

INQUIRY INTO DINGOES IN NATIONAL PARKS IN NEW SOUTH WALES

Organisation: First Nations Against 1080 Poison

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

Submission on from the co-founder of First Nations against 1080 poison supporting the protection of Dingoes.

We welcome the New South Wales Parliamentary Inquiry into the management of dingoes across the state's National Parks and thank the Committee for providing an opportunity for First Nations voices to be heard.

For countless generations, First Nations Peoples have lived alongside dingoes. They are not simply wildlife but cultural kin, teachers, protectors and integral members of Country. First Nations knowledge systems recognise the dingo as a keystone species whose presence supports ecological balance and the health of landscapes.

The continued use of 1080 poison and the routine lethal control of dingoes within National Parks is fundamentally inconsistent with the objectives of conservation, the protection of biodiversity, and the recognition of Aboriginal cultural values.

Cultural Significance of Dingoes

Dingoes hold profound cultural, spiritual and ecological significance for many Aboriginal Nations throughout New South Wales.

Across many language groups they are connected to Dreaming stories, kinship systems, ceremony, law and traditional ecological knowledge. They have shared Country with First Nations peoples for thousands of years and continue to fulfil important cultural roles today.

The destruction of dingoes through poisoning, trapping and shooting represents not only a loss of wildlife but also ongoing harm to living cultural heritage.

Protecting dingoes is consistent with Australia's commitment to recognising and respecting Aboriginal cultural knowledge and cultural rights.

Opposition to 1080 Poison

We strongly oppose the continued use of sodium fluoroacetate (1080) poison within National Parks.

1080 is an indiscriminate poison that causes prolonged suffering before death. Poisoned animals may experience severe distress, convulsions, vomiting, paralysis and respiratory failure over many hours.

The use of 1080 also places non-target native wildlife, domestic animals and culturally significant species at risk either through direct poisoning, secondary or third hand poisoning with this substance being known as a food chain killer.

Poisoning does not distinguish between:

pure dingoes
lactating mothers
pups
non-target native carnivores
scavenging wildlife
culturally significant animals.

This practice conflicts with principles of humane wildlife management and with First Nations obligations to care for Country.

Ecological Importance of Dingoes

Scientific evidence increasingly demonstrates that dingoes function as Australia's apex terrestrial predator.

Healthy dingo populations assist in:

regulating populations of invasive predators such as foxes and feral cats;
maintaining healthier ecosystems;
reducing overgrazing by large herbivores;
supporting biodiversity conservation; and
strengthening ecological resilience.
Removing apex predators can destabilise ecosystems and create unintended environmental consequences.

National Parks exist to conserve biodiversity. Lethal control of a native apex predator within protected areas undermines this purpose.

Legislative Concerns

We are deeply concerned that dingoes remain the only native mammal specifically exempt from protection under the Biodiversity Conservation Act.

This exceptional exclusion allows trapping, poisoning and shooting within areas established for conservation.

We recommend that dingoes receive the same legal protections afforded to other native mammals and that management decisions be guided by contemporary ecological science, independent monitoring and Aboriginal knowledge.

First Nations Leadership

Future dingo management must be undertaken in genuine partnership with First Nations Peoples.

Recommendations include:

recognition of Aboriginal cultural authority in dingo management;
inclusion of Traditional Owners in all management planning and decision-making;
support for Indigenous-led conservation programs;
incorporation of Traditional Ecological Knowledge alongside western science;
long-term investment in Caring for Country initiatives.
Traditional knowledge offers practical and sustainable approaches to coexistence that have supported healthy ecosystems over millennia.

Recommendations

We respectfully recommend that the Inquiry:

End the use of 1080 poison in New South Wales National Parks.
Prohibit routine lethal control of dingoes in protected areas except in genuinely exceptional circumstances supported by independent scientific evidence.
Remove legislative exemptions that deny dingoes the protection afforded to other native mammals.
Recognise dingoes as culturally significant native animals.
Establish First Nations-led co-management of dingo populations within National Parks and wider.
Invest in non-lethal coexistence measures including improved livestock protection, guardian animals, fencing where appropriate and community education.
Support independent research into the ecological role of dingoes and the long-term impacts of lethal control.
Ensure that Aboriginal cultural values and Traditional Ecological Knowledge are embedded throughout wildlife management policy.

Conclusion

The management of dingoes presents an opportunity for New South Wales to demonstrate leadership in biodiversity conservation, humane wildlife management and reconciliation with First Nations Peoples.

Protecting dingoes is about more than conserving a native species. It is about respecting ancient cultural relationships, restoring ecological balance and fulfilling our shared responsibility to care for Country for future generations.

We urge the Committee to recommend an end to the use of 1080 poison in National Parks, strengthen legal protections for dingoes and place First Nations knowledge and leadership at the centre of future management.

Healthy dingoes mean healthy Country. Protecting Country protects us all.

First Nations Against 1080 Poison
Amethyst Downing
Co-Founder
Wandi Wandian