



Managing kangaroos in New South Wales

NSW Commercial Kangaroo Management Program

Why manage kangaroo populations?

Changes to Australian landscapes following European settlement have generally favoured kangaroo populations. People have removed predators, created permanent water sources, and altered vegetation. These changes, and the natural boom and bust cycle of kangaroo populations, can lead to their populations exceeding sustainable levels in some locations.

Overabundant kangaroos can negatively affect plant regeneration, habitat structure and ecosystem processes in an already fragmented landscape, impacting smaller native animals. They also compete with agricultural industries. Thousands of kangaroos are hit by vehicles, while tens of thousands die from thirst and starvation during drought as part of the natural boom bust cycle.

**Department of Climate Change,
Energy, the Environment and Water**

How to manage kangaroo populations?

The main goal of kangaroo management in New South Wales is conservation. This includes reducing the impacts that large kangaroo populations have on the environment, agriculture, and on the health and welfare of individual kangaroos.

Options for controlling kangaroo populations include lethal (culling and commercial harvesting) and non-lethal (fertility control, capture and removal, exclusion fencing) options. While harvesting these iconic animals can be confronting, a regulated and evidence-based approach to commercial harvesting helps reduce the number of kangaroos that suffer in drought. It also lessens the need for land managers to use control methods with poor welfare outcomes.

Why manage kangaroo populations?

Changed rural landscapes favour increased kangaroo populations due to:

- removed predators
- permanent water sources
- cleared land with increased pastures

Over-population has negative effects on:

- native plants and animals
- kangaroo welfare
- habitats and landscape health
- agricultural industries

Over – population

Managed population

Managing kangaroo populations aims to:

- conserve the environment
- reduce impact on agricultural industries
- minimise kangaroo suffering

Options for controlling kangaroo populations

- **Commercial harvesting** (regulated, licenced, monitored):
 - valuable resource contributes to industry and economy
 - sustainable
 - mimises animal welfare impacts
- **non-commerical** culling
- **non-lethal** options (fertility control, capture and removal, exclusion fencing)

Regulating the management of kangaroos in New South Wales

Kangaroos are protected by legislation in New South Wales, with provision to harm or commercially harvest kangaroos permitted only under licence. Licences to commercially harvest kangaroos are issued and regulated through the NSW Government Commercial Kangaroo Management Program.

The NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service grants licences to shoot kangaroos in cases where kangaroos may be damaging property, posing safety risks, or causing economic hardship, and where non-lethal control methods have been unsuccessful.

Both types of licences require kangaroos to be killed in accordance with the respective commercial and non-commercial national codes for the humane shooting of kangaroos and wallabies.

Commercial kangaroo harvesting in New South Wales

New South Wales has regulated the commercial harvesting of kangaroos since 1975. Commercial harvesting satisfies the 3 key components of sustainable use of natural resources: it doesn't irreversibly harm the environment or unacceptably reduce biodiversity; it is profitable, and it is socially acceptable. Harvesting provides a population management option that is humane, sustainable and does not waste meat or skins. The sustainable harvesting of kangaroos for their meat and leather is the basis of a multi-million dollar Australia-wide commercial industry.

Commercial kangaroo harvesting in New South Wales is strictly limited to 4 abundant species (red kangaroo, eastern grey kangaroo, western grey kangaroo and common wallaroo). None of these species are listed as threatened or endangered under NSW or Commonwealth legislation or international listings. There has been no overall decline in kangaroo abundance in areas where kangaroos are harvested. Kangaroo species that are threatened or endangered are not commercially harvested: such species are the focus of conservation research and management.

Principles of kangaroo management

The commercial harvest of kangaroos in New South Wales is guided by principles of ecologically sustainable development and animal welfare,

set out in the *Wildlife Trade Management Plan for the Commercial Harvest of Kangaroos in New South Wales*. The NSW Government monitors and estimates kangaroo populations, establishes sustainable harvest quotas and adjusts these as required, issues harvester licences, monitors harvest activities for compliance with licence conditions, and conducts ongoing research into kangaroo management practices.

The NSW Government regularly reviews its kangaroo management program to improve animal welfare and environmental outcomes. This includes assessing new ways to help manage kangaroo populations. Approaches to kangaroo management will continue to be based on robust scientific evidence, best-practice population monitoring, and harvesting methods that are humane.

How can I find out more?



Online:

www.environment.nsw.gov.au/topics/animals-and-plants/wildlife-management/kangaroo-management

Email:

kangaroo.management@environment.nsw.gov.au

Phone: 1300 17 33 76

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