



# GREENS PLAN TO SAVE OUR KOALAS



## A BOLD PLAN TO SAVE THE KOALA FROM EXTINCTION

Koalas in NSW are on track for extinction unless we act now to address the ongoing threats to their survival. First and foremost is protecting their habitat. The Liberal-National Government has allowed logging, agriculture and urban development to decimate koala habitat in NSW. The Greens have a plan to stop this and save the koala from extinction.

In 2020, the NSW Parliamentary Inquiry into Koalas found that koalas will become extinct before 2050 if urgent action isn't taken to protect their habitat and in 2022 koalas were listed as endangered.

Koala populations in NSW have decreased between 33% and 61% since 2001. Around 8,000 koalas were killed in the Black Summer bushfires and it's estimated there are now less than 20,000 koalas left in the wild in NSW. Despite this, the Liberal-National Government has allowed koala protections to be slowly chipped away, leaving them at threat from logging, agriculture, mining and development.

The Greens have a plan to protect koalas and their habitat across the state from south west Sydney to Lismore to the South Coast.

### THE GREENS WILL:

- ▲ Introduce a Moratorium on the Clearing of Koala Habitat
- ▲ Introduce a Koala Protection Bill with clear powers that prohibit the destruction of Koala Habitat
- ▲ Create a 'Koala Super-Highway' to connect Koala Habitat
- ▲ End Native Forest Logging
- ▲ Create a Great Koala National Park on the Mid-North Coast
- ▲ Save Sydney's Koalas
- ▲ Empower Local Councils to Protect Koala Habitat
- ▲ Urgently act on the climate crisis by ending coal and gas by 2030

## IMMEDIATE MORATORIUM ON CLEARING OF KOALA HABITAT

The Parliamentary Inquiry into Koalas found that without urgent government action to protect Koala habitat, koalas will become extinct in NSW in the wild before 2050.

The alarm has been well and truly sounded. It's time to stop the 'death by a thousand cuts' attack on Koala habitat and draw a line in the sand when it comes to further destruction.

The Greens will demand an immediate moratorium on the clearing of any further Koala habitat, whether it be for logging, development or agriculture.

## INTRODUCE A KOALA HABITAT PROTECTION BILL

The Greens know the only way to protect koalas is to protect all remaining koala habitat wherever it is.

The Greens will introduce legislation in the next Parliament that will prohibit the destruction of koala habitat for urban development, mining or agriculture on public or private land by 2025.

The Greens will also fund the Department of Planning and Environment to comprehensively map all koala habitat prior to the prohibition coming into effect.

## CREATE A 'KOALA SUPER-HIGHWAY'

Koalas don't just need habitat, they need connectivity between their habitat to ensure their long term survival. The Greens plan will protect and expand koala corridors to allow population growth and genetic diversity by:

- ▲ Mapping out and protecting all existing koala corridors.
- ▲ Revegetating destroyed or potential koala corridors to create new connections.
- ▲ Require new developments near koala habitat to include koala corridors with a minimum 450m width.
- ▲ Installing fencing and road overpasses and underpasses to better protect koalas in urban areas and crossing busy roads.

## END NATIVE FOREST LOGGING

Thousands of hectares of koala habitat is logged in state forests across NSW each year. This is a major driver of extinction, not just for our precious koalas, but for many other threatened species like Greater Gliders and Glossy Black Cockatoos.

To top it all off Forestry Corporation, is subsidised millions of dollars each year by the government because their native forestry operations can't even turn a profit!

Our precious native forests must be protected - for koalas and other threatened species, for the carbon they store and the air and water they clean and for future generations to enjoy. That's why the Greens will:

- ▲ Identify and transfer all koala habitat in state forests to the National Parks estate.
- ▲ Rapidly transition out of native forest logging and fund a plan for workers and communities to 100% sustainable plantation forestry industry.

## CREATE A GREAT KOALA NATIONAL PARK

The Mid-North Coast contains some of the largest and healthiest koala colonies in Australia. A Great Koala National Park would not only protect koalas but would generate \$412 million in visitor expenditure over 15 years and create over 9,800 full-time-equivalent jobs<sup>1</sup>.

The Greens would establish a Great Koala National Park combining 175,000 hectares of state forests and 315,000 hectares of protected area on the Mid North Coast, home to around 20 percent of the NSW koala population.

The Greens will:

- ▲ Establish a Great Koala National Park on the Mid-North Coast.

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<sup>1</sup>[https://www.newcastle.edu.au/newsroom/features/report-australias-first-national-park-for-koalas-projected-to-generate-\\$1.2-billion-in-economic-output-and-9,800-jobs](https://www.newcastle.edu.au/newsroom/features/report-australias-first-national-park-for-koalas-projected-to-generate-$1.2-billion-in-economic-output-and-9,800-jobs)

- ▲ Develop an economic, conservation and tourism plan for the Park.
- ▲ Develop a transition plan, including a structural adjustment package, for forestry workers.

## PROTECT KOALAS ON PRIVATE LAND

Two thirds of koalas are found on private land so we can't save our koalas unless strong laws are in place to stop habitat being cleared for development, agriculture and for other purposes.

In 2020, the Liberal-National Government pushed through laws to remove koala protection and removed protections for koalas on rural lands.

- ▲ Create a \$1 billion fund to purchase at-risk koala habitat and corridors.
- ▲ Reintroduce protections for koalas on rural lands.
- ▲ Expand the definition of koala habitat to include land that supports feed trees, shelter trees and dispersal corridors.
- ▲ Fund the Department of Planning and Environment to map koala habitat across NSW on private land.
- ▲ Introduce Stewardship payments for private landholders to protect and expand koala habitat on their land.

## SAVE SYDNEY'S KOALAS

South west Sydney has one of the only Chlamydia free, healthy and growing koala populations in NSW. But urban development on the Cumberland Plain has fragmented and destroyed their habitat.

Developer Lendlease is building its Gilead/ Figtree Hill housing estate right on top of prime koala habitat and corridors in Appin, south west Sydney. Stage 1 is already underway with many mature trees already cut down.

To save Sydney's koalas any further development of this area must cease and the land conserved for wildlife and future generations.

The Greens will:

- ▲ Declare an Upper Georges River Koala National Park.
- ▲ Cancel the Macarthur Priority Growth Area.
- ▲ Map, Protect and enhance Sydney's koala corridors.
- ▲ Stop Stage 2 of the Figtree Hill development.
- ▲ Build underground koala crossings and exclusion fencing along Appin Road.
- ▲ Establish a 'Koala Tourism Centre' at Campbelltown

## EMPOWER COUNCILS TO PROTECT KOALAS

Comprehensive Koala Plans of Management (CKPOMs) allow local councils to identify and protect core koala

habitat and are a central part of the government's strategy to protect koalas.

But despite being introduced in 1994, only a fraction of local councils have an approved CKPOM.

The Greens will:

- ▲ Dedicate funding and resources within DPE to fast tracking the assessment and approval of CKPOMs in all councils with koalas by 2030.
- ▲ Enable councils to refuse development applications that threaten koala habitat identified in a CKPOM.
- ▲ Require councils to map out, protect and have a plan to enhance the connectivity of koala corridors.

## HOW THE GREENS HAVE BEEN FIGHTING FOR KOALAS

**The Greens have not stopped fighting for our precious koalas, both in the parliament and with communities across the state. The Greens have:**

- ▲ Initiated and chaired the groundbreaking NSW Parliamentary Inquiry into Koala Populations
- ▲ Mounted a hard hitting campaign which was instrumental in defeating the National Party's 'Koala Killing Bill'

- ▲ Introduced a bill to create a Great Koala National Park which was defeated when Labor MPs voted against it
- ▲ Mobilised thousands to email Lendlease to do more to protect koalas at its Mt Gilead development which is destroying koala habitat
- ▲ Supported communities across NSW campaigning to protect koalas and their habitat, including hosting a statewide 'koala day of action'

## **FIND ALL OUR POLICIES:**

[greens.org.au/nsw/policyplatform2023](https://greens.org.au/nsw/policyplatform2023)