



**Australian
Koala
Foundation**

A.C.N. 010 922 102

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NOOSA COUNCIL URGED TO LISTEN TO EXPERT KOALA ADVICE

The Australian Koala Foundation (AKF) has offered their expertise to Noosa Council, on the back of the announcement that the Council is gathering information to develop its Koala Management Policy.

The AKF believes that Noosa Council's initiative to take concrete steps to protect the area's few remaining Koalas is imperative, particularly if Koala tourism is one of their priorities.

'We've conducted research into Noosa's Koalas since 1994, and have collected and analysed data from 96 field sites, with over 4000 trees,' said Deborah Tabart, OAM, CEO of the AKF.

Tabart said the data was published as a paper in *Wildlife Research*, detailing food tree species for Noosa Shire, and portrays this information in a Shire-wide Koala Habitat Atlas (KHA).

'This map is being updated all the time', she said.

'We handed over the KHA maps to former Mayor Noel Playford in 1996, and unfortunately those maps have pretty much been ignored by both Noosa Council before the amalgamation, and when under Sunshine Coast Council management,'

AKF's Landscape Ecologist, Dave Mitchell, says that with any Koala Management Policy, it is fundamental to have an understanding of where habitats are.

'Whether the areas currently have Koala populations is irrelevant. What is needed if Koalas are to recover to a sustainable level is to know where there is good quality habitat available,' he said.

'You then manage that habitat so that Koalas can repopulate those areas,' Mitchell said.

'The KHA is the tool needed to do this, and it is available', said Tabart.

'It is one wheel that doesn't need to be reinvented. AKF would be happy to consult with Council on mapping.'

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