

### The most commonly asked questions:

Aren't there too many kangaroos?

Claims that there are more kangaroos today than before Captain Cook landed are erroneous. The records of early explorers and the journal of Captain Cook himself show that kangaroos existed in vast numbers before the First Fleet without adverse effects on the land or vegetation. What we are now seeing (especially over the past 10-15yrs) is that populations are seriously declining. For example in 1993 kangaroo populations in the Lower Darling were estimated at over 1 million. In 2005 that population estimate is now only 100,876. That's a 90% drop. However, in 2005 the quota set by National Parks & Wildlife Service was 45,970. In other words 41% of the population. This is NOT ecologically sound or even "sustainable" wildlife management. Furthermore, NPWS have stated that if kangaroo populations fall below 2 per sq/kilometre then that is equivalent to "quasi" regional extinction and that further shooting would stop. This has NOT happened and already we are seeing densities of kangaroos below 2 per sq/kilometre. Grey kangaroos have already dropped to these low levels in the Lower Darling, Tibooburra & Broken Hill shooting zones. Even red kangaroos are now on the verge of this in the Coonabarabran shooting zone (10) & Griffith zone (11). Still, the unrestricted commercial industry is NOT restrained and the priority to Government agencies becomes the survival of the industry & NOT the species. Declines for grey kangaroos were recorded at 64%, in the western plains and still no reprieve for the kangaroo was forthcoming in the most desperate of times.

Isn't the killing humane?

No. The RSPCA publication entitled "Incidence of Cruelty to Kangaroos Report" showed that up to 15% of kangaroos are not killed outright. Many die a slow and painful death. When mothers are shot, joeys are ripped from their mother's pouch and bludgeoned to death or stomped underfoot, or flee into the bush to die from starvation and predation. A slow and painful death awaits them. When you consider that this is a luxury industry, the deaths of millions of joeys is totally unnecessary. Remember **demand dictates** the kill.

Is there evidence of danger to species?

Yes. The biggest and strongest of the kangaroos are the prime target. Kill enough of these and the species is weakened. Even members of the kangaroo industry are worried. At a meeting in South Australia, one shooter said: "There are not many big 'roos left – just this garbage stuff – to see a big 'roo is a rarity' unquote. The average age of a Big Red kangaroo is now just two years of age. Their natural lifespan

is 20 to 25 years. Yet the Government turns a blind eye to these concerns. More and more females are being shot which means the industry is running out of big males. In previous years the male shooting bias was around 85%. Worryingly now females represent 31-40% of all kangaroos being shot.

Aren't kangaroos a pest?

No. For a start kangaroos prefer different vegetation to sheep and cattle. Research by the University of NSW and the CSIRO shows that the impact of kangaroos on agriculture overall is negligible, though at times there is a buildup of numbers in some areas. However, pasture biomass (vegetation) has to drop below 500 kg/ha before most competition occurs. Essentially below this level there is no vegetation for any herbivore to eat. It is simply a dustbowl. The degradation of our agricultural lands has been caused by 200 yrs of gross abuse and mismanagement. Our native wildlife can not be blamed for salinity problems, overgrazing, deforestation, our current water crisis, etc.

How many are being killed?

Governments set the numbers that can be killed for the skin and meat trade – 'the kill quota'. In 1975 a massive 6.9 million animals were killed. This year due to ongoing drought (especially since 2002) the national quota is 3.8 million. Still this figure is determined by the 2005 aerial survey figures. Meaning a lag of some 12 to 18 months in the data, which could seriously jeopardise any recovery of the commercially hunted species. Estimates for populations in NSW have greatly declined in 2006 due to drought and added pressure from the commercial industry. What is now apparent is that there are not enough large kangaroos to be worth the cost of a bullet. The commercial industry is now pressuring our Govt authorities to open up areas that historically have been NO-SHOOT zones. Who gains from the killing?

Not Australians. Rather than killing kangaroos whose flesh commands a price of just \$1.50 a kilo and \$10 a skin, what we should be offering our international visitors is the sight of large mobs of kangaroos in the wild. The kangaroo industry earns about \$200 million a year. The tourism industry earns more than \$200 billion a year. As the wild places of the world are increasingly destroyed, people are seeking genuine wildlife experiences – something we could give them through our unique and wonderful wildlife. The majority of tourists visit Australia to embrace the beauty of our wildlife, they don't want to see dead carcasses. The commercial industry creates a premature expanding graveyard for kangaroos across Australia.

The commercial industry is an unnecessary luxury market, that views kangaroos only in terms of dollars and cents. ALL the profit goes back to the commercial industry, for minimal outlay.

**Skippy is in real trouble**

Isn't kangaroo killing good for the environment?

Actually No. The kill is often justified on the grounds that kangaroos can replace hardhoofed sheep and cattle yet farmers show no signs of shifting away from sheep and cattle. Kangaroos are slow to grow and produce little meat. In times of drought populations plummet and 70% of joeys die during drought within the first year of life. The concept that kangaroo meat can replace beef and lamb is simply totally unrealistic. Farmers organisations have already stated that they will only supplement their current stock NOT SUBSTITUTE Kangaroos for sheep or cattle. Remember kangaroos don't grow wool.

Isn't kangaroo meat healthy?

We believe not. It's certainly not healthy for the Kangaroo species. Killing animals in the dust, dirt and flies can never meet standards of hygiene mandatory in an abattoir. A recent Government report, *Australia's Preparedness for Emerging Wildlife Diseases*, states that wildlife disease is a threat to human health. There is little doubt that diseases can be contracted from eating kangaroo meat that has been shot and gutted in the dust and dirt of outback Australia. When people become ill from eating contaminated food, it is difficult to isolate exactly what food made them ill. You would need to be able to examine the original carcass. Chillers are often unhygienic and out of public view.

Will it matter if more species of kangaroo become extinct?

Yes. The kangaroo is part of the Australian landscape. After the Statue of Liberty, it is the second most recognisable national symbol in the world. Yet tonight and almost every night, four-wheel drives will crisis cross the fragile soil of our rangelands seeking out kangaroos. The lucky ones will be quickly killed with a bullet through the brain – their flesh to be used as pet food, or served up as a taste thrill for gourmets. Retail stores that sell kangaroo meat and skins may be the richer for this, but Australia as a nation will be the poorer. **Our wildlife is NOT A COMMODITY to be traded to the highest bidder. It is our precious national heritage.**



“ The average age of a big red is now just two years of age. ”



“Up to 15% of kangaroos are not killed outright.”

What can I do?

Politicians take a lot of notice of letters from voters. Kangaroos can't call up politicians, but you can! They rightly consider that each personally written letter represents the views of thousands of people who did not bother to write. Your letter will count!

- Write to the Minister for Environment, Senator Ian Campbell Parliament House, CANBERRA ACT 2600 asking him to stop the commercial killing of kangaroos and the export of kangaroo products. We as a society need to find alternatives to shooting our wildlife.  
Email senator.iancampbell@aph.gov.au
- Write to the Premier in your state C/- Parliament House in your capital city asking him/her to stop the commercial killing of kangaroos in your state. Insist that they address the causes of conflict.
- Write to your State and Federal Member of Parliament asking them to fight for the abolition of the commercial kangaroo industry. Demand that they promote and subsidise benign wildlife adventures.
- Ensure the pet food you purchase doesn't contain kangaroo meat. Don't buy kangaroo products of any description.

**Yes! I wish to join the WLPA.**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Please put me on your emailing list

Regular - \$25    Concession - \$5    Donation

Cheque    Money Order    Credit

Bankcard    MasterCard    VISA

\_\_\_\_\_

Expires \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Please return this form with your payment to:  
WLPA PO Box 211, Gladesville NSW 2111

What should I say in my letter?

The main thing is to give YOUR thoughts and feelings about the killing, but you may like to use some of the points made in this leaflet.

Here's a sample letter:

Dear Prime Minister,

I wish to express my strong opposition to the commercial killing of kangaroos. This killing causes much suffering especially for the kangaroos who do not die immediately and for the joeys of slaughtered mothers who die slowly from starvation. The killing also means that our society is looking at the kangaroo as a scapegoat. Our agricultural dilemmas are self inflicted and we now need to be addressing solutions to the problems we have created over 200 years. Our wildlife should not bear the costs of our mismanagement, with their lives. We oppose the profiteering of companies who view our wildlife heritage as merely a commodity to be traded.

We ask that you reassess this serious issue which is continuing to attract international criticism.

I look forward to your reply.

Yours sincerely,

Joan Smith

Remember, write your letter expressing what YOU feel and think!



For more information contact us at the  
WORLD LEAGUE for PROTECTION of ANIMALS.

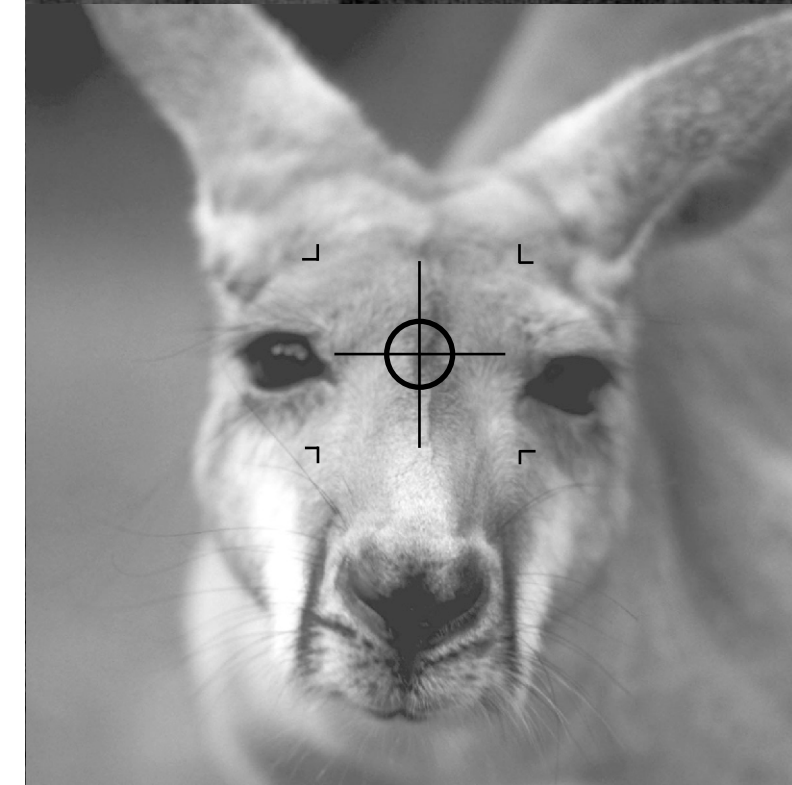
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(Revised Nov 2006)

**Kangaroos...**  
Don't buy into the slaughter



“How can you shoot an animal that looks at you as you aim your gun?”

ex kangaroo shooter



The WORLD LEAGUE for PROTECTION of ANIMALS