

**INQUIRY INTO DINGOES IN NATIONAL PARKS IN NEW
SOUTH WALES**

Name: Name suppressed

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

Re: Inquiry into the treatment, management, and cultural and ecological significance of dingoes in New South Wales National Parks

To the Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide a submission to this important inquiry.

As a member of the public, I strongly support ending the routine lethal control of dingoes within New South Wales National Parks and replacing current management with an evidence-based, ecologically informed, and culturally respectful approach.

National Parks exist to conserve Australia's native biodiversity and ecological processes. It

is therefore fundamentally inconsistent that Australia's apex terrestrial predator and only native canid continues to be managed primarily as a pest within the very landscapes established for conservation.

(a) The genetic status of dingoes

Current management frameworks do not reflect contemporary scientific understanding of dingoes.

Historically, dingo management has relied on outdated genetic testing methods that examined only a very small number of genetic markers and often overstated the extent of hybridisation.

Modern genomic techniques now analyse vastly larger sections of the genome and present a very different picture. Contemporary research demonstrates that most wild-living canids across Australia—and particularly within New

South Wales National Parks—retain overwhelmingly dingo ancestry.

Equally important is the growing recognition that conservation should not focus solely on genetics. Dingoes perform the ecological role of an apex predator regardless of minor genetic variation. Their behaviour, social organisation, territoriality and ecological function distinguish them from domestic dogs.

Ironically, the continued use of lethal control may contribute to the very hybridisation it seeks to prevent. Stable dingo family groups regulate breeding opportunities and maintain territorial boundaries. When these groups are repeatedly disrupted through poisoning, trapping or shooting, younger animals disperse, social structures collapse, and opportunities for interbreeding with domestic dogs may increase. Policy should therefore reflect contemporary science by recognising both the genetic integrity

and ecological function of dingoes.

(b) Legislative, regulatory and policy frameworks

Current legislation contains a fundamental contradiction.

Dingoes are Australia's only native canid and an ecologically important species, yet they remain the only native mammal specifically excluded from protection under the Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016. Instead, they are managed under the broad and misleading category of "wild dogs", which fails to distinguish dingoes from feral domestic dogs or their hybrids.

This classification has allowed extensive lethal control within National Parks despite their primary purpose being biodiversity conservation. The reported deployment of more than [1.5](#)

million 1080 poison baits by the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service between 2020 and 2025 illustrates the scale of this approach. Such widespread poisoning is difficult to reconcile with contemporary conservation principles or Australia's commitment to protecting native wildlife.

Management frameworks should be updated to:

- recognise dingoes as native wildlife rather than default pest animals

- remove blanket lethal control programs from National Parks

- ensure management decisions are informed by current ecological and genetic research rather than outdated assumptions

- prioritise conservation outcomes within protected areas.

(c) The ecological role of dingoes

The ecological importance of dingoes is now well established.

As Australia's apex terrestrial predator, dingoes play a critical role in maintaining ecosystem balance. Healthy dingo populations regulate herbivore numbers, suppress introduced predators such as foxes and feral cats, and influence animal behaviour in ways that reduce overgrazing and allow vegetation communities to recover.

Removing apex predators rarely affects only one species. It creates cascading ecological consequences throughout the food web.

Where stable dingo populations are maintained, research has demonstrated improvements in ecosystem function, including reduced impacts from invasive predators and healthier vegetation communities. Conversely, repeated disruption of dingo populations through lethal control can create unstable social structures while reducing

many of the ecological benefits that intact packs provide.

National Parks should function as refuges where natural ecological processes are allowed to operate. The routine removal of apex predators undermines that objective.

Protecting dingoes is therefore not simply about protecting one species—it is about restoring ecological resilience across entire landscapes.

(d) Cultural significance

I respectfully acknowledge that I do not speak on behalf of First Nations peoples.

However, I recognise that dingoes hold profound cultural significance for many Traditional Owners across New South Wales and Australia. Dingoes are embedded within stories, kinship systems, ceremony, Songlines and Caring for Country practices that extend back thousands of

years.

The National First Nations Dingo Declaration clearly calls for a new relationship with dingoes based on Caring for Dingoes on Country and meaningful involvement of Cultural Custodians in decision-making.

Future management should genuinely partner with Traditional Owners and recognise Indigenous knowledge as an essential component of conservation, rather than treating it as an optional consideration.

Recommendations

I respectfully ask the Committee to recommend:

1. An immediate end to routine lethal control of dingoes within New South Wales National Parks.
2. Legislative reform to recognise dingoes as protected native wildlife within conservation

areas.

Management based on contemporary genetic science and ecological function rather than outdated classifications.

Genuine partnership with First Nations Cultural Custodians in all decisions relating to dingo management on Country.

Increased government investment in non-lethal coexistence measures for neighbouring landholders, including fencing, guardian animals, education and extension services.

Independent monitoring of dingo populations using contemporary genetic and ecological methods.

Recognition that National Parks should prioritise biodiversity conservation and ecosystem health above broad pest-management objectives.

Conclusion

Australia has one of the highest rates of mammal extinction in the world. At a time when biodiversity loss continues to accelerate, it is difficult to justify the routine killing of one of our most important native predators inside protected conservation areas.

Dingoes are not simply another species to be managed. They are a keystone predator that helps maintain ecological balance, an animal of deep cultural significance, and an irreplaceable part of Australia's natural heritage.

This inquiry presents a rare opportunity to align legislation with contemporary science, strengthen biodiversity conservation, respect First Nations knowledge, and ensure that New South Wales National Parks fulfil their purpose as places where native ecosystems are protected and allowed to function naturally.

I urge the Committee to recommend meaningful reform that ends routine lethal control and secures a future in which dingoes are recognised and managed as the ecologically and culturally significant native species they are. Thank you for considering this submission.