

Wildlife Act Review

Issues Paper questions – Response 37:

Contributor: Individual

Primary interests:

- Protection and conservation of wildlife and habitat
- Management and control of wildlife causing problems or damage
- Research relating to wildlife

Question responses

1.1.1 In what ways does the Act succeed or fail in representing contemporary expectations for, and values relating to, wildlife in Victoria? Please provide examples from your own experience.

The Act does not reflect contemporary values and expectations in terms of its capacity to protect native wildlife. It protects species that are considered pest animals that damage wildlife habitat (eg deer), and the penalties for breaches (eg the example given of the poisoned Wedge-tailed Eagles penalty) are not commensurate with the impact on our ecology, or the value people place on protecting wildlife.

1.2.1 Are the current purposes of the Act satisfactory? If not, what should the desired outcomes, objectives or purposes of the Act be? How should the objectives and purposes of the Act relate to the desired outcomes? How would they ensure desired outcomes are achieved?

The purpose of the Act should be succinct and unambiguous - something like "To protect and conserve Australian native wildlife in Victoria", and through the mechanism of regulating the conduct of persons engaged in activities concerning or related to native wildlife, including management, taking, keeping and use.

1.4.1 Should the Act prescribe a general duty of care related to wildlife conservation or biodiversity protection more broadly? Why or why not? How could it work in practice?

Yes it should.

1.5.1 Are there any definitions that are unclear or confusing or that cause problems for achieving the outcomes and objectives of the Act?

Wildlife should be defined as all fauna indigenous to Australia

1.5.2 Should any additional animal species or taxa (groups of species) be included in the definition of 'wildlife' or 'protected wildlife'? Should any species or taxa be excluded and therefore be exempt from some provisions in the Act?

Specific exclusions under particular circumstances (eg specific locations/timeframes) could be allowed where necessary and justified

1.5.3 Should 'game' animals be defined as wildlife in the Act or defined some other way or excluded from the Act entirely?

Yes, all species not indigenous to Australia should be excluded from the Wildlife Act and the protections it affords them

2.1.3 Should game management be regulated under its own Act? What are the advantages and disadvantages of such an approach?

Any form of game management must not encourage or support the maintenance of species that are environmental and/or agricultural pests.

3.2.1 Should the Act include provisions for consultation with the community on certain issues? What issues should undergo community consultation?

Yes - for example any proposed exclusion of species from the Act.

3.3.1 Should the Act enable wildlife management plans? What provisions should be included for such plans?

Consistent with the suggested purpose above, the regulation of the conduct of persons engaged in activities including management, taking, keeping and use of native wildlife should incorporate the submission and approval of wildlife management plans, along with any associated licences, permits etc. Compliance of these plans and permit conditions needs to be monitored and policed, and breaches penalised accordingly.

3.5.2 Is full cost recovery appropriate, or should fees for some licences and activities be subsidised? What role is there for user pays or beneficiary pays principles? What, if any changes, should be made and why?

If a regulatory service is regulating a commercial enterprise, then it should be full cost recovery, whereas the regulation of non-profit services should be subsidised.

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