



Friend or foe? The brushtail possum is native to Australia, but is considered a pest in New Zealand.

Veterinary Medical Association, whenever practicable". And Australia's Department of the Environment and Energy says it follows similar versions of the principles reported in the new paper.

No set of guidelines can provide easy answers to the toughest calls. Brushtail possums (*Trichosurus vulpecula*) are a native Australian species regarded as an invasive pest in New Zealand. They are often killed using anticoagulants, which are the worst poisons

in terms of welfare, says Ngaio Beausoleil, an animal-welfare researcher at Massey University in Palmerston North, New Zealand, and an author on the paper.

Animals that ingest anticoagulants bleed to death over the course of days or weeks. But the poison's use is safer for pets and children because it takes so long to kill. If a child accidentally eats bait laced with an anticoagulant, there is still time to get them to a hospital and administer the antidote. With faster-acting

and more humane poisons such as cyanide, a family pet that inadvertently ate it could die before anyone could do anything about it. A third option, Beausoleil says, is to re-evaluate the need for killing the possums at all.

Island Conservation, a non-profit organization based in Santa Cruz, California, also uses anticoagulants when eradicating rodents in order to save endangered seabirds and other vulnerable island species, says Gregg Howald, the organization's North American regional director and an author on the paper.

But the organization is working on replacing or refining its method to come up with a more humane approach. The new guidelines are a call to innovators around the world, he says. "Bring us something that will work; we will be the first to adopt it." ■

CORRECTION

The news story 'Larsen C's big divide' (*Nature* **542**, 402; 2017) erroneously stated that two glaciers flowing into the Larsen C ice shelf have begun to accelerate. Actually, it was glaciers flowing into Larsen B that began to accelerate before the shelf's collapse. Also, the first reference should have been to E. Rignot *et al. Geophys. Res. Lett.* **31**, L18401 (2004).