

**Submission
No 243**

INQUIRY INTO DINGOES IN NATIONAL PARKS IN NEW SOUTH WALES

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This submission outlines my support for all recommendations in the Terms of Reference (ToR) of this enquiry as outlined by Defend the Wild for the following reasons:

1) Dingoes provide an important ecological function as Australia's primary apex land predator. National Parks Association of Queensland outlines the role of the dingo in ecosystems to regulate prey populations, control mesopredators (mid-sized predators), and prevent overgrazing. They state, "Dingoes contribute to the balance and health of the ecosystem in ways that are often underestimated." We learn in primary school about how healthy ecosystems function, and dingoes are largely the only animal in Australia that comfortably inhabits that role of a land-based apex predator. Testimonies from farmers who coexist with stable dingo populations report the great number of benefits, such as controlled populations of feral pigs and grazing animals, and the protection from feral dogs due to the territorial nature of dingo packs
<https://landholdersfordingoes.org/grazier-case-studies-dingoes-in-the-landscape/>.

2) Greater involvement from cultural custodians is both culturally necessary, prudent, and recognises the expressed desire of First Nations groups to be involved in the decision-making and place-based management of dingoes. There's a need for their help, and they're offering; why are National Parks NSW not seizing the opportunity? National First Nations' Dingo Declaration states "The Dingo is deeply sacred to Australia's First Nations peoples. They are family... We have the right as Traditional Custodians to be directly involved in decision-making in all legislation and management actions that impact Dingoes...We advocate for a different model: caring for Dingoes on Country. This model sees Dingo recognised in legislation as—a culturally significant and protected native species. This model must use traditional knowledge, and evidence-based practice, focusing on peaceful co-existence between Dingoes and all stakeholders. This brings together cultural and western knowledges.

This sentiment is shared across different states and Territories across Australia, such as Traditional Owners of the Wimmera-Mallee and EJA lawyers who are calling for full protection of Victorian dingoes

3) Financial support and extension services for landholders surrounding National Parks to implement non-lethal coexistence strategies to ensure their interests are protected and dingoes can be maintained in the environment is necessary. Freedom of Information data (obtained under GIPA) reveals that NPWS deployed more than 1.5 million of the indiscriminate killer 1080 poison baits between 2020 and 2025. The dollar-figure cost of this is only presumable. Can funds please be redirected to non-lethal management strategies such as exclusion fencing and trail cameras?

Finally, 7 years ago, my partner and I adopted an orphaned Dingo pup from the RSPCA and have raised her alongside our cattle dog since. She is a highly intelligent, loving, and fascinating creature who is distinctly different, both physically and behaviourally, from domesticated dog breeds. And I have loved and lived with many domesticated dogs in my life. I do not advocate for dingoes as pets unless necessary, such as being orphaned and removed from the wild at a young age. Though she is extremely loyal and loving, most people are not equipped to deal with the unique demands of living alongside a dingo companion, and it is an inaccuracy to consider them a dog- even a wild one. They belong to our native land. Not to us. Exerting such cruel dominion over them as does the current practice, is a national shame.