

**Submission
No 259**

**INQUIRY INTO MANAGEMENT OF CAT POPULATIONS
IN NEW SOUTH WALES**

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As an animal lover and advocate I care about all animals and don't wish for any animal to suffer. Cats are sentient beings and like us feel pain. For that reason as with all sentient animals, I support humane non-lethal measures of control. There is no such thing as humane killing. Toxic poisons such as 1080 cause immense and lengthy suffering and need to be banned and have no place in our environment.

I am also a wildlife rescuer and our wildlife are really struggling against so many threats and need the utmost protection. They too suffer from 1080 and measures to control introduced species also kills them. A much greater effort needs to be made to desexed, re home and to contain cats. We know that both cats and dogs can harm wildlife very easily and quickly. But so do we, with all the landclearing for animal agriculture, developments, mining, logging and roads destroying and dissecting their habitat. And we are the ones responsible for allowing so many cats to breed. That's where the emphasis needs to be, on mass and also targeted desexing programs. Why were cats excluded from the recent Inquiry into Puppy Farms? And why have countless inquiry recommendations been ignored about the poor breeding practices and overbreeding issues with both cats and dogs. When money is involved animal welfare often takes a back seat and breeders are no different. There needs to be strict controls on breeding of both cats and dogs (including greyhounds and working dogs) and massive free desexing programs rolled out. And regulatory controls need to be enforced. Animals should also not be sold in pet shops or sold or given away online.

With proper action on desexing and with pet dogs and also cats contained for their own safety as well as that of our precious wildlife we should see an improvement for wildlife and also our antiquated pound system.

Not for profit groups who are rescuing and rehoming cats need funding to carry on their important work and to enable desexing programs in both the cities and in regional areas. Education is also an important aspect, to teach responsible pet ownership and the importance of desexing. This needs to be rolled out in schools, along with the importance of teaching kindness, compassion and respect to all beings. As a wildlife rescuer we are seeing a lot of disrespect for our precious wildlife also.

We humans have created the overpopulation of cats and we need to reduce their population with kindness and compassion, through desexing, rehoming and containment.