



Australian  
Koala  
Foundation

A.C.N. 010 922 102

media release

**EMBARGOED SUNDAY 22<sup>nd</sup> November 10am**

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## **Koalas take climate change solution to Copenhagen**

On the eve of attending the United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP 15) in Copenhagen, the Australian Koala Foundation (AKF) has released groundbreaking research which proves protecting koala trees is an imperative step towards fighting climate change in Australia.

**The alarming research estimates it would take trillions of saplings planted across a land mass three times the size of Australia to replace the carbon stored in the koala forests on the east coast of Australia if they were destroyed by fire or deforestation.**

For AKF chief executive officer Deborah Tabart OAM, the solution to fighting climate change is simple: "Protect the forests we have".

"Research has shown that Eucalypt forests are some of the most valuable carbon sinks in the world," Ms Tabart said.

"Existing forests are our 'carbon vault' – money in the bank so to speak.

"What is the point of attempting to reduce our carbon emissions if the carbon already locked up, the carbon 'in the bank', is not protected?"

**"For instance, a tree the size of a telegraph pole holds a ton of carbon, and if that tree was cut down it would need 2,000 saplings planted over an area the size of two house blocks to replicate the carbon lost.**

"At Copenhagen, the AKF will table this ground breaking research and fight for the protection of the koala and native forests, in Australia and around the world.

"Conservation groups around the world know this is imperative for the future of the planet.

"Without these trees, there will be no koalas. So once again, the beloved koala has the answer to Australia's future.

"Australia could lead the way in the international fight against climate change by making a commitment to protecting the koala and its habitat. Why doesn't Mr. Rudd mention this in the ETS scheme?"

"Unfortunately, the koala forests of Australia are being cleared because our society fails to place an appropriate economic on them.

"Instead, our political leaders remain stuck in a robber baron mentality, actively pursuing activities which increase Australia's carbon emissions, whilst ignoring the benefits of protecting existing forests.



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“Protecting existing forests, and repairing and restoring degraded habitats will secure and renew the carbon we already have in the bank.

“Until the Australian Government and global community recognises the environmental and carbon value of existing forests, these trees will continue to be destroyed.

“The writing is on the wall, protect what we have now.”

For more information, please visit [www.savethekoala.com](http://www.savethekoala.com).

**- ENDS -**

- Meet AKF CEO Deborah Tabart OAM at Gap Creek Road Reserve, Brookfield, at 10am 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2009.
- To arrange an interview phone 0407 750 668.
- Please refer to the attached Koalas and Carbon Collide brochure for supporting information.