

**Submission
No 329**

INQUIRY INTO DINGOES IN NATIONAL PARKS IN NEW SOUTH WALES

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Date Received: 17 July 2026

Submission to the NSW Parliamentary Inquiry into Dingo Management in National Parks

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Introduction

I am writing as a concerned Australian who believes dingo management should be guided by contemporary science, respect for Indigenous knowledge and humane wildlife management. Australia has already lost more mammal species than any other continent. At a time of ongoing biodiversity decline, it is difficult to justify the continued removal of one of our most important native apex predators.

The ecological role of dingoes

Dingoes are essential to healthy ecosystems. As Australia's apex terrestrial predator, they help regulate herbivore populations and suppress introduced predators such as foxes and feral cats. In doing so, they contribute to healthier vegetation and improve the survival of many threatened native species. Removing apex predators can trigger ecological imbalances that place even greater pressure on Australia's already vulnerable wildlife. Protecting dingoes is therefore about conserving entire ecosystems, not just one species.

Current management

I strongly oppose the routine use of lethal control methods, including 1080 poisoning, trapping and shooting, particularly within National Parks. These practices raise significant animal welfare concerns and can disrupt stable dingo family groups. Research increasingly suggests that breaking up established packs may undermine management objectives by creating social instability and increasing hybridisation with domestic dogs. Management should reflect current ecological understanding rather than outdated perceptions of dingoes as pests.

Recognising dingoes as native wildlife

It is concerning that dingoes remain the only native mammal excluded from protection under the Biodiversity Conservation Act, despite their recognised ecological importance. Our legislation should evolve with scientific knowledge and recognise the critical role dingoes play in maintaining healthy Australian landscapes.

Indigenous knowledge and cultural significance

One of my greatest concerns is that decisions about dingo management continue to be made without meaningful involvement of First Nations peoples. For thousands of years, Aboriginal peoples have lived alongside dingoes, incorporating them into culture, kinship and Caring for Country practices. Their knowledge should be central to future management, not simply acknowledged after decisions have been made. If Australia is committed to reconciliation and Indigenous partnership, those principles must be reflected in environmental policy.

Supporting coexistence

I recognise the genuine challenges faced by livestock producers. However, decades of lethal control have not resolved these conflicts. Greater investment should instead

support practical non-lethal approaches such as guardian animals, improved fencing and husbandry practices that protect livestock while allowing healthy dingo populations to persist.

Recommendations

- End routine lethal control of dingoes in National Parks except in exceptional circumstances.
- Recognise dingoes as a protected native species.
- Prioritise evidence-based, non-lethal management wherever possible.
- Ensure genuine Indigenous leadership in future dingo policy and management.
- Review legislation to reflect current ecological research.
- Invest in long-term research and monitoring of dingo populations and non-lethal management strategies.

Conclusion

National Parks exist to protect Australia's natural heritage. Continuing to manage dingoes primarily as pests ignores modern science, raises serious welfare concerns and overlooks their cultural significance to First Nations peoples. I urge the Committee to use this Inquiry to strengthen biodiversity conservation, embrace Indigenous knowledge and ensure Australia's only native apex predator is afforded the protection it deserves.