

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

Question No: 35

Hearing: Supplementary Budget Estimates

Outcome: Outcome 5

Programme: Wildlife Heritage and Marine Division

Topic: Kangaroos – Management Zones

Hansard Page: N/A

Question Date: 27 November 2014

Question Type: Written

Senator Rhiannon asked:

Please provide details of every Kangaroo Management Zone in which commercial shooting of kangaroos has been halted due to drought in the last 30 years?

- a) Given the growing severe drought in Queensland and other states in Australia, in which drought-affected areas will the government halt the commercial shooting of kangaroos to account for this and a known 100% juvenile mortality and up to 60% crash in kangaroo populations during drought?
- b) Has the department or Minister ever considered this science regarding mortality during drought when allowing the continuing export of kangaroo products during drought?
- c) If not, why not?

The kangaroo industry has been trying very hard to increase the quota of kangaroos to be shot; decrease the size limits; and extend the commercial shooting zone areas. We have seen this in the numerous media stories coming out of Queensland.

- a) What are the current discussions or applications to widen any export licences for kangaroo products coming out of Queensland?
- b) May I have a copy of the data, surveys and science provided to the Minister to support any such widening of export licences for kangaroo products coming out of Queensland. If not, why not?

Answer:

The Australian Government responsibilities are to ensure that the kangaroo harvest is sustainable nationally and at the state level; and that the harvest is conducted in accordance with the *National code of practice (commercial) for the humane shooting of kangaroos and wallabies*. State governments manage the harvest in accordance with state management plans, which include management zones within states.

The earliest kangaroo management plan took effect in South Australia from 1999, with management plans in New South Wales, Queensland and Western Australia taking effect from 2001, 2003, and 2008 respectively. Information on suspension of harvest is included in each state's annual report; which can be accessed through the relevant state government agencies.

Kangaroo harvesting in drought-affected kangaroo management zones in Queensland will be suspended by the Queensland Government if kangaroo numbers reach a critical (trigger) point, as outlined in the *Management Plan for the Commercial Harvest of Kangaroos in Queensland 2013–2017*. Best practice science has shown that kangaroos can recover quickly from crashes of up to 60 per cent.

Both the Minister and the department consider best practice survey methodology and peer-reviewed science in its assessment of all kangaroo management plans. Trigger points stated in management plans are a safeguard for both the management of over harvesting and severe changes in environmental conditions. It is also important to note that there may be significant time delays between harvesting and the exportation of a product.

There are currently no discussions or applications between the Australian and Queensland governments on widening export licences for kangaroo products coming out of Queensland.