

**Submission  
No 306**

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

**Name:** Mr Brian Sawyer

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## Submission to the NSW Inquiry into Koala Populations and Habitats

Dear Committee,

Further to the standard letter below, I appeal to the committee to re-evaluate your attitude towards, not just koala habitats, but the habitats of all native flora and fauna. The destruction of native vegetation both in NSW and nationally has reached crisis point. Logging 'old growth forests' should be curtailed. It is time to work on the preservation of what is left. A program of native hardwood plantations is required. Rather than large areas that are often largely destroyed by bushfire, smaller plantation areas should be encouraged. Areas that are destroyed should be promptly replaced. Too many plantations that are burnt are left for years without any rehabilitation. This is unsatisfactory.

Logging forests, like climate change, has almost reached a point of no return. Please make a stand and do what is best for our wildlife and our country.

Yours sincerely  
Brian Sawyer

Ex resident of the mid-north coast of NSW (Manning and Macleay Valleys)

Please accept this letter as my submission to the Inquiry into Koala Populations and Habitats. I hope that the Inquiry can help the NSW government implement steps that will see koala declines reversed before it is too late.

It is important for the committee to realise that the extinction of koalas in NSW is possible if we do not urgently change course. However, this doesn't have to be the inevitable fate for koalas: we know the problems and we know the solutions. The government has the power to choose which future it wants for koalas.

Areas like Pittwater in Sydney and south-east NSW demonstrate what will happen if we fail to act: we will oversee dwindling populations, koala deaths and local extinctions. Protecting habitat is the first and most important step in protecting koalas. I therefore urge you to take the following action:

1. Create the Great Koala National Park and implement other NPA reserve proposals presented to the Committee to protect koalas in north-east NSW—a region that will become more and more important as weather extremes make western areas less hospitable.
2. Protect 'koala hubs' (areas identified by the Office of Environment and Heritage as particularly important for koalas) immediately on all land tenures.
3. Identify and protect koala climate refugia as a matter of urgency.
4. End industrialised logging on public land that destroys habitat quality for koalas and ensure Private Native Forestry is genuinely low-impact and selective.
5. Protect known koala habitat from land clearing by identifying it as Category 2-sensitive land or Areas of Outstanding Biodiversity Value, and urgently require local governments to complete the mapping of koala habitat for holistic protection.
6. Strengthen SEPP 44 (koala habitat protection) to ensure koala habitat is not destroyed by urban development and;
7. Create a new national park in south-west Sydney to ensure rapid development does not come at the cost of koalas.

If we can implement these steps koalas stand a good chance of surviving in NSW. If we continue with business as usual, koalas will continue to die and to slide towards extinction. **I urge you to secure the future of koalas by taking decisive action to protect habitat.**

Yours sincerely

Brian Sawyer