



**Australian
Koala
Foundation**

ACN 010 922 102

Australian Koala Foundation research calls for urgent protection of Victorian Koalas, amid flawed Koala Management Strategy

19 June 2024

The Australian Koala Foundation (AKF) has today released a research paper outlining deep concern about the critical issue of habitat loss across Victoria, the true threat to koala populations.

The Victorian Government's Koala Management Strategy (VKMS) released in May 2023 completely misses the mark in securing the future of Koalas across the state.

"The current strategy appears to be a rehash of a failed 2004 plan," said AKF Chair Deborah Tabart OAM.

"There is an inaccurate perception that Victorian Koala populations are secure and always will be. Koalas have unfairly copped the blame for damaging ecosystems across Victoria and have been labelled as 'overabundant' in some areas. This prompted the brutal culling of hundreds of precious Victorian Koalas, back in 2013 and 2014."

"Whilst the attention of our political leaders and bureaucrats continues to be on passing the buck and shifting the blame, the fundamental problem is ignored – habitat destruction."

"I have spent over 30 years of my career counting dead bodies, it's time to count alive and healthy ones - within habitat that must be legally protected."

In 2022 the Federal Government changed the status of Koalas from 'Vulnerable' to 'Endangered' – but only in New South Wales, Queensland and the ACT. Ms Tabart said 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.

"Victoria's koalas deserve better. There is not a single Koala anywhere in Australia that is safe and secure, until their habitat is protected by law. The only thing that can do that is a Koala Protection Act."

AKF's renewed call for the protection of Victoria's Koalas coincides with the launch of *'The Koalas – A Movie About Survival'*, which hits cinemas across the state from today. Ms Tabart said the film will not only open the eyes of Australians about the plight of the Koala, it will fill them with tears.

"This film tells a harrowing story of the problems that are faced by Koalas across Australia. At AKF, we're all too familiar with the problems, so we're entirely focused on the solution – a Koala Protection Act."

AKF is calling on anyone who is passionate about securing the future of Koalas to join them at their upcoming Koala Army March for all Creatures Great and Small. The March will be held on 1 September in Canberra and will be a glorious celebration of all Australian wildlife, with a message to our leaders that they must be protected. To register, visit [savethekoala.com/koala-army](https://www.savethekoala.com/koala-army)

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GPO Box 2659
Brisbane QLD 4001

Ph: 61-7-3229 7233
Email: akf@savethekoala.com
www.savethekoala.com