

**Submission**

***Loddon Shire Council, Victoria  
Proposal - Licenced Wild Game Pet Meat Processing Facility***

***September 2021***





## Animal Justice Party

Animal Justice Party Limited  
PO Box Q1688  
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### *The Animal Justice Party 2021*

#### Images

Front cover: Eastern Grey Kangaroos (*Macropus giganteus*), Dr Nadine Richings © 2020

This Page: Mount Ash Forest, Kinglake, Dr Nadine Richings © 2020

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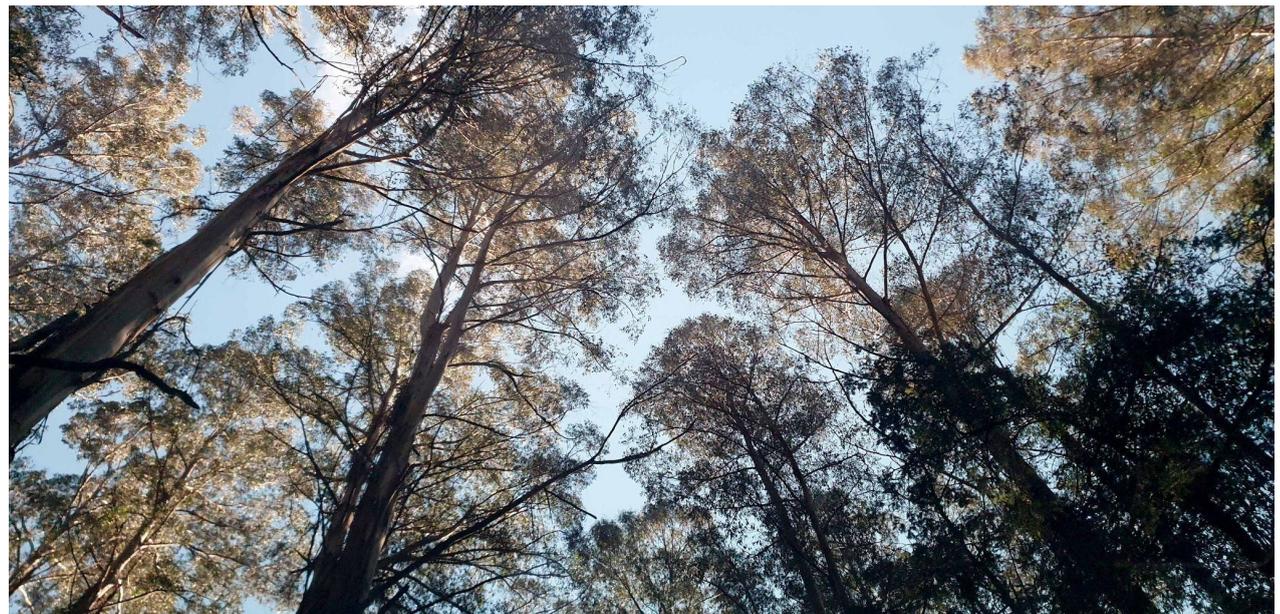
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*The Animal Justice Party acknowledges the First Nations peoples as the custodians of the land on which we live and work.*

## About the Animal Justice Party

The Animal Justice Party (the AJP) is a political party established in 2009 to secure the interests of animals and nature through Australia's democratic institutions of government. Our vision is a planet on which animals and nature have the right to live and thrive free from negative human interference and a human society which functions with kindness and compassion within its ecological limits as a responsible member of the Earth community. The AJP seeks to foster respect, kindness, and compassion towards all species particularly in the way governments design and deliver initiatives, and the manner in which these initiatives function.

In New South Wales the AJP has two elected representatives in the Legislative Council of NSW, Mark Pearson MLC and Emma Hurst MLC. In Victoria, the AJP has an elected representative in the Legislative Council, Andy Meddick MLC, and two councillors in Local Government, Councillors Julie Sloan and Charlie Vincent.

This submission was prepared by the Victorian Submissions Working Group within the AJP. The working group makes this submission on behalf of the AJP with the approval and the endorsement of the Board of Directors.

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## Introduction

We have recently heard that the Campaspe Meat Company Pty Ltd hopes to repurpose the Loddon Valley Abattoir in Inglewood as a “wild game” meat processing facility, with a focus on kangaroos, but with the potential to process the bodies of other animals. Loddon Shire Council is currently reviewing a proposal from the company to repurpose the property at Crown Allotments 28A and 28D Tarnagulla Road Inglewood to support this activity.

The ***AJP objects in the strongest possible terms to this proposal.*** Our three main issues are:

1. Exploiting wildlife and helping to drive the biodiversity emergency;
2. Violence - animal cruelty and human impacts; and
3. Biosecurity and emerging diseases.

This submission is guided by the AJP’s mission and vision and underpinned by our policies. The AJP has policies on animals, environment and human issues<sup>1</sup>. Our policies on kangaroos<sup>2</sup>, environment<sup>3</sup>, environmental law<sup>4</sup>, wildlife and sustainability<sup>5</sup>, wildlife protection<sup>6</sup>, biosecurity<sup>7</sup>, wet markets<sup>8</sup> and decent work<sup>9</sup> are particularly relevant to this issue. The three main issues are detailed in this submission.

We also note that Loddon Shire Councillor, Daniel Straub, runs a social media page called 'The Hunters [*sic*] Voice'<sup>10</sup> and was a former president of the Victorian Duck Hunters Association. We believe this is a conflict of interest and we trust Loddon Shire Council will manage it appropriately and transparently through the consideration of this proposal.

***Our recommendation is that Loddon Shire Council does not support this proposal.***

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this proposal.

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<sup>1</sup>Animal Justice Party, *Policies* <https://animaljusticeparty.org/policies/>

<sup>2</sup>Animal Justice Party, *Kangaroo Policy* <http://animaljusticeparty.org/policieslist/animals/kangaroos/>

<sup>3</sup>Animal Justice Party, *Environment Policy* <https://animaljusticeparty.org/policieslist/environment/environment/>

<sup>4</sup>Animal Justice Party, *Environment Law Policy*  
[https://animaljusticeparty.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/ENVIRONMENTAL\\_LAW-NAT-Basic.pdf](https://animaljusticeparty.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/ENVIRONMENTAL_LAW-NAT-Basic.pdf)

<sup>5</sup>Animal Justice Party, *Wildlife and Sustainability Policy*  
<https://animaljusticeparty.org/policieslist/environment/wildlife-and-sustainability/>

<sup>6</sup>Animal Justice Party, *Wildlife Protection Policy* <https://animaljusticeparty.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/Wildlife-Protection2021.pdf>

<sup>7</sup>Animal Justice Party, *Biosecurity Policy* <http://animaljusticeparty.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/biosecurityA4.pdf>

<sup>8</sup>Animal Justice Party, *Wet Markets Policy* <https://animaljusticeparty.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/WetMarkets2021.pdf>

<sup>9</sup>Animal Justice Party, *Decent Work Policy* <https://animaljusticeparty.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/Decent-Work-2021.pdf>

<sup>10</sup> The Hunters Voice. Facebook Community page. <https://facebook.com/TheHuntersVoice/>

## Exploiting wildlife and the biodiversity emergency

The world's biodiversity (variation in life) is under intense stress and pressure, causing a loss of biodiversity that has led to a Biodiversity Emergency. This is recognised and reported by scientists around the world<sup>11,12,13</sup> and by leading global organisations such as the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES)<sup>14</sup> and the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity<sup>15</sup>. It is an existential crisis and global emergency, since the health and wellbeing of the planet, environment, biodiversity and individual species, including humans, are interdependent and connected.

Australia's biodiversity is in dire straits. The last federal *State of the Environment* Report<sup>16</sup> stated "*The outlook for Australian biodiversity is generally poor, given the current overall poor status, deteriorating trends and increasing pressures*", and the independent review of the federal environment laws, the Samuel Review<sup>17</sup>, concluded that the law was an abject fail. In 2020 there was a Senate Inquiry into Australia's Faunal Extinction Crisis<sup>18</sup>. These threats to nature and decline in biodiversity and ecosystems are also reported in Victoria. The 2018 State of the Environment Report from Victoria's Commissioner for Environmental Sustainability was damning<sup>19</sup>. The Victorian Parliament is currently running an inquiry into biodiversity loss and ecosystem decline in Victoria.

The five main drivers of biodiversity loss are recognised scientifically and globally<sup>20</sup> and can be further categorised as follows:

1. Exploitation (use, abuse, disregard, over-exploitation): animals, habitats & ecosystems, resources (e.g. land, water, air)

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<sup>11</sup> Ceballos G *et al.* (2015) Accelerated modern human-induced species losses: Entering the sixth mass extinction *Science Advances* Vol. 1, no. 5, e1400253 (DOI: 10.1126/sciadv.1400253), <https://advances.sciencemag.org/content/1/5/e1400253>

<sup>12</sup> Ceballos G *et al.* (2020) Vertebrates on the brink as indicators of biological annihilation and the sixth mass extinction. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* Jun 2020, 117 (24) 13596-13602; (DOI: 10.1073/pnas.1922686117), <https://www.pnas.org/content/117/24/13596#ref-list-1>

<sup>13</sup> Waldon A *et al.* (2017) Reductions in global biodiversity loss predicted from conservation spending. *Nature* 551: 364–367. <https://doi.org/10.1038/nature24295>

<sup>14</sup> IPBES (2019): Global assessment report on biodiversity and ecosystem services of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services. E. S. Brondizio, J. Settele, S. Díaz, and H. T. Ngo (editors). IPBES secretariat, Bonn, Germany. 56 pages. <https://ipbes.net/global-assessment>

<sup>15</sup> Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (2020) Global Biodiversity Outlook 5. Montreal. <https://www.cbd.int/gbo/gbo5/publication/gbo-5-en.pdf>

<sup>16</sup> Cresswell ID, Murphy H (2016). Biodiversity: Biodiversity. In: Australia state of the environment 2016, Australian Government Department of the Environment and Energy, Canberra, <https://soe.environment.gov.au/theme/biodiversity>, DOI 10.4226/94/58b65ac828812

<sup>17</sup> Samuel, G 2020, Independent Review of the EPBC Act— Final Report, Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment, Canberra, June. CC BY 4.0. <https://epbcactreview.environment.gov.au/resources/final-report>

<sup>18</sup> Parliament of Australia (2019) Australia's Faunal Extinction Crisis. Senate Inquiry Interim Report, Commonwealth of Australia. Dec 2019 [https://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary\\_Business/Committees/Senate/Environment\\_and\\_Communications/Faunalextingtion2019/Interim\\_Report](https://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/Senate/Environment_and_Communications/Faunalextingtion2019/Interim_Report)

<sup>19</sup> Commissioner for Environmental Sustainability (2018) State of the Environment 2018 Report. Office of the Commissioner for Environmental Sustainability Victoria; Melbourne. [https://www.ces.vic.gov.au/sites/default/files/SoE2018\\_SummaryReport.pdf](https://www.ces.vic.gov.au/sites/default/files/SoE2018_SummaryReport.pdf)

<sup>20</sup> IPBES (2020) Models of drivers of biodiversity and ecosystem change. <https://ipbes.net/models-drivers-biodiversity-ecosystem-change>

2. Habitat loss (changed land use): terrestrial, freshwater, marine
3. Pollution: plastics, chemicals & pharmaceuticals, land, water, air
4. Climate Change: animal agriculture, land clearing & logging, fossil fuels. (N.B.: climate change is a massive issue, yet it is only one of the main drivers of biodiversity loss; one of the main outcomes of climate change is biodiversity loss and ecosystem decline, *i.e.* loss of life on Earth)
5. Introduced species: farmed animals, free-living animals, plants, microorganisms

### ***Kangaroos are being exploited***

Kangaroos are critical species in the Australian environment. The earliest kangaroos appeared about 25 million years ago (mya) and evolved to modern kangaroos by about 3 mya, through adaptation to the changing climate and environment, especially to the formation of grasslands<sup>21</sup>. When there is a natural balance in the environment, kangaroo numbers are balanced through factors such as competition and predation. However, humans are altering the balance of nature; affecting the quality and quantity of species present in various ecosystems. The dingo (*Canis lupus dingo*) is the apex predator in Australia, but humans have killed so many dingoes in Victoria, they are listed as a threatened species under the *Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988*. Loss of dingoes has reduced predation and probably altered kangaroo populations<sup>22</sup>; however, kangaroo joeys are taken by foxes and this limits kangaroo populations<sup>23</sup>. In the very best conditions and, if the joey avoids predation, a female kangaroo may produce one young to independence in 12-18 months<sup>24</sup>; just one, if everything goes right. They most certainly do not "breed like rabbits" as some wrongly claim. The home grasslands of kangaroos have been exploited for farming, in particular, for animal agriculture of introduced species such as sheep and cows; the Victorian Volcanic Plains Grasslands are critically endangered with less than 5% remaining<sup>25</sup>. In addition to losing their habitat, urbanisation and climate change have pushed kangaroos into human urban habitats and created a perceived population problem, *i.e.* there are simply more kangaroos at the edges of cities and more humans are therefore engaging with them, but there are not necessarily more kangaroos. Kangaroos are vilified as "pests"; considered to be an irritation and nuisance for development and to damage infrastructure and compete with introduced, farmed species. They are shot in Victoria under an Authority to Control Wildlife (ATCW) or through the Victorian Government Kangaroo Harvest Program, through which the government uses them as a resource and profits from their meat, fur and skins. This is total exploitation of these iconic and quintessential Australians. This cruelty and abuse is well-documented<sup>26</sup> and overseas markets for kangaroo products are closing as people

<sup>21</sup> Couzens AMC, Prideaux GJ (2018). Rapid Pliocene adaptive radiation of modern kangaroos. *Science*. 362(6410):72-5.

<sup>22</sup> Morris T, Letnic M. (2017) Removal of an apex predator initiates a trophic cascade that extends from herbivores to vegetation and the soil nutrient pool. *Proceedings of the Royal Society B: Biological Sciences*. 84(1854):20170111. <https://royalsocietypublishing.org/doi/full/10.1098/rspb.2017.0111>

<sup>23</sup> Banks, P.B., Newsome, A.E. and Dickman, C.R. (2000) Predation by red foxes limits recruitment in populations of eastern grey kangaroos. *Austral Ecology*, 25: 283-291. <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1046/j.1442-9993.2000.01039.x>

<sup>24</sup> Tyndale-Biscoe CH (2005). *Life of Marsupials*. 2nd ed. Melbourne: CSIRO Publishing. ISBN: 0 643 09199 8

<sup>25</sup> Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment (2020) *Nationally Threatened Ecological Communities of the Victorian Volcanic Plain: Natural Temperate Grassland & Grassy Eucalypt Woodland*. Australian Government.

<https://www.environment.gov.au/epbc/publications/grasslands-victoria>

<sup>26</sup> Hopping Pictures (2018) *Kangaroo: a love hate story*. <https://kangaroothemovie.com/>

around the world recognise with horror the disgusting exploitation of these unique and majestic animals<sup>27,28,29,30</sup>.

***“Kangaroos exist only in Australia; they will not exist anywhere if we continue to kill, vilify and exploit them.”***

**Dr Nadine Richings, Biologist.**

There are many issues with the way the Victorian Government treats kangaroos; three issues are highlighted below.

### ***Numbers, populations and the commercial kangaroo "harvest"***

Some people believe that kangaroos are abundant. However, the Federal Government does not count kangaroos, so no one knows how many kangaroos there are in Australia. State and territory governments use outdated data to guess quotas of the number of animals that can be shot to "sustain populations"; the Victorian Government quotas for 2020 are based on data from 2018<sup>31</sup>. Reporting of the numbers of kangaroos that are shot in Victoria is not accurate<sup>32</sup>. Firstly, the official records are extremely difficult to understand and interpret; information obtained under freedom of information from DELWP regarding ATCW indicates the accuracy of information is poor<sup>33</sup>. Secondly, dependent young are killed; shot or bludgeoned to death but they are not "counted" in shooting/killing records. So, the real number killed is higher than official reports. How can the Victorian Government deliver on Objective 1 of their Kangaroo Harvest Management Plan<sup>34</sup>, "Ensure that commercial kangaroo harvesting in Victoria is ecologically sustainable", when they do not know how many kangaroos (of all ages) are shot and killed?

The Victorian Government ran a trial (Kangaroo Pet Food Trial) to determine if commercial use of kangaroos was viable and sustainable. A government department assessment of the trial recommended it should not continue; one concern was that it was an "unacceptable risk to the sustainability of kangaroo populations"<sup>35</sup>. The Victorian Government ignored recommendations from their own department and established a permanent commercial program.

<sup>27</sup> Center for a Humane Economy (2020) Kangaroos are not Shoes Project. <https://kangaroosarenotshoes.org/>

<sup>28</sup> Viva! (2020) Save the Kangaroo. <https://www.savethekangaroo.com/>

<sup>29</sup> Bradshaw L (2019) Gaia launches campaign to ban sale of kangaroo meat. The Bulletin. 29Jan2019.

<https://www.thebulletin.be/gaia-launches-campaign-ban-sale-kangaroo-meat>

<sup>30</sup> Hope A (2020) GAIA launches campaign against kangaroo skin in sports shoes. The Brussels Times. 06Sep2020.

<https://www.brusselstimes.com/brussels-2/133034/four-arrested-in-case-of-hijacked-helicopter/>

<sup>31</sup> Scroggie MP & Ramsey DSL (2019) Kangaroo harvest quotas for Victoria, 2020. Arthur Rylah Institute for Environmental Research. Technical Report Series No. 308.

[https://www.ari.vic.gov.au/\\_\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0019/453502/ARI-Technical-Report-308-Kangaroo-harvest-quotas-Victoria-2020.pdf](https://www.ari.vic.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0019/453502/ARI-Technical-Report-308-Kangaroo-harvest-quotas-Victoria-2020.pdf)

<sup>32</sup> Hylands P (2019) Kangaroos in Victoria: status 2019. Cowboy Blog, Creative Cowboy Films.

[https://www.creativecowboyfilms.com/blog\\_posts/kangaroos-in-victoria-status-2019](https://www.creativecowboyfilms.com/blog_posts/kangaroos-in-victoria-status-2019)

<sup>33</sup> AWPC (2020) The building blocks of extinction and biodiversity loss in Victoria: Australian Wildlife Protection Council submission to the Parliamentary Inquiry into the extinction crisis in Victoria. June 2020.

[https://www.parliament.vic.gov.au/images/stories/committees/SCEP/Ecosystem\\_Decline/submissions/S73\\_-\\_Australian\\_Wildlife\\_Protection\\_Council.pdf](https://www.parliament.vic.gov.au/images/stories/committees/SCEP/Ecosystem_Decline/submissions/S73_-_Australian_Wildlife_Protection_Council.pdf)

<sup>34</sup> DELWP (2019) Victorian Kangaroo Harvest Management Plan. Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning, Victorian Government. [https://www.wildlife.vic.gov.au/\\_\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0026/436067/VictorianKangarooHarvestManagementPlan2019.pdf](https://www.wildlife.vic.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0026/436067/VictorianKangarooHarvestManagementPlan2019.pdf)

<sup>35</sup> DELWP (2019) Kangaroo Pet Food Trial Evaluation Report. Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning, Victorian Government. [https://www.wildlife.vic.gov.au/\\_\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0019/412723/KPFT-Evaluation-Report\\_Dec\\_2018a.pdf](https://www.wildlife.vic.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0019/412723/KPFT-Evaluation-Report_Dec_2018a.pdf)

In NSW, the commercial shooting of kangaroos has decimated kangaroo species, so much so that there is currently a parliamentary inquiry into the health and wellbeing of kangaroos and other macropods<sup>36</sup>. An expert biostatistician made a submission to the inquiry<sup>37</sup>, appeared as a witness at the inquiry hearings<sup>38</sup> and provided answers to questions on notice<sup>39</sup>; her expert recommendation was:

*"Independent investigation into all population trends over time and subsequent quotas need to be urgently undertaken to ensure the survival of the species and avoid extinction."*

The director of the Campaspe Meat Company has claimed they want to process 1000 kangaroos per week and have the capacity to increase that to 2000<sup>40</sup>. That is between 50,000 and 100,000 kangaroos killed and dismembered per year! These numbers are obscene and absurd. If this occurs, kangaroos will be driven to extinction; it is not sustainable.

### ***Shooting regime is changing kangaroo biology***

Mass killing of kangaroos across Australia is changing the social structure of kangaroo mobs. The large alpha males are the prime target of shooters and they are being eradicated from mobs. The absence of the alpha males allows smaller males to breed; males that naturally would not breed. This is altering the gene pool and the social dynamics in mobs. The sex ratios in some mobs is now skewed toward females. Additionally, the older females are also being culled out of the mobs, removing the nurturing, maternal teaching they usually provide to the younger individuals. However, no one is researching or monitoring the impacts that kangaroo shooting is having on the genetics and social structure of kangaroo populations.

### ***Violence***

The shooting of kangaroos for the commercial venture posed by the Campaspe Meat Company Pty Ltd is cruel and inhumane; this is discussed in the following section.

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### ***Recommendation:***

1. Oppose the proposal for the "wild game" meat processing facility; do not exploit wildlife or help to drive biodiversity loss.

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<sup>36</sup> NSW Parliament (2021) Health and wellbeing of kangaroos and other macropods. Inquiry of the Planning and Environment Committee, Parliament of New South Wales.

<https://www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/committees/inquiries/Pages/inquiry-details.aspx?pk=2707#tab-submissions>

<sup>37</sup> Galea C (2021) Submission to "Health and wellbeing of kangaroos and other macropods". Inquiry of the Planning and Environment Committee, Parliament of New South Wales.

<https://www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/lcdocs/submissions/71264/0311%20Mrs%20Claire%20Galea.pdf>

<sup>38</sup> NSW Parliament (2021) Health and wellbeing of kangaroos and other macropods - hearing transcript. Inquiry of the Planning and Environment Committee, Parliament of New South Wales. 11 Jun 2021.

<https://www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/lcdocs/transcripts/2597/Transcript%20-%2011%20June%202021%20-%20UNCORRECTED.pdf>

<sup>39</sup> Galea C (2021) Supplemental Questions "Health and wellbeing of kangaroos and other macropods". Inquiry of the Planning and Environment Committee, Parliament of New South Wales.

<https://www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/lcdocs/other/15786/5.%20Answers%20to%20supplementary%20questions%20-%20Mrs%20Claire%20Galea.pdf>

<sup>40</sup> Loddon Herald (2021) Pet food plan for town. Loddon Herald Online. 29 Jul 2021.

<https://www.loddonherald.com.au/post/pet-food-plan-for-town?fbclid=IwAR0z6y0bOX37sDYrYj2XmvSxvNWz4PWi8BcBOjU6iWlr4YM MJVQ6F3hpTOA>

## Violence – animal cruelty and human impacts

There is a link between animal violence and violence towards people, in particular child abuse, elder abuse, and domestic violence<sup>41</sup>, and it is an indicator for severe violence, like domestic homicide. In this proposal, the killing of kangaroos will happen in Loddon Shire and its surrounding communities, and the butchering and dismemberment of kangaroos will occur at the proposed meat processing facility. So the Loddon Shire community and its neighbouring communities will be impacted by both the violent killing and dismemberment of kangaroos.

### ***The shooting of kangaroos for the commercial venture posed by the Campaspe Meat Company Pty Ltd is cruel and inhumane.***

The *National Code of Practice for the Humane Shooting of Kangaroos and Wallabies for Commercial Purposes*<sup>42</sup> applies to all kangaroos shot in Australia for "commercial" reasons, and requires shooters to kill the dependent young (pouch young and young-at-foot) of any females they shoot. The methods used to kill the young include decapitation, a blow to the head, or shooting larger young. The presence of fur is used as a gauge of "sentience" and the young kangaroo's capacity to feel pain.

*Young kangaroos are sentient individuals:* The code claims that unfurred young are not sentient or conscious. Anyone who has had even minimal contact with these individuals knows they are all responsive to various stimuli and therefore conscious. A newborn kangaroo responds to gravity and the scent of its mother to travel up the mother's abdominal fur, through the opening of the pouch and then navigate to an appropriately developed teat, to which they attach<sup>43</sup>. This extraordinary feat requires exceptional consciousness, capability and function. Additionally, there is a vast spread of capacity, ability and responsiveness among animals who do not yet have fur. A pouch young is remarkably more developed just before fur is visible compared with the day that they were born, yet both are in the category of unfurred. Individuals who do not yet have fur are definitively not a single group that are all comparable in their faculties.

*Killing of Young:* There is much room for error in what the shooters are asked to do and, therefore, a great chance of intense cruelty, pain and fear among the young kangaroos. The code does not acknowledge that the young kangaroos do not merely feel physical pain; they also feel emotions and are at least fearful, if not terrified. The problem with these methods is that it is not

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<sup>41</sup> Diemer K and Humphreys C (2021) In Victoria, animal abuse may soon be considered a form of family violence. Here's why that matters. The Conversation. March 3, 2021. <https://theconversation.com/in-victoria-animal-abuse-may-soon-be-considered-a-form-of-family-violence-heres-why-that-matters-156284>

<sup>42</sup> AgriFutures (2019) National Code of Practice for the Humane Shooting of Kangaroos and Wallabies for Commercial Purposes. 18 Nov 2020 <https://www.agrifutures.com.au/product/national-code-of-practice-for-the-humane-shooting-of-kangaroos-and-wallabies-for-commercial-purposes/>

<sup>43</sup> Tyndale-Biscoe CH (2005). Life of Marsupials. 2nd ed. Melbourne: CSIRO Publishing. ISBN: 0 643 09199 8

possible to gauge how humane such killing is. Even commercial shooters who are required to undergo training to shoot adult kangaroos, do not complete training on how to humanely kill joeys. At-foot joeys are particularly at risk, as most shooters are unable to catch them, and they are subsequently likely to die from starvation, predation or exposure<sup>44</sup>. We believe this poses a risk to the sustainability of populations, as these deaths that occur as a result of starvation, predation or exposure are probably not recorded in the official numbers when tallying how many kangaroos have been shot.

Shooters do not understand the complexity of kangaroo social structure. Pouch young, young-at-foot and adolescent kangaroos are physically, emotionally and socially reliant on their mothers and other individuals in the mob. The adult alpha male has a very specific role that cannot easily or quickly be replaced. Shooting any individual in the mob will be at least disruptive and at worst destructive, leaving other individuals in turmoil. You cannot in any way make this "humane". Shooters could not know who is dependent on whom in a kangaroo mob. So, the National "standard" encourages shooters to shoot everyone who could potentially be dependent on another – *that means the entire mob!*

In practice, kangaroo shooting is imperfect and cruel. It is done at night, using spotlights to sight the kangaroos. Although the code advises a single, fatal head shot, this frequently does not occur. There are many reports of live kangaroos with bullet wounds and injuries, including jaws shot off<sup>45</sup>. The code advises that very young kangaroos should be bludgeoned; this involves stomping on heads of the joeys or smashing their heads on a solid surface, such as the bull bar of a motor vehicle.

### ***Kangaroo shooting has negative impacts on residents***

In regional Victoria, kangaroo shooting frequently occurs near homes. Many residents are terrified<sup>46</sup>, with spotlights shining into their properties and kangaroos being shot on land adjacent to homes. The next day, the residents find parts of dismembered kangaroos on the edges of their properties<sup>47</sup>. Some residents are suffering such poor mental health as a consequence of the violence they have witnessed and the fear that has left them unable to sleep, that they are selling businesses and homes and moving away from the violent nightmare. The violent practice of kangaroo shooting will negatively impact Loddon Shire residents and

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<sup>44</sup> RSPCA (2020) What happens to joeys when female kangaroos are shot? 26 Nov 2020

<https://kb.rspca.org.au/knowledge-base/what-happens-to-joeys-when-female-kangaroos-are-shot/>

<sup>45</sup> NSW Parliament (2021) Health and wellbeing of kangaroos and other macropods. Inquiry of the Planning and Environment Committee, Parliament of New South Wales.

<https://www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/committees/inquiries/Pages/inquiry-details.aspx?pk=2707#tab-submissions>

<sup>46</sup> Herald Sun (2021) 'Nightmare' roo cull dividing tourist town.

[https://www.heraldsun.com.au/subscribe/news/1/?sourceCode=HSWEB\\_WRE170\\_a&dest=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.heraldsun.com.au%2Fnews%2Fvictoria%2Ftourist-town-of-dunkeld-divided-over-nighttime-shooting-of-kangaroos%2Fnews-story%2F7085e6fea78cd1f213c10e6cdc458b1b&memtype=anonymous&mode=premium](https://www.heraldsun.com.au/subscribe/news/1/?sourceCode=HSWEB_WRE170_a&dest=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.heraldsun.com.au%2Fnews%2Fvictoria%2Ftourist-town-of-dunkeld-divided-over-nighttime-shooting-of-kangaroos%2Fnews-story%2F7085e6fea78cd1f213c10e6cdc458b1b&memtype=anonymous&mode=premium)

<sup>47</sup> Herald Sun (2021) Horror as roos chopped up, left to rot.

[https://www.heraldsun.com.au/subscribe/news/1/?sourceCode=HSWEB\\_WRE170\\_a\\_GGL&dest=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.heraldsun.com.au%2Fnews%2Fvictoria%2Ftourists-and-residents-horrified-as-kangaroos-decapitated-and-disembowelled-at-holiday-hotspot%2Fnews-story%2Fbf85ad4332bae4be0e4e377b24dc2bf0&memtype=anonymous&mode=premium](https://www.heraldsun.com.au/subscribe/news/1/?sourceCode=HSWEB_WRE170_a_GGL&dest=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.heraldsun.com.au%2Fnews%2Fvictoria%2Ftourists-and-residents-horrified-as-kangaroos-decapitated-and-disembowelled-at-holiday-hotspot%2Fnews-story%2Fbf85ad4332bae4be0e4e377b24dc2bf0&memtype=anonymous&mode=premium)

residents from surrounding areas; Loddon Shire Council should not support this proposal for a kangaroo processing facility as it will support the violent practice of kangaroo shooting.

***Violence in slaughterhouses and meat processing facilities: killing animals has a high price on both ends of the knife***

Slaughterhouses and meat processing facilities are neither healthy nor safe. Compared to the general Australian population, meat workers have an increased risk of death from all causes and a high prevalence of self-reported poor psychological and physical health. Slaughterhouses and meat processing facilities are inherently hazardous workplaces that pose tangible physical risks and psychological harms to workers<sup>48</sup>. One of the inherent problems may be that employees must violate the innate tendency to refrain from killing and dismembering someone. By repeatedly violating one's natural preference not to harm and kill, workers are highly likely to experience adverse psychological effects.

***“Animals come here to die, to be eviscerated, to be decapitated. . . these are violent and difficult things to watch. It is essentially very dehumanising work”***      **Bill Haw, CEO of National Farms, USA<sup>49</sup>.**

Workers in slaughterhouses and meat processing facilities suffer from anxiety, panic, depression, increased paranoia, a sense of disintegration, and drug and alcohol abuse. When people are required to work in an environment where they habitually enact relationships of domination and exploitation, where they must desensitise themselves to the suffering of animals, it becomes easier to reproduce these outside of their work<sup>50</sup>. The “Sinclair Effect,” is the propensity for those who routinely slaughter animals, to become perpetrators of violent crimes. Killing animals may be a first step to further forms of violence against humans<sup>51</sup>. Research shows that slaughterhouse workers demonstrate signs and symptoms of Perpetration-Induced Traumatic Stress (PITS), sometimes through the psychological dissociation called “doubling”<sup>52</sup> also experienced by Nazi doctors. PITS is a form of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) that results from situations that would be traumatic if someone were a victim, but where the person in question has been a perpetrator. “Doubling” is a situation whereupon the worker identifies with the animals, feeling that they are worthy of consideration and care. However, in order to keep killing and dismembering them, the workers must dissociate from this kind-heartedness, resulting in a chronic suppression of empathy.

<sup>48</sup> Victor K, Barnard A. Slaughtering for a living: A hermeneutic phenomenological perspective on the well-being of slaughterhouse employees. *Int J Qual Stud Health Well-being*. 2016 Apr 20;11:30266. doi: 10.3402/qhw.v11.30266.

<sup>49</sup> Bill Haw, CEO of National Farms, USA; cited in "Inside the Slaughterhouse" (2002)  
<https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/meat/slaughter/slaughterhouse.html>

<sup>50</sup> Kotler S (2010) This Is Your Brain On Slaughter: The Hidden Cost of Killing Animals. *Psychology Today* May 23, 2010.  
<https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/the-playing-field/201005/is-your-brain-slaughter>

<sup>51</sup> Leibold M (2016) A Call to Action: Psychological Harm in Slaughterhouse Workers. *The Yale Global Health Review*. Jan 25, 2016.  
<https://yaleglobalhealthreview.com/2016/01/25/a-call-to-action-psychological-harm-in-slaughterhouse-workers/>

<sup>52</sup> Gavit, CD (2016) U.S. slaughterhouse industry : masculinity, violence, and a call for feminist intervention. Masters Thesis. The University of Texas, Austin.  
<https://repositories.lib.utexas.edu/bitstream/handle/2152/38193/GAVIT-THESIS-2016.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>

Aside from the brutality to the animals in the slaughterhouse, there is an added risk that this pathology will spill over into their domestic lives, making them more likely to commit violent crimes, particularly against those who are similarly defenceless, such as women and children. At a time when interpersonal and social violence is a grave concern, the AJP recognises that there are significant risks in employing men (overwhelmingly) to kill and dismember as a matter of routine. There is evidence that the psychological harm experienced by men who are paid to do this loathsome work, spills over into the rest of their lives<sup>53</sup>. The AJP is also aware that automated killing is being trialled in some slaughterhouses. While we do not want our friends, relatives or partners to work in these jobs, neither do we want to live in a society where slaughterhouses are fully automated. This would make animal suffering even easier to put out of mind. Instead, the AJP will continue to advocate for the closing of all slaughterhouses.

***“Down in the blood pit they say that the smell of blood makes you aggressive. And it does. You get an attitude that if that hog kicks at me, I’m going to get even. You’re already going to kill the hog, but that’s not enough. It has to suffer. When you get a live one you think, oh good I’m going to beat this sucker. . . And then it gets to a point where you’re at a daydream stage. Where you can think about everything else and still do your job. You become emotionally dead.”<sup>54</sup>***

The emerging literature on the psychological effects of slaughterhouse work on humans is substantive<sup>55</sup>. We already know that farming animals for food is harmful to animals, the environment and human health. Now it is apparent that the animal industries may cause wider harms. The desensitisation to suffering is causally linked to a higher propensity for committing violent crimes, particularly domestic abuse, which is a great concern to Australians. It is impossible to apply an ethical system within an industry that institutionalises and normalises violence. Therefore, the AJP believes the majority of the industry is beyond reform and detrimental to those who work within and pass through it. Due to the multiple harms caused by the slaughterhouse industry, we recommend closing it down and transitioning workers to kinder, meaningful employment<sup>56</sup>.

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### **Recommendation:**

2. Oppose the proposal for the “wild game” meat processing facility; do not support the cruel shooting of kangaroos, the butchering and dismemberment of their bodies or the negative impacts on human mental health that this work causes; do not support the violent shooting of kangaroos that will leave residents feeling fearful and terrorised.

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<sup>53</sup> Fitzgerald AJ et al. (2009) Slaughterhouses and Increased Crime Rates: An Empirical Analysis of the Spillover From “The Jungle” Into the Surrounding Community. *Organization & Environment*. 2009;22(2):158-184. doi:10.1177/1086026609338164

<sup>54</sup> Kotler S (2010) This Is Your Brain On Slaughter: The Hidden Cost of Killing Animals. *Psychology Today* May 23, 2010. <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/the-playing-field/201005/is-your-brain-slaughter>

<sup>55</sup> Gullone, Eleonora (2012), “Animal Cruelty, Antisocial Behaviour, and Aggression: More than a Link” Palgrave Macmillan. Flynn, Clifton P. (2012) *Understanding Animal Abuse: A Sociological Analysis* New York: Lantern Books. Eisnitz, Gail A. (2009) *Slaughterhouse: The Shocking Story of Greed, Neglect, And Inhumane Treatment*

<sup>56</sup> Animal Justice Party *Decent Work Policy*  
[https://animaljusticeparty.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/DECENT\\_WORK-NAT-Basic.pdf](https://animaljusticeparty.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/DECENT_WORK-NAT-Basic.pdf)

## Biosecurity and emerging diseases

The World Health Organization (WHO) lists emerging diseases, such as COVID-19, among the greatest global health threats<sup>57</sup>.

Animal agriculture and wildlife farming and trade, have created perfect conditions for microorganisms to move between individuals and species<sup>58,59</sup>. To an infectious microorganism (a pathogen), the next individual or species is simply the next host, the next stepping stone; a new habitat. Pathogens, including bacteria, fungi and viruses, do not discriminate. Humans are merely another animal, another host, and if pathogens can transfer to a human and thrive, they will. The transfer of infectious diseases between animal species is highly important; it facilitates the spread of infections by dramatically expanding and diversifying the potential habitat for the microorganism. Infections weaken individuals; sometimes they cause long-term or permanent effects and sometimes they are fatal. Emerging infections that spread between species have the potential to decimate species, change ecosystems and drive biodiversity loss. Critical movements and developments that should be monitored are the ability of a pathogen to thrive in a new animal system, *e.g.* movement from birds to mammals, or movement from any species to another species (not just movement to humans). Loss of habitat is forcing wildlife closer together, which is reducing the physical distancing between species and individuals. Animal agriculture and wildlife farming and trade facilitate the transmission of pathogens among individuals and species because of the close proximity – there is no "social or physical distancing".

Some diseases have moved from wildlife to people as we destroy or invade their habitats; examples are the hendra, nipah and ebola viruses<sup>60, 61, 62</sup>. Shooting, hunting and butchering animals are activities that place people in direct contact with blood, flesh, bone, tissues, organs, urine, faeces and skin of animals, and provide the perfect pathway for pathogens to move from dying, dead and dismembered animals to the people who are killing and butchering them<sup>63</sup>. Wet markets, such as slaughterhouses and meat processing facilities, create ideal conditions for the emergence and spread of diseases between animal species, including humans (zoonoses)<sup>64</sup>.

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<sup>57</sup>WHO (2021) Urgent health challenges for the next decade. World Health Organization.

<https://www.who.int/news-room/photo-story/photo-story-detail/urgent-health-challenges-for-the-next-decade>

<sup>58</sup> Grandcolas P & Justine J-L (2020) Covid-19 or the pandemic of mistreated biodiversity. *The Conversation*, 30 Apr 2020.

<https://theconversation.com/covid-19-or-the-pandemic-of-mistreated-biodiversity-136447>

<sup>59</sup> Armstrong F et al. (2020) Coronavirus is a wake-up call: our war with the environment is leading to pandemics. *The Conversation*, 31 Mar 2020. [Accessed 04 Apr 2020]

<https://theconversation.com/coronavirus-is-a-wake-up-call-our-war-with-the-environment-is-leading-to-pandemics-135023>

<sup>60</sup>Animal Justice Party Biosecurity Policy. <http://animaljusticeparty.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/biosecurityA4.pdf>

<sup>61</sup> Karesh WB et al. (2012) Ecology of zoonoses: natural and unnatural histories. *The Lancet*. 380 (9857): 1936-1945.

[https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736\(12\)61678-X](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(12)61678-X)

<sup>62</sup> van Oosterzee P and Laurance B (2020) The next global health pandemic could easily erupt in your backyard. *The Conversation*. 2 June 2020. <https://theconversation.com/the-next-global-health-pandemic-could-easily-erupt-in-your-backyard-138861>

<sup>63</sup>Jandu N (2020) Human activities are responsible for viruses crossing over from bats and causing pandemics like coronavirus. *The Conversation*. 13 May 2020.

<https://theconversation.com/human-activities-are-responsible-for-viruses-crossing-over-from-bats-and-causing-pandemics-like-coronavirus-134226>

<sup>64</sup> Animal Justice Party Wet Markets Policy. <https://animaljusticeparty.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/WetMarkets2021.pdf>

Marsupials, such as kangaroos, are warm-blooded mammals and they harbour viruses that can infect people. For example Ross River Virus is found in Agile Wallabies and Eastern Grey Kangaroos<sup>65</sup>. Australia, in particular the south eastern Australia, has been identified by experts as a disease-risk spot<sup>66</sup>.

*Does Loddon Shire Council want to be responsible for establishing the facility where the next pandemic begins?*

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**Recommendation:**

3. Oppose the proposal for the “wild game” meat processing facility; do not establish the facility where the next pandemic may begin.
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## **Conclusion**

If Loddon Shire Council approves the proposal from Campaspe Meat Company Pty Ltd to repurpose the Loddon Valley Abattoir in Inglewood as a “wild game” meat processing facility, they will:

- Exploit wildlife and drive the biodiversity emergency;
- Support violence through animal cruelty and the human impacts of this violence; and
- Create biosecurity risks and opportunities for the emergence of new diseases.

The AJP implores the Loddon Shire Council to not support the proposal for a “wild game” meat processing facility. We also request that the identified conflict of interest for Councillor Daniel Straub, whereby he is actively involved with, and supportive of, shooting and killing animals, is managed appropriately within Loddon Shire Council while this proposal is being considered.

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<sup>65</sup>Stephenson, E.B., Peel, A.J., Reid, S.A. *et al.* The non-human reservoirs of Ross River virus: a systematic review of the evidence. *Parasites Vectors* 11, 188 (2018). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s13071-018-2733-8>

<sup>66</sup> van Oosterzee P and Laurance B (2020) The next global health pandemic could easily erupt in your backyard. *The Conversation*. 2 June 2020. <https://theconversation.com/the-next-global-health-pandemic-could-easily-erupt-in-your-backyard-138861>