

To the Review Panel

Thank you for the opportunity of making a submission for the review of the Wildlife Act Review (Vic.) 1975, "the Act" .

The Act is inadequate and outdated (endemic pests protected.)

The Act as it stands is inadequate and outdated. Its provisions do not deal adequately with the current environment, some wildlife is not protected while conversely **some endemic pest species, such as deer, are protected even during the breeding season. Doing so is only pandering to deer hunters**(. Deer are rife in Mallacoota, East Gippsland where I live and constitute a traffic hazard on the roads . Also both before and after the recent bush fires, Sambar deer are out of control, damaging regenerating flora, eroding banks along streams and even invading gardens, so electric fences have been bought by some residents.

Native species in East Gippsland not protected under the Act.

The Act is deficient in that it **does not protect some native species**. Permits are issued for the killing of native species found in East Gippsland such as Grey-headed Flying Foxes, Hardhead Ducks and Satin Bowerbirds.

Contradictions in State policy and practice.

Permits have been granted to destroy Brolgas and Magpie Geese which State Government instrumentalities such as Serendip Sanctuary **actually** have been breeding in captivity for release into the wild because these species have been so depleted.

Penalties for ignoring the provisions of the Act are both insufficient and and/or often not enforced.

Four hundred Wedge-tailed eagles were destroyed on East Gippsland farming properties and for this destruction there was a nominal fine. In other areas of the State the poisoning of over 100 birds in Violet Town and the killing of at least 80 koalas in a former bluegum plantation at Cape Bridgewater in 2020 and the resulting legal actions demonstrate that compliance is disregarded and that current penalties are inadequate.

Shooting for "sport" and destruction of wildlife

The Act allows "sporting shooting" of duck. There can be wholesale slaughter in the "open" season and injured and maimed birds can be left to die cruel deaths. Many Victorians want "sporting shooting" banned (Roy Morgan Research Poll 2006).

Commercial harvesting of kangaroos exposes native animals to further cruelty. Wounded animals (like wounded wildfowl) suffer painful deaths. Joeys are killed by being bashed against tree trunks. Permits to kill kangaroos are granted too readily to farmers (including hobby farmers) when they allege that kangaroos are depleting pasture to the detriment of stock and even horses and other domestic animals.

Legislative amendments necessary.

1. The Act needs updating to protect native animals, not exotics introduced for sport.
2. If the Act is seriously meant to protect our wildlife then it must protect their habitat. Logging of all native forests, not just old growth, has to be prohibited.
3. The Game Management Authority ("the Authority") is not a suitable body to oversee wildlife policy. The Authority should be replaced by an independent body operating with out a political agenda

The provisions of the Wildlife Act should be redrafted so that the intention of the Act, namely to protect Victoria's native fauna, is actually implemented.