

Media Release

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Time to fight the real enemy

New research on invasive species again shows the threat invasive species pose to native wildlife. It's a stark reminder that much needs to be done to protect our iconic species from pests, CEO of the Victorian Forest Products Association (VFPA) Deb Kerr said today.

The research, [published in the journal Diversity and Distributions](#) and supported by the Threatened Species Recovery Hub, shows that each year, feral and domestic cats and foxes kill

- more than 1.4 billion mammals
- almost 700 million reptiles, and
- and around 510 million birds.

“Killings by domestic cats make up a massive 78% of animals killed. The research also confirms what a [CSIRO report](#) released late last year found invasive species are the greatest threats facing Australia's native wildlife,” Ms Kerr said.

“Here in Australia and even internationally, people were appalled at [3 billion native animals](#) killed in the 2019–20 bushfires. Yet each year foxes and cats kill nearly as many without any concern raised by the public.

The researchers estimate that foxes alone kill around 367 million mammals each year, with possums and gliders the most common native mammal found in their diet. Other invasive species such as feral deer put additional stress on our ecosystem. Deer browsing hampers the establishment of new trees that play a significant role in addressing climate change.

“Forest workers regularly find themselves face to face with environmental activists who illegally enter worksites, chained to trees or equipment. They cause danger to themselves, and forest workers doing their job and lock up the native forestry industry in expensive protracted litigation. Maybe it's time those activists direct their time, effort, and - clearly substantial - resources to where it matters – joining us in the fight against invasive species”, Ms Kerr concluded.

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About

The Victorian Forest Products Association (VFPA) represents all elements of the value chain from sustainable harvesting of plantations and multiple-use natural forest resources. VFPA is a policy development and advocacy group that represents the interests of Victoria's sustainable forestry. We collaborate strongly with other industry bodies to ensure the best outcomes for forestry in general and our members more specifically. Our charter provides autonomy to manage state issues. We collaborate with the Australian Forest Products Association (AFPA) on any issues that transcend state borders and have national implications.