

Urgent need for a moratorium on commercial killing of kangaroos in Victoria

The Hon. Jacinta Allan MP
Premier of Victoria
1 Treasury Place
East Melbourne VIC 3002

The Hon. Steve Dimopolouos MP
Minister for Environment and Climate Action
Level 36, 2 Lonsdale Street
Melbourne VIC 3000

Date: 15th October 2025

Dear Premier Allan and Minister Dimopolouos,

We are in Parliament today and writing to you in honour of Kangaroos, Sacred Totem and National Icon, in the lead up to World Kangaroo Day 2025. We express deep concern regarding the current approach to Victoria's kangaroo 'management' through commercial killing and the Authority to Control Wildlife System (ATCW). The State of Victoria is blessed with native wildlife that generates vast income through tourism and only recently did you create a commercial incentive to kill kangaroos for profit. This change of attitude towards kangaroos in Victoria happened without a social licence. **A majority of Victorians do not want the commercial killing of kangaroos¹.**

We call on your government to implement an immediate moratorium on commercial killing, noting the Premier's recent comment reported in the ABC that "we've got to look at how it can be done through non-lethal control mechanisms²" and adopt evidence-based coexistence strategies that protect our native wildlife, and that address agricultural concerns through regenerative farming practices, not through the violent killing of our iconic keystone species, the kangaroo. We are aware of the many holding lines that DEECA has used to deflect public concern in the past and on this occasion, at this essential time for Australian wildlife, we ask for your genuine and specific engagement with the issues we raise.

Respecting Indigenous Cultural Values: Kangaroos hold deep spiritual and cultural significance for Indigenous Australians across Victoria. Kangaroos feature in dreaming stories, rock and bark art, and cultural practices that sing to the deep connectedness for our Indigenous communities to Country. For many Indigenous Australians, kangaroos are totemic animals, kin and family, representing important cultural values and ancestral connections. Kangaroos are taken respectfully in ceremony by Indigenous Australians, and we respect their ancient cultural practice, that is reverant, and neither for profit nor wasteful in any way.

The systematic killing of kangaroos through commercial killing and ATCW permits, is a story of disrespect which devalues Indigenous heritage, undermining reconciliation efforts and significantly harming Country. Wildlife protection and management approaches in Victoria need to be developed in genuine partnership with Traditional Owners that incorporate Indigenous knowledge systems, and Indigenous people that have sustained kangaroo populations by only taking what is needed and in respect for kangaroos.

Case for Coexistence and Not Killing: Indigenous land management practices offer valuable knowledge and insights for coexistence that prioritise holistic ecosystem thinking that views kangaroos as essential components of healthy Country. The vast majority of the Australian public supports coexistence and opposes the killing of kangaroos. Independent survey data shows:

- 90% of Australians want kangaroos to remain part of the Australian landscape³
- 88% of Australians think we should share the land with the kangaroos⁴.
- 98% of Australians believe it is important to protect kangaroos⁵.
- 86% of Australians have expressed concern over the decline of native animals and plants in their local areas⁶.

Rather than treating kangaroos as a problem to be eliminated, and scapegoating macropods for climate problems they have not caused, we need to embrace innovative management approaches that work with natural ecosystems. Successful coexistence models from around the world show that non-lethal methods, strategic land management, and habitat corridors can effectively reduce human-wildlife conflict, while preserving biodiversity.

¹ Kangaroos Alive. (2023). Spotlight on Kangaroos: National Survey Report. Accessed October 2025: <https://www.kangaroosalive.org/surveyreport>

² Jacinta Allen quoted in the article 'Kangaroo Control Streamlined for Victorian Farmers facing Drought (13 June 2025), [ABC News](#)

³ Kangaroos Alive. (2023). Spotlight on Kangaroos: National Survey Report. Accessed October 2025: <https://www.kangaroosalive.org/surveyreport>

⁴ Kangaroos Alive. (2023). Spotlight on Kangaroos: National Survey Report. Accessed October 2025: <https://www.kangaroosalive.org/surveyreport>

⁵ Kangaroos Alive. (2023). Spotlight on Kangaroos: National Survey Report. Accessed October 2025: <https://www.kangaroosalive.org/surveyreport>

⁶ 2024-2025 Biodiversity Concerns Report, [A Survey of Attitudes Towards Nature Conservation](#) (2025) Biodiversity Council

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Stopping Cruelty, Suffering and Violence is the Right Thing To Do: The hundreds of thousands of joeys that are brutally bludgeoned to death is an unacceptable level of violence to take place in Australian communities. We draw your attention to "[A Global Declaration of the Kangaroo Welfare Crisis](#)" where over 80 of the world's international scientists, academics, philosophers, ethicists, animal welfare and protection organisations and wildlife experts, unequivocally declare that the commercial kangaroo industry is perpetuating levels of animal cruelty that are entirely unacceptable.

The commercial kangaroo industry has no monitoring at the point of kill in the field. There is widespread evidence that ongoing cruelty and suffering is experienced by kangaroos targeted under the Victorian Government's *Kangaroo Harvesting Management Plan*. It has been raised in parliamentary surveys, wildlife rescue and sanctuary testimony, research and reports, documentary vision from Australian and international film and TV production, evidence provided by Victorian MPs and wildlife organisations, and community witnesses, that ongoing cruelty and suffering is experienced by kangaroos. This is harmful and destructive to kangaroos, the ecosystem, and the very identity and fabric of Victoria and Australia.

Communities are concerned about the extent of gun use in their local areas. They are concerned about the traumatic and lasting impact of finding terminally injured kangaroos on their family walks, or seeing piles of kangaroo remains left on the ground, has on children and the community in general.

The Case for Rejecting Climate Scapegoating: Kangaroos are increasingly being blamed for environmental degradation and climate impacts, but this narrative fundamentally misrepresents their ecological role. As native herbivores that evolved with Australian ecosystems over millions of years, kangaroos are adapted to our landscapes and play important roles in seed dispersal, soil aeration, and maintaining grassland ecosystems. They use minimal resources and are represented in much smaller numbers (2.3 million) than farmed animals who are represented in much more significant numbers (19 million) according to ABS data. The primary drivers of environmental degradation in Victoria are land clearing, urbanisation, intensive agriculture, and climate change caused by human activities — not native wildlife populations. Attention needs to be turned towards addressing the real causes of environmental challenges that are detrimentally impacting ecosystem recovery.

Historical evidence shows that kangaroo populations naturally fluctuate based on seasonal conditions, food availability, and ecosystem capacity. The current approach of widespread killing risks disrupting these ecological relationships and removing species that provide important ecosystem services. Evidence shows that population estimates of kangaroos are over inflated, survey methods for counting kangaroos lack transparency and expert review, and killing quotas are leading to local and regional extinctions⁷. Victoria's biodiversity is already under significant pressure from habitat loss, climate change, and other human impacts.

Coexistence is much more economically viable than commercial killing: Kangaroos are internationally recognised as symbols of Australia, featuring on our national coat of arms and representing our unique natural heritage to the world. As a sacred totem and national icon, kangaroos deserve protection that reflects their cultural and symbolic importance to Australian identity, not management approaches that use violence and elimination. Ecotourism is much more positively aligned with Victoria's values and future. Kangaroos already generate billions of dollars in tourism revenue. Every kangaroo killed is tourism revenue destroyed, and Austrade figures and Tourism Research data support this:

- Australia's ecotourism market: \$6.2 billion in 2023, is projected to reach \$21.1 billion by 2032⁸
- Ecotourism is growing at 13.60% annually vs. kangaroo killing industry worth only \$88 million⁹
- Almost 70% of international visitors specifically want to see animals, and mostly kangaroos when they visit¹⁰

Community perspectives are increasingly becoming aware of the cruelty and harm experienced by kangaroos, and are taking democratic action in their local communities. Four Victorian LGAs have already spoken out on behalf of their communities to stop commercial killing. The State Government has acknowledged the level of community concern that exists in relation to the suffering of kangaroos targeted by the Victorian *Kangaroo Harvesting Management Plan* in recent

⁷ NSW Parliamentary Committee 11, Health and Wellbeing of Kangaroos and other macropods in NSW, 2021

⁸ Imarc, Australia Ecotourism Market Report 2025-2033, on [Imarc website](#) accessed June 2025

⁹ Tourism Research Australia (TRA) on [Austrade website](#) accessed June 2025

¹⁰ Faulkner and Fredline, International Analysis of Wildlife Tourism, Wildlife Tourism Report Series No. 22, 2001

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community consultations. In the consultation report, it was acknowledged, “Participants expressed concern regarding the welfare of animals involved in harvesting operations. Their concerns stemmed from uncertainty regarding the frequency of compliance operations and their effectiveness. Some of the participants also raised concerns about the effectiveness of the National Code for the Humane Shooting of Kangaroos and Wallabies for Commercial Purposes (the National Code) in protecting the welfare of animals¹¹”.

The most comprehensive and effective means of addressing these concerns is to impose a moratorium on commercial killing whilst exploring and implementing non-lethal coexistence approaches that protect kangaroos from cruelty and harm, and respond to public opinion towards wildlife.

Recommendations for Policy Reform: We respectfully request that your government:

1. **Implement an immediate moratorium** on commercial killing and stop the allocation of any new lethal ATCW permits for kangaroo killing while conducting a comprehensive review of current wildlife management policies, building on the positive action of issuing Vets For Compassion with a Permit for Non-Lethal kangaroo relocation.
2. **Transition to coexistence focused management** by investing in non-lethal alternatives including exclusion fencing, wildlife corridors, and habitat management programs.
3. **Establish genuine partnerships with Traditional Owners** including those for whom the kangaroo is a totem, to incorporate Indigenous knowledge and cultural values into wildlife protection and management decisions.
4. **Fund research and pilot programs** demonstrating successful coexistence models that benefit both agriculture and wildlife conservation.
5. **Address root causes** of human-wildlife conflict through landscape-scale planning, habitat restoration, regenerative farming, minimising meat consumption, and sustainable development practices.
6. **Develop transparent monitoring systems** that track ecosystem health, wildlife populations, and the effectiveness of management interventions using scientific rather than economic criteria.

Victoria has the opportunity to lead Australia in ending commercial killing and promoting coexistence and ecotourism. Kangaroos are soft-footed, sentient beings, who use minimal resources, and experience trauma and grief just like we do. Victoria's biodiversity is already under significant pressure from habitat loss, climate change, and other human impacts, and protecting our shared natural heritage, and our national icon, must be an urgent priority.

Yours sincerely,



Kangaroos Alive



Victorian Kangaroo Alliance

**Animals
Australia**
for a *kinder* world

Animals Australia

¹¹ Consultation Summary Report, Review of the Kangaroo Harvest Management Plan 2021-2023