



26 April 2021

Hon Mark Furner MP  
Minister for Agricultural Industry Development  
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**Re: it is time to review the current legislation/regulations of enclosed yabby traps**

Dear Minister,

We refer to your response letter on 11 March 2021 addressed to Mr Patrick Medway AM. We acknowledge and recognise that the Palaszczuk Government acted in 2015 to reduce the impact of yabby traps on bycatch species, including platypus, water rats, water dragons, and turtles. However, six years later, unfortunately, wildlife are still becoming entrapped in enclosed yabby traps and experiencing preventable deaths. Therefore, we believe that it is time to review the current legislation/regulations and implement a ban on enclosed yabby traps to protect our precious wildlife.

Enclosed yabby traps are banned in Victoria, Australian Capital Territory, Tasmania, and Western Australia. Most recently, the New South Wales Government is giving away 5,000 open-top pyramid nets to recreational anglers as part of a comprehensive program to phase out the use of enclosed yabby traps in New South Wales from 30 April 2021. Furthermore, early this year, the platypus was officially listed as Vulnerable in Victoria and is at risk of extinction.

When will Queensland step up and follow the lead of the other states in Australia to protect our precious and iconic native Australian wildlife?

Your response letter states that there have been no reports of air-breathing animals becoming trapped in fishing traps since the changes were introduced in 2015. However, we wish this were true, but unfortunately, it is not the case.

In January 2017, [a platypus was found dead](#) in Lockyer Creek, Queensland, after being trapped in an enclosed yabby trap. [A rakali was also found drowned](#) in an enclosed yabby trap at Wivenhoe Dam, Queensland.

In November 2019, [two eastern water dragons were found trapped](#) in an enclosed yabby trap at Woogaroo Creek, Queensland. One of them drowned; the other one was exhausted and transported to RSPCA Queensland for care.

More recently, in February 2021, an [eighty-year-old crocodile was found dead](#) in a crab pot in Queensland after it completed a death roll, became entangled, and could not escape.





While we acknowledge the change in regulation in 2015, we still see indiscriminate drownings of air-breathing wildlife in enclosed yabby traps. When juvenile platypuses emerge from their nest, they can weigh between 300 – 400 grams. They are slimline with a very sleek body, like rakali, and can still make their way through the opening of the traps and get caught.

Furthermore, most deaths would go unrecorded. “People who have killed platypus or other native species in illegally set enclosed yabby traps will probably not report it. Also, there is a lack of education and enforcement around the use of enclosed yabby traps and the potential danger to bycatch.” – Tamielle Brunt (PhD candidate and ecologist researching platypus populations in southeast Queensland).

Our current actions have an extreme impact on our precious native wildlife, but there is a safe and effective alternative – open-top pyramid nets. Victorian Fisheries have tested the open-top pyramid nets with a [comparable catch rate](#) to enclosed yabby traps.



Outdated (enclosed yabby trap)



Safe alternative (open-top pyramid net)

The Australian Wildlife Society and [Platypus Alliance members](#) ask the Queensland Government to implement a net exchange program and phase out the use of enclosed yabby traps to protect our native wildlife. In addition, education and enforcement around eliminating enclosed yabby traps and the potential danger to bycatch is needed.

The Society encourages your strong support for this action and acknowledging the receipt of this letter, please.

Yours Sincerely

Doctor Julie Old  
President/Wildlife Biologist

Patrick Medway AM  
Chief Executive Officer

