

Submission
No 398

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

Name: Name suppressed
Date Received: 19 November 2024

Partially
Confidential

I am writing to express my deep concern regarding the culling of wild cats currently being conducted in [specific region, if applicable]. I understand that these measures are often implemented as a response to ecological concerns or the impact on native wildlife. However, I believe that culling is not a sustainable or ethical solution to address the issue, and I urge the government to consider alternative approaches that are both effective and humane.

1. Ethical Concerns

The culling of wild cats raises significant ethical concerns. These animals, often feral or abandoned, are not solely responsible for the current ecological challenges we face. Many have become part of our environment due to irresponsible pet ownership and inadequate support for neutering and spaying programs. It is unjust to penalize these animals for circumstances beyond their control. Humane treatment of animals should be a priority in any wildlife management strategy.

2. Questionable Effectiveness

Scientific studies have raised doubts about the long-term effectiveness of culling in controlling wild cat populations. Culling often creates a “vacuum effect,” where the removal of animals only opens up the territory for others to move in and repopulate. This cycle can lead to continuous culling without ever addressing the root cause of the problem.

3. Alternative Solutions

I strongly advocate for the implementation of non-lethal alternatives, such as:

- **Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR) Programs:** TNR has been proven to be an effective strategy in managing feral cat populations. Neutering reduces reproduction rates, while returning cats to their habitat maintains territorial stability, preventing other unneutered cats from moving in.
- **Education and Awareness:** Community education programs can help inform the public about responsible pet ownership, including the importance of spaying and neutering pets and not abandoning animals.
- **Support for Animal Shelters and Rescues:** Increasing funding and support for shelters and rescue operations can provide a humane alternative for managing and rehoming feral and stray cats.

4. Request for Action

I respectfully request that the government:

1. Suspend any ongoing or planned culling of wild cats.
2. Invest in and support TNR programs and other humane population control measures.
3. Partner with animal welfare organizations to develop comprehensive strategies for managing feral cat populations.
4. Launch a public awareness campaign on responsible pet ownership to prevent future issues.

5. Conclusion

In conclusion, I urge the government to reconsider its current approach to managing wild cat populations. We have a responsibility to ensure that our actions are humane, scientifically sound, and sustainable. The well-being of our ecosystem should not come at the expense of animal welfare, and I am confident that with a collaborative effort, we can find a solution that respects both.

Thank you for considering my submission. I look forward to your response and am happy to engage in any discussions or participate in meetings to explore alternative strategies.

Yours sincerely,