

Submission
No 322

INQUIRY INTO KOALA POPULATIONS AND HABITAT IN NEW SOUTH WALES

Name: Supporters of Proforma No 4 - 1,401 people

Date Received: 18 September 2019

**Portfolio Committee No. 7 – Planning and Environment
Legislative Council, Parliament of New South Wales**

- Inquiry into koala populations and habitat in New South Wales

Supporters of proforma submission (#04) – 1,401 people

Dear Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to share my input and play a role in protecting koalas. Please accept this as my submission and note that I give consent to make this submission and my name public.

Koala populations are in crisis and urgent action is needed to ensure their survival in the wild for future generations. I would like to see the committee work together to identify and implement bold and holistic solutions to protect the future of our koalas.

Recently, the NSW Government recognised that koala populations are in steep decline and developed a strategy to address this. However, this strategy and current government policy fails to address the number one threat facing koala populations: habitat loss and fragmentation.

A bold all-of-government approach is needed to actively address this key threat and secure remaining koala habitat on both public and private land. I urge the government to consider the following actions.

- Core koala habitat needs to be permanently protected via the establishment of a connected system of existing and new national parks including the Great Koala National Park in NSW.
- Similar protected areas of core koala habitat in other range states should be established and protected into the future. All koala habitat in public state forests needs to be permanently protected in the reserve network and koala habitat should be exempt from code-based clearing under the current legislation.
- The government's proposal to open up thousands of hectares of old growth forests to logging on the NSW North Coast should be rejected.
- An urgent transition plan needs to be developed to end the logging of native forests on public land.
- Koala habitat and connectivity in the Sydney Basin needs to be protected from development, particularly the large-scale housing development in the Campbelltown area which threatens one of the state's only recovering healthy koala populations.
- Wildlife corridors need to be restored to allow koalas and other animals to move freely about the landscape and prevent human-wildlife conflict. This could be achieved by purchasing private land, changing the tenure of public land, and restoring habitat. It can also be achieved through increased support of voluntary conservation initiatives such as Bangalow Koalas in the Northern Rivers, with whom IFAW is working to restore a koala corridor from Bangalow to Repentance Creek.

I urge you to work together to protect koalas for our future generations. Please don't let them go extinct on your watch. Their future is in your hands.