

**Submission  
No 113**

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

**Name:** Ms Mary-Jayne House

**Date Received:** 30 July 2019

---

As the parent of a primary school student currently studying a unit on koalas, I feel compelled to register my deep concern about the dwindling numbers of this iconic Australian animal in the wild, the rapid depletion of suitable, established koala habitat and the fallacy of 're-homing' koalas when their habitat is destroyed - we know they die, we know they try to return to their home, and we know they don't adapt to transplanting, yet this continues to be employed as a mitigation plan when developments are approved. This must cease, as we know it does not work.

We need to urgently and utterly change how we view mature, established trees and forests - these need to be protected, and koala habitat needs to be preserved as a primary consideration. We need to establish the Great Koala National Park and protect koalas and their habitat. We need to expand protections for areas where we know koalas live - if this means moving developments and roads, this must be done. We need to strengthen protections and employ more people to ensure these protections are policed and enforced. This is key in areas such as south-west Sydney where development is having a devastating impact on koala populations, and in northern NSW. This devastation must be halted as soon as possible. Koala hubs must be given the highest levels of protection on all lands in public and private ownership. We must put resources into creating new koala habitat, even though we know it will be decades before it reaches maturity.

It is unfathomable that we are still allowing, let alone expanding, industrial logging on public land - this must cease. We are destroying vital, rare habitat for disposable paper products - this is utterly shameful and a stain on every politician who has allowed this to happen. We shouldn't be pitting loggers against those who care for koalas and the environment - investment needs to be made in creating alternative jobs and re-training people to be land custodians. Invest in jobs to enhance and protect the land and habitat, instead of destroying it. There is so much work to be done to rehabilitate the land, to regulate and enforce those regulations. A vast number of jobs can be created to do this and National Parks need to have their staff numbers boosted, instead of continually being affected by funding cuts.

Thank you for your consideration. Let this be the turning point. Speak for these unique, wonderful, vulnerable animals and protect their homes.