

**Submission
No 161**

INQUIRY INTO DINGOES IN NATIONAL PARKS IN NEW SOUTH WALES

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I am writing as a private individual and NSW resident. This submission reflects my personal views only and is not made on behalf of any employer or organisation.

I welcome this inquiry into the treatment and cultural and ecological significance of dingoes in NSW national parks. I am not a technical expert, but I care strongly about animal welfare, biodiversity, respectful management of native wildlife and the role national parks should play in protecting native species.

In my view, the current approach to dingo management in NSW needs to change. Dingoes are native animals with cultural, ecological and welfare significance. They should not continue to be managed primarily through pest control frameworks, particularly in national parks, where conservation and protection should be central.

I ask the Committee to recommend that the NSW Government:

1. give dingoes clear legislative protection in NSW, including under the Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016
2. end lethal control of dingoes in national parks, including 1080 poisoning, baiting, trapping and shooting
3. replace lethal control with humane, evidence-based and non-lethal management approaches
4. ensure First Nations knowledge, leadership and decision-making are central to dingo conservation and management
5. support neighbouring landholders with practical non-lethal coexistence measures
6. recognise the ecological role of dingoes as apex predators in national park ecosystems
7. review the use of the broad term “wild dog” where it obscures the identity, role and significance of dingoes.

It is difficult to reconcile the treatment of dingoes with the way NSW generally approaches native wildlife protection. Dingoes should not be excluded from legislative protection simply because they are also caught up in broader “wild dog” control frameworks.

National parks should be places where native animals are protected, not places where a native species can be trapped, poisoned or shot as part of routine management. I accept there can be complex issues at the boundaries of national parks and agricultural land, but this does not justify a system that treats dingoes primarily as pests rather than native animals with ecological and cultural value.

The Committee should recommend law and policy reform so that dingoes are recognised and protected as native wildlife in NSW.

I am concerned about the use of lethal control methods, including 1080 poisoning, baiting, trapping and shooting. These methods raise serious animal welfare concerns and are inconsistent with a modern and humane approach to wildlife management.

Dingoes are sentient, intelligent and social animals. Management practices should reflect this. A system that causes suffering to animals should only ever be used as a last resort, and in national parks I believe the threshold should be especially high.

The NSW Government should move away from lethal control and invest in non-lethal alternatives that prioritise coexistence, prevention, monitoring and evidence-based decision-making.

Dingoes play an important ecological role in Australian landscapes. As apex predators, they can help shape ecosystems, influence the behaviour of other animals and contribute to biodiversity outcomes.

Their role in national parks should be better understood and protected. Removing dingoes from these landscapes risks undermining the very purpose of national parks, which is to conserve nature and maintain healthy ecosystems.

The Committee should recommend a stronger conservation-based approach to dingo management in national parks, rather than an approach driven primarily by pest control settings.

I do not seek to speak on behalf of First Nations communities. However, I strongly support First Nations knowledge, cultural authority and leadership being central to any future approach to dingo management.

Dingoes have deep cultural significance for many First Nations communities. Future policy should be developed with Cultural Custodians, not merely after consultation with them. This should include properly resourced opportunities for Indigenous-led conservation, monitoring, research and decision-making in national parks.

The Committee should recommend that any future dingo conservation framework includes genuine, place-based First Nations leadership.

I recognise that some neighbouring landholders may have concerns about livestock and other impacts. These concerns should be taken seriously. However, the answer should not be broad lethal control of dingoes in national parks.

The NSW Government should support practical non-lethal coexistence strategies for landholders near national parks. This could include advice, grants, fencing support, guardian animal programs, monitoring and other evidence-based prevention measures.

A better approach would protect both landholder interests and the ecological role of dingoes.

Dingoes deserve better protection and more respectful management in NSW. They should not continue to be treated primarily as pests in national parks.

I urge the Committee to recommend full legislative protection for dingoes, an end to lethal control in national parks, and a shift to humane, evidence-based, First Nations-led and conservation-focused management.

Sincerely,

Angela Rolik