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PROTECTING TASMANIA'S WOMBATS

TACKLING SARCOPTIC MANGE

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Greens' Environment spokesperson

**THE
GREENS**

Authorised by Andrea Dawkins MP, Parliament House, Hobart

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Tackling Sarcoptic Mange



The Greens would provide a humane immediate, short, medium and long term response to current and future sarcoptic mange outbreaks in wombat populations.

Wombats are one of Tasmania's most treasured native animals, but they need our help.

Sarcoptic mange has been described by one wildlife ecologist as "the most slow, debilitating, painful death that I've seen of any animal".¹

The disease is caused by the parasitic mite *Sarcoptes Scabiei*, which burrows into the wombat's skin.

Wombats with mange experience severe itching, abnormal thickening of the skin, loss of fur, and death.²

A severe outbreak of mange since 2010 has led to a likely extinction of the wombat population in Narawntapu National Park.³ Since then, this problem has become far more widespread.

Tasmania's wombats are in trouble, and we need to act.

IMMEDIATE RESPONSE

Past research in South Australia has warned of the potential of mange to cause extinction in local populations of southern hairy-nosed wombats, suggesting culling quotas be suspended in infected populations.⁴

The Liberal Government was slow to act, and even then only acted to "tighten the rules" around crop protection permits,⁵ despite evidence that the Tasmanian outbreak had already led to near extinction in some local populations.⁶

The Greens would immediately ban crop protection permits being granted to kill wombats.

We would also support the excellent work being undertaken to establish wombat sanctuaries⁷ by providing \$100,000 in grants for materials and infrastructure requirements.

SHORT/MEDIUM-TERM RESPONSE

Current treatment of wombat mange has limited effect. Dr Scott Carver's research team at the University of Tasmania is currently conducting initial trials of a potentially far more effective chemical treatment for mange.

The research team has secured funding for initial treatment, but has no certainty of funding for

future field trials.⁸ The Greens would make \$500,000 available for these trials.

We would also increase Parks and Wildlife funding by \$350,000 a year to improve rapid response capacity to disease outbreaks, and to develop protocols for coordinating volunteer, community, research and Government agency responses to disease outbreaks.

LONG-TERM RESPONSE

The Greens would make \$200,000 available for research into better understanding of the contributing causes of sarcoptic mange outbreaks, and would investigate the feasibility of transmission barriers at outbreak sites.

We would also conduct a comprehensive review of the response to the mange outbreak in order to inform future structural, resourcing and policy requirements.

INITIATIVE COST

| Initiative Investment (\$m) | 1 st Year | 2 nd Year | 3 rd Year | 4 th Year |
|-----------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| Wombat Sanctuaries | 0.10 | - | - | - |
| Field Trials | 0.50 | - | - | - |
| Parks and Wildlife | 0.35 | 0.35 | 0.35 | 0.35 |
| Mange outbreak research | | 0.20 | | |
| Mange response review | | 0.10 | | |
| Total | 0.95 | 0.65 | 0.35 | 0.35 |

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> YOUR GREEN TEAM



> WANT MORE INFO?

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