

Dear Committee Secretary,

Thank you for the opportunity to make a submission to the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Amendment (Save the Koala) Bill 2021.

Firstly, I support the Bill as it will prevent the current, and the future Environment Ministers, from approving projects that consist of or involving the clearing of koala habitat, and it provides important guidance on the types of actions that would have a significant impact on koalas.

We know that the Queensland, NSW and ACT koala populations have plummeted in the last 20 years. In Queensland the population has crashed by at least 50% since 2001, and in NSW there has been a decline of between 33% and 61% since 2001.

Tragically, over 6,000 koalas are predicted to have been killed in the 2019-20 Black Summer bushfires.

In NSW, a Parliamentary inquiry found that koalas in NSW may go extinct by 2050 unless urgent action is taken to increase protection for koalas and their habitats.

Therefore, ensuring the protection of koala habitat in Australia is one of the most important things we can do to help save our precious koala.

The listing of the combined populations of Queensland, New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory as Endangered in February 2022 was an important step, but the recent State of the Environment Report tells us that listing alone isn't enough. Much stronger action is required, if we wish to continue being the lucky country, that has healthy koalas surviving and thriving in the land they have always called home.

Please save our Koalas with this Bill.

Sincerely,
Jacqui Bate