

Senate Standing Committee on Environment and Communications
Legislation Committee
Answers to questions on notice
Environment portfolio

Question No: 32

Hearing: Supplementary Budget Estimates

Outcome: Outcome 5

Programme: Wildlife Heritage and Marine Division

Topic: Kangaroo – Management Plans

Hansard Page: N/A

Question Date: 27 November 2013

Question Type: Written

Senator Rhiannon asked:

Will the Minister continue to approve state Kangaroo Management Plans (KMPs) if it is demonstrated there is no scientifically valid populations estimates for individual Kangaroo Management Zones?

- a) If not, Why not?
- b) Please advise of the specific processes that ensure that kangaroo populations estimates and resulting commercial shooting quota are informed by valid science?

What is the process to ensure that where scientific invalidity in survey methodology and data is shown, that the Minister guarantees independent, accountable and rigorous investigation?

- a) If not, why not given it is the Minister's responsibility to ensure KMPs accurately reflect population trends and sustainability of kangaroo populations before approving state KMPs for the commercial export trade?

Answer:

When approving a management plan, the Minister takes into account the best practice scientific methodology to be utilised. Management plans are reviewed every five years, including a 20 business day public comment period.

Within scientific literature, a harvest quota of 15 – 20 per cent is considered to be ecologically sustainable in the long-term (Caughley, 1987; Hacker *et al.* 2003, 2004) and has been demonstrated via the monitoring of harvested kangaroo populations.

If scientific invalidity was to be proven, then the Minister would take this information into consideration when considering approval of revised management plans.

The Department or the Minister has not been provided with evidence that the survey method and data being used by state governments is scientifically invalid.

References

- Caughley G (1987a) 'Ecological relationships', in G Caughley, N Shepherd & J Short (eds), *Kangaroos: their ecology and management in the sheep rangelands of Australia*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, pp. 159-187
- Hacker R, McLeod S, Druhan J, Tenhumberg B & Pradhan U (2004) Kangaroo management options in the Murray-Darling Basin, report to Murray-Darling Basin Commission, Canberra.
- Hacker RB, McLeod SR & Druhan J (2003) *Evaluating alternative management strategies for kangaroos in the Murray-Darling Basin*, final report to the Murray-Darling Basin Commission, Canberra.