

Kangaroo culling

An issue that continues to divide Australians is the culling or killing of kangaroos. Those who are for the culls say that it is necessary to keep populations under control; those who are against it say it is cruel and unnecessary.

In parts of Australia, some species of kangaroo flourish and their numbers can become quite large. This can lead to environmental damage such as degradation of native grassland areas. To reduce kangaroo numbers to more sustainable populations, licenced hunters are employed; they must follow strict guidelines for culling. In areas where kangaroo populations become too great, residents have reported that the kangaroos cause damage to crops and fences, and also become hazards on roads, causing accidents and damage to vehicles.

Opponents to culling say that it is cruel to kill the kangaroos, particularly as they have lived in harmony with the land here for millions of years. These people find it ironic that the kangaroo, an Australian icon which we proudly display on our coat of arms, is also seen as a pest that needs to be eradicated by some sections of the community. Comparisons have been made between the killing of baby seals in Canada and the culling of kangaroos in Australia – both are said to be motivated by ignorance and greed.

Tourists who come to Australia hoping to see our unique wildlife in its natural habitat often comment on how disappointed they are at not being able to see it in the wild and at having to go to zoos to see Australian fauna.

The continued culling of kangaroos will only make this situation worse. International campaigns against kangaroo culling are making people overseas aware of what is happening here and this could damage our tourism industry.

Overall, there are many convincing arguments against the culling. We need to develop improved planning and land management plans, which would enable us to live in harmony with the kangaroo and thereby eradicate the need to cull.