



Hon Lisa Neville MP

Minister for Environment, Climate Change and Water

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Ms Deborah Tabart OAM
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Dear Ms Tabart

Thank you for your letter of 18th September, 2015. I appreciate your interest and concerns about the challenges we are facing in Victoria, in particular the problems with Koalas over-browsing in the Manna Gum woodlands in Cape Otway.

As you know, the local community has been consulted and many of them have been involved in the work we are undertaking in Cape Otway. We will continue to seek the advice of animal welfare and ecological experts on short and long term measures to effectively and humanely manage the overabundant Koalas and to keep the Victorian community involved and informed.

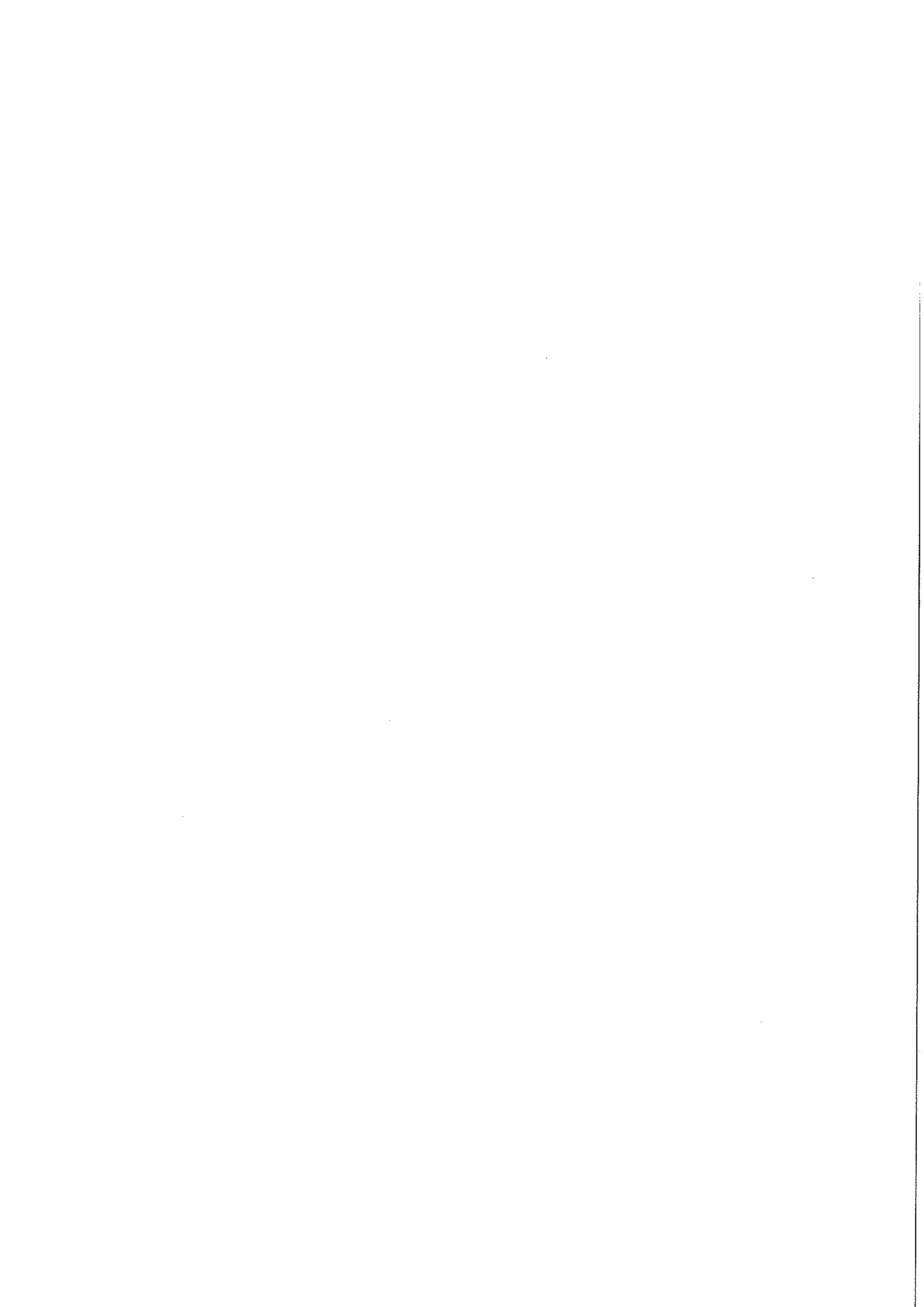
As the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) has advised your foundation, wildlife officers and vets will be carrying out health assessments in those woodlands, commencing tomorrow. This follows on from the assessments carried out in May this year.

The welfare actions will include assessing the health of 300-400 Koalas, fertility controlling healthy females, conducting a trial translocation of approximately 36 healthy Koalas to test the suitability of other local habitats and euthanising unhealthy Koalas to prevent suffering.

The movement, health and survival of the translocated Koalas will be carefully monitored to gauge the suitability of a local habitat of mixed Eucalyptus trees. The Department has developed a robust design and appropriate research protocols for the trial and has received Animal Ethics Committee approval.

It will be possible to capture large numbers of Koalas for all aspects of the welfare actions because of the high population density. This is of course quite unlike the situation you confront in Queensland where Koalas are in low numbers and threatened.

The Government is also allowing Zoos and Wildlife Parks to re-home orphaned back young Koalas whose mothers are euthanized because of poor health.



We are also jointly leading the development of national translocation guidelines for Koalas – to assess the potential impact of moving Koalas from over-abundant populations to areas in other states where Koala numbers are in decline.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lisa Neville', written in a cursive style.

Hon Lisa Neville MP
Minister for Environment, Climate Change and Water

