

Submission  
No 244

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

**Organisation:** Queensland Wildlife Rehabilitation Council

**Date Received:** 26 April 2021

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25 April 2021

Have you even seen a macropod with its jaw blown off or suffering from a body gunshot but somehow still alive? Most wildlife carers around Australia have dealt with this situation, some on a regular basis. A Code of Practice may be in place for kangaroo harvesters but who is enforcing it in the middle of the night in remote regions of the country? Most shooters don't particularly care as macropods are seen as a pest to be removed at any cost; if they shoot any incorrectly they just leave them in the paddock and shoot some more, no one to check on them so it doesn't matter and they certainly wouldn't waste any tags on those they didn't shoot correctly. This so called humane industry is brutal, how is bludgeoning any baby animal humane, a byproduct of the industry that isn't even counted in the amount killed every year. To claim that furless joeys don't feel pain is mortifying and any carer, or individual, who has handled a "pinkie" will tell you differently, they respond to touch, sound and pain at a much younger stage. Do we say that premature human babies don't feel pain? Simply put, these humans don't care of the suffering these innocent animals endure all because of human greed.

Kangaroos are persecuted simply because they are in direct competition with livestock, the very land they have evolved alongside of has been taken over. We have settled on prime habitat, while yes we have developed dams we have also destroyed natural water ways, we have introduced various predators and diseases and now want to restrict all movement by erecting cluster fencing. The rate that cluster fencing is being erected is astonishing, the effects horrifying, all the while government is funding slaughter. Not only is it halting movement of macropods, it affects so many other species as well, turtles, emus, goannas, echidnas, koalas, the list goes on. We also have the opinion of many on the land that once the fencing is up they can annihilate any wildlife on "their" property with no animal cruelty or welfare concerns. Fences go up, gates get closed, water turned off, and no food due to drought results in an environmental disaster for all native wildlife. Others have been known to poison or have hunting parties from choppers. It has to be bad when even the kangaroo harvesters are disgusted by the cruelty. These fences are changing the whole landscape, red kangaroos that are nomadic can no longer follow paths they have traversed for thousands of years and the only paths left are roads which are now wildlife corridors in many areas. As you can imagine it isn't long before these all succumb to road fatalities.

They are naturally a boom or bust species just like the harsh Australian environment, yes their numbers increase in good times but this is so they don't completely die off in the bad times, leaving the fittest and strongest individuals to procreate. Ironically it is these very individuals that are

needed for the longterm survivability and health of the species and yet are targeted by the harvesting industry. This is leading to a weakening of the targeted macropods, is this why the take size is becoming smaller all the time?

A native species does not destroy the land it has evolved on, introduced species on the other hand do. Most of the issues kangaroos are blamed for are the fault of introduced species including humans. Livestock consume a much higher rate of vegetation than kangaroos and unlike kangaroos they do rip out the grass roots and all.

Macropods naturally have high mortality rate with 70% of juveniles not surviving to reach sexual maturity. The pressure from human development is only getting worse which is only going to increase these statistics and we just keep making it harder wanting more of these unique animals dead. Between the kangaroo harvesting industry and the cluster/exclusion fences, I wonder if these animals have any future in the wild.

Kim Palmer

QWRC President