

Submission  
No 243

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

**Name:** Ms Karen Vegar

**Date Received:** 2 August 2019

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Dear Committee,

I am writing to you as a concerned member of the public to respectfully request that the Committee make recommendations for changes in policy, regulation and legislation to greatly improve protection of koala populations in this state.

I am very aware from reporting in the general media, and the research of prominent scientists, that the NSW koala population is in danger from a range of threats. The most pressing threat is deforestation.

Sadly NSW is notorious for its unsustainable, shocking rates of deforestation. Unfortunately the current legislation and policies are not arresting the profound, even existential threats to koalas (and indeed many other species in NSW) arising from deforestation. Current government policy in relation to koalas has failed to deal with this problem, and is exacerbating it.

In my respectful opinion the maintenance of viable and significant populations of koalas (and other species, including up to other 1000 other species at risk of extinction in this state) is a matter of fundamental importance and a moral issue. It is an obligation we owe to future generations.

I respectfully request that the Committee make recommendations to protect koala populations and their habitat by:

1. Urgently and permanently protecting all “koala hubs” from clearance for the timber industry, development and agriculture.
2. Expansion of NSW national parks, including proper corridors and connections, and creating the Great Koala National Park on the NSW mid-north coast.
3. Pursuing a plan that would end the logging of native forests on public land. The status quo is unsustainable, and unfairly favours timber industry interests over the “big picture” and a range of other interests.
4. Making recommendations against the NSW government’s reclassification of old-growth forest to open up some protected areas in the state’s north east to the timber industry.
5. Urging the rejection of burning forest timber for electricity due to the damage done to forests, their biodiversity values, catchment values and ability to soak up carbon dioxide, on top of the GHG emissions that are released.
6. Urgently protecting koala habitat in the Sydney Basin from development.
7. Ending wood chipping in southern NSW

I respectfully ask that you, and the NSW Parliament urgently propose and implement real solutions that will protect koala populations for the future.