



MEDIA RELEASE

Dingo Management Plan Launched

The Northern Territory Parks and Wildlife Service (PWS) today launched the Northern Territory's first Dingo Management Plan.

PWS Biodiversity South Principal Scientist Glenn Edwards said the 2006-2011 Management Program for the Dingo aimed to minimise the impact of dingo predation on livestock and endangered populations of native fauna, while ensuring wild populations of pure dingoes are maintained.

Mr Edwards said the development and implementation of the management plan was vital because it aimed to strike a balance between competing interests, including that of the PWS, which wants to conserve the pure dingo species.

"Dingoes have inhabited the landscape for about 4000 years and play a vital role in the Territory's natural ecological system as a top order predator," Mr Edwards said.

"However, dingoes are also known predators of livestock and can cause significant economic losses to pastoral production.

"Not only does this Plan take these factors into account in striking a balance between competing interests, but it also aims to reduce the threat to humans of dingo attack by actively discouraging visitors to national parks from attracting or feeding dingoes, as this can develop or strengthen aggressive dingo behaviour towards people.

"Equally important is the Plan's recognition of the cultural connection Indigenous Australians have with this protected species.

"Dingoes not only play an important role in providing Indigenous people with companionship and to hunt game, but also in the mythological sense as Dreaming stories relating to the dingo are maintained and passed through generations."

Mr Edwards said another key feature of the Plan was its aim to determine the genetic status of dingoes throughout the Northern Territory and take action to minimise cross-breeding between dingoes and domestic dogs.

"The Northern Territory is one of the last strongholds of pure dingo populations in the wild and we don't want to follow the footsteps of our southern counterparts where more than 50 per cent of the wild dog population is hybrid," Mr Edwards said.

"Hybridisation with domestic dogs represents a significant threat to the long-term conservation of the dingo and despite indications being that we have a 93 per cent pure dingo population, more work needs to be done in this area.

"Unless action is taken to manage dogs effectively in towns and communities, the long-term conservation of dingoes will be jeopardised in the Territory as it is elsewhere in Australia."

Mr Edwards thanked all those involved in contributing towards the Plan's creation, which included extensive public and stakeholder consultation.

He said the Plan would be reviewed five years from now.

The Plan is available at www.nt.gov.au/nreta/wildlife/animals/management

Ends

Media Note – For more information contact Glenn Edwards on 8951 8239 or 0401 115 726

Issued: 8.30am Tuesday, 24 April 2007