

Wildlife Act Review

Submission Comment 166:

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Primary interests:

- Hunting of wildlife
- Wildlife welfare
- Eco-tourism involving wildlife

Comment

Concern 1: I have always had ongoing concerns around issues such as duck hunting which directly impacts our wildlife (native and non native species) and wetlands. It is unnecessary and brutal. This activity no longer fits what most of the public considers an acceptable way to treat wildlife.

Commercial or 'sporting' group interests often impact legislation that is about supporting profit rather than habitat and animal welfare. Penalties for hunters who don't act lawfully need to be greatly increased, and wildlife rescuers should be legally permitted on the wetlands. I have seen images of injured and dead native species as a result of hunting and this is heart breaking. It is not humane to allow any animal, native or non-native, pain, injury or distress.

Concern 2: Commonly wildlife cruelty cases are inadequately punished and punishment for harm to wildlife should reflect the value of our wildlife and harm and pain caused (either as a direct malicious act or indirectly via misuse of chemicals or logging) as a serious deterrent. An example of this is the case of Murray Silvester, who was fined just \$2500 for poisoning eagles. Currently in Victoria, an offender faces a penalty of up to \$8261 and an additional \$826 for each animal killed and I believe this is not a sufficient deterrent/punishment for harm.

Concern 3: I have serious objections to wildlife being used for tourism (Seaworld, for example). Our legislation sets the tone for how we either value or devalue wildlife by prioritising profit over conservation, protection and care. By allowing/condoning the use of wildlife for commercial purposes and profit our legislation makes clear that wildlife abuse is acceptable. I feel the act should recognise the sentience of all wildlife and protect it accordingly.

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