

The Senate

Environment and Communications
References Committee

The koala—saving our national icon

September 2011

© Commonwealth of Australia 2011
ISBN 978-1-74229-524-4

Committee membership

Committee members to 30 June 2011

Senator Mary Jo Fisher (LP, SA) (Chair)
Senator Doug Cameron (ALP, NSW) (Deputy Chair)
Senator the Hon. Ron Boswell (NATS, QLD)
Senator Scott Ludlam (AG, WA)
Senator the Hon. Judith Troeth (LP, VIC)
Senator Dana Wortley (ALP, SA)

Committee members from 1 July 2011

Senator Mary Jo Fisher (LP, SA) (Chair)
Senator Doug Cameron (ALP, NSW) (Deputy Chair) (from 5 July 2011)
Senator Catryna Bilyk (ALP, TAS) (from 5 July 2011)
Senator the Hon. Ron Boswell (NATS, QLD)
Senator Alex Gallacher (ALP, SA) (to 5 July 2011)
Senator Scott Ludlam (AG, WA) (to 5 July 2011)
Senator Bridget McKenzie (NATS, VIC)
Senator the Hon. Lisa Singh (ALP, TAS) (to 5 July 2011)
Senator Larissa Waters (AG, QLD) (from 5 July 2011)

Substitute member for this inquiry

Senator Bob Brown (AG, TAS) to replace Senator Larissa Waters (from 7 July 2011)

Participating members for this inquiry

Senator Richard Di Natale (AG, VIC)
Senator Larissa Waters (AG, QLD)

Committee secretariat

Mr Stephen Palethorpe, Secretary
Ms Sophie Dunstone, Principal Research Officer
Mr Christopher Lawley, Senior Research Officer
Ms Jacquie Hawkins, Research Officer
Mrs Dianne Warhurst, Administrative Officer

Committee address

PO Box 6100
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600
Tel: 02 6277 3526
Fax: 02 6277 5818
Email: ec.sen@aph.gov.au
Internet: www.aph.gov.au/senate/committee/ec_ctte/index.htm

Table of Contents

Committee membership	iii
Recommendations	ix
Abbreviations and Acronyms	xiii
Executive Summary	xv
Introduction	xv
Threats	xvi
Population and threatened species listing.....	xvii
National Koala Conservation and Management Strategy	xviii
Conclusion	xix
Chapter 1 - Introduction	1
Conduct of the inquiry	1
Accessibility trial.....	2
Report structure	2
Acknowledgements	3
Species information	3
Species range – historic and current.....	7
Chapter 2 - Koala population	13
The importance of koala population data	13
Counting methodologies.....	15
Historical estimates of Australia's koala population	23
Current estimates of Australia's koala population.....	27
Concerns with current estimates.....	38
The way forward.....	42
Committee comment	44

Chapter 3 - Threats to koala habitat: urban development, forestry, mining, drought, bushfire and climate change	51
Urban development	52
Forestry	62
Mining	71
Drought, bushfires and climate change	74
Committee comment	77
Chapter 4 - Other threats: disease, dogs and motor vehicles	81
Disease.....	81
Predation by dogs	91
Motor vehicles	99
Chapter 5 - The status of koalas under the law	103
Conservation status of the koala.....	104
Listing under the <i>Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act</i> . ..	110
Committee comment	125
Chapter 6 - The National Koala Conservation and Management Strategy	129
The National Koala Conservation Strategy 1998.....	129
The National Koala Conservation and Management Strategy 2009–2014	132
Evaluation of the National Koala Conservation and Management Strategy.....	134
Committee comment	137
State-based koala management plans	139
Appendix 1 - Submissions, tabled documents, additional information and answers to questions taken on notice.....	143
Submissions	143
Tabled documents.....	146
Additional information	147
Answers to questions taken on notice	148

Appendix 2 - Petitioning documents151
 Petition from Koala Preservation Society of NSW Inc 151
 Petition from Ms Meghan Halverson 151

Appendix 3 - Public hearings153

**Appendix 4 - Environment Protection and Biodiversity
Conservation Regulations 2000, Regulation 7.01: Criteria for
listing threatened species157**

