

Submission  
No 277

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

**Name:** Name suppressed  
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Partially  
Confidential

Thank you for this opportunity to make a Submission for this Inquiry into the health and wellbeing of kangaroos and other macropods in New South Wales.

I am submitting in hope of preventing and ultimately stopping the exploitation of macropods and the particularly exploited and completely brutalized Kangaroo via the commercial and non-commercial killing of kangaroos in NSW. I don't know where to start, the entire treatment of Kangaroos and other macropods in NSW is horrendous and beyond belief especially considering this animal is our National Emblem and sits on the Australian Coat of Arms!

Millions of macropods died in the unprecedented 2019 to 2020 Bushfires, yet still the killing of our kangaroos goes on unabated. If anything it was increased not long after the fires.

Historical and long-term health and wellbeing indicators of kangaroos, and other macropods, at the local, bioregional and state levels, including the risk of localised extinction in New South Wales.

The commercial killing of kangaroos is the **world's largest commercial slaughter of land-based wildlife**, yet it's still a secretive and largely unregulated industry. The fact that a Kangaroo Industry exists, and the shocking cruelty faced by kangaroos targeted by this unsustainable commercial industry, is largely unknown by the average Australian and is met with disbelief by those in all other countries. The rampant, ever increasing and violent killing of our National Emblem is an embarrassment to Australia.

Even more disbelief follows when people learn that it is legal to bash the females' in pouch joey to death, whether it's cutting the baby's head off, bashing it against the shooters truck, stamping on it. And they are not always killed outright, many carers have found alive babies simply thrown away into bushes to die slow painful deaths.

The at foot joeys still dependant on their mothers often flee when their mother is shot. The Code of Practice decrees that the shooter is to follow this joey and kill it with a gunshot to the brain. The shooter will very rarely do this, time is money, so the joey is left to starve to death, be predated on etc. all the while calling out for its' mother.

The adult kangaroos targeted don't get off easy either. The Code of Practice decrees that they must only be shot with a bullet to the brain. They are mis-shot all the time. Body shot and left in the field as it is illegal to body shoot them, thus this is evidence, so shooters leave them there. Often kangaroos will have their paws, feet, or jaws blown off as they try to get away. They remain alive for possibly weeks with these horrendous injuries.

All this is just another night's work in the Australian kangaroo industry. Every night, in the anonymous blackness of night. No one monitors the shooters. Shooters leave the remains of the kangaroos, their entrails, including the heads that can reveal they have been mis-shot, next to or on peoples properties. Of course immense cruelty and non adherence to Code of Practices takes place in the Commercial kangaroo industry.

It is a myth that Australia has high standards of animal welfare.

**Exclusion fencing:**

- In official documents, the NSW Government actively encourages landowners to trap, starve, and kill contained kangaroos.

- The NSW Government also funds the roll out of exclusion fencing, and there's no published data on how much funding has been given out, let alone how many animals are killed because of it.
- Exclusion fencing is just another way the NSW Government is killing kangaroos, and another reason this kangaroo inquiry is so important.

Exclusion fencing costs the lives of an untold number of native wildlife, like kangaroos, as well as other free-living animals and is used to intentionally kill animals like Kangaroos, Wallabies, Wallaroos. Trapped in a confined area or hanging upside down by their feet, animals caught in exclusion fences or funneled into contained areas suffer a long, agonizing death, many with broken bones, joints dislocated, open tear wounds from the barbed wounds etc.

**The fences don't only stop the movement of wildlife, they contain the animals, particularly when it comes to cluster fencing. Trapped in a specific area, or trapped within the fence itself, animals also die from exposure, dehydration, starvation, stress, and predation.** Trapped within barbed wire fences, animals can also suffer painful wounds and die of exposure. Animals prone to entrapment include emus and kangaroos, but also smaller animals like wallabies, echidnas and goannas.

Exclusion fencing is an even greater risk to animals fleeing stressful environments, as they are more likely to injure themselves if they attempt to move through a fence when being chased, desperately seeking food and water, or trying to escape from bushfires or human threats.

The suffering of animals trapped in and around exclusion fencing is of increasing concern given exclusion fences are sturdier and longer than ever, meaning fence boundary checks are far and few between and the animal is rarely found and assisted.

I therefore can only conclude that the killing is intentional.

It is important to know that animals being restricted from food, water and shelter is not always an accidental side effect of the use of exclusion fencing; it's often intentional, particularly with the use of cluster fencing. In fact, to "control" (kill) kangaroos, the NSW Government even encourages "water point closure" as a "supplementary control" option, along with exclusion fencing.

Even worse, they admit while exclusion fencing provides a perimeter, its use still "requires culling to manage internal populations". This means the NSW Government is actively encouraging landowners to trap, starve, and kill contained kangaroos. This is of course untenable.

Photos of Macropods next Page





**The accuracy of population counts:**

Kangaroo surveys vary in their frequency and methodology, and have been frequently changed over the last 30 years. A survey methodology was abandoned in the state of New South Wales in 2019 after 45 years of use because it had been found to be invalid for the purposes of making kangaroo population estimates. It resulted in systematic over-inflation of population estimates and 'quotas' for the killing of kangaroos. Population estimates are unreliable.

It takes 2-3 years for kangaroos to reach sexual maturity. In good times, there is a 75% mortality rate, so only 1 in 4 will even survive to adulthood in perfect conditions. (In drought conditions there is a 100% mortality rate). In a female's 8 years of breeding, only 2 joeys will survive to rebreed, if all goes well. However, if she dies, 3 possible generations die with her. It has been scientifically proven that, in reality, a 14% quota results in a 40% population decline due to joeys being killed, and they are not accounted for in the kill figures. Kill quotas are rarely met - not for lack of shooters trying, but the number of kangaroos are simply not there. In 20 years, carcass sizes have dropped from 40 kg to as low as 12 kg now. The kangaroos being shot are either not even adults or the gene pool has been seriously depleted if these are current adult sizes.

It is logical that kangaroo populations are much lower now than they were before the white colonization of Australia since so much natural habitat has been destroyed and converted to farmland, mines, roads, and housing.

**False Australian vernacular perpetuation by those hoping to gain from killing them** : Kangaroos are in plague proportions!! Kangaroos **are not** in plague proportions and not a single person has been able to take a photograph or video recording of these plagues, because they simply do not exist.

No one actually owns our wildlife, macropods, belong to each and every Australian. They are not owned by the NSW government, they are not yours to kill. They are not owned by shooters in the commercial kangaroo industry, they are not theirs to kill. I even think this is a Human Rights issue. We, the people of Australia, are denied seeing our unique macropods as they really are, particularly the big males. They do not get to reach full maturity as the largest are the first to be shot.

Kangaroo shooters kill the largest and physically superior individuals first since they get paid per kilogram and are after the biggest skins. Over time, this weakens the population structure so much so that a smaller, genetically weaker individual remains, which reduces its survival ability and strength. Kangaroos do not need to be killed, because their population is self-regulating and their populations crash during droughts and can recover in periods of higher rainfall. Kangaroos are not responsible for overgrazing, they are part of Australia's ecosystems. Just more false Australian vernacular perpetuated to keep the excuse going so that big men with violent tendencies can go out and get off on killing them, whether commercially killing or 'culling' on private land, or just cruelty for kicks (illegal). The myths, lies and cultural cringe continue regarding our kangaroos so that the status quo in Australian society continues and "nothing has to change"

#### **Government policies around culling, including quotas, and licenses to kill:**

Controls on the killing of kangaroos have been reduced in New South Wales over the past few years. Farmers can apply for licences over the phone or via e-mail instead of having to visit a National Parks and Wildlife Service office in person. More shooters, including amateurs, can operate on a farm under the same licence. Previous and current licence holders can apply for licences over the phone. Kangaroo carcasses no longer need to be tagged and left in the field and landholders can use the carcass for a range of non-commercial purposes. There are increased limits on the number of kangaroos that may be killed, based on farm size. All sizes from young to adult can be shot. Shooting can take place anywhere across the state, outside previous shooting zones. Licence provisioning in NSW seems negligible of the responsibilities involved, if not ignoring responsibilities and accountability altogether. NSW licencing is not stringent enough and must include follow up inspections that welfare laws are adhered to.

#### **Threats to kangaroos and other macropods:**

Loss of habitat, including the impact of: (i) climate change, drought and diversion and depletion of surface water sources, (ii) bushfires, (iii) land clearing for agriculture, mining and urban development, (iv) the growing prevalence of exclusion fencing which restricts and disrupts the movement of kangaroos.

Drought and the fires across Australia in early 2020 have devastated populations of kangaroos and other native animals. Over 110,000 square kilometres of natural habitats were destroyed. An estimated one billion vertebrate animals died, including 5 million kangaroos. Now floods are causing further suffering and death through drowning and infections.

Numerous kangaroos get killed by vehicles on roads. Collisions with kangaroos can be prevented by avoiding driving long distance between dusk and dawn, if that cannot be avoided, then by watching the sides of the road and slowing down. Also a regular review of speed limits on our roads is necessary. Often way too fast for the type of road being driven on, and dangerous for people, even if no wildlife in habitation nearby.

**Not only have macropods faced extreme habitat destruction and loss of life from the Black Summer bushfires, kangaroos continue to be intentionally killed across NSW through the use of exclusion fencing as well as slaughter for “recreation” and agricultural purposes.**

**Six kangaroo species are already extinct with 17 more species listed as endangered or vulnerable. Australia has the worst record in the world when it comes to species extinctions.**

**I charge the New South Wales government with having a deliberate hidden agenda to exterminate and eradicate the kangaroo from New South Wales.**