



**Australian
Wildlife
Protection
Council**
A voice for wildlife

29 November 2005

Submission for the Senate Inquiry on The National Animal Welfare Bill 2005

**Senate Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport
Committee
Department of the Senate
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600
Australia**

This submission has been prepared on behalf of the Australian Wildlife Protection Council and the National Kangaroo Protection Coalition. We would welcome the opportunity of participating in public hearings during the course of this Inquiry and have a number of representatives with extensive experience on wildlife issues who would be available to speak on the subject.

The Australian Wildlife Protection Council (AWPC) is a non-profit charity founded in 1969 and incorporated in 1981 and its aim is to protect our native animals from cruelty and exploitation. The AWPC's Patron is Professor Peter Singer, Professor Bioethics, University Centre for Human Values, Princeton University. The Australian Wildlife Protection Council is a member of the National Kangaroo Protection Coalition (NKPC), an alliance of 29 Australian animal welfare and wildlife protection groups.

We commend this initiative and agree that the existing legislative and regulatory frameworks relating to Animal Welfare are inadequate and that this is an issue that needs to be addressed at a Commonwealth level. The establishment of an independent authority such as a National Animal Welfare Authority would provide a forum through which Animal Welfare organisations, such as ourselves, could regularly engage and participate via consultation and during formal reviews.

We would like to draw to the Committee's attention, however, that issues relating specifically to wildlife appear not to be adequately covered by the proposed Bill as it currently stands. Adequate provision need to be made in this legislation to ensure the necessary protections for our wildlife and as this would also have implications for the regulatory framework and controls at both Commonwealth and State Government level.

Of immediate concern to us is the cumulative impact that the commercial utilisation of kangaroos has had on populations and species over several years. The 'Code of Conduct for Shooting Kangaroos' is inadequate and has not served to ensure that kangaroos are killed in a humane way. There is simply inadequate control over the industry. Kangaroos are not housed within a building or property ie. an environment in which reasonable controls can be put into place and consequently monitoring and the enforcement of codes are made especially difficult as a result, however, this issue should not be overlooked as a result.

The industry has flourished due to the fact that both Commonwealth and State Government priorities are so heavily weighted in favour of industry, profitability and export dollars at the expense of our wildlife and the environment. The impact on the kangaroo species and the inherent cruelty of industry practices continues to be of concern to many people, both in Australia and overseas.

International Patron-Professor Peter Singer. 247 Flinders Lane, Melbourne, Vic 3000 Australia.

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The AWPC recently had the opportunity of launching a new book in NSW Parliament titled "Kangaroos Myths and Realities" and it is the culmination of extensive research and hard work on the part of many who contributed. We thank Voiceless for providing the grant to enable us to publish the book and help to give our precious wildlife a voice. A few quotes from the book:

*"When the mother is killed, the 'young-at-foot' joey is left to fend for itself, and any zoologist with knowledge of kangaroo habits would have to admit that its chances of survival are at best minimal. Panic, fear, starvation, or being preyed upon by the hundreds of foxes that keep tabs on kangaroo shooting, will end its life in a state of terror. This is not acceptable to reasonable, thinking people. Kangaroo shooting is inherently and overtly cruel by all standards that can be applied and would not be acceptable to reasonable thinking people, if they knew." ~ **David Nicholls***

*"The shot to the head out of the darkness that the industry and its supporters promote as clean, green and humane, every night leaves behind abandoned young-at-foot quietly coughing in an attempt to unite with their mothers - but nobody hears! ~ **Ingrid White***

*"The industry was established as a clever means of kangaroo management for the benefit of farmers but took on a life of its own with its own monstrous agenda, and sought increased quotas to supply market demands. Add to this the illegal killing of kangaroos, and Australians must accept they are responsible for the greatest killing of wildlife on the earth" ~ **Maryland Wilson***

*"Australia has the unenviable record of having the worst record of recent mammal extinction of any country in the world. For over two hundred years now, we have been conducting what amounts to a war on our wildlife" ~ **The Hon. Richard Jones***

*"We need a Mabo decision for Australia's wild animals, a legal recognition of their special status as original residents of Australia, alongside its original inhabitants. The only ethical approach is one that give their interests equal consideration alongside similar human interests" ~ **Professor Peter Singer***

We thank you for the opportunity of providing this submission and welcome the opportunity to participate through public hearings.


Mary Lander

For:
**The Australian Wildlife Protection Council &
National Kangaroo Protection Coalition**

Attachments:

1. *Myths and Realities – An Overview*
2. *Impacts of commercial utilisation of kangaroos and related issues – prepared by David B Croft, BSc. Hons. (Flinders), PhD (Cambridge) Fowlers Gap Research Station and School of Biological, Earth & Environmental Sciences, UNSW Sydney.*
3. *A Copy of the AWPC's book titled 'Kangaroos: Myths and Realities' (Committee Members only)*