

Submission
No 95

**INQUIRY INTO HEALTH AND WELLBEING OF
KANGAROOS AND OTHER MACROPODS IN NEW SOUTH
WALES**

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The Australian marsupial fauna is very unique. Before Great Britain decided to use the continent as a prison, there were no great or predators to reduce the numbers of marsupials or macropods. As Australia separated with the Antarctica about 125 million years ago from the latest super continent, all marsupial ancestors were already living on the continent. Conditions remained favourable to the entire marsupial population to live and thrive on the Australian continent, marsupial predators kept the prey population on the optimal level. Kangaroos evolved from their gigantic forefathers slowly to what they are today. Macropods evolved to having longer feet, to be able to hop faster to safety, when being hunted by the pouches wolf. Fast forward to the last three centuries, first came explorers who found incredible fauna in great numbers. Hopping forwards, came the time, when the continent was occupied by prisoners, Australia being a penal colony. With those first white skinned invaders came their pets, mice and rats. Dingo is not a marsupial, they are descendants of the first dogs brought to the continent. They hunted anything and everything causing great damage to the fauna. As we look at the fauna of Australia today, the number of macropods (big red, Eastern greys, Euros, wallabies etc.) are diminishing due to brutal butchery of these great and amazing animals, each species specialized in various food sources. Now these timid, highly strung and flighty species are ruthlessly killed for dog food and even for human consumption. Kangaroo hide products can be found far away from Australia, even in a Northern country Finland, in gold mining souvenir shops they sell kangaroo hide hats! I would like to say that is somehow like sacrilege. There are proof all around the world how human greed of wanting to make a fast profit, the white population (me being one) takes with greedy hands what is or rather used to be abundant in past years. The NSW holocaust of a wildfire, destroying homes, rescues and killing hundreds and thousands of macropods in a fiery inferno, has not stopped the "culling" the kangaroo population. This has not gone unnoticed. Ordinary people know much more of the fate of the roos, and we are not looking this development with pleasure, far from it. Kangaroos are no pests, their need of food is much less than one sheep needs. In fact, four kangaroos could live very well on the grass grown for one sheep, and this is due to their unique digestive system. Roos don't eat more than they need. Then, why do farmers have a right to shoot a roo close enough eating e.g. sheep or cow hay? Why are the collings still going on, as the species are trying to recover the devastation of the horrific wildfire? I have no other choice but voice my opinion this way, because I am a sort of kangaroo godmother, and being in contact and supporting several joey rescues particularly in NSW and on other areas trying to save the Tassy devil from extinction by viral cancer. In fact, negligible drivers even hunt roos and wombats etc. to make a dent in the population. It is with great sadness that I follow the onslaught of kangaroos for profit only because they live there. They have unique genetics, their development from a jelly bean joey climbing into the Mum's pouch only with tiny arms and stick on a teat for food, in fact the joey and the teat sort of fuse together to provide 24/7 milk to the growing joey. Demake kangaroos have other fantastic features: they can decide the sex of the joey, they can have a joey in stasis in case the Mum has to drop the Joey in the pouch when hopping from a dangerous situation to save her life. And by the way, kangaroos don't box, they spar with each other as mock fights to prepare them for the best moment of combating of the position as the alpha male. Girls spar as well, but it is natural to the species. There is so much more I could keep on adding, but I hope you really dig into this matter from a preservation view, today we are losing about 70-80 species a day, an estimation, because there are so small species going extinct not visible to the naked eye. Every extinct species changes its biotope and creates a ripple effect... the environment changing first just a little, but changing faster and faster, as the ripples meaning the next link in the food chain, cause bigger species going extinct. As humanity, we cannot afford to lose any more species, kangaroos are among those species. Our own existence on planet Earth depends on so many tiny, small and big fauna and flora, and it is a delicate balance, and now we have an extra factor to deal with, the climate change and global warming, which are two different phenomena. Humans are, perhaps, supposed to be guardians of the flora and fauna, but we are not doing a

good job. We destroy and kill at will, and that is not good management of preserving the indigenous flora and fauna. I hope you take our messages seriously enough to take action to put a stop to using kangaroos as a dog food source.