



Australian
Koala
Foundation

A.C.N. 010 922 102

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*** MEDIA ALERT ***

The 'Koala Woman' visits the Otways before Senate Hearing

The CEO of the Australian Koala Foundation Deborah Tabart OAM will be in Victoria from Wednesday 27th July, in readiness for the third Senate Inquiry hearing into the status, health and sustainability of Australia's koala population.

"This hearing on Monday 1st August is very important; it will hopefully highlight the serious issues facing Victorian koalas and that is why I want to see firsthand what they may be using as a smoke-screen to stop a national listing of the koala as vulnerable under the EPBC Act", said Ms Tabart.

Ms Tabart will be taking the opportunity of being in Victoria to visit the Otways to assess the koala situation in the area.

"This is an area the Victorian Government now says is plagued by koalas and I am sure will be used by them as a foil for a listing nationally.

"I am starting to realize that the "over population of koalas " issue has clouded the debate for so long, that no one looks at some of the bigger issues, like tree death from disease, insects, possums or even changes in rainfall.

"I feel the poor koala is just the 'last man standing' in the trees when they become defoliated and I suspect they are thinking, 'what in the heck went wrong?'" said Ms Tabart.

Ms Tabart will be searching for koalas by spotlight on Thursday night and will return early Friday morning to continue her assessment of the koalas in the area and their habitat.

She will also be speaking with local tourist operators in the area.

- ENDS -

SENATE INQUIRY HEARING

WHEN: Monday 1 August 2011

TIME: Starts at 9am

WHERE: Cliftons Conference Centre, 440 Collins Street, Melbourne

Interview opportunities:

- Deborah Tabart OAM, CEO Australian Koala Foundation, will be available for interviews on 0407 750 668, or contact Mya Roth at the AKF office on 07 3229 7233 to arrange a time if Deborah is out of range.
- Stay up to date with the latest from both the Otways and the Senate Inquiry: Follow Deborah on Twitter @DeborahTabart

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media alert