

INQUIRY INTO DINGOES IN NATIONAL PARKS IN NEW SOUTH WALES

Name: Mr Peter Luton

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Peter Luton
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21st June 2026

Dear Members of the Committee,

I am writing to provide a submission to the Inquiry into dingoes in national parks in New South Wales.

I am a grazier, from the Snowy Mountains of NSW. My family has farmed sheep and cattle on our property for five generations, and has a long history with wild dogs / dingoes. I am hopeful that this Inquiry will achieve a balanced approach to dingo management. I am concerned that the extreme views of "keyboard warriors" are driving modern programs, and I am hopeful that input from people with lived experience can be considered.

In relation to the terms of reference, I submit the following;

(1) That the Animal Welfare Committee inquire into and report on the treatment and the cultural and ecological significance of dingoes in national parks in New South Wales, and in particular:

(a) the genetic status of dingoes, the distinction between dingoes and dogs and recent research into the genetic profile of NSW dingoes

- My family has dealt with dingoes for a long time. Research comes and goes. "Facts" change. There is danger in setting policy on something that could be different again in 6 month's time.
- Most research agrees that the south east of NSW (where I live) has the most hybridised dingoes in the country. Will they be afforded fewer protections than other populations?
- The concept of a "pure dingo" theoretically flawed. Dingoes were introduced to Australia, by humans. They were domesticated animals when they arrived on this continent. Genetic research relies on comparison with a "pure" sample, but the Dingo was not "pure" when it arrived on this continent. The definition of a Dingo will never be objective.
- The distinction between dogs / dingoes / hybrids has been largely unhelpful in our area. All of these can kill livestock and wildlife. All of these are important to Indigenous Australians. All dingoes require careful management, regardless of the DNA composition. A pure dingo is still capable of harming wildlife and devastating livestock. This makes genetics a poor driver for program change.
- All programs should aim to keep a healthy population of wild dogs / dingoes inside defined conservation areas, and exclude them from defined control areas

(b) the legislative, regulatory and policy frameworks governing the management of dingoes in New South Wales in national parks

- The current frameworks are inadequate. We are witnessing a major decline in sheep numbers all over Australia. Predation by wild dogs is a huge contributing factor. Farmers simply can not withstand the losses associated with the current control methods, and the decline will continue until the issues are properly addressed.
- I have personally witnessed the impact of wild dog predation. Sheep and wildlife suffer horrific injuries and painful deaths from wild dog attacks, sometimes taking days or weeks to die. It is very distressing to witness the suffering of animals who have been harmed. Current programs are not succeeding in preventing cruelty caused by wild dog predation.

- In my area, the most effective and balanced controls happen when they are driven by local community-level groups, with input from all vested stakeholders (private and public). Top-down approaches usually fail, as they can not deal with the individual differences between communities.
- Policy seems to be driven by people without specialised knowledge, or lived experience. The best decisions arise from community management models.

(c) the ecological role of dingoes in national parks

- It's a nice idea to think that Dingoes suppress feral pests such as rabbits, foxes and cats. We want to believe it, but it's simply not demonstrated in the bush. In reality, these pest animals are causing havoc, and must be managed without reliance on the Dingo as a pest controller.
- Reluctance to adequately manage dingoes has obvious impacts for wildlife and livestock. Any increase in the population of other pest species should be met with increased funding for on-ground pest management, not a watering down of dingo control.
- Australia has a worrying rate of mammal extinction. A strong approach to managing introduced pests (including dingoes) is urgently needed.
- Many conservation groups question the use of 1080 poison. Such ideas hamper efforts to control pigs, rabbits, foxes and cats. A whole of landscape approach is needed, to balance the conservation needs of dingoes against the broader needs of all native animals, and the need to protect livestock from cruel and preventable attacks.
- The negative impact of Dingoes is well understood by the NSW Government, as evidenced by their investment in "Feral Predator Free Areas" inside National Parks. Dingoes are excluded from these areas, because their impact on vulnerable species is well understood.

(d) the cultural significance of dingoes for First Nations communities

(e) the impact of current government policies and programs for the management of dingoes in national parks

- The impact of the current programs is disastrous, both for wildlife and neighbouring farmlands.
- We are seeing more Dingoes / Dogs than ever before, in places where they have never been before. We are seeing increased predation on livestock, signalling programs that fail to adequately manage dog populations.
- The animal justice issues that arise from poorly managed Dingo populations can not be overlooked. Prey species suffer horrific injuries and deaths, as a result of attacks. I have witnessed extremely distressing impacts on my sheep.
- National Parks must accept their responsibility in both conservation and meaningful control of these animals. These programs must balance the need to protect dingoes, against the need to protect other animals FROM dingoes.

(f) dingo management including opportunities for incorporation of Indigenous knowledge and leadership in dingo conservation in national parks

(g) any other related matters

Thank you for the opportunity to give feedback, and I wish you all the best with the task ahead.

Sincerely,
Peter Luton