



**KOALA FOOD TREE
PLEASE PRESERVE**

Photo © Susie Eszterhas

Koala trees are carbon in the bank

Despite Australia's pledges to reduce carbon emissions, our Governments are allowing the clearing of our best carbon storage.

Koala trees – the Eucalypt forests of Australia – have been shown to be some of the important stores of carbon in the world.

Since 1788, when Europeans first settled in Australia, nearly 65 per cent of the Koala forests of Australia have been cleared



- more than 116 million hectares. The remaining 35 per cent (approximately 41 million hectares) remains under constant threat from land clearing for agriculture, urban development, mining, road development and unsustainable forestry practices.

But the loss of these forests also has wider implications for our climate; as Koala forests grow, they sequester carbon dioxide in their wood, locking it away from the atmosphere.

It will be impossible to replace the carbon in those forests if they are destroyed.

Protect the forests, conserve the koala, and Australians will benefit from the range of services those forests provide to our society: tourism dollars, water purification and erosion control, sources of pharmaceutical and industrial products, and cultural comforts among others.

Carbon facts

A tree the size of a telegraph pole contains about 1 tonne of carbon. To replace that carbon, you would need to plant about 7,500 new saplings. This would require 2000 square metres.



Photo © Dr Douglas Kerlin

Planting new saplings will not counteract the removal of existing forests. Any politician thinking that planting millions of trees will solve the carbon problem does not understand basic natural science. 20 million saplings would only offset the loss of carbon from felling 10,000 trees. And that happens every day.

Larger trees grow faster, and sequester carbon more rapidly than younger trees. Newly planted trees will take a decade or more to contribute to the fight against climate change. In the short term, planting 20 million is a futile gesture if we continue to clear our forests.

Koala Protection Act

A Koala Protection Act (KPA) will protect existing forests.

If the Koala forests of Australia were cleared, it would require **22.5 trillion trees** to replace the carbon. It would need an area equivalent to three times the total area of Australia.

