

**Submission
No 123**

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

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I consider, both from reading scientific reports, and my own observations in the country that the status of the koala, in NSW particularly, is critical, and that if the Government continues along its path of encouraging development, construction of roads, mines, and the clearing of native vegetation and forestry, heedless of the effect of loss of habitat, the result will be the rapid approach of extinction of koalas as well as numerous other fauna.

I therefore submit that appropriate action should be implemented immediately to halt the destruction, and to protect areas of koala habitat where they still exist.

This should include completion of accurate mapping of areas where populations or hubs are located so that these can be designated as areas of Outstanding Value in biodiversity, and so that SEPP44 provisions can be enforced where applicable..

The recent changes in native vegetation laws which have caused so much habitat destruction, especially in the northwest areas such as Collarenebri, should be reversed, as placing the onus of decision on the landholder is clearly unsustainable., and being exaggerated by prolonged drought

More National Parks should be established, including the proposed Great Koala Park

Urgent consideration should be given to urban areas such as southern Sydney, where rapid development is threatening koala colonies, which should be protected from the policy of development at any cost..

I propose that the concept of biobanking and offsets should be revised. In particular I suggest that the practice of allowing dwellings to be built in or adjacent to biobank areas is counterproductive, as human habitation, with the inevitable introduction of domestic dogs and cats is highly threatening to wildlife, especially koalas.

I contend that urgent action should also be taken to reverse the planned opening of large areas of mature habitat forests for logging, which is irresponsible in the light of diminishing koala populations. Too much habitat has already been lost, and our generation will be held responsible if we do not act purposefully and expediently to reverse the decline.