

**Submission
No 51**

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

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Date Received: 23 July 2019

- The most critical issue is the failure to protect habitat given that the NSW Koala Strategy identifies habitat loss, connectivity and fragmentation as the key issues.
- The Biodiversity Conservation Act and Local Land Amendment Act need to include provisions to protect habitat, end self assessment, provide for opportunities for legal challenges in the public interest.
- The offset policy should be repealed.
- Regional Forest Agreements have to be repealed and native forests protected from logging, burning and wood chipping.
- Extensive dieback in NSW forests which are koala habitat has been ignored.
- * The draft SEPP 44 (state planning policy for koalas) is completely inadequate and there has not been on submission in favour of the changes.
- Grants provided by the government through the Koala Research Plan are confined to disease, translocation and the medicalization of koalas, completely failing to address the primary issue, conservation and habitat loss.
- Conflicts of interest with grant recipients.
- Southwest Sydney koala population is at serious risk as a result of major urbanisation. Roads & Maritime Services have an appalling record of koala mortality and currently reject any community requests to install overpasses.
- This rejection condemns the largest, healthy expanding koala population to extinction as koalas will be trapped behind exclusion fences.
- A Parliamentary Inquiry into the Roads & Maritime Services failure to provide overpasses and underpasses for koalas in the construction of the Pacific Highway Upgrade with particular reference to Ballina section is overdue.
- The NSW Koala Strategy completely ignores the impacts of climate change on koalas, identified by the International Union for the Conservation of Nature as one of the ten most vulnerable species globally to climate change.
- No climate change refugia or koala national parks in key areas.
- The creation of the Great Koala National Park needs to be a key recommendation.
- Translocations must not be permitted.
- Total lack of compliance, monitoring as evidenced by the Auditor General's Report released recently.
- Severe cutbacks on National Parks & Wildlife Service including rangers.
- * Condemn the closure of the Office of Environment & Heritage.

Bernard Jean