



The Hon. Dr David Kemp MP  
Minister for the Environment and Heritage

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Ms Deborah Tabart  
Executive Director  
Australia Koala Foundation  
GPO Box 2659  
BRISBANE QLD 4001

Dear Ms Tabart

In recognition of your interest in the conservation of koala, I wish to advise you of the outcome of the review of the status of koala under the Commonwealth *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*.

At its 10<sup>th</sup> meeting in December 2001, the Threatened Species Scientific Committee reviewed the conservation status of koala. This is in accordance with a recommendation made by the former Endangered Species Scientific Committee in 1996. At that time, the koala did not meet the criteria for listing as Endangered or Vulnerable under the *Endangered Species Protection Act 1992*.

The Committee's recommendation after the 10<sup>th</sup> meeting was that there is no compelling publicly available data or information to support the suggestion that koala has significantly declined or become more threatened at a national level since 1996. The Committee concluded that there is currently no scientific basis to support koala meeting the criteria for national listing under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*.

Though I concur with the advice of the Committee that koala is considered to be secure at the national level, I am aware that the conservation status of koala varies from secure in some areas to vulnerable or extinct in others. For example, in South Australia, because of introductions, the koala is now found over a greater range than at the time of European settlement. In light of this, I wish to advise you that should new or additional scientific information be made available which indicates the koala is under a new or increased level of threat such that its survival is threatened nationally, the koala would be eligible to be re-nominated for listing under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*.

As you would be aware, the National Koala Conservation Strategy, which aims to provide a national framework for the conservation of koalas, was released in 1998. This Strategy acknowledges that conservation of koala is a complex task requiring an integrated management approach involving community and government participation at all levels. I remain optimistic that the implementation of actions contained within the strategy will promote the conservation of all significant populations of koalas throughout Australia.

Thank you for your continued interest in this important matter.

Yours sincerely

DAVID KEMP

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