



Australian
Koala
Foundation

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Say Sorry Mr Garrett

The Australian Koala Foundation (AKF) was told yesterday that their nomination for the Southeast Queensland koala population as a critically endangered species under Federal Environment laws would not proceed because “the form had not been filled in correctly.”

Despite images of burnt and desperate koalas flooding the world and on the eve of Environment Minister Peter Garrett performing with Midnight Oil this Saturday for bushfire relief – including the famous Sam the Koala – he has turned his back on the koalas that desperately need his support for the protection of habitat in Southeast Queensland.

CEO of the AKF Deborah Tabart OAM is saying Mr Garrett has lost control of his Department or worse still, does know of this decision which is even more disturbing.

“The ironic thing is he is the custodian of our koalas and he should be the one telling his bureaucrats to fill in the boxes – we’re tired of doing the work for you, Mr Garrett.

“It is outrageous that after the AKF has poured \$8 million into science proving the koala is a threatened species, they still find a loophole to avoid protecting it,” Ms Tabart said.

“You have to ask, is this because of a too close relationship between political donors and the Rudd Government?

“I am convinced this situation is linked to the upcoming Queensland election and by September 2010, when the listing decision is due, all approvals for infrastructure and development will have been granted by then.

“I am shocked at the lack of compassion of the bureaucrats in Canberra who know that this bureaucratic decision will see the demise of the Southeast Queensland koala population and I want the people of the world to know.

“Our Governments are prepared to watch the Southeast Queensland population go to extinction for their own political gain,” Ms Tabart said.

Even if the AKF submits another nomination, it will not be reviewed again until September 2010 despite predictions that the koala could be extinct in Southeast Queensland within just five years.

To find out ways to help the Australian Koala Foundation save our koalas, visit the website at www.savethekoala.com.



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- **Interview opportunities: Deborah Tabart OAM, ph 0407 750 668**

media release