

**Submission
No 264**

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

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Submission to “Inquiry into koala populations and habitat in New South Wales”

I make this submission to the Inquiry into Koala Populations and Habitats because I am extremely concerned that further removal of habitats used by koalas will lead to a steeper decline in their population so that they will become extinct in the wild in NSW.

Re Term of Reference B (i) The Coastal Integrated Forestry Operations Approvals and Regional Forestry Agreements.

Further intensive logging of native forests will degrade habitats for koalas and many other forest dependent animals. The disturbance caused introduces weeds and feral animals into what were once healthy forests. Large, old trees and stags provide the most abundant nectar, pollen and leaves which support these species. Microbats which feed on moths, beetles and other insects, helping to keep forest trees healthy, depend on hollows in the largest tree trunks for maternity roosts. The future of koalas is linked to other species in the forests.

From my visits to forests in northern NSW which are still being logged it is obvious that what remains are only young trees. It seems to me that the forests need many more decades between cutting cycles because Australian forests do not grow quickly enough for the pace at which the trees are being logged. Again, from my experience in growing bluegums *Eucalyptus saligna* and turpentines *Syncarpia glomulifera* in bushland in the northern Sydney suburb of Gordon, trees which are 30 years old have just reached canopy height have only trunk circumferences ranging from 710 to 1410mm for bluegums and circumference measurements between 420 and 980mm for turpentines. This site has a high rainfall and relatively rich soils near the shale – sandstone boundary. It seems to me that overharvesting of native forests has already occurred and that now all timber products should and can be sourced from plantations. I encourage the committee to carefully investigate the benefits and costs of the various parts of the timber industry.

I also commend to you the alternative proposals for managing all remaining public forests presented by the National Parks Association of NSW, ‘Forests for all’

<https://npansw.org/npa/campaigns/end-native-forest-logging/forests-for-all/>

Water catchments without erosion and sedimentation are needed to supply water to towns downstream. A just transition from logging and roading jobs to forest conservation, outdoor recreation and increased tourism can take place, just as it did when previous national parks were created from State Forests.

Such a shift in caring for native forests will not only benefit koalas but will also benefit people, economically, socially and environmentally.

I am pleased that the Honourable Members will undertake this comprehensive inquiry and wish them well in their investigations. I look forward reading their final report.

Nancy Pallin