

**INQUIRY INTO KOALA POPULATIONS AND HABITAT IN
NEW SOUTH WALES**

Name: Name suppressed

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Partially
Confidential

I live on the Central Coast of NSW, and for the past 8 months a neighbouring landholder has cleared vast areas of native vegetation, including a Swamp Mahogany forest that was habitat for koalas.

The land falls under the Deferred Matters principle and so the LLS Act came into force. This Act has proved to have absolutely no protection for habitat for koalas or any other native species, including those on the State and National Endangered Species Register.

There is no approval needed before vast areas of native veg is cleared. It is all a matter of self-assessment, which of course is routinely exploited by landholders.

When LLS and OEH Compliance Officers were contacted, the landholder in our Matter was excused of any wrong doing, mainly due to the vague wording of the Act.

There was no motivation or will on the part of the authorities to take punitive action. Hence this irreplaceable habitat for koalas and many other Threatened Species was destroyed with impunity.

This catastrophe has been replicated throughout NSW, with over 200,000 hectares of native veg cleared under these lax laws....or lack of laws.

The State Government must strengthen the laws to protect the habitat for all native species, and put an end to the disastrous levels of land clearing.

Australia is in the midst of an extinction crisis, with thousands of species in trouble, not just koalas.

Retaining habitat is the best way to help protect all native species.