

Submission
No 385

**INQUIRY INTO MANAGEMENT OF CAT POPULATIONS
IN NEW SOUTH WALES**

Name: Name suppressed
Date Received: 21 November 2024

Partially
Confidential

SUBMISSION: INQUIRY INTO THE MANAGEMENT OF CAT POPULATIONS.

ABOUT US

We are responsible cat owners. Our cat was adopted from the Wingecarribee Animal Shelter.

We are also informed and environmentally aware citizens and have donated generously to conservation organisations for many years – including Greenpeace, Australian Conservation Foundation, Nature Conservation Council, wildlife conservation groups as well as multiple animal welfare charities and organisations – RSPCA, Animals Australia, and Humane Society International.

We believe we have a balanced view on cat ownership and environmental protection. We acknowledge that pet ownership is important for many people today because they improve the quality of life for so many by helping to relieve anxiety, stress and loneliness.

Please consider the impact of your draconian proposal on people who care about all animals and the planet.

OUR SUBMISSION

Cats are being targeted while far more suspicious and destructive forces are responsible for environmental degradation and the loss of our wildlife – mostly human beings in pursuit of their unquestionable right to all the trappings of our “modern civilisation”.

Cats are not the main risk to threatened species – humans are with their big homes destroying indigenous habitats; the road trains bringing all the consumer goods to fill their big homes; their fast cars, and their dogs. *All far more destructive than cats.* The proposed cat management strategy is just a low fruit picking exercise, an easy target.

The most problematic invasive species of all is man himself. Man introduced all invasive species in the first place – rabbits, foxes, pigs, deer etc for profit, entertainment, hunting. What about sheep and cattle? *All invasive!* Therefore, is it reasonable to focus on cats rather than the cause of the problem – APPALLING HUMAN BEHAVIOUR – dumping, breeding for profit, not desexing, irresponsible pet ownership, displacement of pets due to moving, violence.

We are concerned that this issue will demonise cats and release increased anti-cat sentiments in the community, which divides us rather than solves the problem. Some people, for reasons known only to themselves, are born or raised to be cat haters. We have animal cruelty

legislation in NSW, but this proposal would create outcomes that conflict with existing animal welfare and cruelty legislation. It will legitimise animal cruelty as a way to deal with any problem. Baiting, trapping, shooting are eighteenth century solutions to 21st century problems. They are inhumane, cruel and ineffective and unacceptable in a civil society.

Animals are becoming increasingly involved in domestic violence situations, so this should be a warning that government sanctioned violence is not a solution to a problem and in fact just appeals to the violent extremists in our society.

OPTIONS

A more balanced and sensible approach would be to prioritise cat welfare and support human management practices, including desexing, community education along with some strategic directions to solve the BIGGER problems.

- Instead of making massive grants to horse racing industry, greyhound racing and other animal gambling pursuits, why not give grants to local councils to support large-scale desexing programs, community education programs and improve animal shelters.
- Better still, employ veterinarians in local councils to monitor animal welfare concerns and undertake education and desexing programs. Most animal shelters are supported by charities, but why does the state government support gambling on animal sports but not treat the impact this disgraceful industry has on society.
- Support community cat programs to encourage rehoming, desexing and fostering.
- Educate and regulate pet owners and teach pet care to children.
- Provide more support and grants for research into roadkill prevention.
- Harmonise animal welfare and cruelty legislation in Australia and have one unified body to oversee the management of animal related practices, industries and ethics, including pet welfare, scientific research, zoos, hunting, entertainment, food production.
- Work towards developing a national sustainable population policy with biodiversity as an important objective.

ADDENDUM

For many years I travelled daily to work between Goulburn and Canberra. I was distressed by the roadkill. Many days I was in tears before I got to work. After many years I could not do it anymore.



A very common site on the Federal, national highway. As far as the eye can see.....

Cats might well kill individual animals, but only cars and trucks can cause this level of destruction. Why is nothing done to curb roadkill which accounted for 310 road incidences in 2022-23, and that would only be for serious incidents involving insurance claims. No one has ever successfully estimated the real level of roadkill. I think Sydney University tried some years back, but it could never be accurate. And yet, the Green ACT government undertakes kangaroo culls on a regular basis. What does this achieve?