



**Australian
Koala
Foundation**

ACN 010 922 102

MEDIA RELEASE

Change of status from ‘Vulnerable’ to ‘Endangered’ nothing but rhetoric, as bulldozers continue to charge through koala habitat

Friday 11 February 2022

The Federal Government has today upgraded the status of the Koala from ‘Vulnerable’ to ‘Endangered’ in New South Wales, Queensland and the ACT. The Australian Koala Foundation (AKF) has responded by saying the change does nothing legally and not backed by any legislative action needed to stop land clearing, which is the key reason for Koalas becoming homeless and then getting sick with disease.

AKF has written to Minister for the Environment, the Hon Sussan Ley MP, on a number of occasions noting that the Koala is in danger far beyond New South Wales, Queensland and the ACT alone. Choosing not to list Koalas in Victoria and South Australia as endangered shows how out of touch our political leaders are with the current state of the Koala.

Chair of the Australian Koala Foundation, Deborah Tabart OAM, said the Federal Government has today given us a word, but they have not given us any legislation to protect Koala habitat.

“This change in status unfortunately is nothing but a token gesture that results in no legislative change to save the Koala. What we need is a Koala Protection Act,” Tabart said.

“This change in status is too little, too late. The Federal Government may be offering our Koalas a nice new word, but behind all the photo opportunities and political rhetoric they continue to approve the destruction of Koala habitat. If the clearing of Koala habitat continues, a further status change is imminent – from ‘endangered’ to ‘extinct’.”

AKF is calling for the implementation of the Koala Protection Act, noting that any legislation that purports to protect the Koala has to be proactive in protecting Koala habitat.

10 years ago, Labor Minister Tony Burke listed the Koala as Vulnerable, after extensive advocacy by AKF and a Senate Inquiry. Since then, there has been a revolving door of Environment Ministers who have done nothing to save the Koala. But, now that an election campaign is ramping up, we seem to see them cuddling a Koala every second day.

“It would be sad to think that Minister Ley’s top achievements as Environment Minister have been listing Australia’s two world-famous icons as endangered, the Great Barrier Reef and now the Koala, after years and years of neglect and band-aid solutions,” Tabart said.

Australian Koala Foundation

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“There is still time for the Prime Minister, Minister Ley, Opposition Leader Albanese and Shadow Minister Terri Buttlar to make a commitment that will really save the Koala – supporting a Koala Protection Act. Our question to both side of politics is the same – will you take legislative action to protect Koala habitat and end the band-aid solutions?”

To find out more about the Koala Protection Act and AKF’s solutions to save the Koala Australia-wide visit savethekoala.com

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