

From: [Patricia Hunt](#)
To: [IPCN Enquiries Mailbox](#)
Subject: Narrabri Gas Project.
Date: Tuesday, 21 July 2020 10:11:46 AM

FRIENDS OF THE KOALAS INC. Submission to the Independent Planning Commission NSW.
Re:- Narrabri Gas Project.

Friends of the Koalas Inc. is an environmental group based on Phillip Island. Our organisation's main aim is the preservation of koalas specifically on the island, but we also make comment on proposals which are detrimental to the species as a whole.

We first wrote to the NSW Premier in 2014 expressing our concern at the gas proposal.

We then made a submission to the NSW Government Department of Planning on 21/5/2017 objecting to the project on the grounds of its substantial impact on the koala and other threatened species in the Pilliga forest. The Pilliga is currently the largest intact temperate woodland in NSW and is vitally important to the koala population there. The koala is now a highly threatened species in serious decline through its range, mainly due to the continuing loss of habitat.

The Santos proposal will lead to the fragmentation of habitat, a threatening process causing stress which is a great killer of koalas. In intact habitat the species can survive. In fragmented habitat with an industrial complex stress will inevitably result in deaths. The preservation of the genetically important koala population in the Pilliga is essential if the species is to survive Australia wide.

Since our original submission the koala population in NSW has continued to decline with estimations that it could become extinct by 2050. The recent catastrophic bushfires caused the death of more than 6000 koalas and destroyed large areas of habitat. It is understood that the Federal Government's Threatened Species Committee is considering the vulnerable status of the koala and may raise its conservation status to endangered which would increase protection for forests and woodlands. This gas proposal can only exacerbate the situation by destroying more vital habitat. There is also the threat of gas leaks causing dieback, contamination of aquifers and serious fire risks.

The NSW Government has been making some commitments to try and improve the continuing decline in koala numbers but, if they are truly serious then proposals such as this **MUST** be rejected!

Australia's extinction rate of native species is already shameful and if this proposal goes ahead it will hasten the demise of many threatened species including the iconic koala.

Yours sincerely,

Patricia Hunt
President
Friends of the Koalas Inc.