

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

Name: Name suppressed

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Partially
Confidential

Submission to the Inquiry into the Management of Dingoes in National Parks in New South Wales

Submission by a Member of the Public

I welcome the opportunity to make a submission to the Inquiry into the Management of Dingoes in National Parks in New South Wales.

I make this submission as a private citizen who has owned and cared for dingoes for more than 18 years. During this time, I have dedicated myself to learning about their behaviour, welfare, biology and unique place in Australia's environment. I have also worked to educate members of the public, veterinary professionals, schools, colleagues and community groups about dingoes, helping to dispel myths and promote a greater understanding of this remarkable native species.

While I am not a scientist, my experience has given me a deep appreciation of the difference between dingoes and domestic dogs. Too often, dingoes are misunderstood and judged against the behaviour of domestic dogs. In reality, they are intelligent, highly social native animals with unique behavioural traits, family structures and instincts that deserve recognition and protection.

One of my greatest concerns is that current management practices continue to treat dingoes primarily as pests rather than as Australia's apex predator and an ecologically significant native species. Contemporary research demonstrates that stable dingo populations play an important role in maintaining healthy ecosystems by helping regulate herbivore numbers and suppress introduced predators such as foxes and feral cats. Management policies should reflect this growing body of scientific evidence.

I am also concerned that the continued use of lethal control methods, including 1080 baiting, trapping and shooting within National Parks, has significant animal welfare implications. Beyond the suffering experienced by individual animals, research suggests that removing members of stable family groups disrupts pack structure, increases social instability and may contribute to increased hybridisation with domestic dogs. These outcomes appear to undermine the very objectives that current management policies seek to achieve.

Throughout my years caring for dingoes, I have witnessed first-hand the strength of their family bonds, their intelligence and their complex social behaviour. They are not indiscriminate killers as they are often portrayed. Like any wild predator, they respond to their environment, protect their families and play an important ecological role. Public perception is frequently shaped by fear and misinformation rather than by evidence and experience.

Education is a critical part of improving outcomes for dingoes. I have made it a personal priority to educate others whenever possible, whether through conversations with veterinarians unfamiliar with dingoes, education within schools, discussions with colleagues or community engagement. I have found that when people are given accurate information about dingo behaviour and ecology, many are surprised by how different dingoes are from the stereotypes they have heard.

I also support greater recognition of the cultural significance of dingoes to First Nations peoples. While I cannot speak on behalf of Aboriginal communities, I acknowledge the deep and enduring relationship many Cultural Custodians have with dingoes and support greater involvement of First Nations people in decisions regarding dingo conservation and management on Country.

I believe there is also significant opportunity for governments to invest in non-lethal management strategies that support neighbouring landholders while allowing dingoes to continue performing their ecological role within National Parks. Greater investment in education, livestock guardian animals, improved fencing, research and extension services would provide more sustainable long-term outcomes than widespread lethal control.

I respectfully ask the Committee to consider the growing body of contemporary scientific research that recognises dingoes as an important native species deserving of protection. Policies should reflect current knowledge of dingo genetics, ecology and behaviour rather than outdated assumptions. I also encourage the Committee to place greater emphasis on education, conservation, coexistence and evidence-based management.

After sharing my life with dingoes for more than 18 years, I know them to be intelligent, sensitive and socially complex animals that deserve to be understood rather than feared. This submission draws on my personal experience alongside the available scientific evidence regarding the ecological role and management of dingoes in New South Wales National Parks. It is offered in the hope that future policy will better reflect both contemporary research and the lived experiences of those who have dedicated themselves to understanding and caring for this unique native species. My hope is that this Inquiry leads to management practices that protect both Australia's unique biodiversity and one of its most iconic native species.

Thank you for considering my submission and for providing members of the public with the opportunity to contribute to this important Inquiry.