

**Submission
No 250**

INQUIRY INTO DINGOES IN NATIONAL PARKS IN NEW SOUTH WALES

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- Formal Submission:

Inquiry into Dingoes in National Parks in New South Wales

To: The Committee Manager, Animal Welfare Committee

Inquiry: Inquiry into dingoes in National Parks in New South Wales

Executive Summary

This submission strongly objects to the current destructive "management" frameworks governing dingoes in New South Wales. Under current policies, the dingo is effectively denied legislative safety anywhere in the state, including inside public National Parks. We call for an immediate moratorium on aerial 1080 poison baiting inside National Parks, a legislative reclassification that explicitly separates dingoes (*Canis Dingo*) from domestic dogs (*Canis Familiaris*), and the co-design of a First Nations-led conservation framework.

- 1. Genetic Status and Legislative Frameworks (Terms A & B)
 - **Deceptive Classification:** The *Biosecurity Act 2015* strips the dingo of its status as a native animal by grouping it under the euphemistic catch-all term "wild dog" alongside feral domestic dogs (*Canis familiaris*). This misclassification is politically driven to enforce a legal mandate under the General Biosecurity Duty to eradicate them.
 - **The Protections Gap:** While the *Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016* nominally identifies the dingo as native, it affords it **zero practical protection**. Dingoes are actively hunted, trapped, and poisoned purely for their presence within their ancestral home ranges.
 - **Recommendation:** Amend the *Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016* to legally separate the dingo (*Canis dingo*) from feral domestic dogs, granting them full statutory protection as a native species.
- 2. Ecological Role and the Impact of Current Policies (Terms C & E)
 - **Escalated Killing Campaigns:** Since July 2023, the NSW Government's Wild Dog Control Program has deployed **over 1.5 million 1080 poison baits**, with aircraft covering 40,000 kilometres of strategic lines. **The Extinction Vortex:** The state's baiting density was quadrupled from 10 to **40 baits per kilometre** to achieve a 90% population "knockdown." This extreme pressure forces genetic bottlenecking and inbreeding, driving NSW dingoes into an irreversible extinction vortex. **Post-Bushfire Exploitation:** Following the 2019-20 Black Summer Bushfires, where over 1 billion native animals perished, recovery funds were perversely diverted into an aggressive campaign

dropping 750,000 baits into fragile, recovering wilderness pathways.

- **Keystone Disruption:** As apex predators, dingoes are biologically essential to suppress invasive cats and foxes. Eliminating them collapses local biodiversity and exposes non-target species, such as the endangered spotted-tailed quoll (*Dasyurus maculatus*), to secondary 1080 poisoning.

- 3. Cultural Significance and First Nations Leadership (Terms D & F)

- **Breach of Cultural Lore:** As formally declared by representatives of the Bundjalung, Yuin Walbunja, and Southern Yuin Tribes in the *Australian Zoologist*, the *Warrigal* (dingo) is a vital totemic entity embedded in sacred songlines and familial Kinship Systems. Harming a dingo is a direct violation of First Nations Lore and Cultural Law.

- **Bureaucratic Hypocrisy:** Under the *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974*, physical First Nations objects (such as fossilised dingo scats or ancient dingo remains in rock shelters) are protected. However, the living, breathing connection to the dingo—and the animal itself—is targeted for state-sanctioned slaughter.

- **Exclusion from Decisions:** Broad-scale aerial baiting programs are routinely planned and executed without genuine consultation with local Traditional Custodians, actively causing profound cultural trauma.

Core Recommendations to the Committee

1. Implement an Immediate Moratorium: Halt all aerial 1080 baiting operations within New South Wales National Parks until comprehensive, independent cultural and ecological impact assessments are complete.

2. Enact Legislative Alignment: Harmonise state laws to acknowledge the dingo as a distinct, protected native species, exempting it from mandatory eradication under the *Biosecurity Act 2015*.

3. Establish Cultural Consultation Frameworks: Require mandatory, formal co-design processes with local Traditional Custodians and First Nations Groups to manage dingo country in accordance with First Nations ecological knowledge and kinship laws. **Invest in**

4. Non-Lethal Alternatives: Transition biosecurity and agricultural funding away from landscape-wide poisoning toward targeted, non-lethal predator exclusion and aversion tactics on private property boundaries. Including, but not limited to, adequate predator proof fencing, and integration of livestock guardian animals such as donkeys and mountain dogs into flocks and herds.

Yours in trust,
Zac Forster