

AJP Policies 2017



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Introduction This is a compendium of new policy *Summaries* and *Key Objectives* flowing out of the work of various policy committees during 2016.

Editing has been made in an attempt to ensure consistency of style and to remove detail which is considered unnecessary at this stage of our development as a political party.

Policy development is an on-going process. If you have comments, criticisms or suggestions on policy please email policy@animaljusticeparty.org.

1 Vision The Animal Justice Party has a long term vision for a kinder Australia but recognises that change will proceed in stages. Many of our policies recognise this and don't simply describe our vision of the future, but the steps required to get there.

Key Objectives

1. To review existing legislation affecting animals to prioritise changes.
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2 Animals

Farming

Farming and food choices are intimately connected and so are the corresponding AJP policies. We advocate a plant based diet but recognise that animal industries are not all the same.

We recognise that some animal industries inflict less pain than others however all involve significant suffering and ultimately the taking of life. The AJP understands that widespread dietary change will be a lengthy process and that animal production methods must be improved urgently as an interim measure; so we will prioritise the phase out of factory farming.

It is the aim of our **dietary policy** to provide programs that inspire people to change. Changes in diets will prompt changes in what and how we farm. Some farmers will have to change their production methods and others will shift from producing animals to producing plant foods. We expect a significant drop in the number of farm animals, an increase in new plant-based industries, and an improvement in human health.

However, whilst the Animal Justice Party will advocate for incomplete reform when the immediate suffering of animals is involved, it will always recognise that such reforms are not enough in isolation and must occur in tandem with a long-term, total transition to plant-based agriculture.

Related policies:

1. Human diet
2. Climate change
3. Marine animals

Key Objectives

1. The withdrawal of Government financial support for animal product industries except for research into welfare improvements.
2. A prohibition on the advertising of animal products and where applicable for health warnings on animal products.
3. Increased funding for research into effective ethical, environmental and health advertising. This should be followed by active Government support for advertising campaigns based around the ethical, environmental and health advantages of plant based diets.
4. To provide financial support and education opportunities where required that will encourage farmers to transition to plant based farming.
5. To introduce a tax on animal products commensurate with their adverse environmental and health impacts.
6. To allow deductible gift recipient status (DGR) for approved not-for-profit animal protection organisations.
7. The rapid phase out of live export and the slaughter of animals without pre-stunning for any reason; including religious beliefs.
8. The rapid phase out of all farm animal mutilations, including tail docking, castration, branding, ear marking, teeth clipping, de-horning and mulesing.
9. The rapid adoption of an 8 hour upper limit on any journey, and restrictions on the climatic conditions under which animals can be transported. Where animals must be transported over longer distances, then as an interim measure, each leg must not exceed 8 hours and the animals must be unloaded, watered and cooled.
10. As the uptake of plant based diets increases, we will work towards laws that abolish breeding and rearing for slaughter or other exploitation.

Companion Animals

The AJP encourages people and animals to share their lives in ways that enrich both. But there is a difference between wild and domestic species.

Companion animals are recognised and cherished by the majority of Australians for their friendship, comfort and devotion. Some 60 percent of Australian households include a companion animal. Companion animals can be pets that share our house, perhaps sit on our laps but they can also be animals that are companions from a distance, such as free-living cats, and birds. All these animals deserve consideration and respect, they provide us with many benefits, but also with obligations. They are not resources.

The Animal Justice Party believes that the requirements of companion animals are inadequately understood. Nationally over 250,000 mostly healthy dogs and cats are put to death each year in pounds and shelters. Around 50,000 cruelty complaints are lodged with only a few hundred successfully prosecuted. It is clear then, that existing acts, regulations, codes of practice, law enforcements, and educational initiatives are failing to protect these animals. The Animal Justice Party will promote reform to protect the best interests of companion animals with the aim of achieving consistency for all levels of government, state, territory, and federal.

Species that haven't been domesticated should be free from exploitation and are not suitable as companion animals.

Key Objectives

1. To provide shelters with adequate funding to cater to lost and unwanted animals
2. To increase desexing levels through government/veterinary subsidies programs and to mandate desexing at point of sale.
3. Animals such as rabbits, guinea pigs, rats and animal assistants like mareema, donkeys, and guide dogs must only be bred by licenced breeders under strict controls.
4. To phase out the sale of companion animals, including birds, reptiles and fish other than from shelters or rescuers.
5. To phase out the breeding of companion animals until shelters achieve no-kill status with no turn-away, then work with companion animal NGO's on only using breeding schemes that benefit the animals involved.
6. To implement and regulate adoption procedures that will better ensure suitable human/non-human compatibility outcomes

7. To implement support programs that enable shelters to rehabilitate animals where required.
8. To manage urban free-living cats humanely via trap, neuter and feed while recognising the conflicts between their interests and those of wildlife.
9. To repeal breed-specific legislation throughout Australia.
10. Birds in cages are unacceptable, aviaries can be used only where release is inhumane.
11. To legislate ensuring tenants can not be discriminated against for having companion animals in their care where the property is appropriate for the animal/s involved.

Live Animal Exports

The AJP opposes the commercial export, whether by sea or air, of live animals; this includes but isn't limited to sheep, cattle, horses, donkeys, camels and goats.

Key Objectives

1. To promote an enquiry into Australia's agricultural exports to determine those plant based products best suited to expand and replace the **3.7 percent** of our agricultural exports that is the live animal export industry.
2. To increase investments in the industries identified by this enquiry.

Animal Experimentation

The Animal Justice Party will strive to put an end to the confinement, pain and distress inflicted on animals for scientific experimentation. We oppose the use of animals in experimentation unless it can be demonstrated that the experimentation will not harm the animal *and* will benefit research and the individual animals involved.

Animals as models for humans in medical science is frequently misleading and we support new technologies with improved predictive power. As an interim measure, Governments at all levels have a responsibility to prevent the suffering of animals of any species for research, whether it be for scientific, commercial or military purposes.

Key Objectives

1. To review ARC and NHMRC funding to ensure suitable support is being provided for non-animal experimentation.

2. To implement educational programs at all levels that replace current animal models with new and effective technologies; many of which already exist.
3. To review project funding priorities of the Federal Government's Rural Industries Research and Development Corporation to ensure there is no support for animals used as resources.
4. To ensure that commercial chemical products, including cleaning agents and toiletries are clearly labelled to indicate whether they have or have not been tested on animals.
5. To immediately ban the use of stray dogs and cats in animal research.
6. To phase-out ARC and NHMRC funding towards experiments that involve the use of animals, except where there are net benefits to the animals concerned.

Bats And Flying Foxes

The AJP will offer a fresh approach that respects flying foxes and bats for their intrinsic worth and will help provide and maintain their basic needs, instead of seeing them as 'pests'.

Key Objectives

1. To address misinformation focusing on bats as dangerous pests to be culled or relocated. A positive image should be promoted focusing on bats' irreplaceable ecological benefits.
2. To outlaw the killing of flying foxes including by landholders for damage mitigation (whether deliberately by shooting and electrocution or from being entangled in nets).
3. To increase flying fox habitat.
4. To require the use of wildlife friendly netting or other non-harmful alternatives to protect orchards where flying foxes are a problem.
5. To ban the use of barbed wire and electrified fencing in rural residential areas where they are a hazard to flying foxes and bats as well as to birds, kangaroos, gliders, possums, wallabies and people.

Greyhound Racing

Greyhound racing and gambling are intimately connected. This inevitably leads to over breeding and the killing of healthy dogs. The industry has also demonstrated a level of mendacity and cruelty that indicates it is beyond any form of regulation. It must be abolished, just like dog fighting and bear baiting.

Key Objectives

1. To rapidly phase out greyhound racing.

Wombats

The AJP recognises that wombats and their rights to protection, quality of life and habitat preservation are the responsibility of all Australians. We have a unique role in caring for this iconic marsupial and a duty to the rest of the world to do this.

Wombats as sentient beings should be able to safely roam throughout their habitat; free from human-mediated harm through shooting, poisoning, dog attack, road kill and culling.

Key Objectives

1. To change farming and forestry practices to prevent harm to wombats or their burrows.
2. To ensure only non-lethal methods of wombat management are used.
3. To harmonise laws protecting wombats throughout Australia and to ensure effective enforcement and penalties.
4. To require that all development proposals take into account the presence of wombats with environmental assessment being undertaken by experts. Where infrastructure is at risk from wombats, then wombat friendly fencing and barriers should be used as required.
5. Wombat corridors across roads need to be monitored and research undertaken to find methods to mitigate harm.
6. To provide guidance and support to farmers suffering financial loss due to wombat damage to fences and/or infrastructure.
7. Farmers need to be prevented from using riparian zones as areas of economic activity. This will prevent conflict with wombats and preserve natural riparian processes and wildlife corridors.

8. To ensure that all properties claiming problems with wombats must be inspected by qualified experts. Any wombats harmed or reported to be in danger must be examined by these experts, who can provide advice and education on wombat behaviour and needs.
9. To support the training of community and landholder/landcare groups to observe, monitor and treat wombats suffering from mange. Wombats have a right to be free of this introduced disease.

Brumbies

A brumby is a wild horse. Early white arrivals brought horses and there have been wild populations in many parts of Australia ever since. The role of these horses in history, both during war and peace, has given them a special place in many Australian hearts.

But their rights are equal to any other introduced animals and are covered in [our Introduced Animals policy](#).

Where environmental degradation from brumbies is demonstrated then non-lethal control measures should be implemented if proven necessary.

The current killing campaigns in some states impose horrific suffering on these animals by using helicopter shooting; this impacts not only the animals shot, but those who may endure severe injuries during efforts to escape.

National legislative protection is required as a matter of urgency.

Key Objectives

1. Give brumbies full legal protection. In particular aerial shooting of brumbies must cease; it is unjustified and inhumane.
2. Support programs that educate the public on the cruel and environmentally negative impacts of killing brumbies. Brumbies digestive processes do not destroy seeds and can spread them over large distances and encourage revegetation. Their droppings make good fertiliser. Education should focus on their beauty and historic significance.

Dingo

The AJP sees dingos as a valuable part of the eco-system; being a native apex predator.

The economic impact of dingos on meat producers has driven their persecution since white arrival. The modern scientific view is that [increasing dingo numbers is essential](#)

to protect what little biodiversity remains. This requires dingos be protected and have more habitat. At present there are only a few protected areas for dingoes; the Blue Mountains NSW World Heritage Area and habitat protection listed under the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act. The World Heritage listed Fraser Island National Park also provides dingo habitat, but gives them inadequate protection from well meaning but ill-informed tourists.

Key Objectives

1. To elevate dingoes from *Vulnerable* to *Protected Native Dog* status and removing any pest status.
2. To legislate giving dingoes full protection and use non-lethals controls where required.
3. To minimise the threat of continued hybridisation by controlling wild dog populations through non-lethal methods. in order to protect dingoes' genetic integrity.
4. To inform Australians, especially rural landowners, of the ecological benefits of dingoes.
5. To increase penalties for killing dingoes.
6. To develop a program for schools teaching children how to act around wild animals, helping them understand the difference between wild dingoes and domestic dogs.
7. To ban 1080 poison.

Sharks

Sharks are an essential part of ocean eco-systems and the AJP advocates complete protection for them; from both culling and harvesting. We also call for a ban on the importation of all shark products.

Key Objectives

1. To ban the importation of all shark parts including fins through amending the *Customs (Prohibited Imports) Regulations 1956 (Cth) for imports (Import Regulations)*.
2. To give total protection to sharks in Australian waters.
3. To create school level programs that teach the significance and importance of sharks.

4. To create school level programs that teach safe behaviour around sharks.
5. To invest in non-lethal deterrence in beaches.
6. To expand research into shark populations and movements.
7. To educate people on the mercury risks associated with shark consumption where applicable.

Introduced Animals

This policy concerns free living introduced species, such as camels, rabbits, cats and foxes, and doesn't deal with exotic species currently found in pet shops; these are dealt with in our [companion animals policy](#).

The AJP supports the humane and non-lethal treatment of all animals regardless of where their species originated. We will support and develop programs that are in-line with this position and focus on restoring eco-systems via methods harmonious to nature such a rewilding.

Key Objectives

1. To immediately ban the use of glue traps, leg traps and steel jaw traps in all States and Territories.
2. To support research into non-lethal population control methods.
3. To replace lethal biological and chemical control with the use of non-lethal techniques, including desexing, immunocontraception, relocation and other emerging technologies.
4. To educate Australians regarding the damage that can be done by abandoned animals such as cats, dogs and other predator species, horses, pigs and non-native fish, amphibians and reptiles.
5. To impose a moratorium on the introduction of exotic animals and disease-causing organisms.
6. To encourage the use of physical barriers around valuable vegetation and, as an interim measure while animals are farmed, to allow the use of guard animals such as dogs or donkeys.

Jumps Racing

Jumps racing is an inherently cruel and unsafe form of entertainment. The AJP opposes jumps racing and will work to achieve its abolition in Victoria and South Australia, the only two remaining states of Australia in which it is still allowed to occur.

Key Objectives

1. To rapidly phase out jumps racing in Victoria and South Australia.

Kangaroos

Legislation that protects kangaroos, wallabies and other macropods is urgently required. We must work to counter the misinformation from those with commercial interests so that kangaroos are valued for their intrinsic worth. We must help maintain their basic needs, instead of seeing them as resources or pests.

Key Objectives

1. To rapidly phase out the commercial killing of kangaroo and wallabies and close down processing industries.
2. To change negative attitudes to kangaroos and wallabies through widespread education about their considerable ecological benefits.
3. To reform relevant legislation, policies and the agencies that administer them to prohibit the killing or brutalising of kangaroos and wallabies.
4. To increase and enforce penalties for deliberate wildlife cruelty.
5. To encourage increased growth in and support for kangaroo friendly wildlife-based tourism in Australia.
6. To review the policies for licensing and the operational practices of wildlife caring and rehabilitation groups and individuals.
7. To prohibit the use of barbed wire fencing in rural residential areas where it is a hazard to macropods as well as birds and bats.
8. To ensure adequate kangaroo corridors are implemented during all relevant development projects.
9. To use exclusion fencing instead of lethal controls to protect vulnerable species at threat from kangaroos.

Koalas

Koalas must not be judged on the basis of their impact on development or tourism. Their habitat must be protected, particularly given their current vulnerable status in Queensland, NSW and ACT. They deserve safety from harm by humans.

Key Objectives

1. To better estimate koala populations and their locations and review the status of the species as appropriate. The range of current population estimates seem too wide.
2. To determine koala road kill hotspots and incorporate overpasses/underpasses and exclusion fences and to encourage koala corridors in fragmented habitat.
3. To prohibit new developments, including housing, forestry and mining on land inhabited by koalas.
4. To place an immediate ban on logging in native forests with koala populations and to ensure that koalas are relocated before logging operations in plantation forests.
5. To abolish large public events such as car rallies and festivals in occupied koala habitat.
6. To educate the public about the ecosystem services koalas render.
7. To encourage increased growth in and support for koala friendly eco-tourism.

Native Birds

The AJP wants to increase biodiversity and to promote practices that enable a flourishing native bird population, coexisting with humans throughout Australia.

The AJP recognises the importance that biodiversity plays for birdlife (and all other life) on our planet. Australian ecosystems are vital for the survival of internationally significant migratory species. Many areas of wetland and coast provide key habitats for these migratory species, so loss of biodiversity in Australia has ramifications that extend beyond our borders.

The AJP supports maximal preservation of native bird habitat, including in residential areas.

The AJP doesn't see native birds as a resource. This implies an end to recreational duck and quail shooting.

Related policies

1. **Wildlife and Sustainability**

Key Objectives

1. To immediately ban duck and quail shooting.
2. To reduce human appropriation of native bird habitat.
3. To expand education about the value of native birds and their interactions within ecosystems.
4. To increase support for long term monitoring of the health of native bird populations.
5. To expand research into potential bacterial, viral or any other biological threats to the wellbeing of native bird populations and into the transmission of diseases to humans and other animal species.
6. To work towards a phase out of firewood collection and use other than from plantations or essential removal of sick and potentially dangerous trees.
7. To further support initiatives aimed at identifying and proposing sites for inclusion on the list of Wetlands of International Importance under the Convention on Wetlands (Ramsar, 1971), for the implementation of international treaties that relate to the protection of migratory birds, such as the Japan-Australia Migratory Bird Agreement, the China-Australia Migratory Bird Agreement, and the Republic of Korea-Australia Migratory Bird Agreement.

Marine Animals

Many marine animals, including fish, feel joy, suffering and pain just as land animals do. The Animal Justice Party believes their current treatment is inconsistent with these basic scientific facts and must change.

Some marine animals, like dugongs and turtles, are killed as part of indigenous tradition. Others are caught as part of an elaborate sport fishing culture; including marlin, swordfish and sharks. The AJP doesn't believe that a culture or tradition of any age or extent is a justification for killing; let alone killing using painful or drawn out methods.

Eating fish, whether farmed or wild, is incompatible with AJP's advocacy of a plant based diet.

Key Objectives

Animal Justice Party

1. To protect all marine animals and their environment as a matter of urgency from adverse commercial industries including, but not limited to, fishing (wild and farmed), gas exploration, land based agricultural run off and harmful dredging.
2. To invest in further development of biodegradable products and work toward the banning of harmful plastics.
3. To invest in research and development to clean up our oceans.

As interim measures, some changes are required urgently:

1. To conduct an audit of nutrition advice from Government and other bodies to ensure it is evidenced based. The background to all seafood advice should first make it clear that seafood isn't required for good health.
2. To establish guideline for nutrition advice from Government agencies recommending that nutritional characteristics can't be separated from environmental and suffering costs of the way seafood is produced.
3. To ensure fish are included in all animal welfare legislation.
4. To implement better labelling of all seafood to include details of production methods and, where appropriate, bycatch levels and that any bycatch estimates be verified by independent observers.
5. To fund research via industry levy into less painful fishing methods.

Animals In Entertainment

Formidable animal welfare challenges exist around Australia with regard to the unnatural use of animals in commercially-operated entertainment enterprises. These enterprises include: performing animal circuses; rodeos; horse and greyhound racing; jumps racing; horse drawn carriage rides; marine parks; zoos and other exhibits such as travelling farm shows (with animals for petting). Broadly defined, *entertainment* also covers such pursuits as recreational hunting.

The Animal Justice Party believes that animals should be enjoyed, appreciated, respected and cared for in as close to their natural state as possible. They should never be terrified as they perform unnatural behaviours or goaded into violent action to provide opportunities for humans to demonstrate 'skills' in taunting and subduing them for audience amusement.

Key Objectives

Animal Justice Party

1. To immediately ban horse jump racing, greyhound racing, recreational hunting, game fishing, rodeos, horse-drawn carriage rides.
2. To immediately ban animals in circuses and marine theme parks.
3. To fund programs to ensure all animals involved in the above industries can be safely rehomed.
4. To redirect government funding and subsidies from the above industries and other forms of entertainment that use animals such as thoroughbred racing into education and awareness raising of the cruel realities that exist in these industries with the goal being towards a legislative ban [reword].
5. To create government funded educational initiatives that promote alternative cruelty-free forms of entertainment and allow deductible gift recipient status (DGR) for approved not-for-profit organisations working in this area.

Zoos

The AJP only supports zoos, marine parks and aquariums where they function in the service of animals. Functions may include breeding of endangered animals, rescue and rehabilitation and serving as a permanent home for animals where release is impossible. Thus all zoos, marine parks and aquariums will join those already evolving to become even more like conservation parks and sanctuaries. Conservation should be carried out in the native land of the species in their natural environment or as closely to as possible.

Visitors, where allowed, shouldn't adversely impact animals.

Key Objectives

1. To review existing legislation to ensure that all facilities holding animals meet high standards.
2. To steadily phase-out government funding of all facilities holding animals that do not exist in the service of the animals involved.
3. To ensure existing animal residents are appropriately cared for and not negatively impacted by funding phase-out.
4. To invest in independent studies that assess the quality of life of all animals in captivity to ensure breeding programs, even for threatened species, still provide a worthwhile quality of life for the animals involved.
5. To redirect government funds to sanctuaries and conservation parks which exist solely in the service of animals.

6. For existing facilities that do not aim to transition, adequate funds must be provided to ensure relocation of all animals to safe and appropriate homes.
7. To develop programs to educate on the intrinsic value of animals in their natural habitat rather than in captivity.
8. To provide funding into threatened species programs abroad where the animals relocation to Australia will have negative impacts on the animals involved.

3 Environment

Environment

The AJP believes humans can thrive while simultaneously reducing our adverse impacts on the natural environment, particularly wildlife.

The human activity which has the most adverse impacts on the most animals is food production. Changing the way we eat can dramatically reduce our impact on animals. The AJP advocacy for a plant based diet is therefore a key plank in our environment policy. No organisation or Government can have an effective environment policy without food policy being central.

In addition to food choices, we measure all resource choices by their impacts on animals. In general terms, this implies we favour recyclable and upcycled materials over those which are consumed and thrown away. If two materials are interchangeable, we favour the one with the lowest land footprint, all other things being equal.

AJP favours sources of clean energy that minimise habitat destruction or other harmful impacts on animals and the environment.

These principles drive policy decisions in all of the following policies with an environmental component.

1. [Human diet](#)
2. [Climate change](#)
3. [Natural gas](#)
4. [Marine animals](#)

Key Objectives

1. To implement our dietary and education policies which will pave the way to an animal production phase out, thus allowing reforestation on those lands where it's feasible.

2. To back comprehensive research into all forms of clean energy, both for electricity and transportation.
3. To transform to a clean energy infrastructure.

Climate Change

We are rapidly changing the climate. It isn't only getting warmer but less predictable. This is nothing short of a global emergency requiring immediate and substantial action. We must slow, stop and reverse the negative changes to the climate before 'tipping points' kick in to accelerate and take the process beyond our control.

The AJP is concerned about the impact of climate change on both humans and animals. Animals will succumb to extreme climatic events well before we do. A world that becomes 2-4 degrees warmer, or more, will kill billions of individual animals, and [could eliminate](#) a substantial proportion of existing animal species.

It is an AJP priority that urgent action be taken to address global climate destabilisation. Animal agriculture plays a major role as a cause of climate change, so a switch to a plant based diet would be a significant help in avoiding it. Globally, it is essential that we protect ocean life and marine eco-systems and decrease livestock numbers to both reduce methane and other greenhouse gas emissions and allow reforestation.

Key Objectives

1. To rapidly transform to a carbon free energy infrastructure.
2. To rapidly transform Australian agriculture to allow reforestation by reducing grazing
3. To prohibit any fossil fuel expansion
4. Implement a carbon tax on both the coal and animal agriculture industries
5. Direct carbon taxes into clean energy solutions, sustainable plant-based food agriculture systems and education
6. Protect existing forests and marine habitats from further destruction

Natural Gas

Fossil fuels, including natural gas, will not be part of any final clean energy solution to climate change. It makes no sense to transition to natural gas, only to have to replace it

with something better in the near future. As a technology, carbon capture and storage (CCS) attached to gas power plants is [unlikely \(see Table 1\)](#) to be clean enough for use in any solution.

Key Objectives

1. AJP recommends that there should be no expansion of natural gas use, whether from coal seam or other sources.
2. AJP recommends that current natural gas use be rapidly phased out in favour of clean energy technologies. Rapidly, in this case means 15 to 20 years.

Wildlife And Sustainability

The AJP aims to maximise wildlife habitat by minimising the land appropriated by people, while ensuring a high standard of health and wellbeing.

Key Objectives

1. To support land management and acquisition to protect and conserve wildlife habitat.
2. To acquire more wildlife habitat through rewilding of land once used by animal agriculture (see our [Climate Change policy](#)).
3. To review the policies for licensing, and the operational practices of, wildlife caring and rehabilitation groups and individuals.
4. To encourage increased growth in and support for wildlife-based tourism in Australia.
5. To impose severe penalties on drivers who intentionally hit wildlife, and require that drivers who accidentally hit wildlife stop and help and/or obtain assistance for injured or orphaned animals.
6. To add wildlife sensitivity components to driver education and training programs.
7. To invest in research and development of technologies to reduce road kill.
8. To transition to 100 percent plantation forestry and ensure that costs of fencing out wildlife are factored into the cost of timber production. Current licensing practices that allow the wholesale destruction of wildlife must cease.
9. The AJP believes that education, and particularly education aimed towards young people, is essential to undo the negative ideas and ignorance fostered by decades of inappropriate, short-sighted and unethical government policies.

Great Barrier Reef

For thirty years the [biggest factor](#) affecting the Great Barrier Reef has been the increased sediment and fertiliser carried into reef waters by all the rivers flowing eastwards in far north Queensland. This sediment and fertiliser comes from pasture on land cleared for cattle.

Recent coral bleaching, exacerbated by climate change, is compounding the threats to the reef.

The AJP focus on plant based eating works like a swiss army knife in that it works on multiple environmental issues at the same time; in this case climate change and the health of the Great Barrier Reef.

As in other areas, AJP policies target major causes rather than easy targets of minor importance.

Related policies:

1. [Marine animals](#)
2. [Climate change](#)

Key Objectives

1. To phase out the cattle industry, starting with bans on further land clearing and the fertilisation of pasture; prioritising those regions closest to the most vulnerable parts of the reef.
2. To ban any new coal and natural gas operations; this is part of our general climate change policy.
3. Similarly, the phasing out of all fossil fuel production and export would see a reduction in bulk carriers passing through the reef.
4. To set clear enforceable regulations on any other industry likely to adversely affect the reef; for example sugar, which is also a sediment and fertiliser culprit.

Land Clearing

The AJP considers Australia's land clearing rates to be both an environmental and animal welfare disaster. We propose to reverse land clearing by addressing the underlying causes.

Animal agriculture is overwhelmingly the largest cause of land clearing across Australia. For example, in Queensland, 93% of cleared land is used for pasture. Other significant drivers (within the remaining 7 percent) are urban development, forestry and mining.

Environmentally, land clearing destroys viable habitat for vulnerable and at-risk animal populations. Clearing also increases soil salinity and is a primary cause of greenhouse gas emissions. Soil erosion from land clearing detrimentally affects waterways and oceans; threatening the Great Barrier Reef especially.

The AJP recognises land clearing not just as a biodiversity and climate change issue, but also as an animal rights and welfare issue. Every year millions of animals die from the destruction of habitat. Animals are injured and die during tree felling with many more dying afterwards from exposure; dehydration; starvation; increased predation; and traffic. Even if they don't die, animals who are displaced will end up pushed into an unsuitable or reduced area.

Key Objectives

1. An immediate cessation of all land clearing associated with animal agriculture.
 2. To introduce habitat protection as a fundamental and consistent planning principle in all regions and sectors.
 3. Amend state-based animal welfare legislation to include an enforceable duty of care towards animals on a landholder's property during all land use changes.
 4. Labelling on products containing palm oil so that consumers can avoid them.
-

4 Humans

Animal Law

We seek a new legal status for animals, acknowledging their right to live protected from human harm.

Key Objectives

1. To establish a Federal and Independent Office of Animal Welfare with powers of prosecution.
2. To implement a national approach to protecting animals under the law.
3. To improve enforcement of laws governing the welfare and protection of animals.
4. To ensure fairer evidentiary burdens on those responsible for prosecuting animal cruelty.

5. To assert Australian sovereignty over all laws regarding animals, regardless of international trade treaties.

Biosecurity

Biosecurity is a word describing procedures to protect people from biological dangers such as infectious diseases. It includes measures designed to prevent new diseases evolving.

Factory farms pose significant biosecurity risks to all Australians. Phasing them out will prevent rather than manage, many infectious disease threats to humans and animals. It will also reduce the risks of new diseases emerging.

AJP advocates a reduction in the interference with wildlife and its habitat. This reduces conflict which risks spreading infectious diseases carried by wildlife.

Key Objectives

1. To establish programs to inform the public about the inherent biosecurity risks associated with intensive animal industries.
2. To establish programs to inform the public about the inherent biosecurity risks associated with reductions in wildlife habitat that can create conflict which brings risk.
3. To support research into bat habitat protection with a goal of reducing conflicts which can be dangerous to both us and bats.
4. To roll back and actively oppose all ‘ag-gag’ laws that use bio-security as a justification for attempts to silence activists and whistle blowers attempting to prevent or expose poor treatment of animals.

Cultured Meat

Meat cultured from individual animal cells has the potential to replace meat produced from killing animals. But if cultured meat is identical to normal meat, it will cause the same health problems. If it is different, it may be better or worse; it is too early to say.

The AJP will judge such meat replacements on a case by case basis as the evidence emerges.

Key Objectives

1. To ask the NHMRC to report on the state and potential for cultured meat, dairy and egg products.

Economy

The Animal Justice Party believes that treating animals as resources is not only morally wrong but reduces human wellbeing. We believe compassion and fairness must be core economic principles. In the major political parties, these concepts run a distant second to productivity and growth.

Humans who are unhappy in their life have [lower productivity](#). They also see less opportunities for economic advancement and are conservative in their [economic behaviour](#). It's also true that positive human engagement with animals of any species makes humans [feel good](#) about themselves and more positive toward others. This is important in building an emotionally stronger, wiser, respectful, compassionate and healthier community.

Key Objectives

1. To end the provision of subsidies, grants and taxation benefits to industries which exploit animals. We would prioritise these changes to begin with the following industries: live animal export, commercial and non-commercial wildlife slaughter and intensive animal agriculture.
2. To provide tax deductible status for not-for-profit animal welfare organisations.
3. To introduce a tax on animal products commensurate with their adverse environmental and health impacts.
4. To establish a national sovereign wealth fund, like the *Future Fund* that provides funding to allow scientists and farmers to shift from using animals to innovative new technologies and plant based products.
5. To ensure that Australians have the choice to invest their savings in banking and superannuation products that promote animal welfare.
6. To support wildlife tourism, already a huge contributor to our GDP, while closing down industries and activities which harm wildlife.
7. To increase the availability of assistance animals within our health and welfare system, while ensuring that these relationships are of mutual benefit.
8. To ensure that workers can use carers leave to care for companion animals.
9. To encourage appropriate workplaces to allow animals at work.
10. To fund innovative projects from volunteer organisations that encourage animal wellbeing.

Education

The AJP believes that the exploitation of animals is not only unnecessary but detrimental to education. Furthermore, whilst education is a right that should be respected, it should not come at the expense of the suffering of other species, particularly given that there are always alternatives.

Many aspects of our education system implicitly mold student values, starting at the canteen and extending into science classes. The AJP will formulate programs across all areas to foster kindness and non-violence towards all beings.

Key Objectives

1. Implement programs that increase and support positive interactions between students and wildlife, rescued farmed and companion animals such as volunteer days and placements at shelters and sanctuaries.
2. To teach students basic nutritional science and convey the discoveries of recent years about the welfare, nutritional and environmental benefits of plant based eating.
3. To facilitate plant based foods in all school, university and TAFE cafeterias, accompanied by research into impacts on student health and behaviour.
4. To explain the realities of modern intensive and extensive farming systems.

Related policies, in particular about animal use in science teaching:

1. [Animal Experimentation](#)

Employment

The AJP aims to maximise gainful employment while phasing out jobs that rely on exploitation of animals as commodities.

Key Objectives

1. Offer educational opportunities for workers currently employed by animal industries through subsidised programs where necessary and traineeships.
2. Promote growth in sustainable animal friendly industries across the board such as eco-tourism, plant-based food products and technologies, and upcycled and recycled design.

Family Violence

‘Domestic and family violence’ is defined as violence by a family member or current or former intimate partner. It may involve attempts to gain and/or maintain power and control over another through a range of abusive behaviours including physical, sexual, emotional or psychological abuse.

Domestic violence is a significant issue in Australia. It is the most common factor contributing to homelessness among women and their children, and plays a major [role in the nation’s homicides](#).

The AJP believes that national and state policies addressing domestic and family violence should be well resourced and evidence based. This should include addressing intersections between family and domestic violence and animal justice issues.

Key Objectives

1. Shelters for survivors of domestic violence must also provide shelter for animals. Research shows that victims may stay in an abusive situation out of a well grounded fear that their animals will be harmed if they leave.

Health

The AJP supports a universal publicly funded healthcare system.

We want to broaden the focus in health policy from just treating disease to also improving health. We believe the biggest gains in health, longevity and economy are to be gained by improving people’s knowledge and access to healthy diet and exercise opportunities.

Our key dietary goal is to shift Australia’s food focus towards healthy plant-based wholefoods. This will greatly reduce the rates of many illnesses.

Related policies:

1. [Human diet and animals](#)
2. [Education](#)
3. [Mental Health](#)

Key Objectives

1. To educate all health care professionals on the benefits of plant based diets.

2. To expand and refocus programs teaching people how to improve their diet and exercise habits.
3. To phase out subsidies to intensive animal industries because they are both cruel and provide a breeding ground for new diseases which pose large public health risks.
4. To end all subsidies to the red and processed meat industries.

Eating large amounts of red and processed meats (which includes pig meat) can have serious health impacts, particularly in relation to cancer, heart disease, diabetes and obesity.

1. To improve food labelling to clearly indicate any components of animal origin.
2. To end unnecessary public funding of research on drugs that address diseases best managed by simple lifestyle choices.
3. To end the inappropriate use of antibiotics because of the risks of creating antibiotic resistant bacteria.
4. To ensure funding of health services is provided at the state level, with an end to vertical fiscal imbalances that cause a lack of accountability at all levels.

Human Diet And Animals

The AJP advocates a plant based diet free of all products derived from animals.

The current demand for animal products in Australia needs to shift to lessen the impacts on individual animals, human health and the planet; education and promotional action needs to occur to bring about a higher uptake of a plant based diet. Education can help people understand the true cost of an animal based diet and strive for individual change.

The AJP believes that many people already find modern animal agriculture unacceptable; and our proposals for reform are covered in our [farming](#) policy.

However, understanding a problem, knowing the solution, and effecting that solution are three separate activities. Our education policy focuses on teaching people to prepare delicious and healthy meals using only plant based ingredients.

Related policies:

1. [Education](#)

2. **Health**
3. **Farming**

Key Objectives

1. To expand school kitchen garden programs.
2. To introduce plant based cooking and food preparation lessons from an early age in schools.
3. To introduce plant based nutrition lessons from an early age in schools.

International Affairs

The AJP wants Australia to be a good global citizen who can lead by example in transforming from a country heavily dependent on animal exploitation to one driven by empathy and compassion.

Related policies:

1. **Live animal exports**

Key Objectives

1. To review all international treaties to determine any agreements which adversely effect animals.
2. To prohibit the import and export of animal trophies.
3. To strengthen policing of illegal wildlife trade bans.

Law Social Justice

The Animal Justice Party believes animal rights is the biggest social justice issue of our time. Achieving animal rights will not only benefit non-human animals but immensely improve the lives of humans. A kinder world where respect and non-violence towards all beings is encouraged and nurtured will have benefits that flow through to the lives of all and the environment which we live.

Key Objectives

Animal Justice Party

1. To continually raise awareness of animal interests in Parliament.
2. To ensure that consideration is given to animals in the drafting of all legislation.
3. To invest in further research on relations between animals and people, exploring and highlighting the ways in which positive interactions between them can improve society.
4. To work towards a definition of personhood to replace the current property status of animals.

Mental Health

AJP will work with existing mental health experts to integrate animal care and interaction with existing programs.

The AJP believes that just as diet and exercise are crucial for physical wellbeing, caring relationships are crucial for mental wellbeing. In particular, having an animal friend is a great way to keep well adjusted. The challenge is to make the relationship beneficial for both parties.

Wildlife rescue and rehabilitation can also give people an avenue for selfless contribution that can enhance self image. But wildlife care also involves mental health risks. Animal rescuers are frequently under resourced and may be disturbed by the human cruelty whose consequences they may have to deal with.

Key Objectives

1. To expand opportunities for human-animal interaction in ways that benefit both.
2. To expand funding for sanctuaries and wildlife rescue and rehabilitation projects.
3. To fund mental health programs to service the needs of those suffering trauma from their work in animal rescue, rehabilitation or advocacy.
4. To rapidly phase out violent industries exploiting animals which negatively impact mental health.

Population

The AJP believes that our policies will enable Australia to reduce it's impact on wildlife and the rest of the natural environment while maintaining a compassionate approach to both migrants and refugees while keeping the home-grown component of our population growth at or below zero.

Key Objectives

1. To keep the national birth rate at or below replacement levels.
2. To educate on the negative impacts of exponential population growth, and the positive outcomes of a stable population.
3. To expand needs based and family re-union immigration in conjunction with the success of our other policies in limiting human impact on the natural world.
4. To ensure that any population increase happens within existing urban boundaries; urban sprawl must cease.
5. To invest in research into urban planning that will improve sense of community and quality of life whilst also living harmoniously with wildlife and nature.