

To Whom it may concern,

**Re: Draft Flying-fox Camp Management Policy**

I have seen firsthand the distress that is caused to the flying foxes when their colony trees are removed and or cut back. Likewise with the removal of vegetation on the ground that causes higher temperatures and less humidity during a heat wave.

The recent mass deaths of thousands of flying foxes in Casino highlights how vulnerable they are and how easily so many are lost putting a huge stress on the ever dwindling populations.

They need our protection and care.

Please read below my comments in regard to the proposed Flying-fox Camp Management Policy. I have focussed on sections that don't meet the aim of managing flying foxes sustainably or humanely.

- ***Routine Camp Management Actions (Level 1 Actions)***

Level 1 actions could be misused (intentionally or otherwise) to disperse a bat colony or to kill or harm to animals in the colony. The wording of the policy needs to make it clear that "routine camp management actions" don't have the effect of disturbing, distressing or harming flying-foxes. It should be clear that penalties that apply under the existing law will prevail if unauthorised actions are taken.

- ***Creation of Buffers (Level 2 Actions)***

Effectively the same issue applies to this section, where these actions could be misused to disperse, kill or harm bats. For that reason, I believe that the same constraints and warnings should apply to actions taken under this section as suggested above for level 1 actions.

- ***Camp disturbance or dispersal (Level 3 Actions)***

The draft policy "recommends" using a coordinator. A "recommendation" won't be sufficient to satisfy the requirements of this policy (i.e. that the flying-foxes are managed sustainably). Rather, appointment of an experienced Coordinator should be mandatory.

- ***Camp disturbance or dispersal (Level 3 Actions)***

Similarly the draft policy lists conditions where dispersals are "not recommended". To ensure that there is no doubt that dispersals are not conducted under inherently inhumane conditions it is important that dispersals may not be conducted under those four conditions. I feel very strongly it is essential for actions endorsed by government agencies to be sustainable and ethical.

- ***Is shooting of flying-foxes allowed?***

I share the view expressed by many others that the shooting of flying foxes is inherently inhumane, and it should be ended as soon as possible. It is indiscriminate, and at the time of year that many crops are 'at risk', flying foxes may have dependent young that will die a slow death from starvation when their mothers are killed.

Yours truly,

Melanie Barsony