

**Submission
No 185**

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

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Submission

NSW Legislative Council

Health and wellbeing of kangaroos and other macropods in New South Wales

Thank you for the opportunity of making a submission.

At the outset, I urge members of the committee to view 'Kangaroo: A Love-Hate Story'. This film will provide you with very real insights into the treatment of kangaroos. The film can be found via the following link:

<https://kangaroothemovie.com>

It is the least members of the committee can do to begin to understand what is going on and why this senseless slaughter must end.

Commercial Slaughter

The commercial slaughter of kangaroos is the largest of land-based wildlife massacres in the world. It is done for profit. NSW and Queensland are the two largest killers of kangaroos for the commercial industry.

Cruelty

Adults - Every night in remote areas of the outback, thousands of these gentle animals, who are grazing peacefully, stand up on hearing an approaching vehicle, stare into a blinding spotlight, and are shot for their flesh and skins. Those that are wounded and escape, endure a long and horrendously painful death. Those injured and unable to escape are beheaded and strung up on utes.

The Code requires a single shot to the head, but even conservative estimates suggest that more than tens of thousands of those commercially 'processed' are not killed in this manner.

Joeys - are bludgeoned to death (as the Code advises) beside their mothers, or decapitated, or left to suffer slow and painful deaths from exposure, thirst, starvation. or being killed by predators.

The "Shot in the Dark" report estimates the numbers of dependent young to be some 440,000. [A Report on Kangaroo Harvesting. Prepared by Dror Ben-Ami, PhD, Wildlife ecologist.]

Atrocities - As just one example of daily atrocities in the 'Kangaroos Alive' exposé, it was revealed that a kangaroo was beaten to death. The bullet was not the primary cause of death. The video shows five kangaroos brutally beaten to death.

The shooter failed to meet the minimum requirements set out in the National Code of Practice for the Humane Shooting of Kangaroos and Wallabies, where "a shooter must aim so as to hit the target kangaroo or wallaby in the brain".

Sustainability/Population estimates

As was shown in the highly acclaimed 'Kangaroo: A Love-Hate Story', scientists warn that estimates of kangaroo numbers are way off-target, with faulty counting methods and hugely inflated numbers.

Then one has the increasing droughts, fires, floods and destruction of habitat. It is horrifying that we may face a future where this iconic native animal is nothing but a memory. Many kangaroo populations are already regionally extinct.

Hygiene – Contamination - Health risks

Hygiene is virtually non-existent with kangaroo shooters, because they are unable to carry more than 20 litres of water. This is for personal use; the shooter is unable to wash down any areas where blood has collected.

During kangaroo butchery, the blood and the spotlight attract flies and other insects, which crawl over the carcasses laying their eggs.

Carcasses are left hanging on the racks whilst the shooter drives to a new location. Whilst on the vehicle, the carcasses become contaminated with dirt and the dried faeces of sheep and cattle arising from dust disturbed by the vehicle wheels.

Carcasses are not always taken to 'chillers' before sunrise, as required, thus exposing them to more heat and flies. Carcasses can be exposed to the elements for up to 8 hours before being chilled.

Kangaroos may be stored in field chillers and may not transported to processors for up to 14 days after being shot.

Dr Ben-Ami's report (referred to above) also includes material on contamination.

It is no wonder Russia banned kangaroo meat imports due to unacceptable levels of E.coli bacteria. But, the list of pathogens is very alarming, and includes Toxoplasma gondii, Salmonella spp.

Sulphites are used in pet food which can cause brain damage and death in cats and dogs.

Wild kangaroos carry parasites and diseases that can threaten human health.

Kangaroo meat also has more L-carnitine per gram than any other red meat, and is associated with the build-up of plaque in arteries which causes heart attacks, strokes and vascular disease.

Zoonotic diseases: COVID-19 is spiralling out of control globally, but the NSW wildlife trade continues. Widely accepted European research states that 3 out of 4 emerging infectious diseases are zoonotic.

<https://sentientmedia.org/coronavirus-should-make-you-reconsider-eating-meat/> March, 2020

Zoonotic diseases are transmitted from animals (wild and farmed, alive and slaughtered) to humans. COVID-19 is just one such virus.

Other countries are banning kangaroo imports

California has banned all kangaroo imports. And a bi-partisan Bill has been proposed to the US government to ban all kangaroo imports, due to its extreme animal cruelty, and the death of thousands of kangaroos and other species in the 2019-20 bushfires.

Sources: Animal Justice Party, Animals Australia, Australia's Kangaroos, Lindy Stacker - 40 years studying this issue, including working with environment organisations and the NSW Government's Kangaroo Advisory Review Committee on this issue, Dr Jane Goodall, David Benatar - NYT

Conclusion

I ask the committee to vote to end the slaughter of our kangaroos as soon as possible. These wild creatures deserve our care and compassion.

Jan Kendall
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