

**Submission  
No 136**

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

**Name:** Mr Gaven Wear

**Date Received:** 30 July 2019

---

Dear Committee,

I would like to make the following submission on Koala. I am 57 and a 4th generation farmer in the Bucca Valley approximately 25 km's North West of Coffs Harbour, the family farms border the Lower Bucca state Forest which is part of the Orara East state forest. My great grandfather who moved to the area in the late 1890's, grandfather and my father all worked as teamsters in this forest. My grandfather often recounted that koala were quite common in the area when he was a boy, however they are now almost never seen, I have never seen one in 57 years.

The question I ask the inquiry to consider is why does a forest that from the outside looks so healthy no longer supports all the species that once inhabited the area, Pademelon wallaby is another species that my grandfather said were in their thousands that are now gone. I would also like to make the following observations, the forest is continuously and heavily logged, there has not been a major bush fire in my lifetime, there is though a significant variation in tree species from remnant vegetation on our farms which include tallowwood, red mahogany. grey gum. grey iron bark, bloodwood, blackbutt, brush box and turpentine, however step through the boundary fence and it becomes almost a blackbutt monoculture.

My grandfather also used to ride his horse to Coramba a distance of 20km,s through the forest with no roads, the ridges were very open with large spreading habitat trees and kangaroo grass. the large trees are all gone and the ridges are a thick stand of blackbutt. I believe that Forest NSW practice has altered the vegetation for timber production but no longer has the species diversity and structure to support some of the former species including koala. koala now in Coffs Harbour area are contained in small isolated coastal pockets under increasing pressure from human development.

Yours Sincerely

Gaven Wear