

**Submission
No 27**

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

Name: Ms Laura Bowden

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It is very sad that fossil records of koalas in Australia indicate that they have been living and thriving on this continent for 30 million years. In 200 years since European occupation their numbers have dropped where we are facing another possible mammal extinction adding to the Australian World Record of the highest mammalian extinctions.

We all know that urban development and the fragmentation of koala habitat are the leading causes the decline in our koala populations and the stresses of which greatly impact their susceptibility to disease.

I used to be a Koala Carer for WIRES and I saw first hand the slow and painful affects chlamydia disease had on our local koala population. It was heartbreaking. I estimate that of the 15 or so koalas that came into my care over a 2 year period, 12 of those were euthanised due to the severity of chlamydia. I only successfully rehabilitated 3 koalas back into the wild. If we want to get serious of saving our lovely icon we need to get serious about urban development and logging around koala habitats. I suggest some areas of State Forests are rezoned to National Parks to prevent logging. Funding for research into chlamydia and koala genes. Where there are loop holes in planning development which allow building on and around koala habitat that these are tightened and very serious fines imposed on individuals or companies breaching these codes.

Koalas are such gentle animals and it would be so horrible if we did nothing immediate and effective to save them from their greatest predator, human population growth.