

**Submission
No 194**

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

Name: Mr Scott Sledge

Date Received: 2 August 2019

My name is Scott Sledge and I am President of both Nimbin Environment Centre and Northern Rivers Guardians, Inc with a combined membership of more than 700 people in this area.

I live on the land which I share with my partner Daniele and our son and his family (4 children aged 4 to 13.) We have been re-foresting a disused dairy farm since 1979 . We milled our own timber to build a home with our own hands.

I am an active member of the North East Forest Alliance (NEFA). We have been party to forestry “consultations” and believe that the government officials who came up our way displayed a firm belief that their role is to provide access to logging and facilitate deforestation with verbiage (greenwash) to hoodwink the public.

The people of this district are very distressed by the rapacious nature of commercial logging which threatens our biota and causes dangers on the local roads and ultimately adds to the causes of climate change. There is no Planet B.

The protections required for a healthy koala population will provide for a healthy biosphere if taken in the right spirit: For example, create wildlife reserves and corridors as if they were priorities: declare imminent domain as you would in cases of significant infrastructure projects. Do NOT pretend that habitat “offsets” will have any real beneficial outcomes.

I respectfully request that government recognise that the public is very concerned by legislation and regulation that abandons protection of our environment in favour of commercial interests. The EPA needs to be empowered to protect forests and wildlife. National Parks should be expanded and logging restricted.

We need an entirely new vision for how we can have a lifestyle going forward into a sustainable future. No “waste” should be removed or burned. Carbon storage should be the main objective along with protection of non-human species. Forests need to be planned for optimum value and only logged for high value timber production. We need to plant more trees not to remove what we have.