



Australian
Koala
Foundation

A.C.N. 010 922 102

01 March 2011

Page 1 of 1

Koala Woman committed to mapping

The CEO of the Australian Koala Foundation (AKF) Ms. Deborah Tabart OAM will be taking the stage with the Associate Professor Julian Cribb, Professor Paul Martin and Tim Wright as they talk about the serious issues facing Australia and one of our most important food bowls.

Ms Tabart will be discussing the importance of mapping to a sustainable future at the Taste of the Liverpool Plains event being held in Caroonna on the 6th March.

Ms Tabart believes that as last speaker for the morning session, she will be able to show the link between the AKF's maps, protecting koalas and arable land and identify solutions for these complex planning issues.

"It should be simple, coal mine here, grow food here and put humans here, but sadly it is never that simple. It becomes pay a royalty here, and you get what you want. Koalas and farmers are in the way and then they are pushed out of the way", said Tabart.

The Liverpool and Breeza Plains, part of the food bowl of Australia, are under threat from coal mining and it is rumored that one of the Chinese companies involved actually thought they were buying land in the Hunter Valley; Ms Tabart blames poor mapping.

"This is why I am obsessed with strong mapping and good vegetation data; it leads to good and informed decisions and mitigates catastrophes like the one unfolding in the Gunnedah, Liverpool Plains region

"Look at our maps, they not only show koala habitat, but also the coal leases; show that to the average Australian and they would be shocked. SEPP 44, the so called legislation to protect koalas in New South Wales hasn't even been called in to see how these coal leases will effect Australia's icon. Why aren't these companies called to account on this?

"Arable land is sacrosanct; selling our long term food source, our natural environment and our food security into destruction is just so un-Australian", said Ms Tabart.

"These people are farmers not activists, and their focus should be producing the crop not fighting for their homes, livelihoods and the food of Australia."

Ms Tabart was initially called into the Gunnedah region because of the koala population, but says once she got there, realized the koala and the environment are inextricably linked. Ms Tabart went on to say the koala cannot be saved until the bigger picture is resolved, like a jigsaw piece in a flawed puzzle.

The event is being held to showcase the wide variety of produce grown on the exceptional black soils of the Liverpool Plains and to highlight the importance of the Plains and how they can be protected.

"I am proud to have been invited; it shows that these great Australians understand how important the koala is to our future", said Ms Tabart.

- ENDS -

Interview opportunities: Deborah Tabart OAM, ph 0407 750 668

If Deborah is out of mobile range please ring the office on 07 3229 7233 for an alternate contact number.

**Public Relations, Ph: 07 3229 7233
Email: akf@savethekoala.com**

media release