

## ENVIRONMENT AND HERITAGE

### Question from The Hon. Mark Banasiak

Page 38 of [uncorrected transcript](#) - Question taken on notice:

**The CHAIR:** I might pick up on one area that Mr Barrett was talking about, which is the great koala national park. As Mr Barrett was saying, we had the University of Newcastle here and they indicated that they could not get any clear figures from the Government in terms of staffing of such a park. The figures around that were a bit vague and rubbery, to say the least. I am wondering whether the department has done any work on how such a park would have to be staffed at all. Ms Kelly, do you have any insight into that?

**GEORGINA KELLY:** I do not have that information here. We would have to take the question on notice.

### Answer:

A full assessment of the ecological, park management, social and economic implications of the proposed Great Koala National Park would be required. An assessment of the management costs and staffing requirements has not been undertaken.

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### Question from Mr Justin Field

Page 40 of [uncorrected transcript](#) - Question taken on notice:

**Mr JUSTIN FIELD:** I am talking about the specific DPE analysis of the koala hubs in New South Wales. They were not made public, but through GIPAA they have been made public. We know that they exist and that there is a lot of crossover, including with current harvesting activities and planned harvesting activities. If those areas of koala hub, which the environment department in New South Wales has identified as critical for future protection, were protected from harvesting, would koalas be better off than they currently are or neutral?

**GEORGINA KELLY:** I will have to take that question on notice, other than to note that the original investment of some \$44.7 million in the Koala Strategy is now \$193 million, and we are seeking to do the base line and understand those populations. But I can take that specific question on notice.

#### Answer:

Protecting and conserving habitat is a priority for the NSW Government, along with managing other threats. The Koala Strategy is designed to address the suite of threats affecting priority populations and ensure that the cumulative effects of management actions deliver the goal of doubling the number of koalas in NSW by 2050.

**Mr JUSTIN FIELD:** If you were to use some of that \$193 million to buy out the logging contracts and remove logging from those areas of core koala habitat—the koala hubs and koala arks—would that be a good use of money to boost koala populations in New South Wales?

**GEORGINA KELLY:** I am sorry, Mr Field, that is an opinion. I can take it on notice.

#### Answer:

Under the Koala Strategy, the NSW Government will invest \$107.1 million over 5 years to fund the protection, restoration and improved management of 47,000 hectares of koala habitat.

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### Question from Mr Justin Field

Page 41 of [uncorrected transcript](#) - Question taken on notice:

**Mr JUSTIN FIELD:** On that \$107 million—I think that is a good point—has the department done any work on prioritising where that money should be spent and what areas in particular should be targeted for protection?

**GEORGINA KELLY:** I will take that question on notice, thank you, Mr Field.

#### Answer:

The NSW Koala Strategy outlines the NSW Government's approach for funding and conservation action prioritisation. The NSW Koala Strategy is available at <https://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/-/media/OEH/Corporate-Site/Documents/Animals-and-plants/Threatened-species/koala-strategy-2022-220075.pdf>.

The Strategy identifies 50 koala populations in New South Wales based on the Areas of Regional Koala Significance (ARKS) identified by the NSW Government, noting that koalas are also found outside these areas.

The 50 koala populations have been prioritised into two intervention categories: populations for immediate investment and populations with key knowledge gaps. Both intervention categories have allocated resourcing under the Strategy. Within the 'population for immediate investment' intervention category, ten focus areas ('koala strongholds') have been identified.