

# MISGUIDED AND LETHAL DINGO CONTROL

Since European invasion, dingoes have been regarded as a serious threat to farmed animals, particularly sheep.

Consequently, the Australian government has spent millions on dingo “control programs”, targeting them extensively with poison baiting, bounty systems and trapping.

## DINGOES: NATIVE PACK ANIMALS

Dingoes can be found in every state of mainland Australia. They live in vitally important packs, allowing the adults to pass on their culture to their young and keep pack numbers stable.

Animals are considered native if they have evolved into their environment, when deep endemic species recognise and respond to them, and when their impact on native species is not exaggerated. Dingoes are native to Australia on all counts.

## BAITING, TRAPPING AND SHOOTING

In states where dingoes are considered “pests”, they can be killed using poisons such as 1080. 1080 can spread throughout the ecosystem, killing scavengers through secondary poisoning, and even killing birds who eat insects that have fed on the bodies of 1080 victims.

Steel-jaw traps are also used to kill dingoes, and in some states are laced with poison. Dingoes are then either shot in the head with a rifle, or die slowly of starvation and dehydration if traps aren't regularly checked.

Multiple state governments have bounty systems in place, incentivising dingo killing. These schemes award shooters up to \$120 per dead dingo.

## KILLING DINGOES IS KILLING BIODIVERSITY

Dingoes are biodiversity regulators whose presence and unimpeded existence in an ecosystem acts not only to control numbers of larger herbivores, but also suppresses animals who may pose a threat to smaller native wildlife too.

Numerous conservationists and ecologists believe that the conservation status of the dingoes in Australia varies between threatened and critically endangered, fearing their extinction could be imminent.

# PROTECTING NATIVE DINGOES PROTECTS ECOSYSTEMS

We must be more conscious of lowering our impact on the natural world and learn to work with nature, not against it. We can learn many lessons from Indigenous communities around the world, who protect and maintain symbiotic relationships with the land and animals through living thoughtfully, we just need to listen and join their calls for justice.

In order to truly protect wildlife, we must revolutionise our current food system; moving away from animal-based agriculture in favour of an Indigenous led, plant-based system. Such a system is more land efficient, encroaching on less wild spaces and causing less conflict between farmers and native animals, like dingoes.

In the meantime, cruel and unsustainable killing of dingoes must cease – science tells us dingo culling does not protect lambs from predation, and may worsen the situation by causing a loss of dingo cultural education around hunting.

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