



Australians for Animals

PROTECT • NURTURE • RESTORE

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SO MANY ISSUES

AFA has been deeply involved in a tsunami of issues which is why the newsletter has been delayed.

Koalas, kangaroos, the Great Koala National Park fiasco, koala campaigns in Queensland, the dreadful slaughter of hundreds of wild horses by helicopter gun men in Kosciuszko National Park, researching and writing an extensive environmental submission to a critical international body, working with a US group who are sickened by what's happening to koalas and will campaign.

Then there's Victoria....We are still waiting for the judgement on whether AFA has standing to bring DEECA to trial over the helicopter shooting.

The hearing was held in the Victorian Supreme Court on 7th and 8th May, four and a half months ago.

A time limit is imposed in Victoria, the judgement has to be delivered within six months. So we wait.



VICTORIA THE KOALA NIGHTMARE STATE

As a result of the Parliamentary efforts of the Animal Justice Party, the Victorian government was forced to release the long-awaited koala report – held up since June 2025 costing over \$850,000 of taxpayers' dollars.



The report contained some amazing assertions including an estimate of the koala population in Victoria amounting to 217,000 koalas – a massive drop from 460,000

Previously claimed by government. The drop inspired many to claim Victoria's koala population had dropped by 50%.

In reality, the population is likely to be much lower. A careful reading of the research demonstrates a very sick koala population with a total of 51,700 koalas estimated to be living

in hardwood plantations in south west Victoria.

This number is more than six times higher than in neighbouring forest. Once harvested, koalas become homeless – if they survive the bulldozers and the injuries caused by clear felling.

There's no information on the mortality of koalas in the January/February bushfires which were catastrophic. Jacinta Allan's government made no attempt to establish how many koalas were lost.

SICK KOALAS

37% of the koalas examined had dental disease, all life stages. Moreover, koalas euthanised on welfare grounds were more likely to have dental disease.

Budj Bim National Park had the highest level of koalas examined with dental disease. As if these koalas haven't been through enough with bushfires, helicopter shooting of over 1000 koalas, drought, so much stress.

If a koala can't eat properly, the animal becomes emaciated and slowly dies of starvation. Infectious diseases were widely detected.

The population estimate relies on "visual koala detections at only 22% of sites" and acoustic detection accounts for 64%.

This estimate has to be taken with a grain of salt. Acoustics are a very poor tool for estimating koala populations.

Acoustics only pick up male bellows. The only good use of acoustic monitoring is to determine if there's koalas in a defined area. But the monitoring is only able to pick up male bellows.

It provides no information on whether females are present, back young, age and size of any population.

The male bellow acoustic detections were subsequently incorporated into an integrated model that was extrapolated across Victoria. A scientifically unacceptable estimate.

So there's no valid estimate of Victorian koala population. Only



the select areas which the report focused on and those estimates are questionable.

What does this mean?

It means the Victorian koala population estimate is a fantasy, based on model calculations with no ground surveys, drone identification, scats, dogs. Guess work based on more guess work.

Bottom line? Victorian koalas are slowly dying of neglect, diseases, starvation, bushfires, lack of any refuges, government and opposition refusal to protect these poor suffering koalas.

The Victorian Labor government provided a \$2.5 million grant to koala conservation after the report was released.

What's a koala worth in Victoria?

The Victorian government grant equates to approximately \$11.98 cents per koala.

BRUMBY KOALA SLAUGHTER

Meantime, the helicopter shooting of wild horses in Kosciuszko National Park began in June. Gun men terrorizing stampeding horses as bullets rein down – many mares died giving birth, foals were struck down with broken legs, the NSW government has admitted an average of six shots were needed to kill a horse.

AFA acknowledges that horses cause some environmental damage, but there are benign ways to limit horse populations without the brutal callous cruelty involved in helicopters. Having witnessed the terror first hand in far north Queensland, there can be no excuse for this kind of mindless, wicked cruelty.

Cruelty is NOT conservation. What's the difference between helicopter shooting koalas and brumbies?

The charity is shocked and deeply concerned by the support of aerial slaughter by many conservation organizations. Five major environmental groups agreed with the Victorian government's

approval of the aerial killing of more than 1000 koalas in Budj Bim National Park. And agreed to keep the operation secret.

At the May Supreme court hearing, bureaucrats from DEECA (the responsible agency) confirmed the approval by IFAW, Humane Society International, Animals Australia, Wildlife Victoria and RSPCA. The fact they collectively kept secret the operation speaks volumes.

So it wasn't surprising to witness the silence and/or hysterical support of aerial killing of horses by many conservation groups. There was scant ground truthing, flimsy evidence of environmental damage, terrible suffering by the horses, all ignored by government and the politicians from the Greens, Independents and Marijuana Parties who all supported this cruelty. The same groups who maintained silence over the helicopter shooting of koalas when the slaughter was finally exposed.

What makes a nonsense of the environmental damage argument by horses is the massive

COURT COSTS THE LAWSUIT IS CRITICALLY IMPORTANT

AFA has to raise approximately \$100k to cover the costs for court fees and expert advice.

Your donations are essential as we fight this David & Goliath battle against a taxpayer funded BIG government.

We have also set up a give now page for donations which can be found at:

www.givenow.com.au/koala-crisis

environmental damage being undertaken in the KNP with the construction of Snowy Hydro 2, a renewal energy project tearing up mega hectares in the park.

In the big picture, how does the clear felling of our native forests, the ongoing losses of our precious

wildlife, mega urbanization projects, fossil fuel, infrastructure measure up against a reported 300 brumbies killed?

Word has it that the Snowy Hydro 2 project used eradicating the horses in KNP as an "offset". AFA is investigating.

AFA'S LONG CAMPAIGN AGAINST HELICOPTER SLAUGHTER

Some of you may remember AFA has a history of national and international campaigning over the aerial slaughter of water buffalo and wild horses in the Northern Territory. AFA hired a photographer and a pilot to take photos of the aftermath of the killings.

To this day, it's hard to look at the images. With the help of a British horse welfare organization, AFA was granted a meeting with Queen Elizabeth's private secretary at Windsor Castle. Her majesty had expressed concern over the cruelty involved in the helicopter shooting of the horses.

Over a million people protested internationally. The cruelty was so shocking. A war zone filled with dead, dying, wounded, traumatized animals. In the NT, the water buffalo changed their behaviour and began grazing at night. If they were out in the daytime and heard a helicopter, the buffalo would splay their bodies on the grass, flattening themselves hoping to hide.

And yes, we met with the Queen's private secretary, and we had

tea and cucumber sandwiches at Buckingham Palace. But even with Her Majesty's concern, the dreadful slaughter has continued its wicked path into the 21st Century.

Hundreds of thousands of Australians have protested the KNP slaughter. Internationally, the Brigitte Bardot foundation has offered to help those campaigning, struggling to stop this dreadful killing method. AFA has given funding to one of the brumby shelters and we have been able to provide some possible help for the ongoing lawsuit currently in process in an attempt to stop further shooting scheduled for November.

But there are no explanations about why the Greens have remained silent over the helicopter shooting of koalas.

OUR WILDLIFE IS IN DIRE STRAITS

**AUSTRALIA'S
IRRESPONSIBLE
POLITICIANS NEED TO
ACT.. WITHOUT NATURE
WE WILL ALL SUFFER.**

As Australia's state and federal governments of both major parties continue to ignore the catastrophic losses of not only koalas but all our irreplaceable, iconic wildlife.

Laws are weakened, promises broken, and the destruction of habitat rolls on wiping out habitat, food, shelter and survival.

AFA is in the thick of this fight. It is a war zone. Please help us do what we can.

**For the Animals,
Sue Arnold & Friends.**



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