

# Center for a Humane Economy Calls on Nike and Adidas to End Their Role in Killing Kangaroos for Soccer Shoes

*As Australia burns, the two big shoe companies drive the killing of millions of marsupials in the largest commercial slaughter of land mammals in the world*

WASHINGTON, DC, USA, January 27, 2020 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The Center for a Humane Economy ("the Center") has identified 65 models of soccer shoes made from kangaroo skins and has asked Nike and adidas – the two biggest brands in athletic shoes – to eliminate kangaroo products from their supply chains. In letters to both companies' CEOs, the Center has flagged that Nike and adidas continue to supply kangaroo leather soccer shoes in the California market, despite the 2016 reinstatement of the state law banning the import and sale of kangaroo parts.



Kangaroo amidst the ongoing Australian wildfires

The federal and state governments in Australia are extraordinarily permissive when it comes to the commercial killing of wild kangaroos, with an annual toll estimated at 1.5 million animals, primarily for leather (shoes and other products) and meat (mostly pet food). The fires have added immensely to mortality levels for kangaroos, with a University of Sydney scientist estimating that a billion animals have died. The fires are expected to continue burning for months.

"During my childhood in the 1970s, some members of my family hunted kangaroos for sport," said Jennifer McCausland, a director with the Center for a Humane Economy who grew up in Queensland. "While I found sport killing inhumane and unacceptable, today's exploitation of kangaroos is different in its scale and cruelty. It's a massive commercial slaughter of kangaroos driven by profit. The fires and their toll remind us that human-caused mass killing must stop."

For years, Australia's kangaroos have been subject to the largest commercial killing of land-based wildlife in the world. Government agencies recommend a shot to the head or the heart that would cause unconsciousness, but shooters cannot consistently find those small targets at night when much of the killing occurs. They also recommend killing joeys, dependent young who haven't left the pouch, by decapitation or blunt force to the base of the skull.

"Nike and adidas are not pulling the trigger, but they might as well be," noted Jennifer Skiff, Director of International Programs for the Center and based in Perth. "So much of the killing is motivated by profit, and athletic shoes are a major end use of the skins."

The Center's preliminary investigation of sales practices reveals that kangaroo leather soccer

cleats are readily available for sale in California though prohibited by state law; indeed, soccer cleats made of K-leather, as it's euphemistically known, can easily be found at multiple sporting good chains and independent soccer stores in the state. Unlike Amazon, Zappos, and other shoe sellers, Nike and adidas exercise fewer controls to stop shipments of kangaroo leather shoes to customers who purchase directly from their e-commerce sites. "One fail-proof way for Nike and adidas to ensure compliance with California law is to eliminate any use of kangaroos in their offerings," suggested Wayne Pacelle, president of the Center.

The Center has so far documented kangaroo cleats from a dozen manufacturers including adidas, Asics, Lotto, Mizumo, Nike, Puma, and Umbro. "Nike and adidas have already made great progress in dramatically reducing leather in their supply chains and moved toward lighter, durable fabrics," Pacelle said. "Eliminating kangaroo leather should not be difficult for companies given the high-performance synthetic and plant-based materials coming out of their labs." Diadora, the Italian athletic shoe manufacturer with at least five kangaroo leather models of soccer cleats, recently announced it would be kangaroo-free by the end of this year. (The Italian luxury fashion company Versace also announced its decision to stop using kangaroo leather.)

The Center just released [a detailed report on the athletic shoe industry](#) and its dramatic move away from leather in its offerings. As an illustration, adidas is lauded for using ocean plastic to make shoes, helping mitigate another devastating human contribution to the killing of animals. The report can be accessed here. The report has an appendix providing a listing of all shoe models that the Center has found made with kangaroo skins.

[Copies of the Center's letters to Nike and adidas can be found here.](#)

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