

Submission
No 287

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

Name: Name suppressed

Date Received: 2 August 2019

Partially
Confidential

I am submitting a letter to the Inquiry of koala populations and forestry in NSW. I do not consent to the committee making my name public.

As a resident of the mid north coast I have a deep appreciation for the forests in this area which is the habitat for our cultural icon, the koala and all the other unique fauna and flora species that lives in it. NSW cannot destroy old growth forest with its multi layered and multi aged trees and plants and expect the koala population not to plummet. I have walked through areas where forestry has taken place ranging from clear felling (where no animal would survive) to degraded forests logged many years previously. Impenetrable lantana thickets completely cover the ground preventing young tree re- growth, let alone a koala trying to traverse the ground. Bell miners sing in the remaining trees above.

Why is it when, more and more species are added to the threatened species list and koalas are in danger of extinction, that the NSW gov't wishes to intensify logging with the new CIFOs approval. Even reserves and stream buffers are under threat with the rezoning and remapping. I cannot understand why the gov't believes that industrial logging helps regional employment in a significant way. One logger on a multi task machine is the face of industrial logging. The whole world loves a koala and the koala belongs to the whole world, not just to NSW. These old growth forests are the most diverse eucalypt forests in the world. Nature based tourism is becoming more and more in demand. Surely tourism and supporting services employ thousands more people. The establishment of the Great Koala NP would attract many visitors in the same way Sth Africa 's safari parks have helped their regional economies I have personally experienced the magnificence and grandeur of these north coast old growth forests with the complex vegetation including ferns, orchids, epiphytes, mosses and a huge variety of plants and trees at different stages and ages.

These forests are unique and have evolved over thousands of years. They are irreplaceable. I feel unless you experience these places personally you cannot have a true understanding what madness this is. I, for one, am awake at night thinking of what will be left for my children. This may be an emotional response but maybe if we recognized these places for what they are, not just wood to be logged, or made into pellets to be burnt overseas, there would be a more respectful attitude towards nature. The gov't has allowed a private company to take away our natural treasure, allowing them to monitor their own industry and increasing their timber quotas by rezoning and remapping. Why is there intensification of logging when mature forests are known to be carbon stores providing inestimable value in reducing carbon emissions? Kempsey Council has implemented water restrictions due to the current dry year. Climate change predicts more periods of hotter and dryer times ahead. Water is our most precious resource, yet increased logging is allowed to take place in our water catchment areas. This is, despite studies, which show old growth forests slow down the rate of water runoff and preserve water flows.

I have seen the steep slopes where logging will take place, as well as erosion affecting water quality. The koala population will not increase if it has no place to live. The NSW gov't must transition out of old native growth forest logging and agricultural land clearing. I hope the committee has a common goal to preserve our precious native fauna and flora and will genuinely develop realistic solutions based on science not just on a commercial model which wants to exploit our natural resources .