

**Submission
No 158**

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

Name: Mr Ron McLachlan

Date Received: 25 July 2019

To the Parliamentary inquiry on koala numbers;

As a frequent visitor to Yuraygir National Park, I'm very concerned about the rapid disappearance of koalas, from around the Station Creek camp site. Only a few years back, there were always several in the trees around the campsite and others near the start of the 4wd track to the beach. In January this year, I saw only one koala in the week that I was there.

To the west of the fenced area that includes the Station Creek Campsite, its very clear that logging of what remains of a once dense native forest area, is increasing, yet there is no sign of any replanting.

As the loggers' felling of mature trees effectively destroys all the nearby saplings, all that's being left is low scrub. Not a desirable environment for the few remaining koalas!

Ensuring the survival of koalas, as well as the over 1000 other species threatened with extinction in NSW, is an issue which must be beyond politics. It requires visionary leadership and lasting change. I therefore encourage the committee to work together to develop a cross-party consensus on genuine solutions to protect the future of our koalas.

Recently, the NSW Government recognised that Koala populations are in steep decline and developed a strategy to begin to address this. Unfortunately, the strategy and current government policy fails to address the number one threat to koala populations – habitat loss and fragmentation.

The NSW Parliament faces a choice: continue with business as usual and oversee the rapid decline and possible extinction of one of our iconic Australian mammals, or make urgent changes to protect vital habitat and restore our native forests. I urge you to work together to save koalas for future generations.

Yours Sincerely,

Ron McLachlan