

24 March 2017

**The Manager  
CONSERVATION RESEARCH, ENVIRONMENT, PLANNING  
AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT DIRECTORATE  
PO Box 158  
Canberra, ACT, 2601  
AUSTRALIA**

e-mail: [environment@act.gov.au](mailto:environment@act.gov.au)

Dear Sir/Madam,

Subject: **Eastern Grey Kangaroo: Controlled Native Species Management Plan**

**I am writing to make a submission opposing the killing of Eastern Grey Kangaroos in the Australian Capital Territory (ACT) and ask that you consider only non-lethal methods if it is even necessary to manage their population. I also oppose the commercial killing of kangaroos.**

Kangaroos and other native animals are not pests but they have an intrinsic value and belong in Australia. They should be able to live in peace as they have done for 16 million years.

No matter what euphemisms are used, there is no such thing as humane killing of healthy animals.

As well as being an ecological disaster, the slaughter causes immeasurable suffering to the animals. Adults that do not die instantly from the first shot are stabbed and clubbed to death, or escape to die slowly of their wounds. Even the survivors often injure themselves in their panic, or die on the roads trying to escape, or live to suffer the emotional distress and disruption to the mob's social structure. Baby and young kangaroos are bludgeoned to death or left to starve. In addition to this killing in the ACT, the largest massacre of native land animals on the planet takes place around Australia each year. Millions of adult kangaroos are shot for their meat and skins.

It is difficult to believe that Australia promotes itself using the image of a kangaroo. The killing of kangaroos can only harm the tourism industry.

The government of the ACT first allowed the killing of over 500 kangaroos at the former Belconnen military base in 2008. Non-lethal solutions, such as relocation, were not considered even though native animal organizations offered to relocate the kangaroos with their own funding and estimated that the cost of relocation was much lower than figures quoted by authorities. It is unacceptable that Indigenous Australian activists were amongst those arrested for opposing the kill. Even greater numbers of kangaroos have been killed every year since 2008.

The reason given for the killing was that Eastern Grey Kangaroos are a threat to species such as Grassland Earless Dragons and the Striped Legless Lizard. At the Administrative Reviews of 2013 and 2014, this claim was shown to be completely untrue. In fact, in an adjoining reserve just across the New South Wales border, where kangaroos are never killed, several of these species are recovering far more quickly than on the Australian Capital Territory reserves where kangaroo killing is conducted every year.

The purpose for the killing is not to save grass species since houses were built on or near the land. It is not necessary to spread low density housing to every part of Australia. Kangaroos help prevent fires by eating excess grass and they help fertilize the soil and spread seeds.

In previous years, government authorities asserted that: “*The numbers to be culled have been based on scientific kangaroo counts in each location. This has been compared to the sustainable carrying capacity for each area that your ecologists have established by taking into account the habitat requirements of grassland dependent animals and plants*”. Independent ecology experts have disputed: (1) the models for determining the sustainable kangaroo carrying capacity of reserves; (2) the methods for counting them; and (3) the models for estimating actual numbers. I take it that your government is well aware of this expert criticism of the calculations.

Kangaroos are not overpopulated nor is there a need to reduce their population. Kangaroo numbers are self-regulating and they do not need to be killed. If local kangaroo population densities are high, it is because their habitat has been reduced to fragments and they cannot move to other areas. It is necessary to increase the number and/or area of national parks and nature reserves and to provide wildlife corridors linking these places of safety. It is also necessary to build overpasses or underpasses so that animals can cross highways, as is done in Croatia and other European countries.

*The two native species of deer in Croatia is have a similar population-density as have the four largest kangaroo species in Australia, and I have never seen a deer even though there is a deer crossing warning sign near Zagreb International Airport, where I work. Hunters use the excuse that it is necessary to hunt animals to control their population in every country. Croatia is a good example of humans coexisting with native animals such as deer, bears, wolves and foxes.*

There is only one species with a population problem and that can be solved by cutting the baby bonus and family allowance to those with more than 2 children. Similarly, there is no need for immigration agents to lure new immigrants by making false promises about employment and the like.

The survey which states that most residents in Canberra support the killing of kangaroos simply indicates that the government has managed to convince residents that the killing is necessary and that there is more work to be done by animal rights organizations and activists in changing public attitudes towards animals.

*It is a myth that Australia has high standards of animal protection. Australia and North America have the worst record in the world when it comes to species extinctions, forest destruction, oppression of indigenous people and the highest (per capita) consumption of fossil fuels. Since I refuse to be part of such a country, I returned to my country of origin and encourage others to do the same.*

In the years that I lived in Australia, from 1970 to 1992, I never saw a kangaroo, with the exception of those at the *Royal Melbourne Zoological Gardens*, even though I travelled a lot, went on camps and did farm work, such as picking potatoes and peas.

I join many people and organizations from Australia and around the world and call on you to work towards finding a non-lethal solution when and if it is necessary to manage kangaroo populations.

Yours sincerely,

Simon Validzic

e-mail: [sime.validzic@gmail.com](mailto:sime.validzic@gmail.com)

website: [www.animal-friends-croatia.org](http://www.animal-friends-croatia.org)

**Note regarding privacy:** I give approval to make my name and other personal information public in any consultation report and there is no need to de-identify me.

**From:** [Sime Validzic](#)  
**To:** [Environment](#)  
**Subject:** Submission: Eastern Grey Kangaroo: Controlled Native Species Management Plan  
**Date:** Friday, 24 March 2017 2:13:17 PM  
**Attachments:** [Submission - Eastern Grey Kangaroo - Controlled Native Species Management Plan.doc](#)

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**Attachment:** this same text formatted as a letter.