

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

Question No: 65
Hearing: Additional Estimates
Outcome: Outcome 1
Programme: Wildlife Heritage and Marine Division (WHM)
Topic: Queensland 2015 quota report
Hansard Page: N/A
Question Date: 23 February 2015
Question Type: Written

Senator Rhiannon asked:

1. During drought up to 100% juvenile kangaroo mortality has been recorded (Shepherd 1987) with up to 60% decline in populations (Robertson 1986). Considering this, and that average kangaroo population growth is recognised as low, only around 10% pa (Arnold 1991; Bilton & Croft 2004), is the Department concerned at the Queensland 2015 Quota Report asserting kangaroo population growth of 35.4% from 2012-2013 (pg 2)?
2. The Department's website states that "the Australian Government carefully considers factors such as the biology, population size and trends and conservation status of the species;"
 - a. What is the kangaroo population growth rate the Department uses to check state kangaroo survey estimates? May I have the contemporary research sources of that PGR please?
 - b. The 2015 Queensland kangaroo quota report shows that the densities per km² of the commercially harvested macropod species have declined by up to 50% in all the survey blocks that were surveyed in both 2013 2014. (pg 38 – 40). Has the Department required cessation of shooting in those localities, given drought has been found to result in 60% population declines?
 - c. If not, why not?
 - d. The Queensland 2015 Quota Report shows density estimates for the Inglewood Block (pg 39) as "0" counts from 2004 to 2014, except for 2010 which shows 0.50 per km²:
 - i. Given that Red Kangaroos do not occur in that area, and that these extrapolated densities has added thousands to the state totals, and therefore the Quotas for this species, has the Department checked this glaring mistake?
 - ii. The 2010 raw count data sheets for the Inglewood Block survey show that Red Kangaroos were only identified and recorded by one observer on one side of the survey aircraft and not the other observer on the opposite side: What examination of survey methodology and actual data does the Department undertake, given its responsibility to ensure that commercial shooting is sustainable?
 - iii. What was Queensland Red Kangaroo Quota and Take for 2010 in Queensland?
 - iv. Are Red Kangaroos allowed to be shot in the Inglewood block currently?
3. Does the Department accept survey results that overfly National Parks and other non-shooting areas, with those counted numbers extrapolated over surrounding countryside?

Answer:

1. The 2015 Queensland Quota Report does not assert a kangaroo population growth of 35.4 per cent from 2012-2013. The California Report asserts a figure of 35.4 per cent on page 2. In the California Report this figure reflects an increase of 35.4 per cent in 2013 from 2012 for the combined sustainable harvest quota of all state jurisdictions who commercially harvest macropods.
2.
 - a) The Department does not use kangaroo growth rates to compare with state kangaroo estimates. The Department accepts kangaroo survey population estimates provided they are undertaken in accordance with the *Queensland Wildlife Trade Management Plan for Export – Commercially Harvested Macropods 2013-17*.
 - b) Kangaroo harvest must cease when zone thresholds are triggered as outlined in the *Queensland Wildlife Trade Management Plan for Export – Commercially Harvested Macropods 2013-17*.
 - c) See response to 2 b).
 - d)
 - i) The Department has queried Queensland officials on this matter. The Queensland Government has confirmed that Red Kangaroos were recorded in the survey block in 2010.
 - ii) The Department reviews proposed survey methodology when assessing management plans, to ensure it is consistent with accepted survey methods based upon peer reviewed literature. The Department checks the application of data and surveys as detailed in Queensland's Annual Reports and Quota Reports against the Queensland Wildlife Trade Management Plan.
 - iii) The 2010 Queensland Red Kangaroo quota was 887,127 and the take was 255,191.
 - iv) Yes.
3. Yes.