



Why hasn't the Koala been listed as a vulnerable species in Victoria and South Australia?

To be eligible for a Vulnerable listing under the federal laws, specifically the EPBC Act, Koalas had to have undergone a **30%** decline in numbers over 20 years. The Australian Government found they declined nationally by **29%**. Victorian and South Australian Koalas missed a federal listing by **1%**. Where is the science to support that 1%?

Government estimates of Koala numbers in Victoria – and nationally – have waxed and waned over many years. In 1995, the Government said there were **180,000** in the Strathbogie Ranges in Central Victoria.

It was acknowledged at the time that this figure was not based on any research, but simply the opinion of a Government researcher and the Government of the day accepted 180,000, citing that figure when

declining to list the Koala in 2006.

Then in 2010 numbers changed again to **73,000** Koalas, state-wide. There was international pressure to protect the Koala, and given that a Vulnerable listing would be dependent on population estimates from 1995, we assumed that the Victorian Government realised that the 1995 figure of 180,000 was far more than their 2010 figure of 73,000 Koalas.

The Australian Government 1995-2010
180,000 Koalas
Strathbogie Ranges, Central Victoria

So what did they do?

They pretended that the 180,000 figure had never existed. All of a sudden it became **>100,000**, with caveats.

> 100,000 Koalas
State-wide, Victoria 2010

And that would have been the end of things, if not for the 2011 Senate Inquiry into the Status of the Koala.

New research presented to the Senate Inquiry highlighted significantly lower Koala numbers in Western Queensland. As a result, Koala declines would be greater than 30% nationally, and the Koala seemed eligible for a national listing.

But that wouldn't work for the Federal Government... And so a new figure was plucked out of the air - the Victorian Koala population was not >100,000, but suddenly **200,000**.

Why then was 200,000 chosen as the new estimate?

If >100,000 had been used, national declines would have been **36%**, and the Koala would be eligible for listing nationally. The Victorian Koala population had to be boosted all the way to 200,000 to offset the declines in Western Queensland. With this new figure, national declines over 20 years fell back to **29%**, meaning the Koala was no longer eligible for protection in Victoria (and as a consequence, South Australia). You have to ask: Why the Government did not want that listing?



The Australian Government 2011

200,000 Koalas

State-wide, Victoria



2022 UPDATE
Victorian State Government

450,000+
Koalas

State-wide, Victoria

The Australian Government's Victorian Koala Population Estimates 1995-2022



>450,000
Koalas ?
State-wide, Victoria

