

**Submission
No 197**

INQUIRY INTO PROVISIONS OF THE RIGHT TO FARM BILL 2019

Organisation: World Animal Protection

Date Received: 2 October 2019

World Animal Protection submission to the Inquiry into the Provisions of the Right to Farm Bill 2019

1 October 2019

To whom it may concern,

World Animal Protection advocates for the highest possible animal welfare standards for Australia's farmed animals. In many cases, Australia falls behind the standards of overseas countries. The lack of a national strategy is particular concerning.

In this context, many organisations resort to media exposes to raise awareness of the need to improve welfare standards. While World Animal Protection does not condone illegal activity that causes distress to rural communities, we also support the right to engage in non-violent activities that are designed to improve the lives of animals or expose their mistreatment.

If the enforcement and development of Australia's animal welfare laws were more transparent and open, this activity would likely decrease. In particular, we recommend a national framework for animal welfare standards based on independent scientific evidence; support for agriculture industries to transition away from low welfare production systems and a national system for reporting on compliance against animal welfare standards.

We also have general concerns that the Right to Farm Bill 2019 is worded in a way that would potentially outlaw civil protest on any enclosed space, including schools, hospitals, mine sites or banks, and could increase penalties and introduce jail terms for peaceful protest that is not related to farming. The bill also seems to duplicate laws that already exist relating to trespass, raising questions about its need and intent.

World Animal Protection urges rejection of this Bill in its current form or substantial redrafting.

Sincerely,

Simone Clarke
Executive Director
World Animal Protection Australia and New Zealand