

**Submission
No 136**

**INQUIRY INTO ANIMAL WELFARE POLICY IN NEW
SOUTH WALES**

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17th February 2022**Submission to the Inquiry into Animal Welfare**

I appreciate this Inquiry. It is important to consider how we treat animals in Australia. This can apply to animals in a variety of categories: animals in the environment, animals used for agricultural, commercial, sporting or pet purposes. All animals should be treated humanely and not have to endure any cruelty or neglect.

On principle, I believe we should respect the intrinsic claim of animals to be valued and respected. Many animals are bred for human use (with one of the biggest areas being food). Rather than disregarding animals as lesser than us or as simply features of a production process, we should have a great respect for the animals that are an important part of our lives, diets and culture. We should have an appreciation for the animals who become (i.e. meat) or who make (i.e. milk, cheese) our food. This includes having an emphasis on maintaining humane standards of animal welfare. While some animals will have a set lifespan, they still nonetheless have needs and feelings that should be considered - such as having enough food, water, not living in extreme temperatures, not being put under stress and (where possible) having access to open air and being able to move around.

Humans in modern society have become increasingly distant from animals and the food we eat, with a long production chain and animal products (such as a variety of meats and the like) being easily available in the supermarket. However, I still believe that many people do prefer and care about animals being treated fairly, including animals that provide the food that we eat. This includes, for example, many people choosing to buy free-range eggs over cage eggs - and many people who would also back stronger regulation to enforce welfare standards for farm animals.

Recently, there was the tragic loss of reportedly some 3 billion animals through the Black Summer 2019/2020 Bushfire Season - whether from the fires themselves or because of loss of habitat or starvation that occurred following the fires. This also highlighted the plight of the Koala, for which there are serious concerns from habitat loss and other pressures on their population. The pressure on wild animals will increase under climate change and worsening

extreme weather events and natural disasters, including drought, bushfires and floods.

The threat of climate change and natural disasters also impacts on other animals, such as livestock and other agricultural or farm animals. These can be directly impacted by natural disasters, such as being harmed through bushfires or floods. They can also be threatened indirectly through circumstances such as drought, which can have a dramatic impact on the available plants for feed. By extension drought can put financial pressure on farmers, which can make it harder for them to provide feed or medical attention or other supports for livestock to uphold their welfare. I am sure farmers overall want to take the best care of their livestock and would be extremely stressed about drought conditions and impacts on animal welfare. Hence, the government should consider the threat to animal welfare posed by climate change and extreme weather conditions (such as drought), and how we can provide support to farmers to help with animal welfare.

Kind Regards,

Benjamin Cronshaw.