

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

Question No: 33

Hearing: Supplementary Budget Estimates

Outcome: Outcome 5

Programme: Wildlife Heritage and Marine Division

Topic: Kangaroos – Population

Hansard Page: N/A

Question Date: 27 November 2013

Question Type: Written

Senator Rhiannon asked:

Survey data shows fluctuations in populations including biologically impossible increases from one year to the next of up to 249% pa – when kangaroo populations can only increase at up to 10% pa – with up to -60% population crashes during drought.

- a) What oversight of data acquisition and analysis does the Minister undertake to ensure the state's kangaroo monitoring programs provide data that has scientific rigor – given that the issuing of export licenses is dependent on 'careful examination' of trends and sustainability.
- b) How does the department reconcile such biologically impossible increases in estimated kangaroo populations?

Answer:

- a) The state governments are responsible for the acquisition and analysis of kangaroo population data. The Australian Government does not directly oversee data acquisition and monitoring activities at the state level. Information contained within each management plan is critically assessed and the department has sought advice from expert ecologists to confirm modelling and survey methodologies used by states.
- b) Significant fluctuations in kangaroo population numbers in one year could be caused by a number of factors including the effects of nomadism, whereby kangaroos move to areas of green pick following rain. Best practice scientific methodology shows that kangaroo numbers continue to remain within normal biological parameters.