

## **Wombat Forestcare Inc**



June 28<sup>th</sup> 2020

### **Submission to Review of Wildlife Act Victoria 2021**

Wombat Forestcare welcomes the opportunity to make the following submission.

The Wildlife Act is archaic and out-dated. In its current form it: -

- protects exotic game animals despite the significant damage they do to wildlife habitats around the state,
- legally sanctions the killing of tens of thousand of native animals each year, including threatened species, through a non-transparent Authority to Control Wildlife permit system,
- treats some native wildlife, such as ducks and native quails, as sport for recreational shooters and kangaroos as pet food,
- provides no direct protection for wildlife habitat,
- provides exemptions to the logging industry,
- has weak penalties for those who commit an offence under the Act, as highlighted by the appalling incidents of the illegal poisoning of Wedge-tailed Eagles.

The Victorian State of the Environment Report 2018 paints a very bleak picture of the current condition of biodiversity and ecosystems in Victoria. None of the 35 indicators used to measure the condition of biodiversity are rated as "good" and only seven are rated as "fair".

In terms of Federal legislation, a recent interim review of the Environmental Protection Biodiversity Act found the laws have been largely ineffective, and Australia is currently leading the world in the extinction of mammals and is ranked fourth when it comes to the extinction of all species.

The Wildlife Act urgently requires amending to prioritise the conservation of wildlife and protection of habitat based on scientific evidence, transparent and accountable decision-making, an independent regulator and a proper compliance and enforcement regime with strong, effective penalties.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.