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Developing a Biodiversity Act for South Australia

Lisa Roberts Daintree

11.01.2024

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Animal Equality principles demand that no animal be threatened, harmed, or made to fear from humans in order for another species to have an advantage. Before you can do any good for an animal, you must first of all “do no harm”. There is no such thing as “overall humaneness” An action towards any individual animal is either humane or it is not. Nothing that falls outside of animal welfare concerns, natural animal behaviour, and good outcomes for ALL animals, merits consideration. Wildlife, even when endangered, does not rate more highly than do the introduced species. There is no place for specieism in caring for our animals. All animals are sentient and equal.

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BACKGROUND

I acknowledge a prime focus of your paper being the identifying of threats to wildlife species and concern over terrain. I have joined protest groups when the government ignore**s** the plight of threatened animals and continue to grant logging rights for human development. Whilst today I write about introduced species, cats in particular, I have regularly campaigned for and saved birds, fought for koalas, kangaroos, ducks, and support Bills in parliament for protections for wombats and many others, being active in all kinds of ways to save wildlife.

I am not ignorant of predation by introduced species but having worked on the evidence based solutions for 16 years, I find that threat abatement plans which comes under your heading of "Minimization" are not the answer.

I am currently engaged in the world's best practice program of keeping cat population ceilings to their lowest through desexing and am also researching the alternative non-surgical methods of desexing, some of which I am hoping will show themselves to be ethical in light of laboratory practice, and gene drive technology.

<u>RECOMMENDATIONS</u>

1. Specify that "minimization" is not to include any threat abatement or culling or killing plan of any animal whether they are considered a threat to wildlife or not.

2. Use the Desex and Return to Home **(**DRH**)** program to control the population ceiling of cats (see next section)

3. An immediate ban on the deliberate breeding of cats until shelter euthanasia numbers reach zero

4. Tighter controls over logging with mandates for tree checking for habitation before cutting a tree down

5. More effort to be shown in finding firebugs and bringing them to justice with harsher penalties and controls. In the case of loss of life (animal of human) emanating from a deliberately lit fire, the perpetrator to face life imprisonment

WHAT DOES NOT WORK IN KEEPING CEILING LEVELS OF CATS LOW

Simply put, when you kill one cat, you could end up with more than 2 in its place, but you will certainly end up with at least the same number and in a very short space of time – less than a year, and the public are very well aware of this now.

Let's look at the most recent results as this is possibly some of the best evidence we can examine. In 2022 the report for the results of the Threat Abatement Plan from the years 2016-2020 came out and we read that the scientists confessed that it had been a failure. But they stated this for the wrong reason. There was a shortfall in the kill! The target had been 2 million and the dead cats totalled 1.5 million. The real reason it qualifies as a failure is because it is now only 2023 and the Government are having to do it all over again!

Billie Lazenby explains in her report on the study done in the forests of Tasmania, that when aggressive top cats are removed and a territory is vacated – a territory that still supports life - younger more virile cats move in, take up residence and breed up. A colony is reestablished and by the 12 month mark, numbers are re-established. The killing program

only ends up with dead cats that suffered on their way out, new cats which have moved in and are breeding, and no desired good result.

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/273508911

WHAT IS DRH AND WHY DOES IT WORK

In built up areas, the travelling of cats to fulfil their needs, can instigate conflict between neighbours and impose a substantial burden on local governments, that are usually responsible for resolving these problems.

The simplest way to explain what Desex and Return to Home (DRH) does, is to say that it resolves 95% of these problems and more. It is a program formulated and pioneered by C.A.T.S. Cats Assistance To Sterilise Incorporated, now in it's 35th successful year. The C.A.T.S. System of DRH contains no negative outcomes and it has the support of the majority of those assisting the cats and it has been and will continue to be complied with.

This program begins with low-priced cat desexing through the C.A.T.S. Scheme, where residents can attend a cooperating vet surgery, costing councils nothing until cat numbers drop sufficiently to be able to introduce the free desexing. This free desexing is then added for a small donation from councils to help with desexing costs - currently $1,250 per hundred cats: Minuscule cost compared with cat bylaw costs.

People simply call the C.A.T.S. Hotline to organise a desexing with a cooperating vet. People like the fact that it humanely breaks the cycle of endless cat euthanasia as it reduces cat numbers and reduces the predation on native wildlife. It has also been formulated to comply with the Natural Resources Amendment Act and has been working well for its 35 years duration.

DRH simply requires kindness by the community which has been forthcoming in leaps and bounds to create the success it is today, with a minimum cost to the rescue volunteers, who allows the cats to live in their yard and feed and care for them: This way semi ownership has become the solution.

Co-operating councils, rescuers and vets now only require a co-operating State Government to repeal its Cat Management legislation, including MANDATORY registration, microchipping, and data base registration and forget about maximum household numbers, for all South Australians to be able to participate in the success of DRH and by extension all Australians.

One major problem with the legislative system is that it creates, an "apartheid" or division between domestic pet cats and free living community cats. It makes the latter seem "unvaluable" compared to a pet, **and subject to a council round up,** resulting in the shelters being flooded to overflowing, with cats and kittens.

Unowned cats are equally valuable. Both groups of cats are sentient animals, and both can experience pain, fear, discomfort, and anxiety. Both groups have their place in the community and are greatly loved and treasured by the residents. Both groups are also essential for maintaining their population status quo by their territory markings which keeps out undesexed infiltrator cats, and also to control the rats and mice and to deter the snakes which are attracted by the rodents.

The C.A.T.S. DRH system achieves all of the above.

An immediate ban on deliberately breeding more kittens is essential to stop the escalation of euthanasia and this ban needs to be in place until zero euthanasia is obtained. This is a simple way to control the deliberate breeding of kittens as the next generation of kittens won't be there to be sold. The current, convoluted breeding laws are making it easy for breeders to flood the market with kittens, and also enabling the cruelty to mother cats in these appalling cat factories, often resulting in court cases due to animal abuse. Banning the profiteering from breeding would result in a reduction of the RSPCA's time and money in

court fighting these cases. Most importantly, in banning breeding, **more** shelter animals would find good homes, and vets who are forced to euthanize would lower their suicide rate. “Sunday Mail Vet Nurses Stress in Spotlight 29.10.2023”

The all important point to understand here is that success translates to lower cat numbers which cannot reproduce but are sufficient to hold a territory from intruder cats through spraying and marking. This stable minimum number is the best result that can be achieved: There is no such thing as a cat free zone in an open system that support cats as, without resident cats, new cats will move in to fill void.

COST OF THREAT ABATEMENT PLANS

The anticipated total cost of the current culling scheme is just over $60 million over each five year period.

I know how I would prefer to see the money spent. IN LOW COST DESEXING

THE ANSWER DOES NOT LIE IN STRIVING FOR BETTER TECHNICAL SOLUTIONS OR BETTER POISONS

The promotion of cat killing by the government with the assistance of aps is inciting vigil anti behaviour.

We have seen the heinous Felixer in development for some time, and one of our desexed pet cats who was on private property and behind a cat proof fence has fallen victim to it, the poison proven by post mortem-results: An agonising death was stated by the veterinarian.

We see that Hisstory is still in development. The name indicates a very warped sense of humour.

The outcry against 1080 has been so long and so fierce that I need hardly mention the public's lack of support for it. Not only animal advocates cry out against it but also environmental groups and dedicated anti 1080 groups. I do not know how the use of this poison has persisted for so long with it when at least once a week a pet dies from a 1080 bait. Every continent in the world has banned it except for ourselves and New Zealand.

According to W.H.O. it indiscriminately kills and contaminates everything from the insects that underpin the native fauna food chain to precious native birds, dogs, and farm animals. The animals go through several lengthy stages of excruciating pain before finally succumbing to death. I am attaching the paper on death by 1080 that describes these clonic and other stages.

Papp is no more desirable with the experimental stages showing cats found dead lying in their own faeces and vomit. Apart from the suffering of the cats, the population of the Corvid bird population was halved during the period of the Roxby Downs trial, despite PAPP being gel encapsulated in the bait meat.

http://www.depi.vic.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0008/255077/ARI-Technical-Report-253-Field-efficacy-of-Curiosity-bait-for-management-of-feral-cat-Roxby-Downs.pdf

None of the other options are better, the list of which is long.

We see that spreading of disease is under consideration.

We see the poisoning of other "pest species" eg rabbits that act as food for cats, is under consideration.

We oppose all of these things and also oppose the release of the dingo as an Apex Predator. To deliberately release one animal with the intent that it will set upon another upon another, is a heinous crime. It is an entirely different prospect to setting up non attack Maremma dogs for farm animals.

In summary, no plan which involves eradication of cats in an open system by the removal, confinement or destruction of cats to reduce overall cat numbers, cat related problems and impact on wildlife, will be successful as the vacuum effect will ensure that new cats (and there are always cats which remain after an eradication program) will restock the vacated areas and breed to restore, and in many cases, increase the original numbers.

We must practice prevention as you suggest, and I have outlined the details of this prevention for you in this paper. Once the ecological damage is done, we cannot go back and “fix” the problem as we do more harm than good.

Lisa Roberts-Daintree

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WLPA 1080 Poison Review of Symptoms

The World League for Protection of Animals

'Remember animals... they feel hunger, thirst, heat, cold, pain, fear and loneliness...'

Australian Charity Fundraising Number (CFN): 12896

Email: admin@wlpa.org

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1080 Poison

1080 Is Torture

1080 (sodium monofluroacetate) is a cruel and indiscriminate poison used to remove unwanted populations of animals.

Banned in most countries, 1080 is still used liberally throughout Australia to control so-called pest species, and reduce browsing damage caused by native animals on private land.

1080 poison is a slow killer. When ingested (usually through baited food) the animal suffers a prolonged and horrific death. Herbivores take the longest to die up to 44hrs, while carnivores can take up to 21hrs before finally succumbing to final effects of the poison. The speed of death is dependent on the rate of the animals metabolism.

A Slow & Horrific Death

Witnesses to the deaths of herbivorous animals, such as macropods, have reported:

"Affected wallabies were sometimes observed sitting hunched up, with heads held shakily just above the ground. Generally they appeared non-alert and 'sick', with shivering or shaking forelimbs and unsteady balance. Most individuals then experience convulsions, falling to the ground and lying on their backs and sides, kicking and making running motions with their hind legs

before dying. Many individuals also ejaculated shortly before death, and, with others, exuded a white froth from their nostrils and mouth."

Carnivorous animals such as dingoes, dogs, foxes, and cats become very agitated, as they tremble, convulse and vomit.

The list of symptoms include:

"restlessness; increased hyperexcitability; incontinence or diarrhea; excessive salivation; abrupt bouts of vocalization; and finally sudden bursts of violent activity. All affected animals then fall to the ground in teranic seizure, with hind limbs or all four limbs and sometimes the tail extended rigidly from their arched bodies. At other times the front feet are clasped together, clenched or used to scratch frantically at the cage walls. This tonic phase is then followed by a clonic phase in which the animals lie and kick or 'paddle' with the front legs and sometimes squeal, crawl around and bite at objects. During this phase the tongue and penis may be extruded, their eyes rolled back so that only the whites show and the teeth ground together. Breathing is rapid but laboured, with some animals partly choking on their saliva. Finally such individuals begin to relax, breathing more slowly and shallowly and lying quietly with the hind legs still extended but apparently semiparalysed".

From the above descriptions, it is without question that 1080 poison inflicts great pain and suffering on affected animals. Aside from the physical pain endured over the many hours before death, the terror, fear and anxiety felt by these animals is unimaginable.

1080 Spreads Through the Environment

1080 is primarily used to manage introduced species. However, this poison is an indiscriminate killer. Poison laid for rabbits is normally in the form of baited carrots and oats, but any other animal occupying a similar niche such as the kangaroo are just as likely to eat the poison. It has been estimated that baits laid for rabbits threaten a further 50-62 species.

1080 not only has devastating consequences for the animals who directly consume it, but it also affects the surrounding environment and its inhabitants. Scavengers and carnivores are killed through secondary poisoning when they feed upon unrecovered carcasses. Indeed 1080 spreads so thoroughly through an ecosystem that insectivorous birds have been killed in baited areas by eating insects who have fed on carcasses and poisoned food.

Despite the obvious pain and suffering caused by this barbaric poison, the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority (the body responsible for the review, regulation and distribution of 1080), refuse to reassess the use of 1080 based on animal welfare. This is because (quote) there are no well established scientific criteria for assessing or making decisions about animal humaneness.

1080 Is Not An Effective Form Of Population Control

1080 is not a sustainable method of population control, and only temporarily removes the target animals from a given area. It also has no effect on the overall population of a species (except where they are already made vulnerable through habitat loss, i.e. with native animals). The sudden removal of a group of animals merely creates ‘spaces’ which will quickly refill themselves.

1080 only creates the illusion of an immediate solution, usually for short sighted economic gains. There are many forms of non-lethal population control, that are both humane and effective, and that will not also damage our already very fragile environment.

Non-Lethal, Humane & Effective Alternatives

Many humane and non-lethal alternatives to 1080 exist, and if we stop seeing 1080 as a ‘necessary evil’ many more alternatives will be developed.

- Maremma Guard Dogs
- Fertility Control
- Growing sacrifice crops
- Electric fencing
- Wallaby & rabbit proof mesh fencing
- Metal tree rings to minimise ‘grazing damage’

1080 Wildlife Massacre

During May 2005 up to 200 000 Bennetts wallabies on King Island were sentenced to a slow and agonising death in one of the largest coordinated 1080 poisonings seen in Tasmania, our so-called 'clean, green, natural state'.

In an environment already saturated with 1080 these wallabies were the latest victims in the Agricultural and Plantation Forestry Industries effort to prevent our increasingly vulnerable wildlife from grazing on private land.

King Island, which is 64 kilometres long by 27 kilometres wide, is dominated by agriculture. Seventy percent of its once magnificent environment has now been decimated to provide grazing land for cattle and sheep, forcing the native inhabitants to live on the peripheries of farms as unwanted pests. In an attempt to further reduce the numbers of wallabies a line of baited carrots 115 kilometres long was placed across 16 of the island's farms to control 'browsing damage'.

Bennetts wallabies take many hours to die after having consumed 1080 baits. Witnesses have reported that the animals can be observed sitting 'hunched up' with their heads and limbs shaking. Poisoned individuals appear 'sick' and withdrawn from their surroundings, and eventually suffer from violent seizures before collapsing and kicking uncontrollably. As they die, usually from cardiac failure, white foam exudes from their mouth and nostrils. It

is also important to recognise that in-pouch joeys will not necessarily die from the 1080 poisoning after drinking their mothers contaminated milk. The people responsible for clearing the carcasses are instructed under the 'Code of Practice for Use of 1080 Poison' to 'humanely destroy' any surviving in-pouch joeys found in dead mothers by 'decapitation with a sharp knife or a heavy blow to the head'. However, as you will later read only an estimated 10% of the 200 000 dead marsupials will be recovered, and so the majority of in-pouch joeys will be left to slowly die of dehydration or starvation.

The liberal use of 1080 as a means of controlling so called 'pest' species and populations has shocking consequences not only for the target animal, but for the surrounding environment and it inhabitants. A preliminary review of the use of 1080 by the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority (APVMA) released on 23 May 2005 for public comment, shows without doubt that the dispersal of 1080 in 'bait form' presents a danger to non-target animals, and that the chemical is 'easily leached from some materials by rain or even dew fall'. Non-target animals (each species has varying sensitivity) are as equally attracted to 1080 baits as the targeted animals. Native mammals who are commonly killed by herbivore baits (such as those used for the Bennetts wallabies) are other macropods, wombats, possums and native rodents. But its list of unintended victims does not end there scavenging animals such as magpies, kookaburras, crows, and currawongs, and carnivorous species like the already threatened Tasmanian Devil and marsupial quolls are killed through secondary poisoning when they feed upon unrecovered carcasses. Indeed 1080 spreads so thoroughly through an ecosystem that insectivorous birds have been killed in baited areas by eating insects that have fed on carcasses and poisoned food.

One of the species listed in the APVMA report as being so susceptible to carrot baits that local extinctions have occurred, is the Potoroo. This tiny macropod is one of the many native animals that tourists can hope to encounter on King Island. And for all the carnivorous and scavenging animals it has been estimated that only 10% of the possible 200 000 Bennetts wallabies poisoned will be recovered after death. This minimal attempt is made despite a strong recommendation from the APVMA that 'animal carcasses must be recovered during and for 14 days after a baiting campaign and be destroyed by burning or burial'. However this promise only accounts for 23% of the 1080 used annually in Tasmania, 77% will still be used by the Agricultural and Plantation Forestry Industries.

The fact that agricultural profit is constantly placed above the interests and well being of other animals will most likely ensure the continuation of 1080 use. The APVMA touched briefly on the subject of animal welfare in their report but stated that as there is no 'scientific criteria for assessing or making decisions about animal humaneness' they could come to no conclusions on this 'matter', and Braddon Liberal MHR Mark Baker referred to those who have spoken out against the use of 1080 as an "extremist bunch of self-righteous bullies".

ACTION

Please send letters of protest to the Tasmanian Government and demand that they prohibit the use of 1080 on private land based on humane and environmental objections. <u>There are proven alternatives to 1080 and they must be used</u>. Also write to ﷺTasmanian Tourismﷺ and let them know that Tasmania is fast loosing its reputation as the 'natural state' and that the revenue made from eco-tourism far out weighs the minimal reduction in revenue which may result from the co-existence of agriculture, forestry and wildlife.

Hon. Judy Jackson
Tasmanian Minister for Environment & Planning
GPO Box 825
Hobart 7001

Tourism Tasmania
GPO Box 399
Hobart TAS 7001

rob.giason@tourism.tas.gov.au

1080 Poison: WA Govt. Wants Full Scale Cruel Poison Retained

Objections by the Western Australian Government to a proposed limitation in the use of 1080 poison are astonishing, according to Joan Papayanni, President of the World League for Protection of Animals. ﷺSuch objections take no account of possible long term effects on the environment of continued use of this poison, or of the horrendous suffering of all animals ingesting it ﷺ both native and non-native,ﷺ she said.

ﷺProposed by the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority after a three year national review, the limitation in 1080 use, reducing the number of allowed baits per kilometre from five to two, is a step forward, but does not go nearly far enough,ﷺ says Ms Papayanni. ﷺTargeted to kill foxes, wild dogs and feral cats, the poison kills many other species as well, through primary or secondary poisoning. Concern at the number of secondary poisons was in fact a major trigger for the review. But no animal deserves death from 1080.

ﷺMeat baits can remain toxic for up to eight weeks and in dry conditions for up to a year ﷺ leaving a long period of time for secondary poisoning to occur. In carnivores such as dingoes, foxes and cats, animals become very agitated, tremble, have violent seizures, and may crawl around, biting randomly at objects till their breath becomes laboured, semi paralysis sets in and they eventually die. This can take up to 20 hours. Many a loved companion animal has died in this way.

ﷺA poison banned in almost every country of the world except Australia and New Zealand and virtually outlawed in the US since 1972, 1080 should be outlawed in Australia, not only for its cruelty but also because we simply do not know what might be the long term effects of continually

pouring substantial amounts of this poison into the environment. .

It is to be hoped the final review will strongly promote alternative solutions to saving native animals from predation – solutions such as appropriate fencing and the use of guard animals such as llamas and Maremma Guard Dogs – found to be effective in many cases in guarding sheep.

The painful poisoning of animals should not be acceptable in 21st century Australia.

Please note that some councils within Sydney are now choosing not to use 1080 in their control of introduced animals.

1080 Poison: 1080 IS TORTURE

PROTEST AGAINST 1080 USE IN TASMANIA

UP TO 200 000 WALLABIES DIE SLOW AGONISING DEATH

During May up to 200 000 Bennetts wallabies on King Island were sentenced to a slow agonising death in one of the largest coordinated 1080 poisoning seen in Tasmania.

A 115km line of baited carrots was laid across 16 beef and dairy farms in order to control "browsing damage" from native wildlife. Bennetts wallabies take approximately twelve hours to die; during this time they convulse violently and froth at the mouth before finally collapsing from cardiac failure. The Code of Practice for 1080 Use in Tasmania states that the in-pouch joeys who often survive must be "humanely destroyed" by "decapitation" or "a heavy blow to the head". However, only an estimated 10% of the dead bodies on King Island were collected, leaving thousands of in-pouch joeys to slowly die from dehydration and starvation while the bodies of their mothers rotted around them.

In 2004 the Tasmanian government promised that it would phase out the use of 1080 poison in state forests by December 2005. But this promise would only apply to 23% of the 1080 used annually in Tasmania, 77% is used by private land holders to poison hundreds of thousands of our increasingly vulnerable wildlife each year.

1080 is an indiscriminate poison and it affects entire ecosystems. Non-target animals (each species has varying sensitivity) are equally attracted to baits. Scavenging animals, such as magpies and kookaburras, and carnivorous animals, like the endangered Tasmanian Devil, and the marsupial Quoll, routinely die when they feed upon unrecovered carcasses. One of the species listed by the Australian Pesticides & Veterinary Medicines Authority (APVMA) as being so susceptible to carrot baits that local extinctions have occurred, is the Potoroo. These tiny macropods are also native to King Island.

King Island farmers insist that they resorted to using poison because "there exists no other commercially viable alternative".

However many would dispute this claim including the APVMA which recently released a review of 1080 use. Its findings state that there are many humane, affordable and effective products such as fencing, including the wallaby proof mesh fencing and tree guards for use in plantations. The Tasmanian Institute of Agricultural Research has also tested and proven that mesh fences are not only cost effective but reliably prevent unwanted herbivores from accessing private property. Before issuing permits to farmers the Department of Primary Industries Water & Environment (DPIWE) encourages the fencing of properties as an alternative to 1080 use but does not require that these recommendations are not mandatory.

The APVMA states that Tasmania's use of 1080 only exerts a knock-down effect and does not reduce the local numbers of the target species in the long term'. Yet 1080 is consistently used as the main method for population control.

Joan Papayanni President for the World League for Protection of Animals said she is appalled that Tasmania the so called Natural State is still using such damaging and noxious poisons in our environment when alternatives exist, and given there are dangerous and long lasting side effects. Already a majority of states throughout the US have banned the use of 1080 based on humane and environmental reasons, as have most enlightened countries around the world.

The World League will be holding a protest against Tasmania's use of 1080, at the Tasmanian Tourism Office, 50 Parkes St Sydney on Friday 22 July 2005 from 12pm noon till 2pm.

Please come and defend Tasmania's disappearing native wildlife!

Contacts:

Joan Papayanni President: 9817 3455

WLPA Office: 9817 4892

1080 Poison: World League Protests Tasmania's Use of 1080 to Kill Wildlife

On the 22 July 2005 the World League for Protection of Animals held a demonstration outside the Tasmanian Tourism Offices in Sydney to protest the use of 1080 to kill Bennetts Wallabies and other native wildlife on King Island and Flinders Island.

On the day we distributed thousands of leaflets, and were met with great enthusiasm and support from passers by.

We urge everyone to contact the Tasmanian Government, and the King and Flinders Island Councils and demand that they

immediately replace their use of 1080 with the many humane, non-lethal alternatives that are currently available.