

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

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## Submission to the NSW Legislative Council Animal Welfare Committee Inquiry into Dingoes in National Parks

My name is Katrina Lee. I am based in Queensland and I am writing this submission in support of stronger protection and more ethical, science based management of dingoes in New South Wales National Parks.

I welcome this inquiry as an important opportunity to reassess current dingo management practices and ensure they reflect contemporary ecological science, cultural responsibility, and animal welfare standards.

### Ecological role of dingoes

I support the recognition of dingoes as a native apex predator and ecologically important species within Australian landscapes. Dingoes play a key role in maintaining ecosystem balance by regulating populations of herbivores and mesopredators, which in turn supports biodiversity and landscape health.

I am concerned that ongoing lethal control programs undermine these ecological functions by disrupting stable dingo family structures and pack dynamics, which can contribute to ecological instability rather than resolve it.

For these reasons, I recommend an end to the killing of dingoes within NSW National Parks, and a shift toward management approaches that prioritise coexistence and ecological integrity.

### Legislative and policy framework

Current classification of dingoes under broad “wild dog” frameworks does not adequately distinguish between native dingoes and other canids. I believe this approach risks misrepresenting the ecological role of dingoes and contributes to management decisions that are not aligned with current scientific understanding.

I recommend that legislation and policy be updated to clearly recognise dingoes as a native species with important ecological function, and that management frameworks reflect this distinction.

### Cultural significance

Dingoes hold deep cultural significance for First Nations peoples across Australia, including connections to lore, kinship, storytelling, and Caring for Country practices.

I support greater involvement of Cultural Custodians in decision making and management of dingoes in National Parks. This should include genuine co design and participation in policy development, monitoring, and on ground management practices, ensuring cultural knowledge is respected and embedded in decision making.

#### Impacts of current management practices

I am concerned about the welfare impacts of current lethal control methods, including trapping, poisoning, and shooting. These methods raise serious animal welfare concerns and can result in prolonged suffering.

I am also concerned that current approaches do not adequately consider non lethal alternatives or invest sufficiently in coexistence strategies that support both landholders and ecological outcomes.

#### Landholder support and coexistence

I support increased financial assistance, education, and extension services for landholders adjacent to National Parks to implement effective non lethal predator deterrent strategies.

This should include practical, accessible support for measures such as improved fencing, guardian animals, and other evidence based deterrents. Supporting coexistence approaches will help reduce conflict while allowing dingoes to remain part of healthy ecosystems.

#### Summary

In summary, I support:

- An end to the killing of dingoes in NSW National Parks
- Recognition of dingoes as ecologically important native apex predators
- Clear separation of dingoes from “wild dog” policy frameworks
- Meaningful involvement of Cultural Custodians in decision making
- Increased investment in non lethal coexistence strategies for landholders

Thank you for considering my submission.

Katrina Lee