

# The human dimensions of the kangaroo in Australia

*Pip Chalk, PhD Candidate, School of Natural Sciences, University of Western Sydney*

Human dimensions research in wildlife management examines the attitudes and perceptions of people towards wildlife in order to integrate the information into management theory and practice (Decker 2002). In Australia human dimensions research is still in its infancy with limited scientific studies having been conducted (Nimmo and Miller, 2007).

For the kangaroo, this type of research appears to be long overdue. There are a number of issues surrounding kangaroo management in Australia that form the basis of this research. They are:

- The need to manage kangaroos for co-existence with humans
- Conflicting values of kangaroos
- Lack of communication between stakeholders
- Limited sociological data on human/kangaroo interaction
- Lack of awareness of human dimensions research

It is proposed that this research will assist in addressing these issues by collecting baseline sociological data that may be integrated into policy and practice to assist in reducing levels of conflict. In addition, conceptual knowledge of human dimensions research needs to be increased, and Australian managers made aware of the importance and practical application of sociological data into traditional biological and economic based plans.

Information on the attitudes and perceptions of the Australian people toward the kangaroo and what values they attribute to it will not only increase the knowledge of how we relate to this animal, but hopefully introduce a new management paradigm into this complex issue that may ultimately reduce confusion and conflict.