

20 August 2023

The Manager, Animal Management
Department of Agriculture and Fisheries
GPO Box 46
Brisbane QLD 4001

Strong Dog Laws: Safer Communities

North Queensland Conservation Council (NQCC) welcomes the opportunity to contribute feedback to proposed changes to Queensland's Animal Management Act.

NQCC is the voice for the environment in North Queensland, with a broad mandate to "protect the land, waters and atmosphere of the region". Inappropriate dog behaviour poses a threat to North Queensland's biodiversity, and we support moves to improve education, regulation and compliance to promote responsible dog ownership and protect communities and wildlife.

We would like to make the following recommendations:

1. Community education campaigns should cover the impacts of dogs on local wildlife. Some wildlife (ground-nesting birds, wallabies, koalas, turtles etc.) are negatively impacted by barking, chasing, digging and attacks. Dog-owners must be made aware of this.
2. Uncontrolled dogs should be prevented from accessing areas of environmental sensitivity, including beaches, tidal zones, riverbanks, and other areas known to support wildlife vulnerable to direct or indirect impacts from uncontrolled dogs.
3. The Wild Dog Act should be amended to refer to "feral dogs" instead, to better recognise the difference between dingoes that act "wild" in line with their nature (hunting for food only) and other dogs that chase and kill for sport, endangering people and wildlife.
4. Dogs that have been bred for the purpose of hunting should be declared dangerous unless the owner can prove otherwise.
5. Rural dogs should be required to be registered and microchipped, to help Councils understand how many dogs are within their local government area.

Yours sincerely,

Crystal Falknau – Coordinator
North Queensland Conservation Council