



Australian Koala Foundation

A.C.N. 010 922 102

Experts call on politicians to step up and protect Koalas

Can you imagine an Australia without Koalas?

That is the image Australian Koala Foundation (AKF) is warning 128 Federal politicians about in a letter, outlining the dire state of our Koala populations.

AKF Chief Executive Officer Deborah Tabart OAM, is calling on our Federal politicians to declare their support for a *Koala Protection Act (KPA)* by 1 September, Save the Koala Month, as AKF members want to know where their representatives stand.

Ms Tabart insists a *KPA* specifically designed to protect vital Koala Habitat, is the only way to ensure the Australian icon's future in the wild.

"With this letter, I have also sent a number of written briefs supporting why I think the system is broken and incapable of protecting the Koala – now and into the future – and why it is time for something new," she said.

"The briefs are sobering to read and they pull together nearly 30 years of information into readable form."

Ms Tabart said the *KPA* is based on the American *Bald Eagle Act* and has been drafted by brilliant national and international legal minds.

"The *KPA* will not be an impediment to industry, particularly if it does the right thing," she said.

"It is time industry was put on notice to produce excellent science as part of its environmental assessments."

Ms Tabart said she has seen some shocking things in her 27-year career, including watching industry leaders plead with Senators not to protect the Koala.

"I don't believe anyone has actually considered what would happen to the Australian economy if the Koala was to disappear from the landscape," she said.

"Koala tourism alone brings more than \$3bn and 30,000 jobs annually." In September, Save the Koala Month, AKF's *Act or Axe* campaign will divulge which politicians are prepared to protect Australia's declining Koala populations.

"Whether it's because of mining, housing and development, or road and rail infrastructure, our populations are disappearing before our eyes to a point where already a number of our depleted wild populations are irreparable," Ms Tabart said.

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