



LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE NO 7 – PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT

MEDIA RELEASE

Koala Report Release must be a Gamechanger for More Habitat Protection or Koalas on Track for Extinction

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

30 June 2020

The Report from the NSW Upper House Inquiry into the State's Koala Populations and their Habitat was released today after a year-long inquiry. "It must be a gamechanger for the government to protect more koala habitat if they don't want to see the koala become extinct before 2050," said Committee Chair Cate Faehrmann.

"This report must be a gamechanger for koalas and the protection of their habitat in NSW. What became crystal clear during this inquiry was that without urgent government intervention the koala will become extinct in NSW before 2050," said Ms Faehrmann.

She continued, "The report found that habitat loss and fragmentation was the biggest threat to koalas, yet at every turn we were handed evidence that showed our current laws are inadequate and facilitating the clearing of core koala habitat.

The strategies and policies currently in place to protect the koala aren't working, like the NSW Koala Strategy which fails in ensuring enough koala habitat is protected for the different koala populations across the state.

There must be a significant increase in koala habitat protected from logging, mining, land clearing and urban development. The government needs to incentivise farmers so they're paid more to protect trees on their land instead of clearing them and overhaul the failed biodiversity offsetting scheme which allows core koala habitat to be cleared."

Ms Faehrmann also said, "There are two proposed new national parks put forward by the committee for the government to investigate to protect some koala populations from immediate threats. They are the Georges River National Park in Sydney's South West and the Great Koala National Park on the mid-north coast.

Climate change, which exacerbated the drought and the recent devastating bushfires is a significant threat to koalas. The committee recommends that the Government factor in climate change as a key consideration in the drafting of all relevant legislation and planning strategies and ensure climate change mitigation is a core component of all strategies to save the koala in New South Wales."

"It was heartening to have members from all sides of politics working together on a shared mission to come up with recommendations that would go to the government in order to save the koala in NSW. Bar a couple of findings that were particularly critical of the government's koala strategy, I see this as a consensus report for the government to urgently act upon," said Ms Faehrmann.

To view a copy of the report and for further information on the inquiry, please visit the committee's website.

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For further information, please contact the office of Committee Chair, Ms Cate Faehrmann MLC, on 0428 837 292.