

From: [REDACTED]
To: [ramсар](#)
Subject: End duck shooting in Victoria
Date: Friday, 29 November 2019 5:56:33 PM

Dear Committee Members

I write to express deep concern that the decline of wetlands combined with the hunting season has brought our native duck populations to the brink of extinction. I hope this inquiry will seriously consider an end to duck shooting in Victoria, and will also provide recommendations for Government actions to restore and protect the wetland habitats that all our water birds depend on.

Across Victoria, Australia, and the world there is growing evidence that ecosystems are in real trouble. The world's water bird populations are particularly susceptible to drought, climate change and other threats. In Australia, long-term aerial surveys indicate highly concerning decreases in native waterbird populations due to an increasingly dry climate.

Decreases in native waterbird populations are also due to hunting. Records from previous decades show that "protected" duck and other non-target bird species are inevitably shot during duck shooting seasons in Victoria. Birds killed include threatened Freckled Duck, Blue-billed Duck and Musk Ducks, Swan, Ibis, Spoonbill, and Cormorant.

Introduced publicly expensive measures, such as the Waterbird Identification Test and the creation of the Game Management Authority, have failed to control the illegal shooting of protected wildlife during duck hunting seasons.

There is no doubt that in Victoria, duck shooting poses an unacceptable and avoidable threat to native waterbirds. Regional areas where duck shooting now occurs, like the Ramsar wetlands near Kerang, are of international importance for their magnificent native and migratory waterbirds. But duck shooting currently makes these areas unattractive for nature-based tourism. An end to duck shooting would provide new opportunities for nature-based tourism in these regional communities.

Thank you for the opportunity to share my thoughts.

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Please reply to Celia Smith at [REDACTED]

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