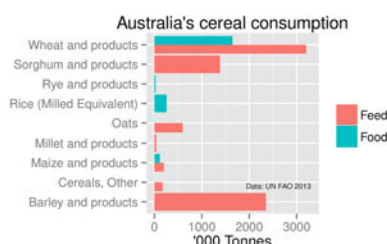
the millenium drought, our dairy industry was crippling the Murray Darling Basin while Sydney and Adelaide were building billion dollar desalination plants. Adelaide spent .83 billion²² building a plant to guarantee 100 billion litres annually, while upstream the dairy industry was using 4,200 billion litres²³.

In cities, it is easy to underestimate the impacts of food choices not just on the animals who are killed, but on the environment that is exploited to feed the massive appetites of our factory farms and feedlots, or the land that is cleared, or kept cleared, for the grazing component of production.

Background

Farming affects not only the animals that are raised and killed but has a major impact on wildlife habitat. Of the 100 million hectares that has been cleared¹⁸ since white arrival, at least 70 percent has been for grazing. Sheep and cattle graze over 400 million hectares of Australia, while we crop just 27 million hectares¹⁹; almost all of this is for cereal production. Our towns and cities occupy just over 3 million hectares.

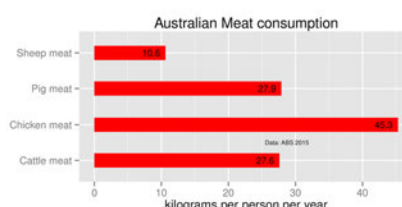
Typically, the majority of our cereal crop is exported, with only 2 million tonnes consumed here as food (for people). In contrast, we feed over 13 million tonnes²⁰ of grains (not just cereals) to our livestock. Cattle alone consume about 6.5 million tonnes of grains split fairly evenly between our dairy and beef industries. We also import some 700,000 tonnes of soymeal for feed annually. Cattle have a very large environmental footprint while providing relatively little food; and all of it is carcinogenic²¹. Wheat supplies not only more protein, but five times more calories in the Australian food supply.



Most of the water taken from our rivers is for the production of meat and dairy products. At the height of

Impact on animals

Two thirds of the meat eaten in Australia each year comes from factory farms where animals are raised in sheds. Australians eat more chicken meat than any other meat and it is virtually all produced in factory farms.



By the end of their 6 weeks of life, only a few percent of chickens can walk normally. They have been bred for rapid growth and their skeletal development can't keep up with the growth of their musculature. The result is an animal that won't live long if released. This contrasts with a lifespan of a decade or more for the original chickens before artificial breeding produced the current animals. Modern chickens are so genetically unfit that getting them to live long enough to breed requires extraordinary procedures, typically reducing their feed intake to retard their unnatural growth rates.

¹⁸<https://www.environment.gov.au/node/22149>

¹⁹http://www.agriculture.gov.au/abares/aclump/Documents/Land_use_in_Australia_at_a_glance_2006.pdf

²⁰<http://www.sfmca.com.au/items/1093/FGP%20Report%20October%202016.pdf>

²¹<http://www.wcrf.org/int/research-we-fund/continuous-update-project-cup/second-expert-report>

²²https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Adelaide_Desalination_Plant

²³https://books.google.com.au/books/about/Quantifying_and_Valuing_Land_Use_Change.html?id=_h3xvQAACAAJ&redir_esc=y



Most pig meat comes from pigs raised indoors, but there has been an expansion of large portable shelters for pig production. Those kept on concrete floors have similar lameness problems to chickens, but for different reasons.

Your impact on animals and the environment is almost entirely determined by what you choose to eat. The AJP is the *only* political party that understands this.

Greyhound Racing



Any industry involving gambling and animals faces intrinsic problems. The punters pay with their wallets and the animals with their lives.

Policy

Greyhound racing and gambling are intimately connected. This inevitably leads to over breeding and the killing of healthy dogs. The industry has also demonstrated a level of mendacity and cruelty that indicates it is beyond any form of regulation. It must be abolished, just like dog fighting and bear baiting.

Key Objectives

1. To rapidly phase out greyhound racing.

Background

Widespread and extreme animal cruelty is inherent in the greyhound racing industry. It includes illegal live baiting, doping and mistreatment and deliberate overbreeding that results in the annual killing of thousands of healthy greyhounds,. The industry's long failure to adequately address these issues or enforce existing laws (despite various reports and exposes), together with evidence of endemic corruption, demonstrates it cannot be trusted to self-regulate and reform.

Where do "Wastage" greyhounds go?

The greyhound industry depends on "wastage" - the over-breeding of dogs to ensure that a proportion will run fast enough to be commercially "useful". Young and healthy dogs not meeting this criteria are routinely killed or given away to science and export, with only a small proportion re-homed or "adopted". Insufficient transparency and published data mean estimates vary but the numbers bred for the sport are huge and more than half are deliberately killed. In NSW, almost 100,000 greyhounds were bred in the last 12 years, with 50-70% killed²⁴. Thousands end up in pounds. "Underperforming" greyhounds have been found shot or bludgeoned to death²⁵. Animal welfare groups and veterinarians have expressed grave concern about the many dogs killed and the industry's failure to take responsibility for finding homes for dogs they breed.

Deliberate overbreeding has led to a market in **research, teaching and live export**. Many dogs who don't make it to the racetrack are routinely given away to medical or veterinary schools for teaching or experiments²⁶ and then generally killed. Recent examples include experiments for cosmetic dental surgery, and one where dogs were suffocated²⁷ and their hearts removed then transplanted. More than 100 dogs have

²⁴<http://www.smh.com.au/sport/horseracing/key-findings-of-special-commission-of-inquiry-into-the-greyhound-racing-industry-20160707-gq10hh.html>

²⁵<http://www.smh.com.au/nsw/at-least-99-underperforming-greyhounds-killed-buried-in-mass-grave-report-finds-20160719-gq92rs.html>

²⁶<http://www.theage.com.au/victoria/victoria-lab-experiments-kill-100-dogs-for-drug-and-dental-research-20151204-glgo1.html>

²⁷<http://www.theage.com.au/victoria/shocking-greyhounds-suffocated-hearts-removed-revived-and-killed-second-time-20160911-grdphx.html>

²⁸<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2015-12-09/greyhounds-exported-to-macau-china-against-industry-rules/7014434>

been exported²⁸ for racing every year to jurisdictions with no animal welfare laws including Macau, where they are subject to appalling living conditions, risk of serious injury and certain death (including being boiled²⁹ alive for eating). Although banned in 2013, 179 trainers were charged³⁰ in 2016 with exporting dogs to Macau.

Live baiting

In 2015 the ABC's Four Corners revealed that the horrendously cruel practice of "live baiting" (or "bleeding") remains endemic and rampant, despite being banned in 1979. Rabbits, piglets, possums are used as live bait to entice and train greyhounds across different states and by individuals at the highest levels in the industry. An estimated one in five trainers maintain it is necessary.

Drugging dogs to run faster

Other cruel practices prevail, including allegations and convictions of dogs being fed or injected with banned performance-enhancing drugs such including steroids and cocaine. Injuries are common – the RSPCA estimates, based on industry figures, that more than 750 greyhounds are injured monthly during races with more during training, trialling and non-TAB races. Races can be held in hot temperatures despite real concerns about heat stress, stroke and death. Greyhound Racing Victoria acknowledges that "heat stress affects canines more severely than humans" and allows races up to 38 degrees Celsius, but in NSW trainers may withdraw greyhounds without penalty above this maximum.

Many racing greyhounds are effectively kept in solitary confinement without access to stimulation or socialization.

Self regulation and fairy tales

Prior to the 2015 exposes the greyhound racing industry was self-regulated with very little accountability, transparency or responsibility for its actions regarding breeding, training, usage, injuries and discarding of greyhounds. Self-regulation has been shown to be an abject failure: live baiting and export have continued long after being banned, and information on deaths and injury have been "sanitised".

States' reactions to the 2015 ABC Four Corners live baiting expose varied. Relevant boards in NSW, Victoria and Queensland resigned or were stood down, inquiries established and new regulations introduced. Tasmania's parliamentary inquiry found no proof of live-baiting but made recommendations. WA and SA continue as before. State government incentive schemes are currently under revision. The NSW Parliament, voted in August 2016 to ban greyhound racing, following a special commission of inquiry that found "overwhelming evidence of systemic animal cruelty" and that the NSW industry has "fundamental animal welfare issues, integrity and governance failings that cannot be remedied". Sadly, as a result of industry pressure, the Premier "back-flipped" on the issue.

Commercial greyhound racing is legal in only eight countries across the world and Australia is reportedly the third largest. An estimated 82 percent of Australians want a nation-wide ban.

²⁹<http://irishpost.co.uk/footage-of-a-greyhound-being-boiled-alive-in-china-emerges-online/>

³⁰<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2016-06-09/greyhound-racing-nsw-charges-179-trainers-owners/7497738>

Introduced Animals

————— NOIMAGE INTRODUCED_ANIMALS

We have introduced thousands of special of plants and many species of animals into Australia. The lucky ones are carefully cared for, while others are shot, poisoned, bludgeoned and given horrific diseases.

Policy

This policy concerns free living introduced species, such as camels, rabbits, cats and foxes, and doesn't deal with exotic species currently found in pet shops; these are dealt with in our [companion animals policy](#).

The AJP supports the humane and non-lethal treatment of all animals regardless of where their species originated. We will support and develop programs that are in-line with this position and focus on restoring eco-systems via methods harmonious to nature such a rewilding.

Key Objectives

1. To immediately ban the use of glue traps, leg traps and steel jaw traps in all States and Territories.
2. To support research into non-lethal population control methods.
3. To replace lethal biological and chemical control with the use of non-lethal techniques, including desexing, immunocontraception, relocation and other emerging technologies.
4. To educate Australians regarding the damage that can be done by abandoned animals such as cats, dogs and other predator species, horses, pigs and non-native fish, amphibians and reptiles.
5. To impose a moratorium on the introduction of exotic animals and disease-causing organisms.
6. To encourage the use of physical barriers around valuable vegetation and, as an interim measure while animals are farmed, to allow the use of guard animals such as dogs or donkeys.

Background

Evolution has produced not just big animals like us, but also small creatures; microbes like bacteria and viruses. Some of these little critters can make us sick or even kill us. But they are not conscious so AJP has no qualms

about killing them by any means available, from soap to antibiotics.

Predators and prey are also the result of evolutionary processes but the conflicts between their interests are obvious. A bird wants to live and enjoy its life, just like a cat, but evolution has set them in conflict. We could choose to favour predators at the expense of prey, or vice versa. Or we could try and be even handed; both want to live. The compromise position of AJP is for population control on either or both, if necessary. Cats, as efficient hunters and breeders can be a particular problem in Australia. AJP doesn't blame them, but does believe that populations should be controlled by non-lethal methods. Conflict with wildlife can further be reduced in urban areas by feeding. Many in the public already do this. Vegan cat food has made considerable progress in the past 20 years, but is still not a guaranteed solution. Some cats won't eat it and it is prohibitively expensive for some budgets. Both problems are solveable, and we aim to support solutions while recognising that they will take time to develop and implement.

Populations of non-predators can also exceed their natural food supply and again, AJP policy aims for non-lethal population control. Frequently we don't just kill introduced animals which we think are overpopulated, we torture with cruel and inhuman methods of killing; everything from myxomatosis to horrid poisons and inhumane weapons like shotguns.

Whether an animal is introduced or not has no special role in our policy. All animals want to live and enjoy their lives. We understand that evolution has no ethical goals, it is a blind mechanism. We, on the other hand, are happy to elevate ethical concerns and, in effect, improve on nature. We do this every time we fight to prevent the natural results of a bacterial infection. We do it when we fix birth defects and engineer new cereals with improved characteristics. The natural results of evolution are frequently tragic for our own species and we are happy to improve upon them. We improve on nature constantly for the benefit of our own species, why not for other species?

Jumps Racing



Policy

Jumps racing is an inherently cruel and unsafe form of entertainment. The AJP opposes jumps racing and will work to achieve its abolition in Victoria and South Australia, the only two remaining states of Australia in which it is still allowed to occur.

Key Objectives

1. To rapidly phase out jumps racing in Victoria and South Australia.

Background

[under construction]

Kangaroos



Tourism Australia named the red kangaroo as *animal of the month* in August 2018. And while some Australians enjoy the wonder of raising orphan joeys, others bash them to death as part of a Government sanctioned industry.

Policy

Legislation that protects kangaroos, wallabies and other macropods is urgently required. We must work to counter the misinformation from those with commercial interests so that kangaroos are valued for their intrinsic worth. We must help secure their basic needs and interests, instead of seeing them as resources or pests.

7. To prohibit the use of barbed wire fencing in rural residential areas where it is a hazard to macropods as well as birds and bats.
8. To ensure adequate kangaroo corridors are implemented during all relevant development projects.
9. To use exclusion fencing instead of lethal controls to protect vulnerable species at threat from kangaroos.

Key Objectives

1. To rapidly phase out the commercial killing of kangaroo and wallabies and close down processing industries.
2. To change negative attitudes to kangaroos and wallabies through widespread education about their considerable ecological benefits.
3. To reform relevant legislation, policies and the agencies that administer them to prohibit the killing or brutalising of kangaroos and wallabies.
4. To increase and enforce penalties for deliberate wildlife cruelty.
5. To encourage increased growth in and support for kangaroo friendly wildlife-based tourism in Australia.
6. To review the policies for licensing and the operational practices of wildlife caring and rehabilitation groups and individuals.

Background

A female kangaroo with a joey's head poking out of the pouch is remarkable. A single kangaroo bounding across the land is spectacular. A mob of kangaroos bounding together is breath-taking.

"Kangaroo" refers to any of six species; the Eastern Grey, Western Grey, Red and Common Wallaroo or Euro, but also the less common Black Wallaroo and Antilopine Wallaroo. Marsupials are found in Australasia and the Americas but kangaroos are only found in Australia. They are quintessential and iconic Australians.

Kangaroos have a synergy with the environment

Australia is the driest, inhabited continent and our marsupials have evolved with the land and climate. Kangaroos appeared in Australia 25 million years ago and evolved to our modern kangaroos by about 3 million

³¹<http://science.sciencemag.org/content/362/6410/72>

years ago through adaptation to the changing climate and environment, especially to the formation of grasslands³¹.

Three features distinguish macropods from other marsupials allowing them to adapt to the environment and climate, including cycles of drought and restricted resources: foregut fermentation, hopping and embryonic diapause³² (delaying the final stages of embryo development until environmental conditions are optimal). Gestation and birth naturally occur at times that are optimal for mother and offspring.

Kangaroos are the only large mammal to develop bipedal movement, and the hopping action is one of their most distinctive features. Hopping is incredibly energy efficient in kangaroos allowing them to travel long distances to find food and water. A dog chasing a kangaroo at near top speed (35km/hr) will use almost twice the amount of oxygen used by the kangaroo.

These special features allow kangaroos to survive Australia's cycles of long and severe droughts and to traverse long distances to find resources. Kangaroos have adapted to habitats such as grasslands, grassy woodlands, open forests and deserts. These habitats are their home.

Reproduction and breeding

Female kangaroos have the capacity to have three young of different ages simultaneously: a joey at-foot (out of the pouch, but returning for milk), a small pouch-young joey and an embryo in waiting in the uterus. This makes reproduction heavily controlled by the changing environment. Most can be continuous breeders when environmental conditions are optimal and opportunistic breeders at other times. But the grey kangaroos are seasonal breeders. Like other animals, the reproduction of all the kangaroo species will be interrupted or halted if environmental conditions are particularly harsh.

Nature is out of balance

Two main factors that control herbivore populations in all ecosystems are resource availability and predation³³,

and in Australia each of these factors has been disturbed by European settlement.

Large herbivores are controlled by the apex predator and kangaroos were once controlled by the dingo which has occupied this significant ecological niche in Australia for between 4,600 and 18,300 years³⁴. The dingo is distinct from the domestic dog in behaviour, morphology, genetics and molecular biology. Over the last 100-150 years, the dingo has been excluded from areas of Australia by barrier fences to protect livestock. Large carnivores are important for ecological balance and biodiversity, and their removal triggers a multitude of changes through all levels of the ecosystem (a trophic cascade), including herbivore populations, the rise of other predators, changes to vegetation type and quality, and soil nutrients³⁵. Some ecologists are calling for the removal of these exclusionary fences³⁶.

Australia has lost at least 40% of its forests since European colonisation, and what remains is mostly fragmented³⁷. So, resource availability for kangaroos has been greatly altered in Australia with loss of habitat through land-clearing, logging and agriculture, and the introduction of artificial water sources causing kangaroos to migrate to find resources. Climate change through human activity (climate damage) has had further detrimental impacts on the environment, resources and is an existential threat to all species³⁸.

Humans co-existing with kangaroos

In Australia kangaroos are seen as a resource and a problem. However, an independent review of the industry concluded that it is unsustainable, cruel and requires legal reform³⁹.

Kangaroos are culturally, socially, and spiritually significant to Australia's first nation peoples. They are appalled by, and opposed to, the "mass slaughter" of kangaroos that is sanctioned by Australian governments.

³²<https://catalogue.nla.gov.au/Record/3535924>

³³<https://www.nature.com/scitable/knowledge/library/dynamics-of-predation-13229468>

³⁴<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/27640201>

³⁵<http://science.sciencemag.org/content/343/6167/1241484.full>

³⁶<https://theconversation.com/lets-move-the-worlds-longest-fence-to-settle-the-dingo-debate-37155>

³⁷<https://academic.oup.com/jpe/article/5/1/109/1294916>

³⁸<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S096098220702341X>

³⁹http://s3.amazonaws.com/thinkk_production/resources/13/2597_UTS_policy_report.pdf

Internationally, Australia is under scrutiny and criticism for the methods by which kangaroos are hunted and shot under the label of “wildlife management”, then processed for various commercial products for national and international markets. Australia’s kangaroo killing is the largest hunt of a land-based animal on the planet and is particularly hypocritical given our objections to whale and seal hunting. Only a few Australian conservation organisations have programs to protect kangaroos⁴⁰.

AJP’s record on kangaroo protection

The brutality observed in killing kangaroos in the ACT was pivotal in the formation of the party in 2010. Since then, we have continued to campaign against cruelty to these animals. During elections, we put pressure on other parties⁴¹ to oppose the slaughter.

Our NSW MP, The Hon Mark Pearson MLC in NSW has a long history as a thorn in the kangaroo industry’s side. He frequently⁴² advocates for kangaroo protection in the NSW Parliament and has called for a government inquiry into their slaughter using first hand evidence.

He is challenging the government’s narrative of over-breeding to “plague proportions” when, in fact, kangaroos are migrating from drought-affected regions. Mark has worked with other campaigners to educate the world regarding Australia’s treatment of the kangaroo. They successfully convinced importers like Russia and the state of California to stop buying kangaroo products due to numerous ethical and health concerns associated with their origins. Much of this work is documented in the award-winning film *Kangaroo: A Love-Hate Story*⁴³. The AJP is committed to protecting kangaroos and our work is ongoing while misinformation and hatred towards them is perpetuated by the media and other political parties.

About the only thing worse than demonising and hunting an animal with callous indifference to its suffering is doing it when almost nobody likes the meat. If any significant proportion of Australians liked kangaroo meat, there would be none left for export. But kangaroo meat is so unpopular that the small amount produced has to be exported to about 60 countries. The industry is engaged in a never ending battle to find new customers who’ve never eaten its product before. There is almost no repeat business.

⁴⁰<https://www.bushheritage.org.au/species/kangaroos>

⁴¹<https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/greens-targeted-because-of-kangaroo-cull-20130818-2s5j4.html>

⁴²<https://markpearson.org.au/tag/kangaroos/>

⁴³<https://kangaroothemovie.com/>

Koalas

————— NOIMAGE KOALAS

Policy

Koalas must not be judged on the basis of their impact on development or tourism. Their habitat must be protected, particularly given their current vulnerable status in Queensland, NSW and ACT. They deserve safety from harm by humans.

Key Objectives

1. To better estimate koala populations and their locations and review the status of the species as appropriate. The range of current population estimates seem too wide.
2. To determine koala road kill hotspots and incorporate overpasses/underpasses and exclusion fences and to encourage koala corridors in fragmented habitat.

3. To prohibit new developments, including housing, forestry and mining on land inhabited by koalas.
4. To place an immediate ban on logging in native forests with koala populations and to ensure no harm is caused to koalas who have moved into timber plantations (see our Land Clearing policy).
5. To abolish large public events such as car rallies and festivals in occupied koala habitat.
6. To educate the public about the ecosystem services koalas render.
7. To encourage increased growth in and support for koala friendly eco-tourism.

Background

[under construction]

Law Social Justice

————— NOIMAGE LAW_SOCIAL_JUSTICE

Policy

The Animal Justice Party believes animal rights is the biggest social justice issue of our time. Achieving animal rights will not only benefit non-human animals but immensely improve the lives of humans. A kinder world where respect and non-violence towards all beings is encouraged and nurtured will have benefits that flow through to the lives of all and the environment which we live.

2. To ensure that consideration is given to animals in the drafting of all legislation.
3. To invest in further research on relations between animals and people, exploring and highlighting the ways in which positive interactions between them can improve society.
4. To work towards a definition of personhood to replace the current property status of animals.

Key Objectives

1. To continually raise awareness of animal interests in Parliament.

Background

[under construction]

Live Animal Exports

————— **NOIMAGE** LIVE_ANIMAL_EXPORTS

Policy

The AJP opposes the commercial export, whether by sea or air, of live animals; this includes but isn't limited to sheep, cattle, horses, donkeys, camels and goats.

products best suited to expand and replace the 3.7 percent⁴⁴ of our agricultural exports that is the live animal export industry.

2. To increase investments in the industries identified by this enquiry.

Key Objectives

1. To promote an enquiry into Australia's agricultural exports to determine those plant based [under construction]

Background

⁴⁴<http://dfat.gov.au/trade/topics/pages/agriculture.aspx#aae>

Marine Animals



Industrial fishing and rising ocean temperatures have lead oceanographers to predict *The Rise of Slime*⁴⁵ as the frequency of jellyfish and other slimy creatures increases. Fishing and climate change are killing the ocean as we know it.

Policy

Many marine animals, including fish, feel joy, suffering and pain just as land animals do. The Animal Justice Party believes their current treatment is inconsistent with these basic scientific facts and must change.

Some marine animals, like dugongs and turtles, are killed as part of indigenous tradition. Others are caught as part of an elaborate sport fishing culture; including marlin, swordfish and sharks. The AJP doesn't believe that a culture or tradition of any age or extent is a justification for killing; let alone killing using painful or drawn out methods.

Eating fish, whether farmed or wild, is incompatible with AJP's advocacy of a plant based diet.

Key Objectives

1. To protect all marine animals and their environment as a matter of urgency from adverse commercial industries including, but not limited to, fishing (wild and farmed), gas exploration (including marine seismic testing), land based agricultural run off and harmful dredging.
2. To invest in further development of biodegradable products and work toward the banning of harmful plastics.

3. To invest in research and development to clean up our oceans. As interim measures, some changes are required urgently.
4. To conduct an audit of nutrition advice from Government and other bodies to ensure it is evidenced based. The background to all seafood advice should first make it clear that seafood isn't required for good health.
5. To ensure that nutritional advice from Government agencies doesn't exclude environmental and welfare implications of the way marine animals are farmed or fished.
6. To ensure fish are included in all animal welfare legislation.
7. To implement better labelling of all seafood to include details of production methods and, where appropriate, bycatch levels and that any bycatch estimates be verified by independent observers.
8. To fund research via an industry levy into less painful fishing methods.
9. To reduce harmful anthropogenic noise in the ocean and waterways, regardless of source.

Background

The numbers of fish caught each year are staggering: one estimate suggests that between 0.97 and 2.7 trillion wild fish⁴⁶ are caught by humans annually, even more than the 60 billion land animals we slaughter

⁴⁵<http://www.economist.com/node/14897220>

⁴⁶<http://www.fishcount.org.uk/published/standard/fishcountfullrptSR.pdf>

⁴⁷<http://faostat.fao.org>

each⁴⁷ year. In addition, between 37 and 120 billion farmed fish⁴⁸ are killed for food. The UN's Food and Agriculture Organisation estimated⁴⁹ in 2014 that demand for seafood production is annually increasing at a rate of 3.2%, twice the world population growth rate. The rise in demand is despite the health risks of seafood⁵⁰: traces of mercury and other heavy metals are found in animal-based "seafood".

Many fish are also consumed indirectly – ground up and fed to factory-farmed animals or other fish. A typical salmon farm, for example, churns through 3-4 kilograms of wild fish for every kilogram of salmon that it produces.

Legislation

In most of the world, it is accepted that if animals are to be killed for food, they should be killed without suffering. Regulations for slaughter generally require that animals be rendered instantly unconscious before they are killed, and killed as close to instantaneously as possible. However, there is no humane slaughter requirement for wild fish caught and killed at sea, nor, in most places, for farmed fish. They are truly the forgotten victims⁵¹.

Without legal protections, these intelligent, complex animals experience injury from nets and other fishing gears and are impaled, crushed, suffocated or cut open and gutted, all while fully conscious. Hundreds of billions of "nontarget" marine animals⁵² - including sharks, sea turtles, birds, seals and whales – are also regularly caught by the commercial fishing industry. In addition, many fish raised on aquafarms⁵³ spend their entire lives in crowded, filthy enclosures, and suffer from parasitic infections, diseases and debilitating injuries.

The slow progress of fish welfare regulation is partly related to an historical lack of scientific agreement on

whether fish suffer or have cognitive abilities which would warrant moral consideration. There has been some remarkable recent work demonstrating that fish not only feel pain⁵⁴ but clearly have cognition and emotions⁵⁵. As a result there have been some minimal developments in providing welfare protections – the voluntary fish welfare guidelines⁵⁶ in the Australian Animal Welfare Strategy (AAWS) for example. The Abbott coalition stopped AAWS operational funding in 2013, but the strategy did help establish the overarching, if weak, principle that the aim should be to minimise suffering within the constraint of practices inherent to the aquatic sector.

Also, marine sanctuaries are being created to maintain pristine ocean ecosystems and isolated efforts to restore estuaries and bays have met with some success. However, we are a long way from seeing strong legal regulation of oceans and marine animal welfare.

Environmental issues

Environmentalists have been ringing alarm bells for decades over the sustainability of industrialised wild fish capture, with mounting evidence of dramatic over-exploitation of fish populations⁵⁷. In Australia, "super trawlers"⁵⁸ have been making headlines⁵⁹, as have the dwindling fish populations in the Great Barrier Reef⁶⁰.

Pollution is the introduction of harmful contaminants in a given ecosystem. Common human-made pollutants that reach the ocean include pesticides, herbicides, chemical fertilizers, detergents, oil, sewage, plastics, and other solids. Many of these pollutants are mistakenly eaten by marine animals, or collect at the ocean's depths, where they are consumed by small marine organisms and introduced into the global food chain. Degradation, particularly of shoreline and other waters, has accelerated dramatically in the past three centuries as industrial discharge and runoff from farms

⁴⁸<http://fishcount.org.uk/published/std/fishcountstudy2.pdf>

⁴⁹<http://www.fao.org/3/a-i3720e.pdf>

⁵⁰<https://www.nap.edu/read/11762/chapter/6>

⁵¹<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/cif-green/2010/sep/14/fish-forgotten-victims>

⁵²<http://fishcount.org.uk/>

⁵³<https://www.peta.org/issues/animals-used-for-food/factory-farming/fish/aquafarming/>

⁵⁴<https://www.amazon.com/Fish-Feel-Pain-Victoria-Braithwaite/dp/0199551200>

⁵⁵<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/sciencetech/article-2662297/Fish-feelings-Expert-claims-creatures-experience-pain-way-humans-better-treated.html>

⁵⁶<http://www.australiananimalwelfare.com.au/content/aquatic-animals/commercial-capture-fishing-guidelines2>

⁵⁷<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2010/may/17/saving-fish-stocks-cost-jobs>

⁵⁸<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2015-04-02/arrival-geelong-star-vessel-reignites-super-trawler-debate/6368358>

⁵⁹<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2015-04-02/arrival-geelong-star-vessel-reignites-super-trawler-debate/6368358>

⁶⁰<http://www.theguardian.com/environment/2015/mar/27/great-barrier-reef-protection-zones-help-boost-fish-stocks-to-pre-european-times>

and coastal cities has increased. The State of the Marine Environment Report for Australia⁶¹ found that pollution from the land contributes up to 80 percent of all marine pollution and is a major threat to the long-term health of marine systems, affecting ecological processes, public health and social and commercial use of marine resources. Harvesting oil and gas⁶² can also seriously damage sensitive marine areas and species. The industry is not properly regulated and has a track record of carelessness.

Despite anti-dumping laws, in certain regions ocean currents corral trillions of decomposing plastic items and other trash into gigantic, swirling garbage patches. One in the North Pacific, known as the Pacific Trash Vortex, is estimated to be the size of Texas and a new, massive patch was discovered in the Atlantic Ocean in early 2010. Plastics and fish got joint headlines in 2016 when it was reported that up to a third of UK fish contained plastic⁶³ including cod, haddock, mackerel and shellfish. A report for the Ellen MacArthur Foundation⁶⁴ estimated that, by 2050, there will be more plastics than fish in the sea⁶⁵. Pollution is not always physical either. In large bodies of water, sound waves from ships, sonar devices and oil rigs can disrupt the migration, communication, hunting, and reproduction patterns of many marine animals, particularly aquatic mammals like whales and dolphins.

Climate change

By far the biggest threat to our marine environment however, is climate change⁶⁶. The increase in global temperature of 1.2°C since pre-industrial times⁶⁷ is disrupting life in the oceans, from the tropics to the poles. Coastal habitats have already been flooded by rising sea levels, with other impacts including ocean acidifi-

cation, coral bleaching, extreme weather events and reduced oxygen in the waters. Climate change is massively disrupting sealife's normal behaviour, life cycle and food chain. As animal agriculture plays a major role in causing climate change, the Animal Justice Party advocates for people switching to a plant based diet.

Some experts predict the collapse⁶⁸ of all economically important seafood populations by 2048. For the health of our oceans, we need to reduce our dependence on marine animals and prevent further climate change.

Food labelling

A German supermarket chain has introduced a wide-ranging supply-chain policy on animal welfare⁶⁹ that may be the most progressive in the world. Sea creatures caught in less cruel ways that avoid by-catch and protected animals are preferred, and Aldi Süd expects improved living conditions and reduced use of chemicals and antibiotics for farmed fish. In addition, the policy encourages suppliers to engage more broadly and proactively with animal welfare concerns.

In Australia, supermarket chains don't go much beyond compliance with industry and regulatory standards, although all express a commitment to sustainable fishing. As well as consumers taking matters into their own hands, supermarkets need to be forced to properly label all seafood to show details of production methods and environmental costs. The Government and other bodies should also have their dietary advice independently audited to ensure it is evidence based and shows the impact of seafood production. They must also be clear that seafood is not required for our good health and that industrial seafood production is cruel and unsustainable.

⁶¹<http://www.environment.gov.au/node/23104>

⁶²<http://journal.frontiersin.org/article/10.3389/fenvs.2016.00058/full>

⁶³<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3759269/Plastic-fish-caught-Britain-toxic-microbeads-used-shower-gels-toothpastes-beauty-products.html>

⁶⁴<https://www.theguardian.com/business/2016/jan/19/more-plastic-than-fish-in-the-sea-by-2050-warns-ellen-macarthur>

⁶⁵<https://www.theguardian.com/business/2016/jan/19/more-plastic-than-fish-in-the-sea-by-2050-warns-ellen-macarthur>

⁶⁶https://portals.iucn.org/library/sites/library/files/documents/2016-046_o.pdf

⁶⁷https://e360.yale.edu/digest/2016_hottest_year_on_record_wmo_12_degrees_c

⁶⁸<http://news.nationalgeographic.com/news/2006/11/061102-seafood-threat.html>

⁶⁹<http://theconversation.com/german-supermarket-chain-ups-the-ante-on-animal-welfare-37748>

Native Birds

————— NOIMAGE NATIVE_BIRDS

Policy

The AJP wants to increase biodiversity and to promote practices that enable a flourishing native bird population, coexisting with humans throughout Australia.

The AJP recognises the importance that biodiversity plays for birdlife (and all other life) on our planet. Australian ecosystems are vital for the survival of internationally significant migratory species. Many areas of wetland and coast provide key habitats for these migratory species, so loss of biodiversity in Australia has ramifications that extend beyond our borders.

The AJP supports maximal preservation of native bird habitat, including in residential areas.

The AJP doesn't see native birds as a resource. This implies an end to recreational duck and quail shooting.

Related policies

1. **Wildlife and Sustainability**

Key Objectives

1. To immediately ban duck and quail shooting.
2. To reduce human appropriation of native bird habitat.

3. To expand education about the value of native birds and their interactions within ecosystems.
4. To increase support for long term monitoring of the health of native bird populations.
5. To expand research into potential bacterial, viral or any other biological threats to the wellbeing of native bird populations and into the transmission of diseases to humans and other animal species.
6. To work towards a phase out of firewood collection and use other than from plantations or essential removal of sick and potentially dangerous trees.
7. To further support initiatives aimed at identifying and proposing sites for inclusion on the list of Wetlands of International Importance under the Convention on Wetlands (Ramsar, 1971), for the implementation of international treaties that relate to the protection of migratory birds, such as the Japan-Australia Migratory Bird Agreement, the China-Australia Migratory Bird Agreement, and the Republic of Korea-Australia Migratory Bird Agreement.

Background

[under construction]

Platypus



Platypus are among the most iconic of Australia's native animals, despite most of us never having seen one; except on screens (Header image: Klaus, Flickr).

Policy

The indirect threats to platypus are dealt with in the AJP policies on diet and population. In particular, our food policies allow us to halt and reverse our appropriation of wildlife habitat even if Australia's human population increases.

Key Objectives

1. Establish school education programs to explain the threats to platypus and what to do about them.
2. An immediate ban on yabby traps. In particular, this implies a ban on the *sale* (not just the setting) of any type of trap that has the potential to kill platypus.

Background

Platypus inhabit a coastal strip along the east coast of Australia and down into Tasmania. There is also a small introduced population on Kangaroo Island in South Australia.

As Australia's population grows, it is important to ensure that our ecological footprint doesn't reduce that of the platypus. They can only survive in healthy river ecosystems, where they primarily eat insects but will also eat shrimps, snails, worms and even crayfish.

Threats to platypus are both direct and indirect. Direct threats include:

1. Fishing. Platypus will eat the kind of bait that many anglers use, so can be caught, or can drown by being entangled in line.
2. Unsupervised dogs and cats can and do kill platypus.
3. Discarded plastic, particularly rings of the right size to get wrapped around a platypus body can and do kill platypus
4. Platypus can be sucked into unguarded inlets on irrigation pumps and mini-hydroelectric generators.
5. General household, farm and industrial waste can disrupt ecosystems by poisoning animals which platypus eat.

More indirect threats include anything which leads to clearing of river bank vegetation and appropriation of river ecosystems. This can be population sprawl or lifestyle choices that increase habitat appropriation needed to support those lifestyles. For example, during recent decades, all of the rivers feeding into the waters along the Great Barrier Reef have witnessed clearing, mostly to support an expansion of the cattle industry⁷⁰. The same choices that have been disastrous for the reef are also degrading platypus habitat. Hamburger eaters are probably aware that cattle are killed to supply the meat, but may not be aware of their involvement in reef destruction or platypus deaths.

⁷⁰<https://terrastendo.net/2014/04/03/are-cows-killing-the-reef/>

Yabby traps

While people don't hunt platypus, they do hunt yabbies and yabby traps can and do kill platypus. Often called *opera-house* traps, these not only kill platypus, but also rakali⁷¹, a native rodent, and fresh water turtles.



A pair of platypus killed in traps near Canberra, Photo: ACT Environment Directorate.

⁷¹<https://platypus.asn.au/deaths-in-yabby-traps-rakali-and-turtle-images/>

Rodeos



Cowboys throwing calves off their feet with ropes around their necks tells children that cruelty to animals is okay; but it isn't.

Policy

The Animal Justice Party (AJP) is opposed to rodeos and the use of animals for sport or entertainment (see our policy on Animals in Entertainment). Specifically, we do not believe that rodeos can be safely regulated and promote non-violent alternatives free from animal exploitation.

Key Objectives

1. An immediate ban on "rope and tie",
2. a rapid phase out of all rodeos,
3. increase funding for cruelty-free community sporting events in rural Queensland

Background

Rodeos are competitive events in which calves, bullocks, steers and horses are ridden, chased, caught and tied in arenas before a paying audience. Competitions may be timed and scored by judges. The underlying aim is to thrill the crowd, but this means putting animals at risk of physical injury and psychological stress when they cannot possibly consent to participate.

Most events rely on hurting or stressing normally docile animals such as horses and bulls to make them buck. They are reacting to a flank strap around their body

and a human rider on their back as they would react to a predator⁷². When the rider stops and the flank straps are loosened the bucking stops⁷³ but some animals take much longer to calm down. When the animals burn out they are sent to sale yards for slaughter or breeding purposes.

Calf Roping

One of the more brutal events in rodeos is the "rope and tie", where calves (less than 6 months old) are chased by a rider on a horse and lassoed around the neck whilst running away. The method of capture means the calf comes to an abrupt stop, often being yanked in mid-air. The human rider then dismounts their horse, picks up the calf, throws him to the ground on his side, then ties three of the calf's legs together whilst the fourth leg is held taut by the rope attached to the saddle.

A Queensland study published in 2016 found that calves previously in rodeos experienced higher stress responses during a simulated "rope and tie" event⁷⁴. The stress response hormone cortisol, epinephrine (related to psychological stress) and norepinephrine (related to physical stress) had increased significantly. All calves displayed eye roll, which indicates they are overwhelmed by stress. It is obvious that "rope and tie" events are, by their very nature, barbaric and unacceptable.

⁷²https://kb.rspca.org.au/what-are-the-welfare-issues-associated-with-rodeos_710.html

⁷³<http://www.peta.org.au/issues/entertainment/whats-wrong-rodeos/>

⁷⁴<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/27136590>

Lack of regulation

In Queensland the use of animals is governed by the Animal Care and Protection Act 2001 (the Act). The purpose of the Act is to promote the care and use of animals in a manner that is socially acceptable. It prohibits bullfighting, cockfighting and other events in which “someone does, or attempts to, catch, fight or throw [an] animal” but it does not apply to rodeos⁷⁵.

There is no endorsed regulation or code of practice under the Act for governing rodeos. As such, commercial organisations may hold rodeos without permits with varying standards of animal welfare. We believe that rodeos can never be safely regulated yet the current lack of oversight (or prohibition) is indicative of successive governments prioritising rural votes over animals’ lives.

⁷⁵https://kb.rspca.org.au/what-are-the-welfare-issues-associated-with-rodeos_710.html

Sharks



Among the 230,000 tonnes of fish⁷⁶ commercially caught or farmed in Australia annually are some 8,000 tonnes of sharks. Beach netting has a high profile, but most sharks are killed and eaten as *flake* from supermarkets and fish and chip shops.

Policy

Sharks are an essential part of ocean eco-systems and the AJP advocates complete protection for them; from both culling and harvesting. We also call for a ban on the importation of all shark products.

Key Objectives

1. To ban the importation of all shark parts including fins through amending the *Customs (Prohibited Imports) Regulations 1956 (Cth) for imports (Import Regulations)*.
2. To give total protection to sharks in Australian waters.
3. To create school level programs that teach the significance and importance of sharks as well as safe behaviour around sharks.
4. To invest in non-lethal deterrence of sharks at beaches.
5. To expand research into shark populations and movements for the protection of both sharks and humans.
6. To educate people on the mercury risks associated with shark consumption.

Background

Sharks are ancient and wonderful creatures with hundreds of known species found marine environments

around the world. Sharks are apex predators - the top of their food chain - and play an important part in the maintenance of marine ecosystems. While villainised in popular culture and by state governments around Australia, sharks are crucial to our very survival with reports of catastrophic environmental damage in areas without stable shark populations.

Furthermore, lethal shark mitigation programs around the country kill thousands of “target” and “non-target” marine animals. In Queensland alone, shark mitigation programs have killed over 85,000 animals since 1962, including sharks, dolphins, rays, and even whales. These control programs are yet to be proven effective and are primarily driven by fear-mongering from state governments. Non-lethal water safety programs — including the use of dedicated shark spotters and shark monitoring — can protect both humans and sharks alike. In South Africa, the use of drones to monitor shark movement has been effective in the prevention of incidents by keeping beach-goers informed of the presence of sharks.

Not only can we remain safe without having to kill sharks, we can benefit from their presence on our coasts. Sharks help keep our waterways and oceans healthy and vibrant. Like the economic benefits gained from whale watching operators, there is also yet untapped potential in shark tourism based on observation with a commitment to respect and non-interference.

⁷⁶http://data.daff.gov.au/data/warehouse/gaam/afstadgaamd003/2015/AustFishAquacStats_2015_v1.0.0.pdf

Wildlife Rescue

————— NOIMAGE WILDLIFE_RESCUE

Policy

The Animal Justice Party believes that we owe a duty of justice to all animals. For animals who we have daily relationships with, who are domesticated, we owe specific duties. For those animals who are distant to us, and who we rarely or never interact with, we owe a duty to not harm, or to rectify harms we have directly or indirectly caused.

Key Objectives

Background

Human activities such as deforestation for animal agriculture, mining, and development, frequently displace and injure wildlife as a form of collateral damage. We believe that we have a duty to other species who also reside in this country, to both minimise our impacts on their habitat and also to care for wildlife who are the victims of human activities. ##Why do we need Wildlife Rescue? Wildlife are non-human animals who largely live free and independent lives, with little contact with humans other than when they are subject to harms through development, mining, hunting or habitat destruction. Despite the lack of contact between domesticated human animals, and wild non-human animals, the relationships between the two are complex ones. In our tendency towards industrialisation and development, our actions have exposed wildlife to particular vulnerabilities. - Direct and intentional violence under the names of “management”, “sport” or “research” (hunting, fishing, trapping, kidnapping, testing, killing and experimenting) - Habitat loss as humans continue to encroach into the domain of wildlife in ways which destroy habitat and denies them the space, resources and ecosystem viability the need to survive. - Spillover harms: the countless ways in which the built environment interferes with, and imposes risks upon, animals (highways, airplanes, boats, air pollution, ocean acidification). ##Wildlife Rescue Resources Wildlife rescue organisations such as WIRES and BADGAR among others report that has been an increase in all kinds of animals being displaced and injured, requiring rescue, rehabilitation and rehoming. Wildlife are injured, displaced and killed primarily because of deforestation, urban development, fires, inclement and unexpected weather, and a change in habitat through ecological damage caused by human activities. Victoria is home

to over a dozen small wildlife rescue organisations, all staffed by volunteers and funded by the general public: ##Call for Government support for Wildlife Rescue. Wildlife who are rescued by the public are done so based on the good will of the community, and a genuine concern to minimise the harm cause to other species. However, there is scant funding and few resources for such good samaritan behaviour. The need to rescue, rehabilitate, care for and regime wildlife is growing, due to human activities, and it must be addressed at a government level. Furthermore, there is a need for training and support for wildlife rescuers, and education for members of the public. Education regarding rescuing at risk wildlife, but also education about co-existing in the same landscape, as many people just do not know what to do. ### Do we have a duty to wildlife? Wild animals need no passport, or human permission to live life according to their species and individual preferences. Just as we do, other species have ways to live, die, eat, breed, work and play. They have their own likes and dislikes, morality and intelligence. We rarely have anything directly to do with each other. Therefore, we do not have a duty to police the animal world. But when we have – as a species - been responsible for visiting harms upon them, we believe we owe positive duties of justice to wild animals, to redress some of those harms caused through human activities, in a way that respects their interests, preferences and agency. We recommend legislating, streamlining and facilitating wildlife rescue in order to correct the harms we have caused. ### How to enact justice for wildlife Current legislation categorised certain animals into certain groups according to whether we feel they need protection or not. The unfortunate aspect of our legislation regarding animals, is that protections are easily and frequented eroded, in that same legislation. of protection that can be easily eroded. This is why wildlife need our active and specific protection, and why, when they are under threat of human activities, or their homes or health are damaged due to human activities, we must have a policy to ensure their rescue, protection, rehabilitation and rehoming. However, it would be prudent to consider their needs along with our own, rather than try to mop up the damage afterwards. We are less likely to need rescue, if we consider animals’ environment and plan accordingly: - Wildlife bridges (such as in Queensland) - Kangaroo fences - Wombat tunnels - Maintain old growth forests - Others...

Wombats

————— NOIMAGE WOMBATS

Policy

The AJP recognises that wombats and their rights to protection, quality of life and habitat preservation are the responsibility of all Australians. We have a unique role in caring for this iconic marsupial and a duty to the rest of the world to do this.

Wombats as sentient beings should be able to safely roam throughout their habitat; free from human-mediated harm through shooting, poisoning, dog attack, road kill and culling.

Key Objectives

1. To change farming and forestry practices to prevent harm to wombats or their burrows.
2. To ensure only non-lethal methods of wombat management are used.
3. To harmonise laws protecting wombats throughout Australia and to ensure effective enforcement and penalties.
4. To require that all development proposals take into account the presence of wombats with environmental assessment being undertaken by experts. Where infrastructure is at risk from wom-

bats, then wombat friendly fencing and barriers should be used as required.

5. Wombat corridors across roads need to be monitored and research undertaken to find methods to mitigate harm.
6. To provide guidance and support to farmers suffering financial loss due to wombat damage to fences and/or infrastructure.
7. Farmers need to be prevented from using riparian zones as areas of economic activity. This will prevent conflict with wombats and preserve natural riparian processes and wildlife corridors.
8. To ensure that all properties claiming problems with wombats must be inspected by qualified experts. Any wombats harmed or reported to be in danger must be examined by these experts, who can provide advice and education on wombat behaviour and needs.
9. To support the training of community and landholder/landcare groups to observe, monitor and treat wombats suffering from mange. Wombats have a right to be free of this introduced disease.

Background

[under construction]

Zoos

————— NOIMAGE ZOOS

Policy

The AJP only supports zoos, marine parks and aquariums where they function in the service of animals. Functions may include breeding of endangered animals, rescue and rehabilitation and serving as a permanent home for animals where release is impossible. Thus all zoos, marine parks and aquariums will join those already evolving to become even more like conservation parks and sanctuaries. Conservation should be carried out in the native land of the species in their natural environment or as closely to as possible.

Visitors, where allowed, shouldn't adversely impact animals.

Key Objectives

1. To review existing legislation to ensure that all facilities holding animals meet high standards.
2. To steadily phase-out government funding of all facilities holding animals that do not exist in the service of the animals involved.
3. To ensure existing animal residents are appropriately cared for and not negatively impacted by funding phase-out.

4. To invest in independent studies that assess the quality of life of all animals in captivity to ensure breeding programs, even for threatened species, still provide a worthwhile quality of life for the animals involved.
5. To redirect government funds to sanctuaries and conservation parks which exist solely in the service of animals.
6. For existing facilities that do not aim to transition, adequate funds must be provided to ensure relocation of all animals to safe and appropriate homes.
7. To develop programs to educate on the intrinsic value of animals in their natural habitat rather than in captivity.
8. To provide funding into threatened species programs abroad where the animals relocation to Australia will have negative impacts on the animals involved.

Background

[under construction]

Environment

Animal farming is implicated in most of Australia's most pressing environmental problems, from the destruction of the Great Barrier Reef through to species extinction from habitat loss.

Climate Change



The lack of *science-based* climate policies in all Australian political parties, including the Greens, is a national and international scandal. A science-based policy considers the impacts of various activities and sets policies accordingly. It doesn't prioritise a cattle and BBQ culture ahead of a liveable climate.

Policy

The AJP will prioritise urgent action to address climate change. Grazing and associated land clearing is a major cause of climate change. So, in addition to phasing out fossil fuels, we will also have to phase out sheep and cattle farming. This is essential not only to reduce methane emissions, but also to allow reforestation.

Key Objectives

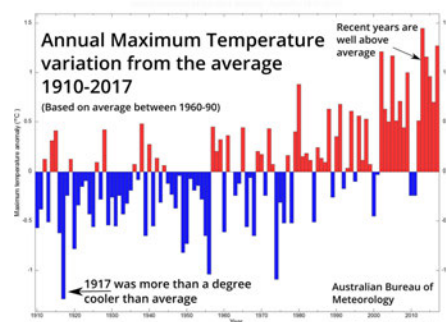
1. To prohibit any fossil fuel expansion and rapidly transform to a carbon-free energy infrastructure.
2. To rapidly transform Australian agriculture to allow reforestation by reducing grazing.
3. Implement a carbon tax on both the fossil fuel and animal agriculture industries.
4. Direct carbon tax income into clean energy solutions, sustainable plant-based food agriculture systems and education.
5. Protect existing forests and marine habitats from further destruction.

Background

A 2010 book, *Merchants of Doubt*,⁷⁷ revealed how a few conservative scientists with energy industry funding, worked to confuse the public about our impact on the

climate. These people had earlier honed their skills doing exactly the same job for the tobacco companies; confusing the public about whether smoking caused lung cancer.

Three decades after satellites⁷⁸ provided data to verify the climate science, we are now seeing the results of our collective failure to act: a hotter and less stable climate. The satellites confirmed that more energy was arriving at the planet than leaving: by accurately comparing the energy hitting the top and bottom of the satellite. If the first number is higher than the second, then, obviously, the planet will heat up: and it is. Here is some data from Australia:



The Animal Justice Party (AJP) accepts the science and is concerned about the impact of a hotter and less stable climate, with more extreme events, on both human and non-human animals.

⁷⁷<https://www.imdb.com/title/tt3675568/>

⁷⁸<https://science.nasa.gov/missions/erbs>

A global emergency

Climate change is a global emergency requiring immediate and substantial action across all sectors of society. We must act before we cross “tipping points” that will make further climate deterioration unstoppable and irreversible. Even when we stop emitting greenhouse gases, warming will continue for some decades⁷⁹.

Threats to every aspect of human life

The Australian Government is fully aware of the disastrous impacts of climate change across Australia⁸⁰. The website just referenced suggests that some 85 percent of the our population living along the coast will be impacted by rising seas, storm surges, flooding, heatwaves, and damage to public infrastructure. More residences will be threatened by larger and more frequent bushfires, causing loss of homes and lives. Our ability to respond to these disasters will be jeopardised, as *“the changing frequency, magnitude and distribution of extreme weather may result in natural disasters occurring in new areas and where emergency management experience is limited. Natural disasters could increasingly occur in close succession, limiting the time available for a community to recover between events.”*

Our agricultural yields will be diminished by natural disasters and sustained drought conditions, putting our food security at risk. Water will become more scarce and freshwater aquifers will become contaminated by seawater. These issues will create social and political problems for future governments as our population struggles to adapt to an unforgiving and unpredictable climate.

Entire ecosystems threatened

Humans and other animals are already suffering from extreme climatic events. A world that becomes 2-4 degrees warmer will kill billions of individual animals with many species going extinct⁸¹. Research suggests that half of all threatened species in Australia are especially vulnerable to climate change. The negative impacts will be on a scale comparable to habitat loss⁸². Shrinking habitat area also increases vulnerability to climate

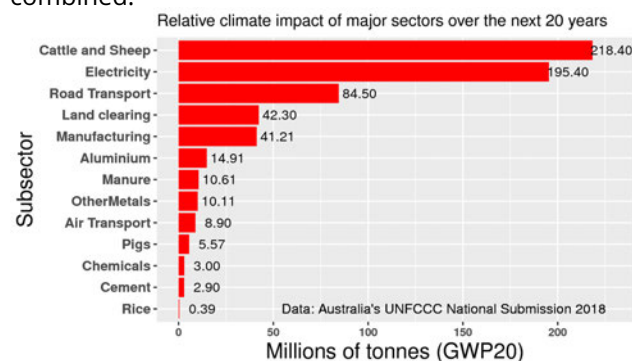
change, exacerbating the problem further. As local conditions change, animals will need to relocate to more suitable habitat or perish. For example, the Mountain Pygmy-possum relies, in both Victoria and NSW, on snowy environments which are under threat from rising temperatures. Their habitat is further degraded and fragmented by encroaching development, including ski resorts.

Animals relying on certain weather conditions, e.g. fire seasons or high moisture levels, are particularly vulnerable as our climate becomes increasingly unpredictable. Amphibians and plants will also require a range of conservation management techniques to help them survive changing climate conditions. Each threatened species will need tailored conservation management plans depending on their unique vulnerabilities. For example, researchers have suggested artificial breeding sites and habitats to climate-proof threatened species. However this is a desperate last resort and is not a viable solution for every threatened species nationwide.

If we allow climate change to continue at the current rate we will most likely see some species become extinct and some ecosystems collapse entirely. Our only hope is to stop it before it is too late.

Climate impacts of food choices

The following chart shows that methane from Australia's 28 million cattle and 70 million sheep will have more impact on the climate in the next 20 years than all of our coal or gas fired electricity power stations combined.



⁷⁹<http://science.sciencemag.org/content/307/5716/1766>

⁸⁰<http://www.environment.gov.au/climate-change/climate-science-data/climate-science/impacts>

⁸¹http://www.ipcc.ch/pdf/assessment-report/ar5/wg2/WGIIAR5-TS_FINAL.pdf

⁸²Pimm SL. Biodiversity: Climate change or habitat loss—which will kill more species? Curr Biol. 2008; 18: 117–119

⁸³<http://science.sciencemag.org/content/326/5953/716>

⁸⁴<https://www.mla.com.au/news-and-events/industry-news/red-meat-industry-can-be-carbon-neutral-by-2030/>

Methane is unusual in being broken down relatively quickly; with 90 percent gone by 20 years. But during that 20 years, a tonne of methane has 105 times⁸³ the impact of a tonne of carbon dioxide. Meat and Livestock Australia claim⁸⁴ they will make red meat carbon neutral. Attempts to reduce cattle methane go back at least to the 1980s⁸⁵ and have failed spectacularly to have any significant impacts, so continued claims are disingenuous at best.

Red meat's impacts aren't just due to methane from cattle and sheep, but also to the carbon released by land clearing. To make red meat carbon neutral requires, for starters, reforestation of existing cleared pasture land. That can't happen with existing cattle and sheep populations.

Furthermore, given the high impact of methane and the long life of carbon dioxide, we need to do better than "carbon-neutral" if we are to have any hope in

slowing and reversing catastrophic climate change. We must first stop and reverse land clearing. Land clearing rates in Queensland alone have been enough to completely undo the federal government's gains in fighting greenhouse gas emissions⁸⁶. As 93 percent of this clearing⁸⁷ is to create pasture for animal agriculture, the solution seems remarkably clear.

The AJP is the only political party with a science-based climate policy. No other political party has policies which demonstrate a clear understanding of the rapid impact of methane and land clearing on the global climate.

Animal agriculture currently accounts for about one percent of employment. Horticulture already employs more people⁸⁸ than the chicken, pig and dairy industries combined. There is ample room for new products and jobs growth in novel plant-based foods.

⁸⁵<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/7082625>

⁸⁶<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2017/oct/06/queensland-tree-clearing-wipes-out-federal-emissions-gains>

⁸⁷<https://publications.qld.gov.au/dataset/4dbd1416-52b7-467a-8410-17a70ddf16bf/resource/60a7902d-7a9d-49a7-90b1-a54686fbcef5/download/slatsreport2015-16.pdf>

⁸⁸<http://www.agriculture.gov.au/abares/Documents/agricultural-commodities-report-march-2017.pdf>

Energy



Household electricity is 1/16 of our energy usage. We need more than panels on roofs to decarbonise our energy infrastructure.

Policy

The AJP Climate Change policy supports any clean energy source because the consequences to all animals of further climate destabilisation will be dire (see climate change fact sheet). But not all clean energy sources are equal in their animal impacts. Further research is required into viable and sustainable options.

Key Objectives

1. Including the impact on animals and the environment in the selection criteria for all energy sources.
2. Rapidly transition to a carbon free energy infrastructure, using known clean technologies in the most ecologically and animal friendly mix. Rapidly in this case means 15 to 20 years.
3. Investing in development of new clean animal friendly energy technologies.
4. Implementing a climate tax on both the fossil fuels and animal agriculture industries, using the principle that the polluter pays.

For more information refer to our Climate Change policy.

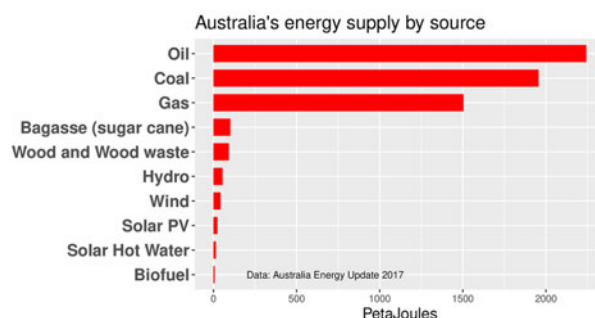
Background

AJP is concerned about the reliance on fossil fuel energy sources in Australia. These have been scientifically

proven to contribute to climate change. While we recognise that humans rely on energy in their daily lives, we seek a solution that is not only sustainable but also considers the lives of other animals.

Energy production is a major source of greenhouse gases. Alarmingly, Australia has the highest per capita emissions in the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), with 25 tonnes of greenhouse gases being emitted per person every year. Australia has committed to reducing emissions by 5 percent from 2000 levels by 2020 in line with The Paris Agreement (2015).

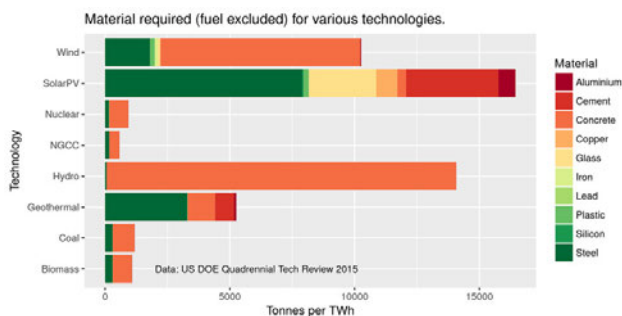
Electrical energy generates a disproportionate amount of greenhouse gases but all fossil fuels have to be eliminated. The following chart puts our energy sources into context.



In 2017, despite our commitment to the Paris Agreement, emissions increased⁸⁹ by 0.8 per cent, the third consecutive year with an increase in emissions. It is clear that our current energy systems and strategies

⁸⁹<https://www.climatecouncil.org.au/emissions-data-released-2017>

are failing. While “clean energy” and “renewables” are often put forward as the solution, these terms are somewhat misleading as all energy harvesting technologies generate pollutants during their life-cycles. Renewables, for example, require considerably⁹⁰ more mining than nuclear.



The mining requirements of renewables increase still further if mining for battery or other storage technologies is included.

Understanding the full consequences of energy production systems is necessary for meeting demand while also safeguarding the ecological systems on which we depend⁹¹. Significant losses of global biodiversity and ecosystem services are already occurring as a direct result of increasing climate change. We need systems which simultaneously minimise impacts on animals at a species and individual level, while reducing greenhouse gas emissions rapidly. It's a tough problem.

Fossil Fuels

AJP recognises that fossil fuels, including coal and natural gas, cannot and will not be part of any final clean energy solution to climate change. Roughly speaking, if a technology isn't 95 percent cleaner than coal, then it can't be part of a long term solution. Natural gas is neither sustainable nor clean enough. It makes no sense to transition to natural gas only to have to replace it with something better in the near future.

Biofuels

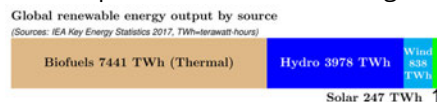
Compared with oil based fuels, biofuels reduce transport emissions or carbon dioxide by approximately 74 percent⁹². This is not clean enough as a long term solution. Furthermore, biofuels require large amounts of

what should be wildlife habitat. As it is a core AJP goal to maximise land available for wildlife by minimising our own land use, biofuels do not present as a viable option.

Renewables and objectivity

While it is enticing to think that natural elements may be the way of the future, this is not a straightforward solution. While sun and wind are renewable, the resources used to harvest them are not. These include land, battery chemicals, steel, concrete and a range of rare-earth metals. All have an impact on animals and need serious consideration.

The AJP's focus on animals means we cannot ignore any adverse impacts on them. Most renewable energy comes from either flooding river valleys or the burning of forests or crops, as illustrated in the figure.



Wind power is also not benign, with US wind farms killing between 600,000 and 880,000 bats a year in addition to half a million birds. Solar has the least adverse consequences of the renewable options currently available.

Globally, hydroelectric reservoirs have flooded 34 million hectares of land to date. Despite this devastation, over 3,700 large (>1MW) dams are planned or under construction, many in the Amazon basin, South East Asia and Africa. If we are to protect the environment and its inhabitants, hydroelectricity cannot be expanded further in Australia.

Forests are now labelled as “renewable” energy, stripping them of protection. The largest coal fired power plant in the UK, for example, has been converted to run on wood pellets. That single power station burns through almost 6.5 million tonnes per year. At best this requires⁹³ the continuous logging of some 6,800 square kilometers of forest. At present this wood is coming mainly from forests in the US and Canada via very large tankers burning very dirty oil. The transportation fuel emission costs aren't even close to being clean enough to make this renewable energy part of a clean energy future.

⁹⁰<https://acola.org.au/wp/esp/>

⁹¹<https://academic.oup.com/bioscience/article/65/3/290/236920>

⁹²https://www.afdc.energy.gov/vehicles/diesels_emissions.html

⁹³<https://mitpress.mit.edu/books/power-density>

It is clear that solving our energy problem without increasing impacts on wildlife and habitat will take careful planning and clear thinking.

Animal agriculture.

We also have to solve *all* the problems associated with energy consumption, including clean food. AJP has concerns that current comparisons of energy sources focus solely on carbon emissions alone and do not take into account the impact different energy sources have on animals such as land clearing. For instance, carbon data typically excludes emissions from the Kyoto Protocol category Land Use, Land use Change and Forestry. The largest single source of land use emissions is land clearing for the expansion of grazing, which not only contributes to emissions, but also impacts biodiversity, water quality and climate change. Animal agriculture

is one of the largest uses of energy in Australia. The simplest and most cost effective method of addressing all of these issues, including the reduction of energy is to transition away from animal agriculture towards a plant-based economy and food solution (see our *Farming* policy).

Consumer demand

Education is required around the importance of everyday consumers reducing energy consumption. This will not only be achieved through direct conscious household energy consumption, but will require targeting the largest consumers of energy - non-ferrous metals (mostly aluminium), food processing, chemical production and mining. Solutions here connect with other AJP policies, such as limiting urban sprawl (see our *Population* policy).

Environment



Any comprehensive policy on the environment starts with a policy on food; because food choices determine the scale of our environmental impact more than any others.

Policy

The AJP believes humans can thrive while simultaneously reducing our adverse impacts on the natural environment, particularly wildlife.

The human activity which has the most adverse impacts on the most animals is food production. Changing the way we eat can dramatically reduce our impact on animals. The AJP advocacy for a plant based diet is therefore a key plank in our environment policy. No organisation or Government can have an effective environment policy without food policy being central.

In addition to food choices, we measure all resource choices by their impacts on animals. In general terms, this implies we favour recyclable and upcycled materials over those which are consumed and thrown away. If two materials are interchangeable, we favour the one with the lowest land footprint, all other things being equal.

AJP favours sources of clean energy that minimise habitat destruction or other harmful impacts on animals and the environment.

These principles drive policy decisions in all of the following policies with an environmental component.

1. Human diet
2. Climate change
3. Natural gas
4. Marine animals

Key Objectives

1. To implement our dietary and education policies which will pave the way to an animal production phase out, thus allowing reforestation on those lands where it's feasible.
2. To back comprehensive research into all forms of clean energy, both for electricity and transportation.
3. To transform to a clean energy infrastructure.

Background

The area of Australia is about 770 million hectares and our cities, towns and suburbs occupy less than 3 million of those hectares. Our biggest impact on Australia is via our food choices with our sheep and cattle grazing over 400 million hectares of native vegetation and a further 70 million hectares of improved pasture; meaning land which has been cleared, planted and fertilised.

But we know that Australia is full of wide open spaces, globally the human impact of the animals we farm is even more extreme. Wildlife is in retreat everywhere. It has been estimated that the weight of all the people on the planet is now 11 times bigger⁹⁴ than the weight of all the planet's wild mammals; with the weight of our 1.4 billion cattle being 16 times bigger than the weight of those wild animals. The AJP understands that our environmental impact on the planet is largely a function of food choices.

The mainstream environment movement's neglect of the impact of food choices on the environment renders them fundamentally, if unwittingly, anti-wildlife.

⁹⁴http://www.vaclavsmil.com/wp-content/uploads/PDR37-4.Smil_pg5613-636.pdf

Great Barrier Reef



One of the planet's greatest natural wonders is dying on our watch, with climate change and cattle being the biggest culprits.

Policy

For thirty years the biggest factor⁹⁵ affecting the Great Barrier Reef has been the increased sediment and fertiliser carried into reef waters by all the rivers flowing eastwards in far north Queensland. This sediment and fertiliser comes from pasture on land cleared for cattle.

Recent coral bleaching, exacerbated by climate change, is compounding the threats to the reef.

The AJP focus on plant based eating works like a swiss army knife in that it works on multiple environmental issues at the same time; in this case climate change and the health of the Great Barrier Reef.

As in other areas, AJP policies target major causes rather than easy targets of minor importance.

Related policies:

1. **Marine animals**
2. **Climate change**

Key Objectives

1. To phase out the cattle industry, starting with bans on further land clearing and the fertilisation of pasture; prioritising those regions closest to the most vulnerable parts of the reef.
2. To ban any new coal and natural gas operations; this is part of our general climate change policy.

3. Similarly, the phasing out of all fossil fuel production and export would see a reduction in bulk carriers passing through the reef.

4. To set clear enforceable regulations on any other industry likely to adversely affect the reef; for example sugar, which is also a sediment and fertiliser culprit.

Background

Australia's magnificent Great Barrier Reef is so large it can be seen from space. It is home to at least 1,500 fish species, 215 bird species, and countless dolphins, whales, snakes, turtles, and - of course - living corals. The millions of fascinating marine animals and beautiful corals that live within this marine park make the Great Barrier Reef a true environmental and social treasure, deserving of its listing as both a Natural Wonder and World Heritage Area. The Great Barrier Reef is also a huge asset to the Australian economy (valued at Billion⁹⁶): more than two million tourists visit the marine park each year, contributing -6 billion to the national economy and supporting an estimated 67,000 full-time jobs.

Unfortunately, however, over-fishing, pollution, and climate change are putting the entire Great Barrier Reef at risk, jeopardising our enjoyment of it, and, most importantly, the lives that depend on it. Commercial and recreational fishing⁹⁷, which reduces the proportion of

⁹⁵<https://terrastendo.net/2014/04/03/are-cows-killing-the-reef/>

⁹⁶<http://www.theage.com.au/environment/-gwyzyj.html>

⁹⁷<https://www.coralcoe.org.au/media-releases/fishing-impacts-on-the-great-barrier-reef>

predators to prey, are significantly affecting the reef's ecosystem while *pollutants*,⁹⁸ chiefly from cattle grazing and sugar cane growing⁹⁹, are running into the reef's catchments, damaging habitats and stunting and killing corals.

Corals require warm water to thrive, but are highly sensitive to too much heat. But greenhouse gas emissions and global temperatures¹⁰⁰ have continued to rise, and now the basic ocean temperature is so high that temperature spikes can pose a critical risk to the reef. Scientists say they have no doubt that climate change is responsible for bleaching¹⁰¹ of the reef. The push to expand Australia's already massive coal output with the huge Adani mine¹⁰² shows an ignorant disregard for both the reef and decades of climate science.

The head of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority confirmed in 2017 that recent back-to-back bleachings may have killed off¹⁰³ as much as half the reef. Dr Reichelt said that we have already passed safe levels of global warming for the reef, and that the best science suggests global warming needs to be limited to 1.5 degrees: there has already been a 0.7 degree warming over the past century. Certainly major structural and social changes¹⁰⁴ are required to ensure the continuing existence of the Great Barrier Reef, including phasing out the cattle industry. On an individual level, the effects of pollutants, fishing and climate change on the reef's marine life can all be reduced through moving to a plant-based diet.

⁹⁸<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/commentisfree/2016/jun/09/how-the-great-barrier-reef-got-polluted-from-farms-and-fossil-fuels-to-filthy-propaganda>

⁹⁹<https://terrastendo.net/2014/04/03/are-cows-killing-the-reef/>

¹⁰⁰<https://www.nytimes.com/2017/03/15/science/great-barrier-reef-coral-climate-change-dieoff.html>

¹⁰¹<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2017-06-20/world-heritage-coral-reefs-risk-coral-bleaching-unesco-report/8634502>

¹⁰²<http://www.smh.com.au/business/mining-and-resources/the-coal-war-inside-the-fight-against-adanis-plans-to-build-australias-biggest-coal-mine-20170213-gubn21.html>

¹⁰³<http://www.news.com.au/technology/environment/climate-change/half-the-great-barrier-reef-may-have-died-in-last-two-years/news-story/d1a7e2974597f40d04700d7313c9f713>

¹⁰⁴<http://theconversation.com/the-great-barrier-reefs-safety-net-is-becoming-more-complex-but-less-effective-75053>

Land Clearing



We call it “deforestation” when it happens overseas, but “land clearing” here. In Australia, the biggest driver is and has always been meat production. The brutal substitution of pasture and livestock for wildlife and habitat. (Image: Bill Laurance)

Policy

The AJP considers Australia’s land clearing rates to be both an environmental and animal welfare disaster. We propose to reverse land clearing by addressing the underlying causes.

Animal agriculture is overwhelmingly the largest cause of land clearing across Australia. For example, in Queensland, 93% of cleared land is used for pasture. Other significant drivers (within the remaining 7 per cent) are urban development, forestry and mining.

Environmentally, land clearing destroys viable habitat for vulnerable and at-risk animal populations. Clearing also increases soil salinity and is a primary cause of greenhouse gas emissions. Soil erosion from land clearing detrimentally affects waterways and oceans; threatening the Great Barrier Reef especially.

The AJP recognises land clearing not just as a biodiversity and climate change issue, but also as an animal rights and welfare issue. Every year millions of animals die from the destruction of habitat. Animals are injured and die during tree felling with many more dying afterwards from exposure; dehydration; starvation; increased predation; and traffic. Even if they don’t die, animals who are displaced will end up pushed into an unsuitable or reduced area.

Key Objectives

1. An immediate cessation of all land clearing associated with animal agriculture.
2. To introduce habitat protection as a fundamental and consistent planning principle in all regions and sectors.
3. Amend state-based animal welfare legislation to include an enforceable duty of care towards animals on a landholder’s property during all land use changes.
4. Labelling on products containing palm oil so that consumers can avoid them.

Background

We have deforested over 100 million hectares¹⁰⁵ of Australia since white arrival. The major causes of this deforestation are clear from the statistics on land use¹⁰⁶. We crop around 30 million hectares while our towns and cities occupy only 3 million.

The major cause of deforestation historically and currently is animal agriculture; cattle and sheep. There are over 70 million hectares of *improved pasture*. This is land that has been cleared and is fertilised and planted with feed and fodder crops. In addition these animals graze 344 million hectares of native vegetation. All up, animal agriculture occupies over half of the 770 million hectares of mainland Australia.

¹⁰⁵ <https://soe.environment.gov.au/>

¹⁰⁶ http://www.agriculture.gov.au/abares/aclump/Documents/Land_use_in_Australia_at_a_glance_2006.pdf

Despite the fact that Australia's cattle population has been falling since 2013, land clearing for cattle not only continues but is currently increasing because of the removal of deforestation restrictions in Queensland. This allowed almost 400,000 hectares to be cleared in 2015-16¹⁰⁷.

Australia used to have a sheep population of about 170 million in 1990 and a cattle population of some 26 million. The sheep population is now about 75 million, which should allow massive reforestation. But the imperative to clear land remains because some sections of the sheep and cattle industry *mine* land rather than

farm it. After land has been cleared, it is very productive for a few years. After this brief period, it is cheaper to clear new land and move on than it is to restore productivity to the now clapped out country.

But it isn't just Australian forests that are impacted by our cattle. When they are exported to Indonesia, they are typically placed in feedlots for some months. One standard feed is the *palm kernel meal* left over from the palm kernel oil extraction process. This is otherwise a waste product, so there is a synergy between rainforest destruction for palm oil and the feedlotting of cattle using a byproduct of that process.

¹⁰⁷<https://www.qld.gov.au/environment/land/vegetation/mapping/slats-reports>

Waste



More land is appropriated from wildlife for food production than any other purpose. So using more land than we need because of high food waste levels has direct impacts on animals.

Policy

The AJP aims to eliminate food waste and environmental pollution while reducing energy and material use. We support recycling and a “circular economy” where these have positive impacts. We recognise that the environmental problems we face ultimately also require a reduction in consumption and an end to the consumption of animals (see our policies on Population and Farming)

Key Objectives

1. To invest in further development of biodegradable products and work toward the banning of harmful plastics (see our Marine Animals policy).
2. To encourage recycling and composting programs in businesses and public institutions and educate the public about waste issues.
3. To stop the dumping of clothing and edible food by retailers and to ensure these products are sent to people in need.
4. To invest in innovative enterprises which are reducing and reusing waste.
5. To oppose “planned obsolescence” and barriers to repairing or upgrading consumer goods.

Background

Not all waste is created equal. There are considerable differences in the impact on wildlife and eco-systems

of various kinds of waste. These differences allow us to rank waste issues and focus on the most critical ones.

Waste can be broadly considered in the following categories: land, water, energy and materials.

Land

Animal Justice Party (AJP) aims to minimise our human footprint to allow the recovery of wildlife populations. High levels of food waste mean we need to appropriate more land for food production than we would otherwise need. It is also particularly tragic when an animal is raised in pain on a factory farm, trucked and slaughtered in fear, only to end up in the bin. Australians are reported to throw out million¹⁰⁸ worth of fresh meat each year.

Food and other waste are intimately connected and show some of the hidden complexity in the trade-offs and dilemmas associated with tackling waste.

For some foods, extra or more sophisticated packaging can reduce food waste at the expense of increasing packaging waste. Recycling packaging can reduce packaging waste, but at the expense of the extra energy required to do the recycling. In a real sense the refrigerator is the ultimate illustration of waste trade-offs. It reduces food waste by allowing us to keep foods longer at the expense of consuming material in the form of steel, aluminium, plastic, and copper to name a few. The fridge is also a fairly heavy user of energy in the average household.

¹⁰⁸http://www.tai.org.au/sites/default/files/PB%206%20What%20a%20waste%20final_7.pdf

Water

Of the 8 million tonnes¹⁰⁹ of plastic waste entering the ocean each year, Australia contributes approximately 130,000 tonnes. Single use plastics are wreaking havoc with marine life; plastic bags, balloons, straws and drink bottles to name a few, frequently find their way into the ocean. This not only causes injury, entanglement and death to sea animals, but contaminates marine life, with approximately 700 species¹¹⁰ found to have ingested plastic. While single use plastic may currently be an everyday convenience for many, these items are simply not necessary in today's society. We believe it is important to educate the public about the impact of their choices and on sustainable alternatives while also encouraging enterprises that are actively reducing their waste. Solutions to all damaging plastics require further research and development, but it is clear that we must rely less on plastic in our future.

Abandoned fishing nets are also a significant part of the plastic pollution problem in the oceans, which travel great distances, trapping and killing large numbers of marine animals¹¹¹. Forty-six per cent of the 79,000 tonne Great Pacific Garbage Patch, for example, is comprised of fishing nets¹¹² alone (not including other fishing gear). Along with the devastating environmental impacts created by harvesting the oceans of fish (see our Marine Animals fact sheet), we believe that addressing the plastic pollution problem must involve stressing the importance of focusing on fishing as a primary solution.

Energy

While many forms of waste, like food, plastics, paper and old phones are obvious, wasted energy is invisible. A modern mobile phone embodies as much energy¹¹³ as it took to produce a motor vehicle in the 1980s. And while cars are typically kept and maintained for well over a decade, many people upgrade their phones without a second thought. They might rage against users of disposable cutlery, while their 5th phone in a decade has produced a huge amount of invisible waste. This invisible energy waste can have a large impact; particularly when the energy comes from burning fossil fuels. Invisible waste produced by damming rivers or cutting

and burning forests or crops for biofuel, can also be significant.

But does it matter about using energy if it is clean energy? Sweden consumes almost 40 percent more electricity per person than Australia but produces merely 1/4 of the carbon dioxide per person. We need to understand that generalisations may need to be revised, and the public educated, as our information improves and as technology changes.

Materials

Materials are components of the natural world that mined or grown and are then processed. Australia's mining industries use tens of thousands of hectares of land, but with highly variable impacts. This is much lower than the hundreds of millions of hectares affected by animal agriculture and the 25 million affected by cropping.

Some mining technologies are virtually invisible¹¹⁴. Others involve total devastation, but over a small area. Something like the McArthur River mine in the Northern Territory is smaller than Sydney airport. In contrast to these small intense impacts, our food industries appropriate hundreds of millions of hectares. But there is a wide variation in the kinds of land use between mining and food, and their impacts on wildlife. Measuring the impact of wasted materials is complex but wasted food likely has more impact on wildlife and habitat than other forms of waste; simply because of the massive land use changes required to produce food

Recycling issues

As the recycling industry has grown it is evident that it is just like any other large industry, particularly when handling toxic material. Adelaide has more recycling 9 per person than anywhere else in Australia and has experienced a string of recycling plant fires over the past decade, all spreading toxic smoke over a large area; Recycling is not always benign.

Recycling may be different from other industries, but it still has costs and benefits which need to be measured and considered when decisions are made. Recycling some goods may be hazardous and costly

¹⁰⁹ <https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/stemming-the-plastic-tide-10-rivers-contribute-most-of-the-plastic-in-the-oceans/>

¹¹⁰ <https://ocean.si.edu/conservation/pollution/marine-plastics>

¹¹¹ <https://www.worldoceanfest.org/new-blog/2017/6/9/the-impact-of-abandoned-ocean-fishing-nets-on-marine-life>

¹¹² <https://www.nature.com/articles/s41598-018-22939-w>

¹¹³ <http://pubs.rsc.org/en/content/articlehtml/2014/cs/c3cs60235d>

¹¹⁴ <https://www.csiro.au/en/Research/MRF/Areas/Resourceful-magazine/Issue-07/Invisible-mining>

in both time, energy, water, strong solvents or other materials.

Australia has been exporting its recycling to developing countries and has had an “out of sight, out of mind” attitude to the extreme hazards associated with recycling some goods. While we support recycling in our policy and objectives we understand that it isn’t an end in itself but a means to an end; namely to reduce our adverse impacts on the planet.

The circular usage conundrum

In 2018 a committee of the Australian Senate called for the Government to “... *prioritise the establishment of a circular economy in which materials are used, collected, recovered, and re-used, including within Australia.*”

But consider timber, a traditional, popular, renewable material used for building, furniture, and energy. Is its use and disposal considered “circular”? Forests are habitat and their harvesting impacts many animal species. The forestry industry has also always been one of the most dangerous for humans. In essence it is a *sustainably destructive* industry.

Other grown materials, such as hemp, biofuels, wool or cotton, are also complex industries needing careful analysis. Simply being *natural* isn’t enough. Wool, for example, involves substantial suffering, regardless of how sustainable it is. Some materials are sustainably destructive and wool is sustainably cruel. Circularity makes the most sense with elements, particularly metals and their alloys. But even here there are tradeoffs and compromises. What if an element is more energetically expensive to recycle than to mine? Recycling in that case may only be sensible if clean (meaning near zero CO₂ emissions) is abundant.

Some materials may be easily recycled, but undesirable for toxicity and safety reasons, such as batteries. Lead acid batteries are readily recycled but also a dangerous weapon in the wrong hands. Unfortunately the nature of battery use makes control impossible.

In summary, we aim to minimise our eco-footprint while providing a good standard of living for everyone on the planet. When a circular economy of some material helps, then we should support it, but when it doesn’t then we shouldn’t. To assume that circularity is always good is to prejudge complex technical issues when we should be measuring impacts and making intelligent choices.

Wildlife And Sustainability

————— NOIMAGE WILDLIFE_AND_SUSTAINABILITY

Policy

The AJP aims to maximise wildlife habitat by minimising the land appropriated by people, while ensuring a high standard of health and wellbeing.

Key Objectives

1. To support land management and acquisition to protect and conserve wildlife habitat.
2. To acquire more wildlife habitat through rewilding of land once used by animal agriculture (see our [Climate Change policy](#)).
3. To review the policies for licensing, and the operational practices of, wildlife caring and rehabilitation groups and individuals.
4. To encourage increased growth in and support for wildlife-based tourism in Australia.
5. To impose severe penalties on drivers who intentionally hit wildlife, and require that drivers who

accidentally hit wildlife stop and help and/or obtain assistance for injured or orphaned animals.

6. To add wildlife sensitivity components to driver education and training programs.
7. To invest in research and development of technologies to reduce road kill.
8. To transition to 100 percent plantation forestry and ensure that costs of fencing out wildlife are factored into the cost of timber production. Current licensing practices that allow the wholesale destruction of wildlife must cease.
9. The AJP believes that education, and particularly education aimed towards young people, is essential to undo the negative ideas and ignorance fostered by decades of inappropriate, short-sighted and unethical government policies.

Background

[under construction]

Humans

The AJP has policies not just on the traditional areas of animal cruelty, but on the areas which concern all species, like climate change, and energy. Work in slaughterhouses is also a concern from both a human and animal perspective.

Cultured Meat



A world with meat, eggs and dairy products produced without harming animals may not be too far away.

Policy

Meat cultured from individual animal cells has the potential to replace meat produced from killing animals. But if cultured meat is identical to normal meat, it will cause the same health problems. If it is different, it may be better or worse - it is too early to say.

The AJP will judge such meat replacements on a case by case basis as the evidence emerges. Engineered meats have considerable promise to both reduce animal production and all of the associated environmental issues.

Key Objectives

1. To ask the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) to report on the state and potential for engineered and cultured meat, dairy and egg products.

Background

Clean meat means meat produced without animals. It can be either *cultured meat*, meaning meat produced from individual animal cells, or meat engineered from 100 percent plant components.

Engineered meat

Former Stanford biochemistry professor Patrick Brown started *Impossible Foods*¹¹⁵ in 2011. His goal was to produce products made from plants that could compete head on with meat and win over meat lovers; producing things that taste like meat, except perhaps better.

Brown attracted the attention of former Microsoft boss turned philanthropist Bill Gates and an army of brilliant scientists who used cutting edge research to find out how to make plant proteins give the taste and mouth-feel of meat proteins. We all know how different bread is from wheat; the method to achieve this remarkable transformation has been known for thousands of years, but the chemistry is complex. Making plants taste like meat involves combining many types of plants and some complex science, but the proof is in the eating and reports are that the *Impossible Foods* burger is pretty bloody close¹¹⁶ to the real thing; it even "bleeds" a little.

One of the tricks they use is soy leghemoglobin, this is a plant heme molecule analogous to the heme molecule in meat. This molecule is found naturally in the roots of soybean plants but Impossible Foods produce it using genetically engineered yeast. This is environmentally far better than harvesting the large amount of soybeans they would otherwise need.

The burger is just the first in a long set of meat mimicks that *Impossible Foods* aims to produce. These foods have the potential to create mainstream meat replace-

¹¹⁵<https://www.impossiblefoods.com/>

¹¹⁶<http://www.npr.org/sections/thesalt/2016/06/21/482322571/silicon-valley-s-bloody-plant-burger-smells-tastes-and-sizzles-like-meat>

ments for people with little or no concern for animals. They will also be far less environmentally destructive than the animal production systems they replace.

Bill Gates has also invested in *Beyond Meat*, another company who has developed various plant based burgers based on either Soy or Pea protein. Like *Impossible Foods*, *Beyond Meat* aims to produce products that closely mimic the look, taste and cooking sensation of meat. Their burgers change colour and even “bleed” like meat through the use of beet colouring.

Cultured meat

The alternative approach is to start with an individual animal cell and grow this in a laboratory into a collection of animal muscle cells. The challenges in this case mainly revolve around gene programming and supplying the appropriate raw materials and conditions to encourage the development of the desired tastes and textures. This work is far less advanced and carries the intrinsic risk of reproducing meat’s adverse health impacts along with the taste.

Decent Work



Killing animals has a high price, on both ends of the knife.

Policy

The emerging literature on the psychological effects of slaughterhouse work on humans is substantive¹¹⁷. We already know that farming animals for food is harmful to animals, the environment and human health. Now we are seeing that the animal industries may cause wider harms. The desensitisation to suffering is causally linked to a higher propensity for committing violent crimes, particularly domestic abuse, which is a great concern to Australians. An industry that institutionalises and normalises violence makes an ethical system within it impossible to apply. Therefore, we believe the majority of the industry is beyond reform and detrimental to those who work within and pass through it. Due to the multiple harms caused by the slaughterhouse industry, we recommend closing it down and transitioning workers to kinder, meaningful employment.

Key Objectives

1. To establish a Federal Government inquiry into the connection between slaughterhouse work and family and social violence
2. To ensure that workers compensation schemes cater for the unique physical and psychological risks faced by slaughterhouse workers

3. To conduct regular psychological examinations of workers for signs of stress and psychological harm that could raise the risk of family or social violence
4. To provide assistance to enable animal farmers and slaughterhouse workers to transition to plant based industries.

Background

Slaughterhouses are neither healthy nor safe. Compared to the general Australian population, meatworkers have an increased risk of death from all causes and a high prevalence of self-reported poor psychological and physical health. Slaughterhouses are inherently hazardous work-places that pose tangible physical risks and psychological harms to workers¹¹⁸.

"Animals come here to die, to be eviscerated, to be decapitated... these are violent and difficult things to watch. It is essentially very dehumanising work" (Bill Haw, CEO of National Farms, USA¹¹⁹). One of the inherent problems may be that employees must violate the innate tendency to refrain from killing and dismembering someone. By repeatedly violating one's natural preference not to harm and kill, workers are highly likely to experience adverse psychological effects. Slaughterhouse workers suffer from anxiety, panic, depression, increased paranoia, a sense of disintegration, and drug

¹¹⁷Gullone, Eleonora (2012), "Animal Cruelty, Antisocial Behaviour, and Aggression: More than a Link" Palgrave Macmillan. Flynn, Clifton P. (2012) Understanding Animal Abuse: A Sociological Analysis" New York: Lantern Books. Eisnitz, Gail A. (2009) Slaughterhouse: The Shocking Story of Greed, Neglect, And Inhumane Treatment"

¹¹⁸<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4841092/pdf/QHW-11-30266.pdf>

¹¹⁹<https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/meat/slaughter/slaughterhouse.html>

and alcohol abuse. When people are required to work in an environment where they habitually enact relationships of domination and exploitation, where they must desensitise themselves to the suffering of animals, it becomes easier to reproduce these outside of their work¹²⁰. The “Sinclair Effect,” is the propensity for those who routinely slaughter animals, to become perpetrators of violent crimes. Killing animals may be a first step to further forms of violence against humans¹²¹.

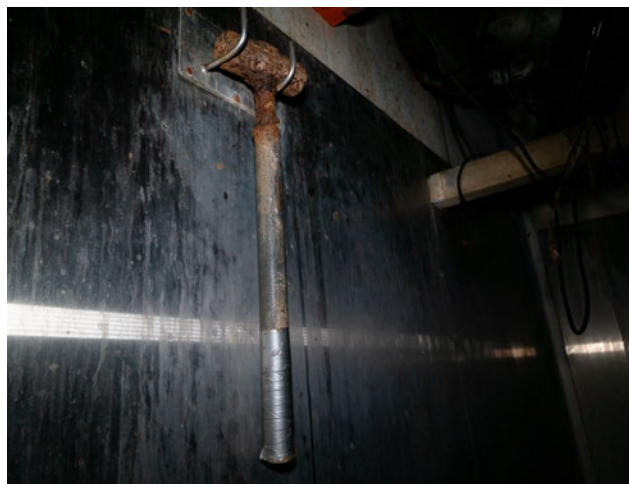
Research shows that slaughterhouse workers demonstrate signs and symptoms of Perpetration-Induced Traumatic Stress (PITS), sometimes through the psychological dissociation called “doubling”¹²² also experienced by Nazi doctors. PITS is a form of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) that results from situations that would be traumatic if someone were a victim, but where the person in question has been a perpetrator. “Doubling” is a situation whereupon the worker identifies with the animals, feeling that they are worthy of consideration and care. However, in order to keep killing and dismembering them, the workers must dissociate from this kind-heartedness, resulting in a chronic suppression of empathy.

“Down in the blood pit they say that the smell of blood makes you aggressive. And it does. You get an attitude that if that hog kicks at me, I’m going to get even. You’re already going to kill the hog, but that’s not enough. It has to suffer. When you get a live one you think, oh good I’m going to beat this sucker. . . And then it gets to a point where you’re at a daydream stage. Where you can think about everything else and still do your job. You become emotionally dead.”¹²³

Aside from the brutality to the animals in the slaughterhouse, there is an added risk that this pathology will spill over into their domestic lives, making them more likely to commit violent crimes, particularly against those who are similarly defenceless, such as women and children.

At a time when interpersonal and social violence is a grave concern, we recognise that there are significant risks in employing men (overwhelmingly) to kill and dismember as a matter of routine. There is evidence

that the psychological harm experienced by men who are paid to do this loathsome work, spills over into the rest of their lives¹²⁴. We are also aware that automated killing is being trialled in some slaughterhouses. While we do not want our friends, relatives or partners to work in these jobs, neither do we want to live in a society where slaughterhouses are fully automated. This would make animal suffering even easier to put out of mind. Instead, we will continue to advocate for the closing of all slaughterhouses.



A hammer in an Australian slaughterhouse is used as a backup killing method

Work in slaughterhouses lends itself to worker exploitation. In Germany the meat industry¹²⁵ is under the spotlight for low wages and conditions built on the back of cheap migrant labour. Slaughterhouses in Australia¹²⁶ the UK¹²⁷, and Canada¹²⁸ have chronic shortages of workers prepared to kill animals. It’s one thing to buy meat in plastic packaging from supermarkets, but quite another to be in the front line doing the killing.

Another type of work that can seriously affect humans as well as animals is keeping animals used for research purposes. The animals are normally killed at the conclusion of the research which affects both them and animal house workers who may have formed bonds with them.

¹²⁰ <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/the-playing-field/201005/is-your-brain-slaughter>

¹²¹ <https://yaleglobalhealthreview.com/2016/01/25/a-call-to-action-psychological-harm-in-slaughterhouse-workers/>

¹²² <https://repositories.lib.utexas.edu/handle/2152/38193>

¹²³ <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/the-playing-field/201005/is-your-brain-slaughter>

¹²⁴ http://www.animalstudies.msu.edu/Slaughterhouses_and_Increased_Crime_Rates.pdf

¹²⁵ <https://www.ft.com/content/obbb1754-6812-11e3-8ada-00144feabdc0>

¹²⁶ <https://www.theland.com.au/story/5420550/abattoir-jobs-galore-but-new-workers-are-few/>

¹²⁷ <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2018/nov/19/christmas-crisis-kill-dinner-work-abattoir-industry-psychological-physical-damage>

¹²⁸ <http://www.nwawjc.org/news/2016/2/4/slaughterhouse-work-is-so-horrible-canada-cant-find-anyone-to-do-it>

Domestic Violence



Women often stay in an abusive relationship because an animal is used as a hostage. Threats and violence to animals can be a very effective control strategy when refuges don't provide for them.

Policy

The Animal Justice Party opposes violence in all forms. Violence towards adults, children or animals is never acceptable. We will advocate for holistic approaches to overcome the barriers for victims of domestic violence seeking refuge and will promote coordinated inter-agency approaches to give victims the justice they deserve. Meaningful change will require us to abolish the property status of animals and re-categorise companion animals as dependents (see AJP's Companion Animal Policy).

Key Objectives

1. Increase the coverage of domestic and family violence refuges, especially those that also shelter dependent children and animals, and provide secure funding.
2. Strengthen legislation relating to animal cruelty and ensure consistent and adequate sentencing and rehabilitation for perpetrators of violence (see our Animal Law policy).
3. Facilitate information sharing, collaboration and cross-training between police, other government departments, veterinarians and the Independent Animal Protection Agency to stamp out all forms of violence (see our Animal Law policy).

4. Create a single national register for convicted perpetrators of domestic and family violence and animal cruelty to forewarn potential victims and convey societal values of non-violence.
5. Reform the family law system to consider the animal's wellbeing during divorce proceedings and make it easier for victims to amend animal registration and microchipping details without alerting the perpetrator as to their whereabouts.
6. Introduce compulsory reporting mechanisms for veterinarians who reasonably suspect animal abuse or domestic and family violence to be occurring.
7. Include age-appropriate lessons for school children to identify and respond to animal abuse and domestic and family violence situations. (see our education policy)

Background

Domestic and family violence is a pattern of behaviour intending to cause fear or harm in order to control another member of the household. Controlling behaviours may include physical violence, sexual abuse, verbal abuse, social abuse, financial abuse, psychological abuse, damage to property and harm to loved ones. It is estimated that companion animals are present in 70% of domestic violence cases in Australia¹²⁹, with substantial evidence indicating a strong connection be-

¹²⁹ <https://www.abc.net.au/triplej/programs/hack/link-between-domestic-violence-and-pets/10263328>

¹³⁰ <http://www.abc.net.au/news/-%20-%20what-%20happens-%20to-%20pets-%20in-%20domestic-%20violence-%20situations/>

¹³¹ https://www.researchgate.net/publication/237067781_Volant_A_Johnson_J_Gullone_E_Coleman_G_2008_The_relationship_between_family_violence_and_animal_abuse_Journal_of_Interpersonal_Violence_23_1277-1295

tween animal abuse and domestic violence¹³⁰. Studies indicate that in up to 71% of domestic violence situations¹³¹ women with companion animals reported threatened or actual animal abuse. Perpetrators of domestic and family violence often threaten, hurt or kill family companion animals as a means of coercing and controlling female partners¹³². Children in violent homes may also witness and commit animal abuse themselves, possibly causing prolonged psychological problems and continuing a cycle of animal abuse¹³³. Experts recommend early clinical interventions by professionals to mitigate the potential of this occurring. It also needs to be acknowledged that there are long-lasting impacts on animals¹³⁴ who have both witnessed or experienced domestic violence, with traumatic effects evident months after the abuse, and well beyond their human companions having left the violent home.

Staying to protect their companion animals

Up to 48% of women¹³⁵ remain in violent homes if no provisions can be made for their companion animals for fear of their safety. This is exacerbated by the fact that most refuges or crisis accommodation options will not house companion animals. Research by veterinary pathologist Dr Lydia Tong found that when leaving with their animals, 92% of women were turned away from refuges, 70% were turned away from government rentals and 60% from private rentals. In 33% of cases¹³⁶, family and friends also turned them away. The Animal Justice Party seeks to remove these barriers for victims seeking refuge. Many women are also unaware of animal accommodation services for people fleeing domestic violence situations and are often not comfortable confiding in their vets or seeking help from animal shelters¹³⁷. Others are not willing to separate from their companion animals due to the emotional stability, security and companionships they provide for them and their children¹³⁸. Australia needs options for victims of domestic violence to seek refuge with their companion animals.

National registries and strengthening legislation

Much of the Australian community and law enforcement agents welcome registries¹³⁹, such as a sex offender registry, as a means of not only providing access to information that could help individuals to avoid harm, but to also make public the values and expectations of society. A national domestic violence and animal abuse registry may play several roles, such as aiding animal shelters in running background checks on potential adopters, for individuals to make informed choices about potential new connections and as a form of public education, starting or continuing public discussion around what behaviours are unacceptable in our society. It must, however, be remembered that registries may not deter offenders¹⁴⁰, and so we must avoid creating a false sense of security. Specific to animal abuse registries, there are several words of caution¹⁴¹, including their limited reach and utilisation, their limited scope and inability to provide true protection, their inability to remove all access to companion animals, the extreme likelihood of their inability to reduce animal abuse, and the expense of implementation and maintenance. As such, registries are useful when taken as part of a suite of approaches to tackling domestic and family violence. It is also important to create and implement stronger legislation against violence, including appropriate jail time and prevention of owning or caring for animals for offenders, while also including appropriate counselling¹⁴². When taken together, these strategies may provide better outcomes for human and non-human victims of domestic violence animals.

Wider reform; changing family law

Animals are also notably absent¹⁴³ in government and community sector policies aimed at tackling domestic and family violence. The family law courts also need reform as "current legislation treats family [companions] and other animals as property, to be divided as part

¹³² <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/10437797.2003.10779134>

¹³³ https://kb.rspca.org.au/is-there-a-link-between-domestic-violence-and-animal-abuse_695.html

¹³⁴ <https://ro.uow.edu.au/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?referer=https://www.google.com/&httpsredir=1&article=1335&context=asj>

¹³⁵ https://groups.psychology.org.au/Assets/Files/domestic_violence_and_animal_abuse.pdf

¹³⁶ <https://www.theaustralian.com.au/2014/10/22/barns-its-time-to-rethink-sex-offender-registers/5832176>

¹³⁷ <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1111/j.1751-0813.2011.00843.x>

¹³⁸ https://kb.rspca.org.au/is-there-a-link-between-domestic-violence-and-animal-abuse_695.html

¹³⁹ <https://theconversation.com/sex-offender-registers-dont-mean-we-can-assume-children-are-safe-39188>

¹⁴⁰ <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2014-10-22/barns-its-time-to-rethink-sex-offender-registers/5832176>

¹⁴¹ <https://www.aspc.org/about-us/aspc-policy-and-position-statements/position-statement-animal-abuser-registries>

¹⁴² https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/animalia/wp/2016/09/13/animal-abusers-are-being-registered-like-sex-offenders-in-these-jurisdictions/?noredirect=on&utm_term=.5d17278d2422

¹⁴³ <https://ro.uow.edu.au/asj/vol7/iss1/2/>

of a just and equitable property settlement between the parties ...”¹⁴⁴. This means that matters of animals’ well-being are not considered in decisions made about their future. These limitations can lead to companion animals remaining in the custody (or “ownership”) of a violent perpetrator, placing them at risk of further

harm. The AJP advocates for the custody of animals to be awarded to the party or parties who will best look after their wellbeing. We believe that this will help victims leave violent homes together with their loved ones.

¹⁴⁴<https://www.abc.net.au/triplej/programs/hack/link-between-domestic-violence-and-pets/10263328>

Economy

NOIMAGE ECONOMY

Policy

The Animal Justice Party believes that treating animals as resources is not only morally wrong but reduces human wellbeing. We believe compassion and fairness must be core economic principles. In the major political parties, these concepts run a distant second to productivity and growth.

Humans who are unhappy in their life have lower productivity¹⁴⁵. They also see less opportunities for economic advancement and are conservative in their economic behaviour¹⁴⁶. It's also true that positive human engagement with animals of any species makes humans feel good¹⁴⁷ about themselves and more positive toward others. This is important in building an emotionally stronger, wiser, respectful, compassionate and healthier community.

Key Objectives

1. To end the provision of subsidies, grants and taxation benefits to industries which exploit animals. We would prioritise these changes to begin with the following industries: live animal export, commercial and non-commercial wildlife slaughter and intensive animal agriculture.
2. To provide tax deductible status for not-for-profit animal welfare organisations.

3. To introduce a tax on animal products commensurate with their adverse environmental and health impacts.
4. To establish a national sovereign wealth fund, like the *Future Fund* that provides funding to allow scientists and farmers to shift from using animals to innovative new technologies and plant based products.
5. To ensure that Australians have the choice to invest their savings in banking and superannuation products that promote animal welfare.
6. To support wildlife tourism, already a huge contributor to our GDP, while closing down industries and activities which harm wildlife.
7. To increase the availability of assistance animals within our health and welfare system, while ensuring that these relationships are of mutual benefit.
8. To ensure that workers can use carers leave to care for companion animals.
9. To encourage appropriate workplaces to allow animals at work.
10. To fund innovative projects from volunteer organisations that encourage animal wellbeing.

Background

[under construction]

¹⁴⁵ <https://www.theguardian.com/science/2010/jul/11/happy-workers-are-more-productive>

¹⁴⁶ <http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/soc/economics/staff/eproto/workingpapers/happinessproductivity.pdf>

¹⁴⁷ <http://animalsandhappiness.weebly.com/health-benefits-oxytocin.html>

Education



Humane education starts with food choices that don't need to be confined, transported, killed and butchered.

Policy

The AJP supports quality, accessible and holistic education. Many aspects of our education system implicitly mold student values, starting at the canteen and extending into the classroom. The AJP will formulate programs across all areas to foster kindness and non-violence towards all beings.

The AJP believes that the exploitation of animals is not only unnecessary but detrimental to education. Education is a right that should be respected, but it should not come at the expense of the suffering of other species, particularly given that there are always alternatives.

Key Objectives

1. To implement programs that increase and support positive interactions between students and wildlife, rescued farmed and companion animals such as volunteer days and placements at shelters and sanctuaries.
2. To place more focus on critical thinking and experiential learning, such as through charity and community service work, reducing the focus on standardised testing and providing teachers with the autonomy to lesson plan according to the needs of their students.
3. To teach students nutritional science and convey the discoveries of recent years about the welfare, nutritional and environmental benefits of plant based eating.
4. To ensure that all students have a good understanding of environmental science, including climate science.
5. To facilitate plant based foods in all school, university and TAFE cafeterias, accompanied by research into impacts on student health and behaviour.
6. To explain the realities of modern intensive and extensive farming systems and remove education programs provided by industry organisations. Education must be free of financial conflicts of interest.
7. To increase awareness of the links between domestic violence and animal cruelty and to teach the social and emotional skills required to promote non-violence. Access to helplines and information must be readily available.
8. To teach students how politics, law and ethics operate to guide our society including an operational understanding of our voting systems.
9. To replace animal dissection with virtual or physical model alternatives.

Background

[under construction]

Employment

————— **NOIMAGE** EMPLOYMENT

Policy

The AJP aims to maximise gainful employment while phasing out jobs that rely on exploitation of animals as commodities.

subsidised programs where necessary and traineeships.

2. Promote growth in sustainable animal friendly industries across the board such as eco-tourism, plant-based food products and technologies, and upcycled and recycled design.

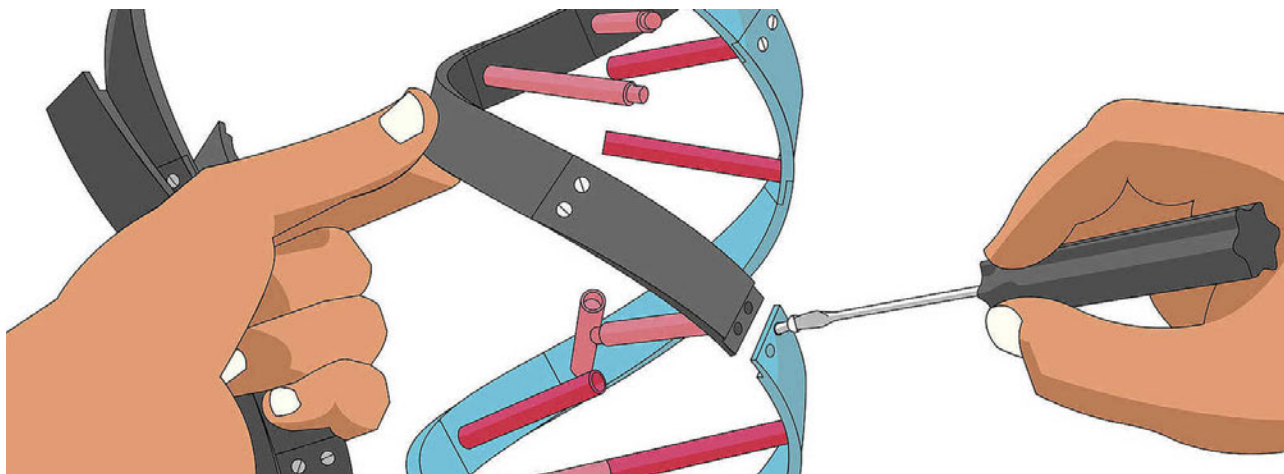
Key Objectives

1. Offer educational opportunities for workers currently employed by animal industries through

Background

[under construction]

Genetic Manipulation



Changes in the genetic makeup of plants and animals is usually a matter of chance, but can be improved upon with suitable wisdom, skill and care.

Policy

GM has the potential to bring both benefit and harm. The Animal Justice Party (AJP) will therefore create policy regarding genetic manipulation on a case-by-case basis, drawing on the value base of kindness, equality, rationality and non-violence to assess the merits of each case. We seek regulation that prevents misuse and promotes social advancements. We will not hesitate to condemn GM when used in ways that harm animals. We will support GM where it removes existing forms of animal exploitation, improves human health, creates nutritious and sustainable crops, or helps protect our environment.

Key Objectives

None at present.

Background

Purposeful genetic manipulation (purposeful-GM) faces heavy fear-based opposition. However, it is grounded in modern genetic biology and, when handled responsibly, has potential for advancing animal, human and environmental interests.

In the 1960s, scientists believed that our genes were perfect little pearls carefully honed by evolution over

millions of years. Mutations were thought to occur in a gene perhaps *"once in a hundred thousand generations"* (p.19¹⁴⁸).

That view was wrong. Mutations are now known to be natural and occur frequently. Each of our 25,000 genes will be mutated during our lifetime in over a billion cells in our body¹⁴⁹. These mutations do not necessarily get passed on genetically, they accumulate while we are alive. Mutations are not limited to our body cells but also occur in our eggs and sperm which give rise to the next generation. Each of us is born with 40-80 genetic mutations¹⁵⁰ that occur in neither of our parents.

These new (de-novo) mutations occur entirely by virtue of daily random damage to genetic material, and are largely neutral in their impact. Sometimes, one or more might give someone an easier path to fitness or flexibility than their parents. Other times, they result in a susceptibility to minor ailments. Rarely, but catastrophically, they will result in a truly horrifying disease. But nature is blind and totally unconcerned if the result is a young body riddled with tumours, brittle bones, malfunctioning organs.

The driving forces behind genetic changes are the normal processes of metabolism... simply being alive. And this isn't just a process within animals like ourselves. It's everywhere. We share genetic material with plants, microbes and other animals.

¹⁴⁸ <http://books.google.com.au/books?id=dQkAAAAAMBAJ>

¹⁴⁹ <http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/0815344546>

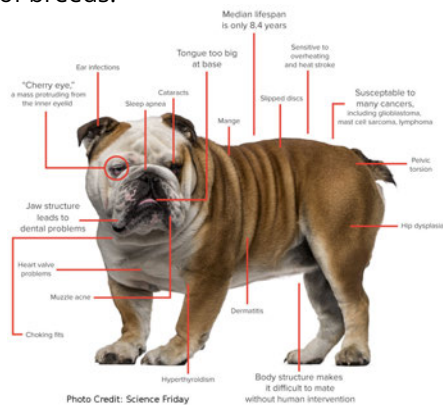
¹⁵⁰ <https://genomebiology.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s13059-016-1110-1>

The difference between the normal random changes and purposeful-GM is that purposeful-GM can be planned and thus more likely beneficial.

Selective breeding, a “natural” disaster

Purposeful-GM techniques come in two general classes. The first, selective breeding, is regarded as natural and acceptable by those opposed to genetic manipulation. Selective breeding is the frequently brutal deliberate mating of particular plants, animals – and even people – to achieve some particular goal. It's been used for everything from beans to beer and from beagles to bovines. The results of these so-called *natural* methods of purposeful-GM have been almost universally devastating for animals.

The list of pedigree pet problems is almost as long as the list of breeds.



For example, half¹⁵¹ of Cavalier King Charles Spaniels will develop a serious heart condition by age five. In bulldogs and persian cats, it's breathing problems.

Every year, billions of chickens endure pain throughout most of their short life because they've been deliberately bred for rapid muscle growth and their skeletal systems can't keep up. Other species who are farmed have similar tales to tell. But among the worst abusers of these so-called natural breeding methods have been pet breeders.

Selective breeding may be natural in some sense, but it has been a disaster for animals.

Scientific GM

Until recently, more modern scientific genetic manipulation methods have been beyond the capacity of farmers and pet breeders. We don't yet know what they will do with them.

But some scientists are using the new techniques in ways which benefit animals. Insulin for diabetics used to be derived from pig pancreases, but these days it is produced using GM bacteria.

Many vegans take B12 produced by GM bacteria. Many non-vegans effectively get this same B12, but via sheep and cattle fed supplements by Australian farmers. They do this because many soils in Australia are cobalt deficient. Vegans just cut out the middle man.

As a last example, the heme molecule used by *Impossible Foods* to give its burgers their meaty flavour is also produced using GM bacteria. In contrast, farming cattle for beef may be viewed by some as 'natural', but it is both a climate disaster and a potent cause of bowel cancer.

Irrelevant dichotomies: natural Vs artificial

The assumption that some technologies are somehow *natural* and therefore good and beyond criticism while others are somehow *unnatural* and intrinsically immoral is what makes a significant sector of the environmental movement both irrational and, by their actions, cruel.

The dichotomy between natural and artificial is morally insignificant. What matters is the *purpose* and *outcome* of the manipulation. This is no different from any other technology.

New technology, new questions

CRISPR¹⁵² is the latest in a series of genetic manipulation tools. Many previous tools resemble a shotgun in the crudity of their operation. CRISPR enables letter perfect changes to DNA at a price and simplicity that will make it rapidly displace alternative technologies. But, as with all other technologies, it can be used for good or evil.

Some of the early CRISPR projects involve attempts to save the world's banana crop from a soil fungus that is

¹⁵¹<https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/although-purebred-dogs-can-be-best-in-show-are-they-worst-in-health/>

¹⁵²<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/CRISPR>

¹⁵³<https://www.sciencelink.com/fungal-disease-could-wipe-bananas-out-in-5-to-10-years-say-scientists>

¹⁵⁴<https://musculardystrophynews.com/crispr-cas9-treatment-dmd/>

otherwise tipped to remove bananas from our diet in coming decades¹⁵³. Almost all bananas are genetically identical which makes them particularly prone to disease. Duchenne muscular dystrophy¹⁵⁴ is caused by a small genetic defect which CRISPR researchers hope to correct.



CRISPR works by co-opting a tool used by bacteria for billions of years to protect them from viruses. The tool allows *precise* recognition and alteration of genetic material. Previous techniques were extraordinarily hit and miss.

The technical ease doesn't relieve us of the ethical obligation to think about the impacts of our manipulation, and it's the goal of the manipulations which should be the focus of regulators and the concerned public.

CRISPR is a fact. We can't undo the science, we can only try to regulate it. The regulation of simple and cheap tools is particularly challenging but absolutely essential. CRISPR will allow all manner of people to become involved; not just nice people with noble objectives. Anyone can get DIY kits¹⁵⁵ on-line for US.

¹⁵⁵<http://www.the-odin.com/diy-crispr-kit/>

Gun Control

————— NOIMAGE GUN_CONTROL

Policy

The AJP supports the 1996 National Firearms Agreement (NFA). Gun violence has no place in Australia and yet the proliferation of firearms puts innocent lives in danger.

AJP will strengthen the NFA by removing access to guns for the purpose of the lethal control of animals or the recreational shooting of animals.

AJP supports legislation and policy initiatives that seek to reduce gun violence and the trauma, injury and death that guns cause to both humans and other animals.

Key Objectives

1. Run public education campaigns highlighting the social and environmental harm caused by gun use.
2. Oppose the use of guns for the lethal control of animals (see our Introduced Animals policy).
3. Prohibit recreational shooting and hunting in National Parks and State Reserves.
4. Maintain the NFA's effective gun laws and firearm import restrictions; and Impose further restrictions to prevent guns being used for violent crime and in domestic violence situations.

Background

(Under Construction)

Health



Caring relationships with animals improve people's mental health. Cruelty towards them does not.

Policy

The AJP supports a universal publicly funded health-care system.

We want to broaden the focus in health policy from just treating disease to also improving health. We believe the biggest gains in health, longevity and economy are to be gained by improving people's knowledge and access to healthy diet and exercise opportunities.

Our key dietary goal is to shift Australia's food focus towards healthy plant-based wholefoods. This will greatly reduce the rates of many illnesses.

Related policies:

1. [Human diet and animals](#)
2. [Education](#)
3. [Mental Health](#)

Key Objectives

1. To expand opportunities for human-animal interaction in ways that benefit both.
2. To expand funding for sanctuaries and wildlife rescue and rehabilitation projects.
3. To fund mental health programs to service the needs of those suffering trauma from their work in animal rescue, rehabilitation or advocacy.
4. To rapidly phase out violent industries exploiting animals which negatively impact mental health.

Background

The AJP wants to broaden Australia's focus in health policy from treating disease to improving health, which includes promoting exercise. Our goal is to shift Australia's food focus towards healthy plant-based diets free of all products derived from animals, which will greatly reduce the rates of many health problems in our population. The AJP also wants to ensure funding of all health services is provided at the state level where accountability is easier to enforce.

The benefits of plant food

According to scientific authorities writing in the Medical Journal of Australia¹⁵⁶, a well-balanced plant based diet is the healthiest of all. It is suitable for all ages and can significantly lower health risks such as heart disease, strokes, cancer, diabetes, obesity and high cholesterol. Vegans tend to eat seven or more pieces of fruit and vegetables per day, meaning they have a 33% reduced risk of premature death¹⁵⁷ compared with people who eat less than one portion.



¹⁵⁶<https://www.mja.com.au/journal/2013/199/4/plant-based-diet-good-us-and-planet>

¹⁵⁷<https://www.vegansociety.com/go-vegan/health>

A recent Oxford University study¹⁵⁸ has found that by 2050, widespread adoption of plant-based diets would avert 8.1 million premature human deaths every year. This would be due to factors including the reduction of red and processed meat, which the World Health Organisation (WHO) has classified as carcinogenic¹⁵⁹ to humans.

Antibiotics

The increase in infections which are resistant to many antibiotics is a global problem. In factory farms, diseases due to the stress of overcrowding and lack of vitamin D can result in high levels of antibiotic use. In some countries animals are fed a steady diet of antibiotics¹⁶⁰ as a form of growth promotion. Those antibiotics pose a direct threat to the environment when they run off into water. Resistant bacteria can develop in animals and can cross over to cause infections in people. In a major 2014 WHO report¹⁶¹ into antimicrobial resistance, WHO warns¹⁶² that superbug strains of bacteria that can lead to serious illness, including tuberculosis, meningitis, salmonella and *staphylococcus aureus* ("golden staph"), have already emerged around the world.

According to Emeritus Professor *Mary Barton*¹⁶³ of the University of South Australia, while the situation is better in Australia than many other parts of the world, we need to do more¹⁶⁴. Disturbingly, there's still no national system to monitor how many antibiotics are given to farmed animals in Australia. The push to increase growth rates and productivity in modern animal farming is only making the threat more serious. It is clear that subsidies to intensive animal industries, including the red and processed meat industries, must be stopped.

In terms of animal products, there is a lack of accurate information in Australia about the welfare of the animals (from birth to slaughter) that would enable consumers to make informed purchasing decisions – about their health too. The absence of nationally agreed definitions or standards for product labelling allows the

often arbitrary use of terms such as "free range", "organic", "biodynamic" etc to continue. Currently, the only animal product that is regularly labelled according to its production system is carton eggs, but there is much debate about the definitions.

Labelling

The AJP supports a rigorous, nationally consistent approach to the labelling of non-factory farmed animal products. Consumers are becoming increasingly discerning towards the ethical and health issues surrounding food production. According to the RSPCA¹⁶⁵ for example, the sale of eggs labelled as "free range" has increased from around 5% in 1997 to 23% in 2007 and 40% in 2012. Given that there are significant differences in the welfare of animals exposed to different production methods, labelling has the potential to provide consumers with consistent and reliable information on the welfare of the animals concerned. Labelling would also allow people who wish to avoid all animal food for health or compassionate reasons to do so without error.

Animal experimentation

More than six million animals¹⁶⁶ are used annually in research and teaching in Australia and New Zealand, many for our "health benefit". Many of those animals are subjected to some degree of pain and/or stress during the experimental procedure or as a result of the environment in which they are kept. AJP argues that much of this testing is unnecessary, given that there are alternatives to cruel testing, animals and humans are so different, and that so many health problems could be alleviated by the switch to a healthy plant-based diet.

Position on Vaccination

The AJP recognises the basic scientific fact that vaccinations have been among the most successful of all

¹⁵⁸http://www.oxfordmartin.ox.ac.uk/news/201603_Plant_based_diets

¹⁵⁹<https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/nutritionsource/2015/11/03/report-says-eating-processed-meat-is-carcinogenic-understanding-the-findings/>

¹⁶⁰<http://ecowatch.com/2012/antibiotic-misuse-livestock/>

¹⁶¹<https://www.newscientist.com/article/dn25498-antibiotic-resistant-superbugs-now-a-global-epidemic/>

¹⁶²<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2014-05-01/antibiotic-resistance-poses-threat-to-global-health-who-report/5422080>

¹⁶³<http://www.animalsaustralia.org/features/global-superbug-threat.php>

¹⁶⁴<http://www.animalsaustralia.org/features/global-superbug-threat.php>

¹⁶⁵http://kb.rspca.org.au/labelling-of-animal-welfare-friendly-food-products_223.html

¹⁶⁶http://www.animalsaustralia.org/issues/animal_experimentation.php

modern medical interventions. Together with antibiotics and modern plumbing they have reduced human suffering on a vast scale. For example, between 1900 and 1980 in the US, the number of deaths from infectious diseases¹⁶⁷ dropped from around 800 per 100,000 people each year, to just 36. Some people do have severe reactions to vaccines and the AJP supports calls for a national compensation to deal with these rare events.

Many current vaccines either contain animal products or are tested on animals and the AJP would work to encourage vaccine developers to move to animal free production and testing methods as fast as possible. Innovative methods to remove animals from the process should make for a better cheaper product.

The AJP would prefer education and positive incentives to the current coercive regime of no-jab no-play.

¹⁶⁷<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/10963605>

Human Diet And Animals

————— NOIMAGE HUMAN_DIET_AND_ANIMALS

A plant based diet is best for animals, humans and the planet. We need to educate the next generation on this.

Policy

The AJP advocates a plant based diet free of all products derived from animals.

The current demand for animal products in Australia needs to shift to lessen the impacts on individual animals, human health and the planet; education and promotional action needs to occur to bring about a higher uptake of a plant based diet. Education can help people understand the true cost of an animal based diet and strive for individual change.

The AJP believes that many people already find modern animal agriculture unacceptable; and our proposals for reform are covered in our [farming](#) policy.

However, understanding a problem, knowing the solution, and effecting that solution are three separate activities. Our education policy focuses on teaching people to prepare delicious and healthy meals using only plant based ingredients.

Related policies:

1. [Education](#)
2. [Health](#)
3. [Farming](#)

Key Objectives

1. To expand school kitchen garden programs.
2. To introduce plant based cooking and food preparation lessons from an early age in schools.
3. To introduce plant based nutrition lessons from an early age in schools.

Background

A global switch to diets that rely less on meat and more on fruit and vegetables could prevent 5 million prema-

ture deaths every year by 2050. A full switch to plant based eating would prevent 8 million premature deaths annually and avoid 130 million years of life lost each year¹⁶⁸.

The Oxford Martin School researchers also found that plant based eating would reduce greenhouse gas emissions by two thirds, and lead to healthcare-related savings estimated at between -31 trillion (US) avoided climate damages of some .5 trillion (US). The healthcare savings were calculated over the biggest 4 causes of premature death and disease: heart disease, stroke, cancer and diabetes. Meat consumption has a role in all of these.

Human health

Certainly a well-planned plant-based diet has considerable health benefits. But much of the research comparing vegan, vegetarian and meat based diets don't restrict their attention to "well-planned" diet. They simply survey normal people. Not all plant based eaters are health conscious, many do it for the animals. Nevertheless, the health benefits are still clear. The tendency of vegans to eat more fibre and seven or more pieces of fruit and vegetables per day, means they have a 33% reduced risk of premature death¹⁶⁹ compared with people who eat less than one portion. Vegans¹⁷⁰ are leaner¹⁷¹, have lower BMIs and have lower percentages of body fat¹⁷² compared to those in other dietary groups. They're less likely to get weight-related diseases such as diabetes, have a reduced risk of heart disease¹⁷³ and have lower cholesterol, blood pressure¹⁷⁴ and rates of certain [cancers] (<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/23836264>). Many people turning vegan feel health benefits straight away: increased energy, clearer skin, reduced allergy symptoms, stronger hair and nails, and relief from the pain of migraines and PMS. In addition, a feeling of mental wellbeing often comes from knowing one's

¹⁶⁸ http://www.oxfordmartin.ox.ac.uk/news/201603_Plant_based_diets

¹⁶⁹ <http://jech.bmj.com/content/early/2014/03/03/jech-2013-203500>

¹⁷⁰ <https://www.vegansociety.com/go-vegan/health>

¹⁷¹ <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/26164391>

¹⁷² <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/26138004>

¹⁷³ <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/23364007>

¹⁷⁴ http://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/jasmijn-de-boo/food-health_b_7671190.html

lifestyle is alleviating animal suffering and limiting environmental damage.

Animals

Over 60 billion land animals and over a trillion marine animals are killed globally per year, merely to satisfy human taste preferences. Factory farms¹⁷⁵, where most food animals are raised, are the number one cause of animal cruelty in the world today.

Factory farmed animals are raised intensively in artificial environments and prevented from demonstrating their natural behaviours. Their bodies are altered and sometimes mutilated to make them fit into the production system: many will endure painful surgical procedures such as tooth cutting, tail docking, beak trimming and castration, all without pain relief. These practices are justified by producers to prevent animals from injuring themselves and others through behaviours brought on by stress, boredom and trauma – such as feather-pecking, biting other animals or chewing on their cage. Factory farming treats animals as if they were machines designed only to produce, and earn profit overall – their quality of life is deemed to be of no value.

While factory farming treats animals as commodities, scientists are almost daily publishing research results confirming that animals are more like us than previously thought. They not only suffer in ways very like us, but they can mourn for loved ones¹⁷⁶ and plan for the future¹⁷⁷.

The environment

Finally, while the world's population has doubled since the 1960s, world meat production has quadrupled¹⁷⁸ and is still growing. This trend will continue to contribute to global warming, widespread pollution, deforestation, land degradation, water scarcity and species extinction. Animal agriculture is damaging to the environment and inefficient because animals consume more food than they produce. More animals mean

more crops are needed to feed them, but the planet cannot cope¹⁷⁹ with the increase in meat-eating — especially when there will be between 2-4 billion¹⁸⁰ more human mouths to feed by 2050.

In Australia, sheep and cattle graze over¹⁸¹ 340 million hectares of native vegetation in addition to over 70 million hectares of “improved pasture”. We crop 25 million hectares with farmed animals consuming around 13 million tonnes of feed grains annually compared to just 2 million tonnes used as food for our 24 million people. The adverse environmental impacts of our animals even extend offshore by virtue of the 3/4 of a million tonnes¹⁸² of soybean meal imported as animal feed each year. The total protein content of this imported feed is higher than the total amount of animal protein consumed by people in Australia.

The millions of “food” animals also contribute to climate change: University of Tasmania Professor of Environmental Sustainability, Barry Brook, estimates that raising animals for human consumption is responsible for half of Australia's short-term global warming¹⁸³ gases — even more than our coal fired power stations.

Making a difference

That said, it doesn't seem likely that mainstream political parties will be promoting a meat tax¹⁸⁴ (to help offset meat's financial burden on the environment and public health system) any time soon. Until the Animal Justice Party has more elected representatives, compassion and rationality will not prevail in our national food policies.

As an interim measure, education can help people understand the true cost to the planet, animals and people of a meat based diet and strive for change. All of us have the power to adopt and advocate for a plant-based diet but health care professionals specifically should be educated to promote them. Plant based nutrition and food preparation lessons should also be introduced from an early age in schools, and the school kitchen garden program expanded.

¹⁷⁵<http://www.makeitpossible.com/>

¹⁷⁶<https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/when-animals-mourn/>

¹⁷⁷<http://www.sciencemag.org/news/2017/07/ravens-humans-and-apes-can-plan-future>

¹⁷⁸<http://www.fao.org/docrep/016/ap106e/ap106e.pdf>

¹⁷⁹<https://esa.un.org/unpd/wpp/>

¹⁸⁰http://esa.un.org/unpd/wpp/unpp/panel_population.htm

¹⁸¹http://www.agriculture.gov.au/abares/aclump/documents/Land_use_in_Australia_at_a_glance_2006.pdf

¹⁸²<http://www.sfmca.com.au/items/1093/FGP%20Report%20October%202016.pdf>

¹⁸³<http://www.animalsaustralia.org/features/lets-talk-about-climate-change.php>

¹⁸⁴<https://theconversation.com/heres-an-idea-to-chew-over-gst-reform-should-add-meat-to-the-tax-buffet-45160>

International Affairs

————— **NOIMAGE** INTERNATIONAL_AFFAIRS

Policy

The AJP wants Australia to be a good global citizen who can lead by example in transforming from a country heavily dependent on animal exploitation to one driven by empathy and compassion.

Related policies:

1. **Live animal exports**

Key Objectives

1. To review all international treaties to determine any agreements which adversely effect animals.
2. To prohibit the import and export of animal trophies.
3. To strengthen policing of illegal wildlife trade bans.

Background

[under construction]

Mental Health



Caring relationships with animals improve people's mental health. Cruelty towards them does not.

Policy

AJP will work with existing mental health experts to integrate animal care and interaction with existing programs.

The AJP believes that just as diet and exercise are crucial for physical wellbeing, caring relationships are crucial for mental wellbeing. In particular, having an animal friend is a great way to keep well adjusted. The challenge is to make the relationship beneficial for both parties.

Wildlife rescue and rehabilitation can also give people an avenue for selfless contribution that can enhance self image. But wildlife care also involves mental health risks. Animal rescuers are frequently under resourced and may be disturbed by the human cruelty whose consequences they may have to deal with.

Key Objectives

1. To expand opportunities for human-animal interaction in ways that benefit both.
2. To expand funding for sanctuaries and wildlife rescue and rehabilitation projects.
3. To fund mental health programs to service the needs of those suffering trauma from their work in animal rescue, rehabilitation or advocacy.

4. To rapidly phase out violent industries exploiting animals which negatively impact mental health.

Background

The benefits of animals

Caring relationships are crucial for mental wellbeing, and having positive contact with animals is very beneficial for peoples' mental health – anyone with a cherished pet knows this. The benefits¹⁸⁵ are well documented¹⁸⁶: animals reduce stress, isolation, depression and other health problems¹⁸⁷, and increase physical activity and social interaction.

Animal therapy is a growing field: in addition to visiting people who are sick or lonely, animals can assist in occupational therapy, speech therapy, or physical rehabilitation to help patients recover. The presence of an animal can significantly increase positive social behaviors among children with autism¹⁸⁸ spectrum disorder, for example. We need more funding for initiatives that are beneficial for both animals and humans, such as sanctuaries, and programs whereby cared-for animals visit aged care homes, treatment centres, schools and so forth.

Despite the mental health benefits, companion animals are declining in Australia¹⁸⁹. Not experiencing the

¹⁸⁵ <http://www.center4research.org/benefits-pets-human-health/>

¹⁸⁶ <https://www.animalsandsociety.org/human-animal-studies/society-and-animals-journal/articles-on-the-benefits-of-animals-to-humans/>

¹⁸⁷ <http://center4research.org/healthy-living-prevention/pets-and-health-the-impact-of-companion-animals/>

¹⁸⁸ <https://petpartners.org/learn/benefits-human-animal-bond/>

¹⁸⁹ <http://www.smh.com.au/comment/we-are-losing-dogs-and-cats-and-it-is-a-great-loss-20160103-glyh67.html>

affection of animals and the character building responsibility for the care will leave us the poorer as a society. For some people the only interaction with animals will be on their plate. This interaction is at the end of a long production chain which typically starts on a factory farm and ends in a slaughterhouse.

Animal cruelty and mental health

Animal cruelty, whether direct, unthinking or systemic, dehumanizes us all. In a kind of collective “numbing”, many of us eat meat, wear leather and otherwise use animals who have been abused in countless ways, but don’t react emotionally until the cruelties are directly brought to our attention.

As far back as the late 1600’s, philosopher John Locke observed that “harming animals has a destructive effect on those who inflict it”. For example, studies¹⁹⁰ of the connection between cruelty committed against animals and people have increased over the past twenty years, with professionals from a wide range of areas now recognizing that the abuse of animals never occurs in a vacuum¹⁹¹ and that it is a “gateway” indicator to other forms of violence. The studies show that children who abuse animals have generally been victims of abuse themselves, have witnessed domestic violence in the home, or learned from their parents to react to anger or frustration with violence. These children then perpetrate that violence against a vulnerable member of their household, such as the companion animal.

Slaughterhouse impacts

You can’t have a meat industry without slaughterhouses, but this is an industry with serious adverse impacts on the mental health of all those associated with it.

A 2013 Australian study confirmed a link between slaughterhouses and violence¹⁹². It was a small study but consistent with a much larger US study¹⁹³ which used data from 581 counties and found slaughterhouses were linked with more rapes and other violent crimes as well as higher total arrest rates. But is this because slaughterhouse work makes people violent or

because those who are already violent tend to gravitate to such jobs? The study wasn’t just big but carefully designed to investigate precisely this question. It concluded that it is the work that is the problem rather than the people. Slaughtering animals isn’t a job we should be protecting; the stench of death and the act of killing damages those at both ends of the knife.

Farmer suicide

Farmers commit suicides at a rate considerably higher than non-farmers, and in some areas the suicide rate can be double the national average¹⁹⁴. Animal farmers typically have ready access to firearms allowing an impulse to become fatal¹⁹⁵. High suicide rates are a tragic reflection of an underlying mental health problem. While many Australian farmers have to deal with isolation and the grueling demands of an industry heavily influenced by events beyond their control, our grazing industries and farmers tend to be the most isolated. The most remote areas in Australia have the highest suicide rates; up to nearly triple the rate in cities¹⁹⁶. A general shift to plant based eating will change the face of Australian agriculture. There will be more fruit and vegetable producers and no outback cattle stations.

Compassion fatigue

While all society’s mental health is stunted by the cruel ways we treat animals, frontline workers trying to help them suffer most of all. Those who devote their lives to working with abused animals – in rescue, rehabilitation or advocacy - can suffer terrible mental stress. STSD (secondary traumatic stress disorder) aka “*compassion fatigue*”¹⁹⁷ is common amongst people who work for animals and can include: recurrent nightmares and recollections of the trauma, difficulty sleeping, irritability or outbursts of anger, difficulty concentrating, hyper vigilance and an exaggerated startle response. Their experiences can lead to severe depression or even suicide. It is truly time to fund mental healthcare for such people, and to phase out the violent industries exploiting animals that negatively impact our mental, physical and planetary health.

¹⁹⁰ <http://www.animal-lib.org.au/campaigns/animal-rights-theories/the-psychology-of-violence-against-animals>

¹⁹¹ <https://www.animal-lib.org.au/campaigns/animal-rights-theories/the-psychology-of-violence-against-animals>

¹⁹² <http://www.news.com.au/national/slaughterhouse-workers-are-more-likely-to-be-violent-study-shows/story-fncynjr2-1226560029984>

¹⁹³ http://www.animalstudies.msu.edu/Slaughterhouses_and_Increased_Crime_Rates.pdf

¹⁹⁴ <http://www.abc.net.au/news/factcheck/2014-10-16/farmer-suicide-rates-bob-katter-fact-check/5805450>

¹⁹⁵ http://www.rrh.org.au/publishedarticles/article_print_2517.pdf

¹⁹⁶ http://www.aph.gov.au/About_Parliament/Parliamentary_Departments/Parliamentary_Library/pubs/BN/2011-2012/Suicide

¹⁹⁷ <https://www.animalsandsociety.org/helping-animals-and-people/compassion-fatigue/>

Natural Gas

————— NOIMAGE NATURAL_GAS

Policy

Fossil fuels, including natural gas, will not be part of any final clean energy solution to climate change. It makes no sense to transition to natural gas, only to have to replace it with something better in the near future. As a technology, carbon capture and storage (CCS) attached to gas power plants is unlikely (see Table 1)¹⁹⁸ to be clean enough for use in any solution.

Key Objectives

1. AJP recommends that there should be no expansion of natural gas use, whether from coal seam or other sources.
2. AJP recommends that current natural gas use be rapidly phased out in favour of clean energy technologies. Rapidly, in this case means 15 to 20 years.

Background

[under construction]

¹⁹⁸<http://www-pub.iaea.org/MTCD/Publications/PDF/ccanp2014web-14869824.pdf>

Population

NOIMAGE POPULATION

How do we decrease our destruction of wildlife habitat while doing our bit to provide a safe haven for those fleeing war and persecution? A plant based diet is the key. It's a swiss army knife of a policy that provides answers to many pressing problems.

Policy

The AJP believes that our policies, particularly our plant based diet, will enable Australia to reduce it's impact on wildlife and the rest of the natural environment while maintaining a compassionate approach to both migrants and refugees while keeping the home-grown component of our population growth at or below zero.

Key Objectives

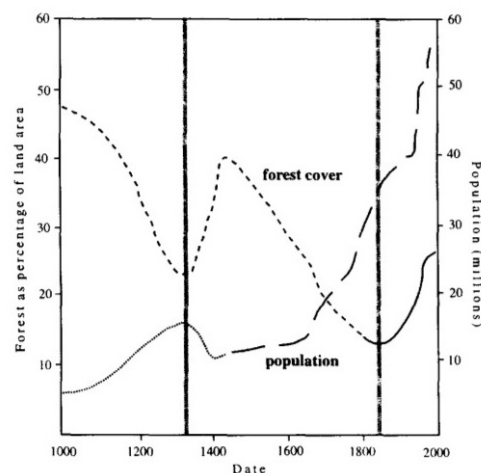
1. To keep the national birth rate at or below replacement levels.
2. To educate on the negative impacts of exponential population growth, and the positive outcomes of a stable population.
3. To expand needs based and family re-union immigration depending on the success of our other policies in limiting human impact on the natural world.
4. To ensure that any population increase happens within existing urban boundaries; urban sprawl must cease.
5. To invest in research into urban planning that will improve sense of community and quality of life whilst also living harmoniously with wildlife and nature.

Background

When most people think of Australia's population, they ignore the 600 million chickens, 70 million sheep, 28 million cattle and 5 million pigs which we produce and kill annually. These animals amplify the impact of our 24.4 million people on land use, energy and water.

We crop about 24 million hectares and could easily feed double our present human population while decreasing our croplands. Our mines occupy a few tens of thousands of hectares and our homes occupy just over 2 million hectares. It is our animal production that dominates our land use. They consume the majority of our crops while producing relatively little in return. Wheat delivers more protein to the Australian food supply than sheep and cattle combined, despite these animals grazing over 400 million hectares of the country, including 70 million on land that has been cleared and fertilised for the purpose.

Historically, many countries have increased their area of forest while growing their population. The graph shows France which has doubled her forested area over the past 200 years. The key, in that case was replacing wood with coal and then nuclear power. We can do similarly by switching to a plant based diet.



Processed Meat



About 60 Australians were diagnosed with bowel cancer today. At current rates, one million of our 24 million population will get bowel cancer before they are 75.

Policy

Processed meat should not be sold to people under 18 years of age. Health warnings should be placed on all processed meat packaging. This policy is consistent with other potent carcinogens like cigarettes and alcohol.

Key Objectives

To make public policies on processed meat mirror those on tobacco, in particular to:

1. publicly fund education campaigns about the harms of processed meat to human health,
2. mandate health warnings on all processed meat products,
3. ban the sale of processed meat in school cafeterias,
4. ban processed meat in hospitals, and
5. impose a deterrent tax on processed meat.

Background

Processed meat comes from an era before refrigeration. Nobody could have predicted that adding salt or nitrates to meat as a preservative could cause cancer, just like nobody could have predicted that smoking causes cancer. People usually died of other things well

before the age that cancer rates rise. But modern science has unravelled the causal connections for both cigarettes and lung cancer and processed meat and bowel cancer.

Back in the 1990s cancer researchers noticed that people who ate more meat had higher rates of bowel cancer, but it took a decade to nail down exactly how the cancer was caused and to understand that that not all meats were the same. The speculation¹⁹⁹ was that since digesting red and processed meats produced carcinogens similar to those in tobacco smoke, then the impacts in the bowel might mirror those in the lung due to smoking.

By 2007, the science was clear. Red and processed meat were responsible for the link, with processed meat being about three times more potent. As a result, the 2007 report²⁰⁰ of the World Cancer Research Foundation and American Institute for Cancer Research advised people to avoid processed meat entirely and limit red meat.

More recent analyses²⁰¹ indicate that a morning bacon or other processed meat habit of 100 grams per day could increase your chance of bowel cancer by between 70 and 100 percent. You may choose to play Russian roulette with your own health, but should our children be allowed to develop deadly habits that can be tough to break?

Processed meat is typically meat that has been salted, cured, fermented, or smoked. Things like hot dogs

¹⁹⁹ <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/8631138>

²⁰⁰ <http://www.wcrf.org/int/research-we-fund/continuous-update-project-cup/second-expert-report>

²⁰¹ <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/23380943>

(frankfurters), ham, bacon, sausages, corned beef, canned meat, and biltong or beef jerky.

Importantly, studies that have examined the concentrations of carcinogenic compounds in raw meat suggest that the consumption of these meats, regardless of whether they are unprocessed or uncooked, pose health risks. Cooking or processing simply adds new carcinogens or increases the amounts of already existing ones.

In October, 2015, the World Health Organisation released a declaration²⁰² on the carcinogenicity of red

and processed meat. Processed meat was classified as a Group 1 carcinogen in humans; this is a category which also includes tobacco and asbestos.

Bowel Cancer in Australia

In 2017 bowel cancer²⁰³ was the second most common cancer in Australia in both men and women. In men, it ranked second after prostate cancer and in women second after breast cancer. It is estimated that there will be 16,682 new cases in 2017 and that we will exceed 17,000 cases in 2018.

Positions

24 September 2017

NATCOM, informed by the discussion at the 2017 National Conference, recognises that members must be able to trust that the party will stay focused on animals. Hence our policies will keep that focus. They will determine the issues which dominate the effort of our elected representatives.

But we also recognise that the voting public need to know how AJP representatives will vote on important non-animal issues. Thus, when we believe a position follows clearly from our core values of rationality, non-violence, kindness and equality, then we will adopt it, without reference to the membership. But we recognise our fallibility and allow that a single adequately argued communication from a member may cause us to rescind or modify that position.

On some issues, there may be no single obvious position flowing from our core values, in which case our representative will exercise a conscience vote.

Asylum Seekers

10 November 2017

The Animal Justice Party (AJP) will act upon its core principles of Kindness, Equality, Rationality and Non-Violence, by responding to the suffering of those persons who are forced to leave their countries of origin as a result of displacement by war, genocide, breakdown of public order or a well-founded fear of persecution based on unlawful discrimination.

As a good global citizen, Australia has a proud history of being amongst the first countries to ratify the UN Convention on Refugees, including other related conventions, and to accept refugees in dire circumstances from around the world. Our position is that Australia has a moral and a legal obligation to comply with the international treaties we have ratified. Australia has a right to apply domestic laws that establish border integrity, but this must be done in such a way that persons fleeing persecution for legitimate reasons will be protected under Australian law.

Refugees must not be prevented from accessing their rights as asylum seekers. In particular, the AJP condemns the removal and processing of those seeking asylum to countries other than those approved by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

We also believe that citizens, journalists and NGOs must be able to observe the conditions provided for asylum seekers and displaced persons by this government and its agencies.

²⁰² <http://www.who.int/features/qa/cancer-red-meat/en/>

²⁰³ <http://www.aihw.gov.au/publication-detail/?id=60129558547>

Marriage Equality

26 September 2017

AJP supports equal marriage for all. This flows easily from our core value of equality.

On Vaccination

The AJP recognises the basic scientific fact that vaccinations have been among the most successful of all modern medical interventions. Together with antibiotics and modern plumbing they have reduced human suffering on a vast scale. For example, between 1900 and 1980 in the US, the number of deaths from infectious diseases²⁰⁴ dropped from around 800 per 100,000 people each year, to just 36. Some people do have severe reactions to vaccines and the AJP supports calls for a national compensation to deal with these rare events.

Many current vaccines either contain animal products or are tested on animals and the AJP would work to encourage vaccine developers to move to animal free production and testing methods as fast as possible. Innovative methods to remove animals from the process should make for a better cheaper product.

The AJP would prefer education and positive incentives to the current coercive regime of no-jab no-play.

Voluntary Euthanasia

7 March 2018

The AJP supports voluntary euthanasia with appropriate safeguards to ensure that the choice is free and well informed. This choice should only be available when a person is diagnosed with a disease, illness or medical condition that is incurable, advanced, progressive and will cause death; and is experiencing suffering that cannot be relieved in a manner that the person considers tolerable.

²⁰⁴<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/10963605>



COMPANION ANIMAL ACTION PAPER

The Hon Mark Pearson, MLC for the Animal Justice Party



August 2017

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1. ETHICAL FRAMEWORK

Every animal is a sentient being, capable of experiencing both pain and suffering as well as physical and psychological well-being. As a society, we must progress from viewing animals as objects or possessions that can be purchased and then abandoned like an unwanted piece of furniture, to the recognition of their intrinsic worth as living, complex beings with their own needs.

Because of human dominance of the planet's resources, including the domestication of animal species such as cats and dogs, we have a responsibility to provide care and protection for those companion animals living with or in close contact with humans. In recognition of the sentience of cats and dogs and in objection to their current legal status as personal property, this policy document refers to 'guardians' rather than 'owners' of animals.

It is the position of the [Animal Justice Party](#) (AJP) that the interests of companion animals have been consistently and deliberately overlooked or marginalised by a succession of state and federal governments. The fact that nationally over 250,000 healthy dogs and cats are put to death each year in pounds and shelters is clear evidence that existing regulations, policies and educational initiatives are failing to protect these animals.

The standard of care for companion animals housed in commercial breeding establishments should meet the animal's emotional, psychological, and physical needs. The AJP considers that pet shops cannot provide an environment which meets these needs.

2. THE HUMANE MANAGEMENT OF COMPANION ANIMALS

2.1 Background

Companion animals have been selected and bred over many generations to live in a close domestic relationship with humans. Dogs and cats are expected to submit to the control of their human guardians, and in return they are provided with food, shelter, and physical care. The reality is that many human guardians fail to provide this care. Each year tens of thousands of companion animals are either surrendered to pounds and shelters, or abandoned to fend for themselves, living as best they can in industrial waste lands, on the streets, in suburban recreational areas or our state and national parks. Animals can often be left to their own devices for days and weeks at a time, with guardians holidaying without providing for their animals in their absence.

Often animals are abandoned due to financial problems and the inability to afford food or the costs of veterinary care, moving into rental accommodation where animals are not allowed or changing family circumstances where animals cannot be accommodated. Guardians may also have no alternative other than to surrender their animals due to unforeseen circumstances such as ill-health, personal crises such as homelessness or domestic violence.

In other instances, it is a lack of understanding of the needs of the animal or a lack of commitment to providing the care and attention required. There is an urgent need for better public education about the needs of companion animals. Dogs kept on chains or left alone in backyards, provided with little to no exercise, limited socialisation or inadequate sensory stimulation will be stressed, bored and lonely. Thus, these dogs may well engage in behaviours such as barking, aggression or straying, putting them at risk of abandonment, surrender or seizure by council.



2.2 Transfer of Statutory Responsibility for Animal Welfare - Animal Protection Office (APO) and NSW Police

The AJP considers that it is inappropriate for animal welfare to be located within the Department of Primary Industries. There is a clear conflict of interest between the profit-driven nature of animal industries and the need to protect animals from inhumane treatment and to ensure adequate conditions for animal well-being and the expression of natural behaviours.

The AJP supports the establishment of a separate statutory body; the Animal Protection Office (APO) with powers to review existing animal industry regulations and make recommendations for change. Private animal welfare charities would no longer be responsible for investigating and prosecuting animal cruelty matters due to their lack of resources and accountability to government.

The APO would establish an Animal Protection Inspectorate with powers to accept complaints from the public, ability to undertake broad-ranging inspections of animal industries (including companion animal breeding, entertainment, animal research facilities and local government pounds), and make recommendations to government for change to regulations and refer recommendations for investigations and prosecutions to police.

APO would be a significant improvement upon the current situation where private charities and non-government agencies are investigating and enforcing criminal laws without the same degree of oversight that is required of public bodies.

NSW Police would be provided with funding to establish an Animal Protection Division for investigation and prosecution of offences under the *Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act*.

3 BREEDING

3.1 Breeding as an expression of natural instincts

The AJP recognises that there is a conflict between allowing companion animals to express their natural instincts by mating and breeding and concern that unchecked breeding is both detrimental to the health of individual animals and may lead to an unsustainable increase in companion animals available for homing. This over-breeding in turn may contribute to high kill rates in pounds and shelters where homes cannot be found for impounded animals. Consequently, the AJP accepts the current necessity of sterilising companion animals.

3.2 Desexing-Mandatory for animal traders, pounds, and shelters only

The AJP supports mandatory desexing of cats and dogs for those in the animal trade, including the provision of pre-paid desexing vouchers for kittens and puppies at the point of sale. Local Councils, RSPCA, and Animal Rescue Shelters to be required to desex animals or provide vouchers prior to re-homing.

The AJP does not support mandatory desexing of companion animals owned by members of the public for the following reasons:

- It cannot be enforced without expending significant compliance resources, resources that the AJP considers are better spent on community education and providing free or discounted voluntary desexing services.
- Some guardians would surrender or abandon their companion animals rather than pay the veterinary costs for desexing, either because they consider it a waste of money or cannot afford sterilisation costs.
- Semi-owned, community and free living cats are at greater risk of being impounded and killed because they have not been desexed.
- There is preliminary evidence that the mandatory desexing provisions of the *Cat Act 2011 (W.A)* has resulted in a significant increase in the number of non-sterilised cats being impounded and killed¹.

3.3 Desexing Programs

Funding for programs to be drawn from Companion Animal registrations and levies on commercial breeders. State Government should allocate funding to local councils with a reporting mechanism for assessing success of desexing programs and reductions in pound numbers and kill rates.

¹ (Citation reqd- Michelle Williamson)

3.4 Education

The AJP proposes that the desexing of companion animals should be promoted and led by local government. Education programs should be directed at both the general community as well as targeted campaigns in community languages addressing cultural issues regarding desexing. Education campaigns should be conducted to address animal behaviour and health aspects of desexing as well as providing a practical guide to responsible and humane care of companion animals.

3.5 Discounted/Free desexing

The AJP supports the provision of discounted or free desexing programs targeted at low socio-economic communities and rural areas where the availability of affordable and accessible veterinary care is a barrier to desexing. Where there is no desexing service available, fly-in veterinary services or mobile vet buses should be arranged by the Department of Local Government, in liaison with the Australian Veterinary Association.

Local veterinary practices should be funded to provide companion animal desexing services to means-tested low income earners, pounds and shelters. Council Pounds and CI 16(d) Animal Rescue Shelters should be given priority access to free desexing services.

The cost of subsidised desexing should be borne by government. The offset is the eventual reduction in the economic and social costs associated with enforcement, impounding, and killing of healthy animals.

3.6 Desexing-Early Age

While there is some debate about the health risks of desexing young animals, there is evidence that early desexing of healthy kittens and puppies is safe and reduces the number of animals abandoned in pounds².

The AJP recommends the promotion of early desexing of 12-week-old healthy kittens and puppies that have attained 1kg in weight. Smaller dog breeds to be desexed by 22 weeks of age.

3.7 Desexing vouchers must be provided at point of sale/gift

Commercial breeders, and incidental breeders (guardians or persons in charge of undesexed companion animal/s who are not required to be registered as breeders) to be regulated to provide desexing vouchers with each sale or gifting of a kitten or puppy, with fines for non-compliance.

² <http://kb.rspca.org.au/afile/419/114/>

3.8 Enforcement

Enforcement by Local Council Compliance Officers, with right of entry to inspect premises and sale records.

4. BREEDING ESTABLISHMENTS

Of concern is the large number of animals produced by commercial breeders, including the unknown number of puppies and kittens euthanised due to birth defects or killed due to “unwanted ‘features’”. Commercial breeders argue that they find homes for all their animals, and while it may be true that they rarely abandoned or surrender their animals are to pounds, they nonetheless compete with pounds and shelters for the homing of animals. A reduction in commercial breeding and a public education campaign encouraging rescue adoptions would result in more homes being available to shelter animals.

A major concern is the prevalence of “puppy farms” which focus solely on maximising profits by repeated breeding, provide substandard, often squalid conditions. The focus on profits often means inbreeding occurs, with the risk of genetic defects causing not only 0animal suffering but also increasing the risk of abandonment due to the costs of any veterinary care required because of the inbreeding.

The NSW Companion Animal Taskforce (p6) defined puppy farms as ‘an establishment where a number of dogs are kept in sub-standard conditions and bred repeatedly to their detriment with inappropriate or inadequate provision of food, water, shelter and veterinary treatment.” RSPCA Australia has defined puppy farms as “an intensive dog breeding facility that is operated under inadequate conditions that fail to meet the dogs’ behavioural, social and/or physiological needs”³.

There is also considerable community frustration with guardians who do not desex their companion animals and contribute to the numbers of unwanted animals being abandoned or surrendered to Council Pounds and Shelters. These guardians can be defined as “incidental breeders’.

Ancillary to commercial breeding is sales, whether online or via pet shops. Animal Rescue groups consistently raise concerns about inappropriate impulse buying in pet shops and online sales masking the truth of animas bred in puppy farm conditions⁴. Breeders must not sell animals to pet shops. Pet shops should only promote rescue animals for adoption.

4.1 Regulatory Framework

In NSW, the breeding of companion animals is regulated as an animal trade under Schedule 1 of the *Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1979 (NSW) (POCTAA)*⁵. The Animal Welfare Code of Practice - Breeding Dogs and Cats (2009)⁶ sets out the welfare standards for the care and management of

³ End Puppy Farming-The Way Forward, RSPCA 2010, p1

⁴ Mark Pearson, MLC Companion Animal Roundtable One and Two, held at NSW Parliament House, 24 February 2016, and 9 December 2016

⁵ <http://www.legislation.nsw.gov.au/#/view/act/1979/200>

⁶ http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0004/299803/Breeding-dogs-and-cats-code-of-practice.pdf

breeding dogs and cats and the raising of puppies and kittens for sale. The Code of Practice does not apply to the 'incidental' breeding of animals.

The Code contains both mandatory standards and recommended guidelines for the care of dogs or cats for breeding. A breeder who fails to meet a standard may be given Penalty Infringement Notice or be prosecuted under Clause 26 of the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Regulation 2012⁷. In more serious cases, breeders may be prosecuted for an offence under POCTAA for failing to meet the legal obligations regarding an animal's welfare (for example failing to provide proper or sufficient food and water, adequate exercise, and necessary veterinary treatment.).

Clause 26 of the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Regulation 2012 also sets out the minimum standards of care including: hygiene, record-keeping, monitoring care and treatment of animal, accommodation and equipment that is suited to the physical and behavioural requirements of the animal, protection from extreme climatic and environmental conditions and from interference by people, sufficient space within which to rest, stand, stretch, otherwise move about, sufficient quantity of appropriate food and water, protection from exposure to disease, distress and injury and, in the event that the animal becomes diseased, distressed or injured, must be promptly provided with appropriate treatment, and each animal must be periodically inspected to ensure that it is receiving appropriate food and water and is free from disease, distress and injury.

4.2 Mating and Litters

The current mandatory standards require that bitches and queens must not be intentionally mated during their first oestrous cycle. Breeding animals must be physically and mentally fit, healthy, and free of disease at the time of being mated. Bitches must not have more than two litters in any two-year period, unless with the written approval of a veterinary practitioner. Queens must not have more than three litters in any two-year period, unless with the written approval of a veterinary practitioner.

Non-enforceable guidelines also encourage the desexing and re-homing of 'retired' breeding dogs and cats⁸.

⁷ <http://www.legislation.nsw.gov.au/#/view/regulation/2012/408/part4/sec26>

⁸ http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0004/299803/Breeding-dogs-and-cats-code-of-practice.pdf PAGE 10

5. COMMERCIAL BREEDING REFORMS REQUIRED

The community has expectations that commercial breeders meet adequate animal welfare standards and that 'puppy farms' should be closed down and prosecuted for animal cruelty.

The AJP considers that the current regulatory regime has not stayed abreast with the rapidly evolving scientific understanding of the complex needs of companion animals as well as changing community attitudes towards the relationship between humans and companion animals⁹.

Most guardians view companion animals as part of the family¹⁰ and it is reasonable to assume that they would expect commercial breeders to provide appropriate standards of care to prepare them for living in a family environment. This is borne out by the community outcry in response to [media articles reporting on 'puppy farms.'](#)

A review of the current Animal Welfare Code of Practice - Breeding Dogs and Cats Code of Practice has been in progress for several years. This is an opportunity for significant improvements to be made in the Code. The AJP recommends that mandatory standards should be based on the needs of animals to express their natural behaviours with specific set times for access to fresh air, exercise and socialisation with other dogs and humans.

- Minimum standards for shelters and pen size complete with comfortable bedding and environmental enrichment such as toys.
- Limits must be placed on litters per breeding animal, including minimum age of commencement and retirement from breeding.
- Minimum staff to animal ratios must be mandated to ensure proper supervision and care as well as adequate socialisation with humans.
- Mandatory desexing and rehoming of retired breeding animals.



⁹ <http://www.oie.int/doc/ged/D2045.PDF>

¹⁰ <https://www.realinsurance.com.au/RealInsurance-Mk2/media/documents/resources/2016-core-data-pet-survey-report.pdf>

6. INTRODUCTION OF A BREEDERS' LICENCING SCHEME

There have been numerous complaints about the lack of accountability in the companion animal breeding industry. Although the NSW Government has repeatedly rejected the introduction of a breeder licencing scheme, the AJP considers that licencing is the only way of ensuring transparency and accountability in the industry, end puppy farming and guarantee responsible breeding and high welfare outcomes for breeding animals.

6.1 Incidental Breeders

'Incidental breeders' are excluded from the requirement to register.

1. An 'Incidental Breeder' is defined as an individual who owns or is in charge of no more than two undesexed female companion animals that have produced no more than one litter in the lifetime of each animal. The onus of proof of 'incidental breeding' is upon the guardian or person in charge of the animal.
2. A community awareness campaign should be undertaken to educate the public about the changes to breeding laws.
3. Breeders of greyhounds and hunting dogs (breeds to be listed in the regulations) are not exempted from this provision.
4. Primary Producers with recognised breeds of working dogs (to be listed in regulations), are excluded from the requirement to register as a breeder.

6.2 Compulsory Registration- Companion Animal Breeders Licencing Scheme

The *Companion Animals Act 1986 (NSW)*¹¹ to be amended to provide for a compulsory scheme for the registration of companion animal breeders.

1. Breeders to be licenced and listed on the Companion Animals Register administered by the Department of Local Government.
2. Individuals (other than 'Incidental Breeders') or businesses seeking to breed companion animals must be registered as breeders, irrespective of whether they breed pedigree animals or designer dogs or cats for the pet trade.
3. Failure to register as a breeder will attract a maximum penalty of 100 penalty units and the seizure of all animals, with a seven year disqualification from registration as a breeder.

¹¹ <http://www.legislation.nsw.gov.au/#/view/act/1998/87>

THE BREEDERS' LICENSING SCHEME WILL CONTAIN THE FOLLOWING ELEMENTS:

1. A publicly accessible database of breeders to be included on the Companion Animals Register
2. Breeders must have development approval to operate a breeding establishment in their local government area
3. Licence number for every breeder, to provide an auditable trail for every sale or transfer of guardianship
4. All breeding animals must be microchipped with an individual registration number including the breeder licence number
5. All kittens and puppies to be given a unique serial number which must be recorded in breeding records, including the microchip Register of Animal Boarding Establishments details of the parents.
6. A system of periodic audits and spot inspections
7. Sets the maximum number of animals that each breeding establishment may keep
8. Breeders' licence number, breeding animal's microchip number and puppy or kitten's serial number to be included in any advertisement in any medium where animals are advertised, sold, or transferred
9. Breeders must comply with all standards and guidelines contained in the Code of Practice for the Keeping and Breeding of Cats and Dogs
10. Minimum staff to animal ratio for the appropriate care, socialisation, training and enrichment of breeding animals and their litters.
11. Limit the age and frequency of breeding and maximum numbers of litters per animal, based on breed size and species (to be specified in the Code of Practice)
12. Requires desexing of all puppies and kittens of appropriate age prior to sale or transfer, or prepaid vouchers at point of sale.
13. Provision for licences to be revoked where breeder convicted of animal neglect and/or cruelty.
14. Breeders must not sell animals to pet shops.

7. COUNCIL POUNDS

The public expectation of council pounds is that they provide temporary care and protection for animals requiring housing pending return to their guardians or, if unclaimed and where appropriate, efforts are made to rehome animals either in private homes, RSPCA shelters or with animal rescue groups or foster carers.

Council Pounds must comply with the NSW Animal Welfare Code of Practice for Dogs and Cats in Animal Boarding Establishments. The Code was drafted with commercial kennels in mind and does not address the special needs of animals found abandoned, stray or surrendered. Animals in pounds are far more likely than kennel boarders to be stressed, victims of abuse or neglect, experiencing ill-health, lack of socialisation, pregnancy or lactation and care of young. In the three years from 2011 to 2014, NSW Council Pounds re-homed 5,000 and killed 15,000 cats and dogs ¹². Re-homing includes reclaimed animals and reasons for killing includes euthanasia for medical and behavioural reasons as well as the killing of healthy animals unable to be found homes in the timeframe dictated by pound management.

With no human guardian to advocate for them, companion animals in pounds are vulnerable to arbitrary decisions about their welfare, including access to appropriate veterinary treatment and crucially, testing for suitability for re-homing. There have been several incidents in council pounds that give rise to concerns about the safety of animals in pounds. Animals have died of heat stress, found frozen alive in freezers, killed without a holding period, and questions about the adequacy of veterinary care and diet. Pound facilities also vary significantly from one local government area to another. Some council pounds are barely habitable; concrete floors without bedding with no protection from extremes in temperature.

7.1 New Regulatory Framework for Council Pounds

1. The AJP recommends that the Office of Local Government review the regulatory framework for council pounds.
2. Part 7 of the *Companion Animals Act* to include the requirement for council pounds to provide seized or surrendered animals with adequate food, water and veterinary care, and kept in a place that is well drained and maintained in a clean condition, and is provided with adequate shade for the climatic conditions, and is kept secure, and is separated from other animals that are diseased or, if the animal is or appears to be diseased, is kept separate from other animals.
3. A specific and mandatory Code of Practice for Council Pounds should be developed which considers the needs of vulnerable animals.

¹² Figures provided by Geoff Davidson from Justice for Max, drawn from Office of Local Govt statistics

4. In conjunction with a new Code, it is recommended that NSW adopt and implement a version of the Victorian Government's Domestic Animal Management Program.

7.2 Companion Animal Management Program

Under the Program;

1. Councils must demonstrate compliance with Sect 64 (5) of the *Companion Animals Act*.
“Before destroying a seized or surrendered animal, Council must consider whether there is an alternative action to that of destroying the animal and (if practicable) to adopt any such alternative.
2. Councils must develop a domestic animal management plan every four years and outline the services, programs and policies required for the management of dog and cat issues in their community.
3. Councils would be required to provide benchmarks for kill rates and rehoming rates and publish annual progress reports on the council website and display on their premises so that they are visible to visitors.
4. Councils would be required to document and record reasons for decisions to euthanise. These records to be summarised into categories on council's website.
5. Animals available for rehoming should be advertised on council websites.

Program Strategies would include;

1. Key performance indicators for lowering kill rates solely for medical reasons.
2. Other performance indicators would include supporting animal rescue groups with free or discounted desexing and registration, providing community education for responsible companion animal guardianship and demographic targets for discounted or free desexing.
3. Pounds should be open to inspection by the public.
4. One of the goals of the Program should be to reunite guardians and their companion animals where possible. Many guardians of impounded animals end up surrendering their animals because they cannot afford to pay the holding charges.
5. Greater discretion in extending holding periods and fee waivers should be considered in order to promote reclaiming by guardians.
6. Fine amnesties or reimbursement for guardians who meet compliance requirements over extended periods of time should also be considered.
7. Amnesty systems for good behaviour (where guardians had prior history of straying, nuisance dogs) could be trialled.

8. Rangers to have greater discretionary powers regarding enforcement of the *Companion Animals Act*.
9. Trained and accredited rangers being given enforcement powers under *POCTAA* such as powers of entry to inspect for puppy farms, then referred on for police investigation.

7.3 Code of Practice for Council Pounds

A Council Pound Code of Practice should ensure greater transparency in all aspects of animal management including standards for veterinary care, healthy food, hygiene, environmental enrichment, comfortable bedding, strategies to reduce stress such as separate areas for mothers and kittens.

1. There must be a mandatory minimum length of stay no less than 28 days for unclaimed animals.
2. Animals assessed as suitable for rehoming must be microchipped, vaccinated and desexed before leaving the pound.
3. CCTV cameras to be installed and monitored in all council pounds.
4. Minimum standards for provision of exercise for dogs
5. Quarantine area for animals with communicable diseases and illnesses
6. Separate areas for dogs and cats
7. Separate area for cats with kittens
8. Provision for veterinary care and vaccinations such as for Parvo, where appropriate
9. In recognition of the current varying standards between pounds, there will need to be a transition to minimum standards for facilities including adequate pen size and provision for a secure space for exercise.
10. Council pound staff must have minimum qualifications and training in animal care, animal behaviour and for the killing of animals.
11. Only independent, suitably qualified consultants should conduct the behaviour test which determines which animals have the capacity to be rehomed.
12. Rangers must undertake animal behaviour education and training and be fully conversant with the *Companion Animals Act*.
13. Pounds are to be open weekends to facilitate reclaiming, rehoming and adoptions.
14. Confirm compliance requirements concerning *POCTAA* provisions in regard to adequate shelter, protection from the elements including temperature extremes

7.4 Support for Rescue Groups

The Office of Local Government (OLG) to host and maintain a publicly available registry of companion animal rescue groups. To be eligible for registration, rescue groups must meet minimum standards including residency in NSW, incorporation under the *Associations Incorporation Act* and at least one member having completed a qualification in animal care. Registration would allow rescue groups to obtain impounded animals for rehoming, access OLG funds to undertake community education and discount desexing programs.

Registered groups that wish to provide accommodation services would be required to comply with a Code of Practice for Dogs and Cats in Rescue Shelters- to be developed in consultation with cl16(d) rescue groups.

8. ANIMAL BOARDING ESTABLISHMENTS

The AJP recommends that the NSW Animal Welfare Code of Practice - Dogs and Cats in Animal Boarding Establishments ¹³ be revised given that there have been no changes since it was first published in 1997. It is noted that a review has been undertaken but the Department of Primary Industries has not released a draft for comment.

While Animal Boarding Establishments are a regulated animal trade under Schedule 1 of POCTAA, there needs to be a system of registration, inspections, and audits to ensure compliance with the standards.

1. Inspections and audits should be funded via an annual registration fee imposed on all commercial boarding establishments.
2. The Department of Local Government would be required to tender for an independent inspection and audit service.
3. This service would make recommendations to the Minister for Local Government for registration renewals, suspensions, or cancellations.

8.1 Register of Animal Boarding Establishments

The AJP proposes that a publicly accessible Register of Animal Boarding Establishments be established in the Companion Animal Register administered by the Department of Local Government.

For animal boarding establishments to maintain their registration they must comply with the following requirements:

1. Obtain development approval to operate an animal boarding establishment in their local government area.
2. Display Registration Number on online sites and at premises where animals are kept.
3. House no more than the maximum number of animals allowable under the NSW Animal Welfare Code of Practice - Dogs and Cats in Animal Boarding Establishments
4. Comply with all standards and guidelines contained in the NSW Animal Welfare Code of Practice - Dogs and Cats in Animal Boarding Establishments
5. Maintain minimum staff to animal ratio for the appropriate care, socialisation, and enrichment of boarding animals.
6. A minimum of one onsite residential staff member to present at all times.

¹³<http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/animals-and-livestock/animal-welfare/codes/aw-code-5>

7. Cooperate with a system of periodic audits and spot inspections.
8. Publication of audits and inspection reports on OLG website.

