

**INQUIRY INTO DINGOES IN NATIONAL PARKS IN NEW
SOUTH WALES**

Name: Name suppressed

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Partially
Confidential

Dingoes are the only native mammals specifically exempt from protection under the Biodiversity Conservation Act, allowing them to be trapped, poisoned and shot across New South Wales National Parks.

I ask for an end to dingo killing within New South Wales National Parks to protect the ecological function of dingoes and support biodiversity conservation.

I ask for greater involvement of Cultural Custodians in decision-making and place-based management regarding dingoes in National Parks to ensure the cultural significance of dingoes is reflected in legislation and management.

As well as financial support and extension services for landholders surrounding National Parks to implement non-lethal coexistence strategies, ensuring their interests are protected and dingoes can be maintained in the environment.

Current dingo management policies are largely based on outdated genetic research using only 23 genetic markers. Contemporary studies now use up to 195,000 markers and indicate that overwhelmingly, Australia's wild-living canids are dingoes, with hybridisation relatively uncommon in stable, undisturbed populations. In New South Wales, more than three-quarters of sampled wild canids showed over 93% contemporary dingo ancestry.

Research indicates that lethal control methods such as poisoning, trapping and shooting can disrupt stable dingo pack structures, increasing social instability and the likelihood of interbreeding with domestic dogs. Modern conservation science increasingly recognises that ecological function - including the role of dingoes as apex predators - is an important consideration alongside genetics when assessing wildlife populations.

Dingoes differ from domestic dogs in several important ways, including their ecological role, social structure, breeding patterns, and behaviour. Australia does not have an established continent-wide population of feral domestic dogs living independently across ecosystems, and it is now widely understood that the wild canids occupying these landscapes are dingoes performing important ecological functions.

In New South Wales, the term "wild dog" is an umbrella term used to collectively refer to dingoes, domestic dogs and hybrids. There is no distinction between roaming or stray dogs and dingoes under current legislation.

Dingoes are the only native mammal specifically exempt from protections under the Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016, allowing lethal control across National Parks.

Dingoes (under the term 'wild dog') are classified as priority pest animals under Regional Strategic Pest Animal Management Plans developed by Local Land Services.

The NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service undertake dingo ('wild-dog') control on public conservation land in order to meet its 'General Biosecurity Duty' under the Biosecurity Act 2015 to manage pest animals, and align with the priorities set out in the New South Wales Wild Dog Management Strategy.

Information obtained under the Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009 revealed that more than 1.5 million 1080 poison baits targeting dingoes were deployed by New South Wales Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) between 2020 and 2025.

Current policy settings continue to manage dingoes within broad pest management frameworks despite contemporary ecological and genetic research recognising dingoes as an ecologically important native species.

Dingoes are Australia's only native canid and are recognised as an important apex predator and keystone species.

Dingoes regulate populations of kangaroos and wallabies, reducing grazing pressure on landscapes.

Dingoes eradicate introduced goats, reducing pressure on vegetation.

Dingoes suppress, and in some cases eradicate, foxes through territorial competition and predation easing pressure on smaller native wildlife.

Dingoes suppress introduced cats through territorial competition and predation easing pressure on smaller native wildlife.

Research suggests that stable dingo populations may suppress fox populations more effectively than poison baiting programs alone.

Dingoes also contribute to the suppression of pigs, reducing pressure on landscapes.

The presence of dingoes influences the behaviour and movement of herbivores and other animals, reducing pressure on vegetation communities.

The removal of apex predators can destabilise ecosystems, contributing to vegetation decline, habitat degradation and increased pressure on threatened species.

Current management programs relies on lethal control methods including 1080 poison baiting, trapping and shooting.

Lethal control can disrupt stable dingo family groups and pack structures.

Disruption of dingo family structures may increase the likelihood of dingoes breeding with domestic dogs.

Removal of dingoes causes trophic cascade.

Removal of dingoes from ecosystems leads to increases in introduced predators and herbivore pressure.

Trapping of dingoes raises serious welfare concerns for the time the animal remains in the trap, unable to access food, water or shelter.

Current management programs do not adequately reflect contemporary ecological science or cultural perspectives relating to dingoes.

Current management of dingoes in National Parks is largely focused on agricultural protection not biodiversity outcomes.

No funding is allocated for research and development into non-lethal coexistence strategies for agricultural properties neighbouring National Parks.

Many Cultural Custodians report feeling excluded from decisions relating to dingo management on their Country.

Longstanding lethal control measures have not eliminated the risk of predation on farmed animals, with some studies finding broad-scale 1080 baiting of dingoes could exacerbate the risk of predation on calves.

There is currently no extension services to support landholders to implement non-lethal predator deterrent strategies in New South Wales. Funding currently utilised for broad-scale 1080 baiting of dingoes and trapping and shooting in National Parks could be re-directed to support neighbouring landholders with coexistence extension services.

Livestock Guardian Dogs have been proven effective at reducing or eliminating predation on livestock by dingoes. They also provide other benefits to landholders including deterring macropods (kangaroos and wallabies) from grazing paddocks, protection from foxes and protection from birds of prey.

There is widespread anecdotal evidence from landholders that donkeys are effective guardians against canid predators. There is a strong opportunity for the New South Wales Government to support more robust trials into the use of livestock guardian donkeys to support properties neighbouring National Parks.

Investment is needed into research, development and scaling of coexistence strategies in New South Wales that ensures landholder interests are protected and dingoes can be retained in the environment to play their important ecological role.

Please review the treatment of this important keystone predator and think about the future.