

Standing for **Animals**

Your Humane
World for Animals
newsletter
MARCH 2026



- A new chapter for wildlife
- Protections for whale sharks

- Global disaster response
- Dog fighting rescue



**Humane
World for
Animals™**

Formerly called Humane Society International Australia



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We acknowledge the Traditional Owners of this land. We recognise and respect the enduring relationship they have with their lands and waters, and we pay our respects to Elders past and present.

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Share your stories of creating a more humane world by using the hashtag **#standingforanimals** on social media.

Front cover

A giraffe, one of the species that continues to receive protection after November's CITES (the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species) session.

Image: HelpingHandPhotos/Getty

Back cover

An eastern spinebill in a banksia tree.

Image: Jonathan Steinbeck/Shutterstock

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Message from our Executive Director

Looking back at the year just gone I am so very grateful for all you helped us achieve for animals, here in Australia and around the world.

In this issue of *Standing for Animals*, we share just a small sample of the ways that you have helped to tackle the root causes of animal cruelty and suffering, to improve the lives of animals.

Many of you have been with us for decades as we worked to improve our federal environment law to better protect animals. It has been a long journey but we've finally seen the passage of some legislative changes that are a step in the right direction. You can learn more about some of the improvements here as well as how important it is for our politicians to use the law wisely.

You will also learn of how we are nearing the end of the sanctioned cruelty that is greyhound racing and how our colleagues in the United States worked to rescue dogs from a suspected dogfighting ring. It breaks my heart to think of how these dogs have been treated. But with your support they will now get to experience care and love instead of nothing but brutality.

You will also meet a wonderful fellow supporter, Tanya Diesel, who lives and breathes compassion for animals. Her wisdom and creativity are inspired by our natural world and she gives back in so many ways that I am sure will inspire others.

I know you are all aware that I adore elephants! So, it is wonderful to bring you a couple of new stories of elephants in Thailand that have gone from lives of misery to lives of joy, thanks to your generosity.

None of our work is possible without you and I cannot thank you enough for your support.

Thank you for another year of standing with us for animals and I look forward to more victories with you in 2026.

Warmest regards

Erica Martin
Executive Director
Humane World for Animals | Australia





Greater gliders, native birds and platypus: just some of the treasured Australian wildlife that will benefit from reform to Australia's EPBC Act.

With your support A new chapter for Australia's wildlife

Following years of tireless advocacy, the Federal Government has passed major reforms to the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation (EPBC) Act. This should give Australian wildlife a fighting chance for the future.

Campaign director Nicola was a member of Professor Graeme Samuel's Consultative Committee during the independent review of the EPBC Act. She reflected on the significance of the reforms, saying that "these new laws must mark a new chapter for our environment and prioritise the protection of nature in decision making."

The reforms introduce a new Environment Protection Agency, require National Environment Standards to be in place to guide decisions, ensure development approvals have a "Net Gain" for the environment, and define "Unacceptable Impacts" on the environment that should be rejected. The Australian Greens also negotiated further improvements to put an end to exemptions for native forest logging and "high risk" vegetation clearing.

Our supporters wrote to Members of Parliament in their thousands to call for these improvements. These positive steps for nature would not have been possible without your efforts.

But there's still work for us to do. While there are improvements to the Act, the reforms have also opened some risks. The federal government will be able to transfer select powers to state and territory governments, including the power to approve developments that impact national threatened species and UNESCO World Heritage sites. Developers will also be able to apply for their developments to be declared of "national interest", allowing them to side-step protections.

With your continued help, we will continue to stand up for animals and their environments and monitor these processes closely to see that they are used responsibly. Your voices, actions and advocacy have helped drive these reforms in the right direction and with your further advocacy alongside us, we will keep up the pressure to make sure that nature is at the heart of decision making.

Thank you for your support. Together, we're making sure Australia's wildlife and wild places have a brighter future.

Global wildlife trade meeting delivers wins and challenges

The most important global meeting on international wildlife trade wrapped up in Samarkand, Uzbekistan late last year, where governments gathered for the 20th Conference of the Parties (CoP20) to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES).



Victory for whale sharks

Among the victories on the international stage at CoP20 this year, we celebrated decisive progress on the future of whale sharks.

The Conference of the Parties determines how international trade should be managed for some of the world's most threatened species. To make sure the right decisions were made there, we sent our team members Lawrence Chlebeck and Dr. Renae Charalambous to CoP20 to speak on behalf of animals in need.

CITES is a United Nations treaty between 184 countries that regulates international wildlife trade. Species are listed in Appendices 1 to 3, with Appendix 1 offering the highest protection for species threatened with extinction. Every three years, Parties meet to vote on proposals to change species listings and consider documents on compliance, enforcement and welfare.

Conservation in action

This year's agenda spanned marine species, trophy-hunted mammals and animals targeted for the wild animal pet trade. Parties adopted historic protections for sharks and rays, including uplisting oceanic whitetip sharks, whale sharks, manta and devil rays to Appendix 1 after steep population declines. This means that their international trade will now be prohibited.

Stronger trade controls were also agreed for wedgefish, guitarfish and several deepwater shark species, which are in high-demand due to liver oil used in cosmetics and supplements. These decisions may finally help slow decades of decline. However, proposals for eels, sea cucumbers and South Africa's abalone failed, leaving them vulnerable to trade.

Efforts to reopen ivory and rhino horn trade were decisively rejected, with parties worried that it would stimulate the market and unleash a new wave of poaching, but a proposal reducing safeguards for African elephants passed, allowing trade in leather goods made from elephant hide and for some countries to export live elephants from the wild to captivity—a worrying step for already pressured populations. Attempts to remove protections for giraffes were thankfully defeated.



TOP: Renae and Lawrence with the Australian flag at CITES CoP20.
BOTTOM: Renae delivering an intervention on geckos.

Demand for rare reptiles, birds and mammals to supply the global wild animal pet trade also came under scrutiny. Important wins included new listings for Australia's Mount Elliot leaf-tailed gecko and the ringed thin tailed gecko—both found in tiny populations in Queensland—as well as Galápagos iguanas and Central American two-toed sloths, all highly vulnerable to illegal poaching and trafficking.

Across the agenda, parties prioritised species with narrow ranges—irreplaceable animals that can vanish with even low-level exploitation. CoP20 showed that when governments put science ahead of commerce, CITES can deliver meaningful action. And this in turn helps reduce the scale of wild animals suffering for commercial exploitation. The challenge now is ensuring these decisions translate into real-world protection.

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Partner update

From chains to freedom: Malai Ngun's second chance

Rescued in 2016 at 59 years old, Malai Ngun had endured decades of hardship: brutal Phajaan "spirit breaking" as a calf, losing sight in one eye during years in logging camps, and later giving tourist rides in exploitative camps alongside other abused animals.

Thanks to your generosity, she now lives safely at Wildlife Friends Foundation Thailand's biggest elephant enclosure, free from chains and forced labour. It didn't take long for Malai to form a close bond with Alicia, a fully blind rescued elephant, and today she spends her days peacefully exploring, foraging and enjoying the companionship she was denied for so long.

She has taken on the role of Alicia's carer in some ways, guiding her around their large enclosure and even taking Alicia for swims. Their friendship is a truly heartwarming story of newfound lives and renewed hope for two beautiful, rescued elephants.

Ngun's story is a good reminder to never ride an elephant when on vacation and to always avoid 'attractions' that offer elephant rides. These intelligent and social animals deserve our deepest respect and admiration, not to be used for entertainment.

Thank you so much for helping Malai Ngun enjoy her sunset years free from cruelty and exploitation.



Malai Ngun enjoying the freedom and friendship of her new life at Wildlife Friends Foundation Thailand's biggest elephant enclosure.



Humane World for Animals teams on the ground in Alaska and Jamaica.

Disaster response

Our work in Alaska, Jamaica and Mexico

Last year, Humane World for Animals responded to three disasters across the globe, as Mexico and Alaska confronted devastating floods and Hurricane Melissa wreaked destruction on Jamaica.

Our teams brought urgent relief to animals and their communities and thanks to your support, they were able to act swiftly and compassionately, when help was needed most.

Mexico: Floods in Veracruz

When catastrophic floods struck five Mexican states, our disaster response team deployed to Poza Rica and Álamo. Entire neighbourhoods were submerged, leaving thousands displaced and animals without food, water or shelter. We provided veterinary care, supplies and support in temporary shelters, helping families stay connected with their pets and preventing disease outbreaks such as leptospirosis.

Jamaica: Hurricane Melissa

Hurricane Melissa flattened homes and cut off communities from essential supplies. Our team, including Canadian responders, delivered food, medicines, carriers and equipment to local shelters.

Working with Negril Pup Rescue and Montego Bay Animal Haven, we provided immediate relief and began planning a mass veterinary clinic to ensure animals received vaccinations and updated records.

Alaska: Typhoon Halong

In western Alaska, Typhoon Halong destroyed most structures in Kipnuk and caused widespread flooding. At the request of Bethel Friends of Canines, we funded an evacuation flight and supplied food, crates and essential gear for more than 170 dogs in temporary care. Our long-standing Pets for Life partnership enabled a rapid response for this remote community.

Your generosity ensures that when disaster strikes, animals are not forgotten. Together, we are reducing suffering and building resilience worldwide.

Inside story

Katie Loughran

Digital Content Coordinator



Katie joined Humane World for Animals Australia in July 2025 as our digital content coordinator. With experience creating content for not-for-profits, she brings a creative eye and keen nose for storytelling to our team.

Why did you join Humane World for Animals Australia?

I joined Humane World for Animals because its mission aligns perfectly with my values. The focus on addressing the root causes of animal cruelty and working for long-term change is what drew me in. I wanted to be part of an organisation that's dedicated to creating a kinder, more compassionate world for all animals.

Tell us about your role and why digital content is important to our mission to end animal cruelty?

In my role, I create digital content that tells powerful stories and raises awareness about animal welfare. Digital content is crucial to our mission because it helps us reach a wide audience, spark important conversations, and inspire people to take action.

What are some of the challenges in your role and what are the most rewarding things about being part of the team?

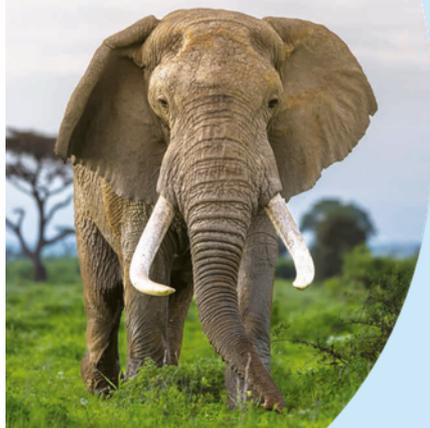
A big challenge in my role is finding the right balance between showing the harsh realities of animal suffering and sharing hopeful stories that keep people motivated. But the most rewarding part is seeing the positive impact our work has. Whether it's a person being inspired to act, or a shift in public awareness, knowing we're helping make a difference makes it all worth it.

Do you have a favourite animal?

It's tough to choose just one, but I think pollinators like bees and bats are incredible. They're often overlooked, but their role in supporting ecosystems and food systems is vital. They're small yet mighty, and I believe they deserve much more recognition for the work they do.



**Humane
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Humane Journeys

Travel with purpose

Join us to experience the transformative power of travel with Humane Journeys. We're offering once-in-a-lifetime trips where you can be immersed in our global efforts for animal protection. Humane Journeys offers authentic, cause-driven travel to unique destinations around the world. Each small group trip is guided by top program experts and designed to

provide a tailored experience highlighting our efforts to protect all animals. Our journeys provide luxurious lodging, integrate low-impact tourism measures and showcase leading-edge animal welfare and conservation programs. If you enjoy travel, we invite you to consider joining us in the field on one of our upcoming Humane Journeys.

For more information, visit humaneworld.org/humane-journeys or email us at humanejourneys@humaneworld.org.

Supporter spotlight

Tanya Diesel



Tanya Diesel is an animal advocate, leadership expert, poet and long-time supporter of our work at Humane World for Animals. Hailing from Southern Africa, Tanya's passion for animals has been life-long, having been inspired by Africa's iconic species at young age.

"Growing up and exploring in Southern Africa, I was surrounded by extraordinary landscapes and wildlife. Lions, elephants, rhinos and meerkats were part of the adventures of my childhood. Over time, I also witnessed how quickly these animals were challenged and disappearing through poaching, habitat loss and human impact. Those early experiences shaped a deep and lasting sense of responsibility toward animals and the natural world.

Today, that responsibility shows up through my philanthropy and through my work. I lead Aspirall, a leadership and strategy consultancy that works with boards and executive teams globally. At its heart, the work is about helping leaders align purpose, values, and decision-making so their organisations can create meaningful and lasting impact. For me, leadership has always been inseparable from care. Care for people, for systems and for the planet we share.

Humane World for Animals embodies those same values. Their work goes beyond rescue. They speak truth, advocate courageously and work at the policy level to protect animals and ecosystems for generations to come. I am inspired by their integrity, persistence and willingness to take on difficult conversations in the service of real change.

Supporting Humane World for Animals is about standing alongside a community that leads with compassion, responsibility and action driving lasting and systemic solutions. It is an honour to play a part in building a more humane future for animals, deep respect for nature and longevity of our humanity and the planet."

“*For me, leadership has always been inseparable from care. Care for people, for systems and for the planet we share.”*



Meerkats and rhinoceros: just two of the African animals that inspired Tanya's passion for conservation.





Humane World for Animals assisted law enforcement with two alleged dogfighting seizures in the United States late last year.

Impact updates

47 dogs and puppies rescued from alleged dogfighting in the United States

In November, Humane World for Animals helped South Carolina Law Enforcement Division (SLED) rescue 47 dogs and puppies from three suspected dogfighting properties in Chester and Lancaster counties.

Supported by local authorities, the operation found dogs chained to barrels or makeshift shelters, many scarred, underweight, and suffering from wounds, flea infestations and dental disease. Dogfighting equipment was also discovered.

Among the worst cases were a malnourished mother with three puppies in a filthy hutch, as well as a dog with a leg swollen from bite wounds. "It's haunting to see so many dogs—injured, covered in scars and clearly in need of veterinary attention—just stuck on the end of a heavy chain," said Janell Gregory, South Carolina state director of Humane World for Animals. Despite their suffering, many dogs greeted rescuers with affection.

Humane World for Animals assisted several dog fight investigations in 2025, rescuing about 90 dogs from seven properties. The rescued dogs are now receiving urgent care.

Hearst Magazines goes fur-free worldwide

Hearst Magazines International, with Humane World for Animals, has announced a global ban on promoting animal fur across all platforms, including print, digital, social media, and advertising. This covers titles like *Harper's Bazaar*, *ELLE*, *Cosmopolitan*, *Town & Country*, and *Esquire*.

Hearst joins other leaders rejecting fur. The Council of Fashion Designers of America will end fur promotion at New York Fashion Week, and Condé Nast introduced a fur-free policy.

In addition to these industry announcements, Poland announced its own ban of fur farming—becoming the 24th country to ban the practice. Between 2014 and 2024, animals killed for fur have dropped by 85%, from 140 million to 20 million.

ABOVE: KEVIN WOLF/AP IMAGES FOR HUMANE WORLD FOR ANIMALS; OPPOSITE: MGS051830/PDA/BAY (TOP); THE FARM TRANSPARENCY PROJECT (BOTTOM)

H&M Group commits to mulesing-free wool

Since January 2025, all virgin wool used by H&M Group comes from farms certified to the Responsible Wool Standard, meaning it's 100% mulesing-free—a major win for lamb welfare.

Humane World for Animals has urged H&M since 2018 to eliminate wool from lambs subjected to mulesing, a painful, live cutting procedure still common in Australia. Humane alternatives exist, including breeding sheep resistant to flystrike.

Australia remains the only country where mulesing occurs, despite promises to phase it out by 2010. Since then, about 140 million lambs have suffered. H&M's commitment shows change is possible when consumers and companies demand higher standards.

Progress towards ending greyhound racing

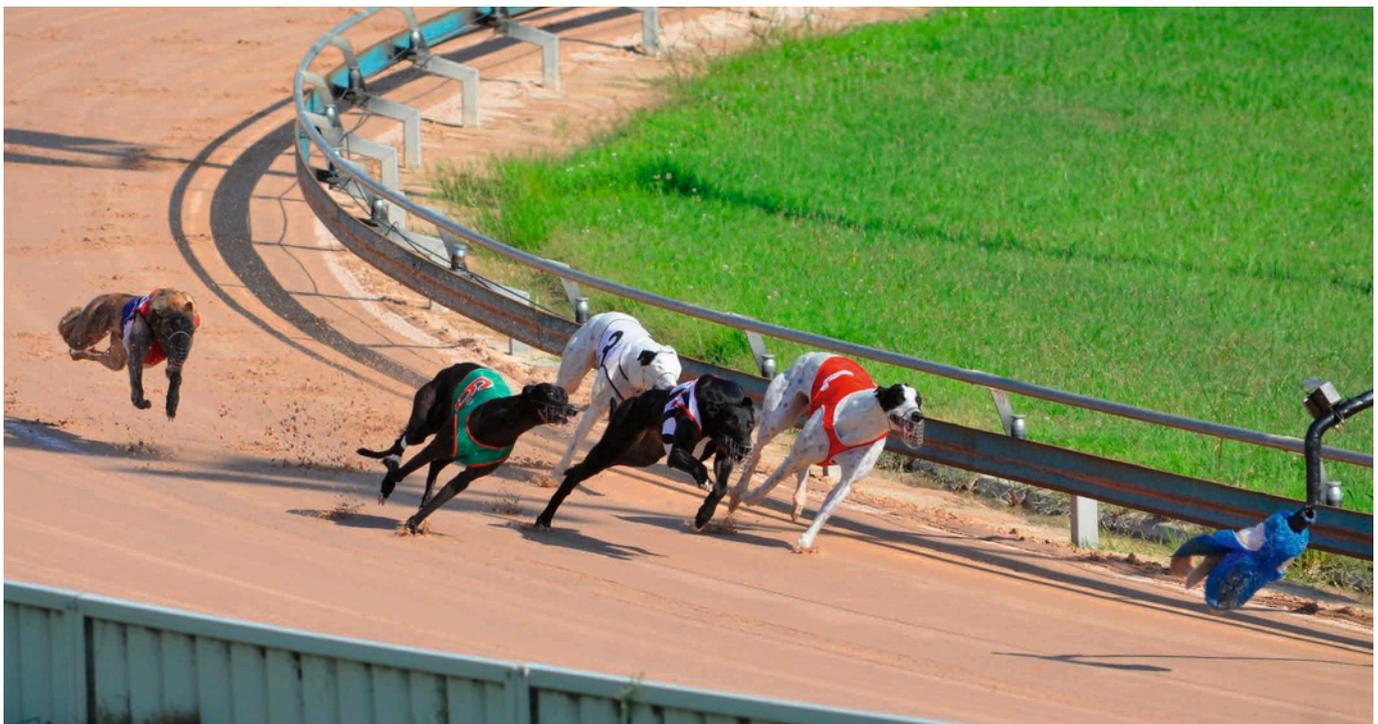
2025 saw major progress in ending greyhound racing. Humane World for Animals joined an alliance calling for Sydney's Wentworth Park to be returned to the public when its lease ends in 2027. NSW Premier Chris Minns announced redevelopment plans that will close the track.



Australia is the only country in the world where mulesing (or live lamb cutting) takes place.

Greyhound Racing NSW will shut 11 of its 26 tracks, moving towards phasing out racing. Newcastle City Council supported eliminating racing locally. Western Australia launched a public inquiry, and Tasmania will end funding for racing by June 2029. Queensland's new \$90 million facility, The Q has seen 21 dog deaths since opening, highlighting the need for reform.

Internationally, Scotland, Wales and New Zealand are advancing bans, and the US is close to ending the practice. These changes show progress is possible—with continued support, we'll keep pushing to end this industry.



Australia has the largest greyhound racing industry in the world, with more tracks operating here than in all other countries combined.



Together, we tackle the root causes of animal cruelty and suffering to create permanent change. Thank you for standing for animals.

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