

**Submission  
No 46**

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

**Name:** Ms Charlotte McCabe

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To the NSW Upper House inquiry into the koala population.

I am deeply concerned that our koalas are currently listed as vulnerable and that the NSW government have recently decided to change land clearing laws so that 99% of koala habitat which is on private land can now be very easily cleared and the levels of land clearing appear to be sky rocketing.

I remember about 10 years ago hearing that there was a group in Japan that was working to 'save the koala'. I thought they were deluded and caught up in some kind of misunderstanding about the facts. I felt positive that our country would never allow the koala to get to the point where anyone needed to 'save' it. Disturbingly, I have had to come to terms with the fact that they were right and I was wrong.

The issues are systemic and need to be addressed at a state and national level. Our environment laws are riddled with loopholes and completely lack accountability. No level of government is ultimately accountable for the survival of the koala, hence the hand-balling continues. I recommend endorsing the new environmental laws that the Places You Love Alliance is recommending.

I think the offset scheme is a complete failure and needs to be scrapped.

The Regional Forest Agreements also needs to be scrapped. Native forests need protection, not logging. The logging industry has had plenty of time to set up plantations. It is only due to a lack of government regulation that they rely on new native forest coups to be opened up.

Climate change is impacting all species including the koala. Protecting this species will need to involve a serious commitment to limiting global warming to 1.5 degrees which the current NSW government seems to be determined to ignore.

The Great Koala National Park needs to be established and National Parks and Wildlife need the appropriate funding to be able to protect our valuable natural assets.

No mammal has ever come off the conveyor belt towards extinction in Australia. There is nothing that currently assures me that the koala won't soon become threatened and then endangered. That would be a national disgrace that is completely avoidable if we act now.