

Inquiry into the Animal Care and Protection Amendment Bill 2022

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Submission re the Animal Care and Protection Amendment Bill 2022

Thank you for this opportunity to make a submission to the Animal Care and Protection Amendment Bill.

In general terms this proposed legislation appears to be very much moving in the right directions to improve the care and protection of animals – sentient beings.

Rather than seek to touch on and respond to each and all aspects of the proposed Bill – I feel sure that you will receive a comprehensive array of comments on each relevant aspect from a wide array of expert and experienced professionals – I shall simply seek to focus on

Implications and Impacts on Native Wildlife

There are clear statements that the Bill aims to reflect the latest scientific knowledge and community attitudes. Recently there has been more scientific research regarding humane treatment of animals based on growing acceptance of sentience and ability to feel pain.

However, although there is this very welcome mention of humaneness of treatment **there is an absence of looking at the impacts of animal management practices on our native wildlife.**

Of increasing concern, there is widespread evidence of secondary poisoning of birds and other native predators who have consumed the remains of baited “pests” or have inadvertently eaten the poison directly.

There is evidence that many native species have consumed 1080 – [sodium fluoroacetate: a poison totally banned in most countries around the world, including the United States of America, where it was outlawed in the 1970s because of its indiscriminate lethal effects] – and as a result have died in unconscionably horrific ways.

The nature and significant extent of these “collateral damage” impacts on native wildlife is rarely mentioned, or where it has been, neither adequately or correctly assessed, nor appropriate protective constraints and restrictions imposed or properly implemented.

I urge that the proposed ban on CSSP pig poison be widened and extended to include a ban on the use of 1080 (sodium fluoroacetate) and any/all other poisons which operate in such cruel and unconscionable ways on sentient creatures, with such unintended indiscriminate lethal consequences for wildlife.

However, even less likely to be mentioned is the use of traps.

Most people know about horrific injuries of jaw traps and have considered soft traps instead; but there has been no research on another widely available trap – the **glue traps**.

Glue traps

Glue Traps are banned in the **Australian Capital Territory, Tasmania, and Victoria**. Additionally, many retailers – including Mitre 10, Kmart, Big W, and Target Australia – have stopped selling them.

But despite the suffering that these devices clearly cause countless animals, some retailers continue to sell them; and they can still be purchased online.

There are NO controls at all regarding their use, and unfortunately many people put them inside and outside and do not check to see if anything has been caught. Animals caught can die slow and horrific deaths from thirst, starvation, suffocation; and from injuries as they struggle to free themselves.

But an even more concerning aspect (because this is a largely unrecognised issue) is the number of native animals caught on these traps.

Australia is facing a wildlife extinction crisis and we need to stop unnecessary deaths of wildlife. Carers and vets have rescued (and tried to save) various reptiles, small native mammals (including bandicoots, antechinus, native rats), birds, raptors; and - most often - our insectivorous bats.

Most do not survive.

I urge that the committee, in considering the impacts of animal management processes, give careful attention to each of their residual actual or potential unintended consequences for our native wildlife, as well as the humaneness of the process.

I urge that traps be included as a threatening process in the Bill. I would particularly wish to see all glue traps totally banned.

Calf roping should now, finally, be banned.

This issue has been a matter of contention and public debate for many years, with both expert veterinary advice and strong public opinion emphasising the need for such a total ban.

This present process provides an appropriate opportunity to resolve this concerning issue once and for all.

I note in support a new study 'The legality of calf roping in Australia' ([Stonebridge, UQ Law Journal, 2022](#)) – which confirms that "beneficial contributions of calf roping do not justify the harm caused to the calves and that calf roping would therefore likely **not be legal if the standard of unnecessary harm applied**".

This follows several recent Australian scientific studies ([Sinclair et al, 2016](#) and [Rizzuto et al, 2020](#)) which both confirm that this event causes significant stress to vulnerable calves.

The Bill should simply seek to ban calf roping as a “prohibited event”.

Conclusion

I commend to the consideration of the Committee the several points I have sought to raise in this brief Submission; and thank you again for the opportunity to contribute to the development process of this important legislation.

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