



Ms Deborah Tabart OAM
CHAIR
AUSTRALIAN KOALA FOUNDATION
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Dear Ms Tabart

Thank you for your letter to the Minister for the Environment and Water, the Hon Tanya Plibersek MP concerning koala protection. Minister Plibersek has asked me to thank you for your correspondence and to reply on her behalf.

I want to acknowledge your passion and commitment to Australia's koalas, and your decades-long dedication to their recovery.

Koalas are a unique and iconic species cherished by Australians and the Australian Government is taking practical action to protect and conserve them. In February 2022, the listing status of the koala (combined populations in Queensland, New South Wales and the ACT) was increased from 'vulnerable' to 'endangered' under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (the EPBC Act), based on expert advice from the Threatened Species Scientific Committee.

In April 2022, the Australian Government also released the first National Recovery Plan for the Koala, setting a clear pathway for investment and action to support the recovery of the listed koala. The Government continues to invest in research, monitoring and practical on-ground actions to support recovery, in collaboration with all levels of government, conservation organisations, universities, wildlife experts and the community. A copy of the recovery plan is available at www.dcceew.gov.au/environment/biodiversity/threatened/publications/recovery/koala-2022

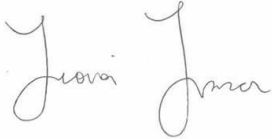
The Australian Government is now in the process of establishing the first national koala recovery team, chaired by me, to oversee and coordinate the implementation of the recovery plan. More details on the structure and function of this team will be available shortly. We anticipate and welcome strong community interest and involvement in the recovery team. Accordingly, we will provide ample opportunities for groups such as the Australian Koala Foundation to contribute ideas and be part of the recovery plan implementation.

I note with interest the proposed Koala Protection Act that you attached to your letter. Thank you for bringing this to our attention. The Australian Government has committed to delivering a full response to the 2020 independent review of the EPBC Act, led by Professor Graeme Samuel AC, by the end of this year. The response will outline reform directions including potential legislative changes. The Government will engage with a broad range of stakeholders and partners, including First Nations groups, business, environment groups, scientists and state and territory governments, to deliver this commitment.

I will be in contact again in the coming months with more details about how the Australian Koala Foundation can contribute to the delivery of the recovery plan through the recovery team process. I look forward to your valuable contributions.

Thank you for bringing your concerns to the Government's attention and for advocating for our precious native wildlife.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Fiona Fraser". The signature is written in a light grey or blue ink.

Dr. Fiona Fraser
Threatened Species Commissioner