



## VICTORIAN KANGAROO ALLIANCE

### CONCERNS ABOUT THE TREATMENT OF KANGAROOS

#### Sustainability Risk

- Commercial killing of kangaroos is the world's largest terrestrial wildlife slaughter and a source of deep national shame for many Australians.
- There were already far too many 'culls' without consideration of non-lethal alternatives, yet the introduction of the commercial system more than tripled average quotas in Victoria. The evaluation of the Victorian commercial trial in 2018 showed it may have increased waste, as well as being lawless, corrupt, a threat to kangaroo sustainability, and low-value to the tax payer. Victorian Labor launched the Kangaroo Harvesting Program anyway, removed the need for landholder permits and opened nearly the whole state to 'harvesting'.
- There are major sustainability concerns as figures from the industry differ widely from independent scientists. This was recently exposed in shocking detail in the NSW Kangaroo Inquiry. Contrary to spin, kangaroos are not remotely abundant enough to replace livestock. Their reproduction rates are similar to koalas and quotas often outstrip reproductive capacity leading to concerning declines. We have no faith in the Victorian population surveys as the last one saw a percentage increase double the biologically possible rate despite the drought and catastrophic bushfires.
- In January 2022, independent biostatistician Claire Galea released a scathing report showing Victorian government kangaroo population surveys were deeply flawed and would be resulting in overshooting and grave sustainability risks.
- Victorian Kangaroo Alliance receives regular reports of from concerned community members that kangaroos are disappearing across the state. Meanwhile, profiteering shooters are increasingly desperate to find kangaroos. Not only are shooters leafleting and door-knocking, they are soliciting widely across community Facebook groups in a bid to find scarce kangaroos.

#### Unregulated Cruelty

- Kangaroos are shot in the wild at night with virtually no oversight or sanctions for breaches of the National Code of Practice.
- Kangaroos are regularly wounded and die slow, painful deaths with limbs and jaws blown off.
- Only commercial shooters need to pass an accuracy test and it is completely unrepresentative of conditions in the field.
- The Code of Practice includes the bashing of in-pouch joeys – considered a waste product. The Code notes the correct method is difficult and depends on the shooters' skill to bash the correct part of the joey's head. There is no joey bashing proficiency test.
- At-foot joeys are also supposed to be euthanised as a waste product but often escape to die slowly from exposure, starvation and predation, calling for their mothers.
- Kangaroos are highly social and the regular terrorising and taking of large adults seriously damages mob structure and success.

## Human Impact

- The industry causes major offense and distress to many Indigenous people for who the Kangaroo is a Sacred Totem. In 2021 the Yuiin People put forward a Kangaroo Declaration calling for an end to the colonial exploitation of kangaroos.
- The industry causes major distress to wildlife rescuers, carers, advocates and all who care about animal welfare. It terrorises those who love their local kangaroos and must fight to save them.
- Many Victorians are fearful that shooters will be stalking their neighbourhood and killing beloved local mobs.
- Depletion of kangaroos, dumped offal and shooting near homes and businesses is destroying amenity and livelihoods, and the broader potential for lucrative and sustainable ecotourism in regional areas.

## Health Risks

- Carcasses are field dressed with little to no sanitary precautions and are driven around all night in any heat covered in dust and insects with mixed wild species crammed together on the back of open utes. According to the CDC, 75% of new or emerging diseases are zoonotic in origin and the unsanitary cross-contamination of the kangaroo industry poses a serious pandemic risk.
- Kangaroos are prone to mass mortality events from a highly fatal haemorrhagic disease which, if it became zoonotic, would be catastrophic.
- Meat from wild kangaroos have a high incidence of parasites, toxoplasmosis, e-coli, salmonella and other pathogens.
- Sulphite preservatives used to mask putrefaction in kangaroo pet meat can cause thiamine deficiency in dogs and cats leading to brain damage and death.
- Imports of kangaroo have been banned in Russia and California and many companies are rejecting this ethically/environmentally/hygienically questionable trade. There are major international campaigns against kangaroo products.

## LINKS

### Information from independent scientists:

- <https://www.kangaroosatrisk.org/>
- <https://www.kangaroosatrisk.net/> (Nomination to List the Large Macropods as Threatened Species)
- <http://thinkkangaroos.uts.edu.au> (particularly <http://thinkkangaroos.uts.edu.au/issues/hygiene.html>)

### Other resources:

- <https://vickangas.org> (see 'resources' for Victorian Kangaroo Pet Food Trial Evaluation Report)
- [www.kangarocrisis.com](http://www.kangarocrisis.com)
- <https://www.kangaroosalive.org/>
- <https://www.kangaroosalive.org/yuin-declaration>
- [www.alv.org.au/the-facts/issues/kangaroos/](http://www.alv.org.au/the-facts/issues/kangaroos/)
- <https://vickangas.org/blog?blogcategory=Aboriginal+perspectives>
- 2022 update from president of Australian Wildlife Protection Council: [www.creativecowboymovies.com/blog\\_posts/kangaroo-2022](http://www.creativecowboymovies.com/blog_posts/kangaroo-2022)
- <http://theconversation.com/food-fight-aboriginal-elders-take-on-the-kangaroo-industry-2905>
- Documentary freely available on Tubi <https://kangaroothemovie.com/>
- GRAPHIC images from inside the industry: <https://www.facebook.com/kangarootruth>
- NSW Parliamentary Inquiry Report: <https://www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/lcdocs/inquiries/2707/Report%20No%2011%20-%20PC7%20-%20Health%20and%20wellbeing%20of%20kangaroos%20and%20other%20macropods%20in%20NSW.pdf>
- Detailed myth busting presentation: <https://friendsofmotherearth.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/Kangaroo-Myths.pdf>