

Daniel Andrews, Premier of Victoria
Gayle Tierney, Minister for Agriculture
Lily D'Ambrosio, Minister for Environment



2 November 2022

Dear Premier and Ministers

Re: Moratorium on the killing of Victorian kangaroos

We express our deep concern at the recent and current flood events across Victoria and their devastating impact on our native wildlife, and in particular, the kangaroo population.

The *Victorian Kangaroo Harvesting Plan 2021 – 2023* allows for an immediate suspension of commercial shooting when kangaroo numbers are affected by a 'significant natural event'.

The widespread Victorian floods are a 'significant natural event' and the situation is now urgent:

- Kangaroos are trapped by rising floodwaters
- High numbers of kangaroos have been hit by vehicles, attacked by dogs and caught in fences as exhausted mobs flee to safety
- In-pouch joeys are drowning as their mums wade through the floodwaters
- At-foot joeys are drowning in the floodwater
- Joeys are being separated from their mums and left orphaned
- Survivors are at risk of suffering and death due to exposure, thermal stress, myopathy, and bacterial and parasitic infections
- Volunteer rescuers and carers are at a capacity and exhausted
- More rain and floodwater is predicted for the coming days

In addition to those that have already perished, it is expected an unknown number of kangaroos are deceased, still underwater, only to be discovered once water levels recede.

"What we have seen across the state is a large number of animals that are waterlogged, injured, and displaced or stranded." ~ Lisa Palma, CEO of Wildlife Victoria¹

As the natural disaster unfolds, the killing of kangaroos continues each day under the commercial Kangaroo Harvest Program and Authority to Control Wildlife (ATCW) permit system. Not only is this hastening the destruction of the species, it is creating an additional burden for volunteer rescuers who are called to attend to the wounded and joeys left behind.

Victorian kangaroos are in crisis - burned in the Black Summer bushfires of 2019/2020, habitat increasingly lost and fragmented, shot commercially and non-commercially in enormous numbers, many killed illegally, unknown numbers killed by vehicle strikes, fence hanging, foxes, dogs, toxic grasses and disease. And now the floods.

We call on the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning to:

1. Immediately place a moratorium on the Kangaroo Harvest Program
2. Immediately place a moratorium on ATCWs for kangaroos
3. Conduct a kangaroo count to accurately capture the impact of the floods and reflect the reduced kangaroo population.

¹ <https://www.sbs.com.au/news/article/the-photo-that-tells-the-story-of-australias-devastating-flood-crisis/o5120vfiv>

We are in the middle of a sixth mass extinction and biodiversity crisis with wildlife making up only four percent of the world's mammalian biomass. It is incumbent upon our leadership to protect what we have left and set the example of respect and protection for wildlife.

Sincerely

Victorian Kangaroo Alliance



An exhausted displaced mother kangaroo stuck in a fence with her face in the muddy water in Gisborne. She was euthanised and her joey taken into care. Credit: Debbie Gwyther-Jones.



Her orphaned joey caked in mud, likely suffering from a respiratory infection from the mud and water. Credit: Krysti Severi.



Young male kangaroo caked with mud after fleeing floodwaters in Kialla. Credit: Kirsty Ramadan