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## Garrett accused of abandoning koalas

By environment reporter [Sarah Clarke](#)

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**Conservation groups have accused the Federal Government of failing to protect the koala under national laws.**

The Commonwealth is currently considering a plan to make the koala "conservation dependent", which would see the states play a role in removing threats such as developments that could destroy koala habitats.

But Deborah Tabart from the Australian Koala Foundation says the states have failed so far and the koala needs greater protection if it is to survive.

"Here we have an animal that should be listed by the Federal Government," she said.

"'Conservation dependent' basically means nothing.

You can still leave the decision-making to the states or local governments, and that's seen thousands of koalas die.

"We all know that the states haven't been able to protect the koala in the last 200 years. Why would we think they could in the future?"

"I am so disappointed in Minister [Peter] Garrett."

Ms Tabart says there are as few as 43,000 koalas left in Australia.

Environment Minister Peter Garrett says the "conservation dependent" listing would give state governments a key role in koala protection.

"The responsibilities need to be shared," he said. "My expectation is that everyone will pull their weight."

The Federal Government will make its decision later this year.



Conservationists want national laws to protect koalas (ABC News)