



Farmers and Koalas Unite Against Common Threat

Farmers across Australia fighting to defend their land from developers have found an unlikely ally: the Australian koala.

Deborah Tabart OAM, CEO of the Australian Koala Foundation says the fate of our farmers, food security and koala population is inextricably linked.

“Where there is farmland, there are koalas. Where there is development, there are koalas. When development meets prime Australian farmland, the human cost and environmental costs are astronomical.”

“Farmers have bought land to grow crops and hold livestock to feed Australia. I never thought I would see them walking in our door or ringing us for support.”

Farmers are being treated like second class citizens by the Government, who are allowing foreign and Australian mining companies alike to come in and say, ‘This looks like a good place to put a quarry’.

Instead of being out there farming, our farmers are fighting battles to protect their land.

“This is astonishing as it is them who produce food on a long term basis for Australia,” Ms Tabart said.

“I watch the faces of these people and I know their concerns are not only for themselves, but for the long term viability of our country and our food security.”

One has to think that the short term royalty payments to our State Governments, many of whom are in great debt, are quick to grab short term dollars, without thinking through long term consequences.

Ms Tabart explained that the “too close” relationships between governments and industry has compromised our food security by allowing mining to occur in areas of prime farmland that is shared by koalas.

“The farmers are suffering now. Humans are fodder to these companies and soon everyone will be affected. People in the city really never understand where food comes from. There is a growing rift between city and bush and I am hoping the koala can mend that rift.”

Ms Tabart said that a strong response from a Senate inquiry into the health of the Australian koala could see additional protection awarded to Koala habitat.

“I am hoping this additional protection could encompass areas of prime Australian farmland where koalas exist, protecting it from destruction and securing our food supply.”

The AKF’s submission is no. 25 and can be found at <http://bit.ly/gQtI ZZ> or http://www.aph.gov.au/Senate/committee/ec_ctte/koalas/submissions.htm

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media release