

MEDIA RELEASE

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Disappointment and sadness for Loddon Kangaroo populations

Wildlife Victoria was deeply disappointed to learn of the Campaspe Meat Company's intention to establish a kangaroo pet food processing plant in Inglewood in the North of Victoria.

Wildlife Victoria CEO, Lisa Palma said that the decision was out of touch with the Victorian community's views on how our native animals should be treated.

"In recent years there has been a significant shift of community values away from the traditional view that wildlife is an open resource to be used and managed for human benefit," Ms Palma said.

"We know that our communities care deeply for the wellbeing of our native animals. In fact, studies have shown that the protection of wildlife is fundamental to the community's identity, culture and community wellbeing."

"In 2020 alone, Wildlife Victoria received more than 100,000 enquiries from people requesting help for injured, sick and orphaned wildlife. Almost 10,000 of those enquiries were specifically for kangaroos," said Ms Palma.

Ms Palma said Wildlife Victoria opposes the slaughter of kangaroos for the purpose of profit.

In Victoria, commercial harvesting of Eastern and Western Grey kangaroos has been allowed since 1 October 2019, under the Victorian Kangaroo Harvest Management Plan (KHMP).

According to a report from Victoria's Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning, 46,064 kangaroos were killed under harvesting permits last year. Harvesters reported that 30,882 (67 per cent) of the kangaroos harvested were male and that 13,850 dependent young were destroyed.¹

Ms Palma said that when you consider female kangaroos commonly have one young annually, with the mortality rate in the wild for joeys typically at 70% in the first year of life, the number of kangaroos killed through the Victorian Kangaroo Harvest Management Plan was simply devastating.

"Government bodies should act as trustees for 'our' native animals and consider the shifting values of the community more broadly," she added.

Ms Palma said native animals offer an incredible drawcard for those visiting country Victoria as tourists.

"Our precious wildlife should be considered for the benefit of the community at large and not any special interest group," Ms Palma said.

"Knowing that this facility will be established so very close to the Kooyoorra State Park is terribly distressing for animal advocates," Ms Palma said.

"It is a sad fact that thousands of adult kangaroos along with their pouch young, and at foot Joeys will suffer a terrible fate when the Campaspe Meat Company's facility opens. It is likely that entire kangaroo communities will be eradicated in the region," concluded Ms Palma.

ENDS

For general information and enquiries contact: media@wildliffvictoria.org.au

¹ <https://www.wildlife.vic.gov.au/our-wildlife/kangaroos/commercial-harvest-of-kangaroos> accessed 9 September 2021.