

Senate Standing Committee on Environment and Communications
Legislation Committee
Answers to questions on notice
Environment and Energy portfolio

Question No: 13
Hearing: Additional Estimates
Outcome: Outcome 1
Program: Biodiversity Conservation Division (BCD)
Topic: Regional Forest Agreements
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Question Date: 14 March 2017
Question Type: Written

Senator Rice asked:

The NSW EPA has found that koalas prefer larger trees, mature forest stages and low disturbance from fire and logging. How does the federal government propose to protect koalas via the RFA process, in light of serious population declines over the last 20 years?

Answer:

Management of Australia's native forests should achieve a balance between social, economic and environmental outcomes. Regional Forest Agreements are the most effective way of achieving this balance.

The Agreements provide a framework that enable forestry operations to be undertaken in accordance with threatened species recovery plans or other related statutory conservation planning documents.

Under the Agreements, state governments are responsible for the day to day management of ongoing forest operations. These management responsibilities includes the protection of threatened species, such as the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 listed vulnerable koala (combined populations of Qld, NSW and ACT).

The Australian Government is currently working with relevant state governments to develop a national koala recovery plan.