

Online submission

28 June 2024

**Australian Academy of Science EMCR Forum submission on
*Renewing the Australian Animal Welfare Strategy: discussion paper***

The Australian Academy of Science's Early- and Mid-Career Researcher (EMCR¹) Forum welcomes the opportunity to comment on the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry's *Renewing the Australian Animal Welfare Strategy: discussion paper*.

In rewriting the Australian Animal Welfare Strategy (AAWS), the EMCR Forum recommends:

- consulting directly with EMCRs from a range of fields and institutions around their understanding of the AAWS in Animal Ethics Committee (AEC) applications. We suggest the inclusion of wording in the AAWS that encourages staff and researchers to point out flaws or issues in an AEC application with the senior members of their project teams who hold the applications. There is a general need to educate researchers and other stakeholders about the AAWS.
- consideration of the complexities of undertaking field work in the marine environment where fauna, such as cephalopods, frequently shift across jurisdictional boundaries.
- the inclusion of First Nations considerations in the AAWS. For First Nations communities and individuals, cultural protocols impact their interactions with culturally important species which have flow-on effects to their place in their community. Tension occurs where First Nations researcher have to follow AEC protocols that do not acknowledge the additional care or handling needed for various species.

Prepared on behalf of the EMCR Forum by the Executive team. The EMCR Forum represents over 6,000 of Australia's early- to mid-career researchers across science, technology, engineering, mathematics and medicine, and thus offers a unique perspective from the future leaders of STEM research across Australia.

To discuss or clarify any aspect of this submission, please contact Dr Mari Kondo, EMCR Program Manager at emcr@science.org.au

¹ An EMCR is an individual between 0 and 15 years (0-5 for early career, 5-15 for mid-career) of graduating from a PhD or equivalent (discounting career interruptions) who actively engages in research, either as a researcher or in a role that substantially supports the delivery of research and that requires substantial research training and experience. This includes researchers in academia, industry, government, public, commercial or not-for-profit sectors. Researchers without a higher degree but with equivalent professional experience may identify as EMCR, typically in circumstances of non-traditional career pathways and/or of belonging to underrepresented intersectionalities.