

The operation of the above ACT has ignored the severe decline in kangaroo populations in Queensland, NSW and South Australia. Three out of the four species of kangaroo shot in the wild for meat and leather are on the brink of extinction, according to a new report 'Decimation of an Icon' by the Australian Society for Kangaroos which uncovered the shocking results.

Western Grey, Eastern Grey, Wallaroo and Red Kangaroo populations have plummeted to densities of below five kangaroos per square kilometre, defined in the Australian government's Murray Darling report as 'quasi extinction'. In fact, densities of less than two kangaroos per square kilometre have been identified across 50 to 60 per cent of the three states.

More than three million animals are still allowed to be slaughtered every year despite the worst drought in living memory and the result is a decimation of kangaroo populations.

An immediate cessation of commercial and non-commercial slaughter of kangaroos in New South Wales, South Australia and Queensland should have been implemented long before such a critical situation eventuated. There is a tipping point where low densities and lack of diversity in the gene pool causes a non reversible spiral into extinction as we have seen with a third of our wildlife already. Why is my government allowing Australia's unique, gentle and social icon to be sacrificed for a few short term dollars in sport shoes and pet food?

Kangaroos, like all our native fauna and flora are the key to regenerating Australia's natural environment where land clearing and stock grazing have turned it into a giant dustbowl. If the Australian environment is going to stand a chance against the effects of climate change, it desperately needs all the kangaroos it can get to reduce the fire hazard of long dry grass and encourage seed dispersal, germination and fertilisation through their unique motion and waste products. Our economy also needs them to attract the tourists who value them enough to pay to come here in the hope of seeing them in the wild. Our fauna and flora coexisted in balance, perfectly suited to Australia's harsh conditions for thousands of years and that's the Australia that tourists come to see and what makes Australia unique.

Have we not damaged the Australian rangelands enough without now driving it's remaining fauna into history as well?

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