



**THE HON SUSSAN LEY MP
MINISTER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT
MEMBER FOR FARRER**

MC19-008213

19 SEP 2019

Ms Deb Tabart OAM
Chairman
Australian Koala Foundation
GPO Box 2659
BRISBANE QLD 4001

Dear Ms Tabart

Thank you for your letter of 18 April 2019 to the Prime Minister, the Hon Scott Morrison MP, concerning the protection of koalas. Your letter was forwarded by the Assistant Minister to the Prime Minister and Cabinet, the Hon Ben Morton MP, to me as the Minister responsible for the matters you raised.

The listing of the koala (combined populations of Queensland, New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory) as a threatened species under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act) established a rigorous and transparent regulatory framework for its protection as a matter of national environmental significance.

A comprehensive national recovery plan is currently being prepared under the EPBC Act. The plan will set out the research and management actions necessary to stop the decline and support the recovery of the listed koala across its range. A koala conservation advice, prepared at the time of listing, currently guides national conservation effort for the listed koala.

The Australian Government is collaborating with the relevant states and territory governments to ensure that the recovery plan aligns with their new koala plans and strategies. This will ensure a national and coordinated approach to the conservation and management of the species. It is planned that a draft will be available for public consultation later this year.

Beyond our strong legislative platform, the Government is also funding projects that support koala conservation. As part of the \$100 million Environmental Restoration Fund, the Government is providing \$6 million to protect the koalas of South-East Queensland and Northern New South Wales, including support for koala wildlife hospitals and projects to support the protection and restoration of important koala habitat.

Thank you for bringing your concerns to the Government's attention.

Yours sincerely

SUSSAN LEY