

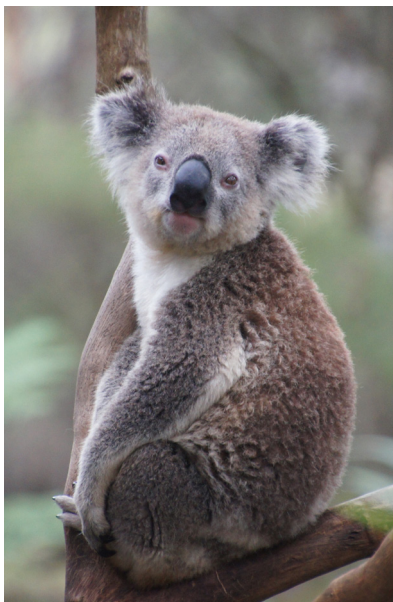
**WILDLIFE PRESERVATION SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA LIMITED
TRADING AS AUSTRALIAN WILDLIFE SOCIETY**

SOCIETY POLICIES

**HABITAT PRESERVATION
CONTROL OF FERAL ANIMALS AND FERAL PLANTS
USE OF NATIVE SPECIES FOR HUMAN NEEDS
FEEDING NATIVE ANIMALS
NATIONAL PARKS
PREVENTION OF ROADKILL
KEEPING NATIVE ANIMALS IN CAPTIVITY
MARINE SANCTUARIES
CLIMATE CHANGE
PLASTIC AND RECYCLING**

PREAMBLE

1. There are certain broad positions that are fundamental to the aims and purpose of the Society. We propose these should be termed “policies”, should be acceptable to all members of Council and should be considered binding on people speaking on behalf of the Society. Such policies should have sound scientific and ethical foundations.
2. There are also more specific items, often of immediate interest but likely to be relatively short-lived, related to these policies on which the Society could have a position. However such positions may need to be more flexible. These are included as “guidelines”.
3. Brief supporting rationales are supplied when necessary.



Policy 1: Habitat Preservation

1. The Society gives high priority to all measures to protect wildlife habitat.

rationale: Loss of wildlife habitat presents the greatest threat at the present time to the preservation of biodiversity in Australia.

2. The Society supports measures to encourage and ensure proper management of lands outside parks and reserves, including ecologically sustainable management of agricultural lands.

rationale: The vast majority of endangered plant and animals are located outside national parks and reserves, and governments do not have the resources to set aside adequate areas to protect these species.

Policy 2: Control of Feral Animals and Feral Plants

The Society supports efforts to control introduced weeds and feral pest animal species.

Guidelines:

The use of 1080 as a control measure against foxes and cats is supported provided that:

- In eastern Australia, where the resistance of native animal species to 1080 is much less than in Western Australia, 1080 is not broadcast, as for example by aerial baiting, but is buried.
- Such baits are placed in sand plots or in such places where it is possible to determine the presence of non-target species.
- 1080 baits should be buried deeper than 10cm (quolls avoid).
- Such baits are removed after the controlled baiting regime is completed.

rationale: Feral animals and plants impact on native species by predation, competition for food and shelter, destroying habitat, and by spreading diseases.

Policy 3: Use of Native Species for Human Needs

The Society recognises that native plant and animal species are used for human needs and seek thorough representation, advocacy and lobbying to influence government and the public to ensure:

- That harvesting is at sustainable levels.

- Passing or selling to another party should be avoided at all costs. For example, dugong and turtle meat.
- That the decision to allow such use is made on the basis of scientific evidence.
- That levels of exploitation are checked frequently and such levels revised on the basis of sound management practices which are themselves based on hard scientific data.
- In the case of animal species harvesting is carried out in a humane manner, by licensed operators under the control of relevant wildlife authorities.

Guidelines:

1. Native animal species should not be hunted or farmed for the purpose of supplying human ornament or dress.

rationale: There are adequate sources of such materials from plant, domesticated animal or manufactured sources.

2. Where species are harvested for other reasons, such as pest control, it should only be carried out under strict government legislation and monitoring. Meat and skins should not be wasted but should be available for commercial use.

rationale: If carcasses have a monetary value which can only be realised through proper channels, there is even greater incentive to remain within a licensed system.

3. Farming of suitable species, such as crocodiles, should be encouraged as an alternative to the taking of individuals or eggs from the wild.

rationale: Farming is a means of ensuring that there is no depletion of wildlife populations. Farming of some species has already been carried out successfully for a number of years under control of the Northern Territory and Queensland wildlife authorities.

Policy 4: Feeding Native Animals

The Society discourages the artificial feeding of native wildlife in the bush or in backyards, except under conditions of severe environmental stress, such as bushfire or drought.

rationale:

- Predation: feeding stations can be magnets for predators, especially cats and dogs. Native animals that lose their natural instincts of predator awareness become easy prey. We recommend at least cleaning bird feeding stations daily to reduce the incidence of disease transfer or instead planting native food trees and shrubs as an alternative.



- Dependency – animals may become dependent upon artificial sources of food and become less inclined to forage naturally.
- We suggest not to feed on a long-term basis. Long-term feeding would lead to an adaption and animals becoming habituated to being fed and results in animals becoming aggressive or people go on holidays leaving animals 'high and dry'.
- Poor nutrition - lack of adequate nutrition to cover bird and animal dietary needs. In the case of birds, parental birds may take poor foods back to the nest such as bread as opposed to a seed or nectar equivalent, which may affect the healthy development of young native birds and encourage feral mallard crosses. Furthermore, bread pollutes waterways leading to algal blooms and bread expands in the gut causing gastrointestinal issues.
- In the case of juvenile native mammals (joeys) cows milk is not appropriate for feeding, leading to diarrhoea and possibly death. Where required, feeding of native baby mammals/joeys should only be conducted by qualified wildlife carers with expertise in those species.
- Nuisance – hand feeding of native animals such as goannas, possums and kangaroos can make them aggressive and they can become a nuisance by stealing food from unaware humans.

Policy 5: National Parks

1. Control of national parks should never be vested in any organisation or group other than the state or federal national parks authorities.

rationale: Conservation may not be a high priority with special interest groups. Organisations or groups other than national park authorities are much more likely to be susceptible to commercial pressures.

Guidelines:

1. While Indigenous Peoples involvement in the management of national parks and the selective hiring of Indigenous Peoples as rangers and other park officials should be encouraged, the ultimate control and ownership of national parks must remain with the community as a whole.
2. Commercial developments in national parks should be kept at a bare minimum.

rationale: The alpine environment is exceptionally fragile and supports a specialised flora and fauna, such as the mountain pygmy-possum (*Burrhamys parvus*). Fast-moving traffic to ski fields has led to an unacceptable level of roadkill.

Policy 6: Prevention of Roadkill

The Society supports continued research into ways of reducing roadkills of native wildlife.

rationale: Current research indicates that some 7,000 native animals are killed on the roads across Australia every day. This is a terrible waste of our native wildlife and a high cost to the motorist and insurance companies involved in smash repairs.

Policy 7: Keeping Native Animals in Captivity

The Society is opposed to taking native terrestrial vertebrates from the wild into captivity except as necessary for educational display and research purposes.

Guidelines:

1. Wherever possible zoo specimens should be obtained from captive breeding programs. Repeated capture of a species from the wild for display purposes is unacceptable under this policy.

rationale:

- The Society recognises that many Australians keep native birds, reptiles, amphibians and fish as a hobby. It is important that no native wildlife be taken from the wild to satisfy this hobby, but rather captive-bred specimens should continue to be used. The Society approves the keeping of native animals, only if they are licensed.
- The Society recognises there are different rules in each state and recommend that you follow the laws within your state.
- The Society encourages responsible pet ownership such as keeping domestic pets such as felines indoors to prevent predation or harm to native wildlife species.
- If native wildlife such as an echidna or snake enters the backyard, pets should be moved indoors and the wildlife allowed to pass-through and/or contact the appropriate wildlife organisation.

Policy 8: Marine Sanctuaries

The Australian Wildlife Society believes that an integrated system of marine sanctuaries is essential for the maintenance of marine biodiversity within the marine environment. The Society believes:

- All states should have a comprehensive network of marine sanctuaries to protect our marine wildlife.



- There should be no “take” of any kind in a marine sanctuary.
- 50 percent of marine parks should become marine sanctuaries.
- Rules apply to help ensure healthy and sustainable fisheries for future generations in regards to recreational fishing and commercial fishing we suggest that these rules are abided by and the appropriate licenses obtained.

Guidelines:

1. Marine parks are not the same as marine sanctuaries. Currently, marine sanctuaries comprise as little as 3 to 6 percent of marine parks. The vast majority of marine parks are zoned “general use” which means in many circumstances there is very little difference in the activities permitted inside the marine park and those permitted outside.
2. Marine sanctuaries are coastal, estuarine or oceanic areas managed to conserve biodiversity. They range from small, highly protected areas that focus on species or community protection, to large multiple areas that include complex linkages of ecosystems and habitats.
3. Marine sanctuaries should be one of a number of tools for the protection of biodiversity.
4. Numerous marine species use mangroves as nurseries during early life stages. It is evident that conserving mangroves will be essential to the persistence of marine species and should be protected.

Others are:

Management strategies, estuary and catchment management plans, conservation agreements, water quality protection plans, threatened species recovery plans, and habitat protection plans.

5. Studies from around the world show that when you declare 30 to 50 percent of a marine area as a marine sanctuary not only do the benefits to biodiversity abound, but fisheries and tourism also reap the rewards. This occurs over time due to the improvements in ecosystem resilience and the large increase in the numbers of big, more productive, fish that spill-over into fishing grounds.

rationale: Sections of the ocean need to be protected from human activity so that we do not deplete the earth’s natural resources and so we can provide a secure habitat for vulnerable species.

Policy 9: Climate Change

The Society recognises that human intervention has had a significant effect on the health and well-being of native fauna and flora. We accept that there is now ample evidence to demonstrate the long term effects on climate patterns of industrial and population pollution, particularly the release of greenhouse gases. The Society supports all efforts by governments, industries and individuals to introduce policies and behaviours that will reduce climate change and maintain a supportive environment for our fauna and flora.

rationale: The greatest single detrimental effect of human activity on the environment has been the destruction of eco-systems and habitat. Climate change is now threatening to accelerate this process and since scientists now accept that human activity is responsible, we must do all in our power to change human behaviour.

Guidelines:

1. We encourage people to make gradual changes in their life to reduce fossil fuels and greenhouse emissions and implement wildlife and environmentally-friendly action.

rationale: We have witnessed an endless amount of damage to our natural world. We need to implement action, now, so that we do not damage the earth beyond repair.

Policy 10: Plastic and Recycling

The Society endorses the reduction in the use of single-use plastics and encourages recycling to eliminate the ingestion of plastics by wildlife.

rationale: Every year 400 million tonnes of plastic is manufactured, of which 8 million tonnes end up in the oceans or are ingested by wildlife. Furthermore, plastic breaks down over time into microplastics which ends up in our ecosystem.

Guidelines:

- Plastic manufacturing processes and products need to be wildlife-friendly, for example, switching from ‘plastic rings’ to ‘lift and peel’.
- The Society encourages everyone to go plastic-free. There are many sustainable products on the market, and we can stop supporting single-use plastic. Examples everyone can switch to include glass, paper bags, paper straws, reusable containers, wax wraps, bamboo cutlery, reusable coffee mugs, shampoo bars, etc.

rationale: Australian’s generate 27kg of plastic waste each year of which 2 to 5 percent end up in the ocean. Plastic is built to last forever, does not decompose and harms wildlife, often resulting in death.

