

Submission
No 289

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

Organisation: World Animal Protection Australia

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World Animal Protection submission to the NSW Legislative Council Portfolio Committee No. 7 Inquiry into the health and wellbeing of kangaroos and other macropods in New South Wales

23 April 2021

World Animal Protection is an international animal welfare organisation that has offices in 15 countries and is active in 50. We have worked to end animal suffering for 50 years. A major focus of our work is the protection of wildlife. We believe that wildlife should be protected, not hunted, farmed or traded¹.

World Animal Protection does not propose to address every Term of Reference for this inquiry. We will restrict our comments to the animal welfare concerns associated with the commercial hunting of kangaroos. We urge the Inquiry to recommend that commercial hunting of kangaroos in NSW be stopped.

Every year, millions of kangaroos are killed for meat and skins. The National Code of Practice for hunters mandates that kangaroos are killed with a 'head shot' that causes instantaneous death. But given the hunting takes place at night, targeting animals in the wild, hunters can miss and only wound animals who escape to die over a longer time period. We are unaware of official statistics for the animals who are wounded and escape, only to endure a long

¹ We do not include plants, fisheries that supply the food industry, wild animals hunted by communities for subsistence, or other wildlife trade that is deemed essential for human survival.

and painful death, but previous studies suggest the number is high, potentially in the hundreds of thousands.²

When hunters kill a female kangaroo that has a joey, they are required to kill it. The Code mandates a number of methods, such as a blow to the head, decapitation or shooting. However, joeys can escape their mother's pouch and flee, leaving them vulnerable to starvation or predators. It is not possible to say with certainty how many joeys are killed, but some estimates have put the number in the hundreds of thousands annually³.

Monitoring of the industry is challenging. Shooting occurs at night in regional areas, away from the oversight of regulatory agencies and the general public, and there are a limited number of inspectors.

Awareness of the animal welfare concerns associated with the commercial industry is leading to import bans. Last year, supermarkets in Belgium and Germany agreed to stop selling kangaroo meat. In February this year, two US Congressmen introduced the Kangaroo Protection Act which would ban the import of kangaroo meat and skins to the United States. A similar ban already exists in California. We expect other retailers and jurisdictions to introduce similar restrictions.

We urge this inquiry to recommend that the commercial hunting of kangaroos in NSW be stopped immediately.

Yours sincerely,

Simone Clarke

Executive Director

World Animal Protection Australia

² RSPCA Australia *A Survey of the Extent of Compliance with the Requirements of the Code of Practice for the Humane Shooting of Kangaroos* (2002).

³ Ben-Ami D, Boom K, Boronyak L, Townend C, Ramp D, Croft D and Bekoff M, 'The welfare ethics of the commercial killing of free ranging kangaroos: an evaluation of the benefits and costs of the industry' (2014)