

**Submission
No 293**

INQUIRY INTO DINGOES IN NATIONAL PARKS IN NEW SOUTH WALES

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Submission to the NSW Legislative Council Inquiry into Dingoes in New South Wales National Parks

Thank you for the opportunity to make a submission to this inquiry.

I have worked for many years in conservation and natural resource management, where I have been involved in balancing biodiversity conservation with practical land management outcomes. My views are informed by both professional experience and a strong interest in ensuring that Australia's natural ecosystems remain healthy and resilient for future generations.

The dingo is Australia's apex terrestrial predator and has been part of the Australian landscape for thousands of years. As a native species, it evolved alongside our flora and fauna and plays a vital ecological role that cannot simply be replaced once it is removed from an ecosystem.

National parks exist primarily to conserve Australia's native biodiversity. Management within national parks should therefore begin with protecting natural ecological processes, including the role played by native apex predators such as the dingo.

Public debate often focuses almost exclusively on livestock predation. While attacks on sheep and other livestock can have significant financial consequences for producers, these impacts should be considered alongside the ecological benefits provided by healthy dingo populations and the purpose for which national parks were established.

Australia's landscapes evolved with dingoes present. Scientific evidence indicates that dingoes help regulate populations and behaviour of invasive animals such as foxes, rabbits and feral pigs. Protecting healthy dingo populations therefore supports broader ecosystem health while also contributing to the control of invasive species.

Contemporary genetic research has shown that many free-ranging animals commonly described as 'wild dogs' possess overwhelmingly dingo ancestry. Management decisions should therefore reflect current genetic science and recognise the conservation significance of dingo-dominant populations.

In my view, the long-term objective should be to farm with Australia's native environment rather than continually attempting to remove native wildlife from it. Agriculture and biodiversity conservation should not be viewed as competing objectives.

Governments should support landholders adjoining national parks through practical coexistence measures, including exclusion fencing, guardian animals, improved husbandry practices and strategic grazing management. Where specific animals repeatedly prey on livestock despite these measures, targeted management may be justified. However, broad-scale routine lethal control within national parks should not be the default response.

Recommendations

- Recognise dingoes as a native species of fundamental ecological importance.
- Prioritise healthy dingo populations within national parks.
- Base management on contemporary ecological and genetic science.
- Promote coexistence between agriculture and native wildlife.
- Increase investment in non-lethal livestock protection.
- Restrict lethal control to exceptional, evidence-based circumstances.
- Recognise the important role dingoes play in suppressing foxes, rabbits and feral pigs.

Australia's national parks exist to protect our natural heritage. By working with Australia's native ecosystems rather than against them, we can better support biodiversity conservation while maintaining productive and sustainable farming communities.

Thank you for considering my submission.

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