

From: [Bronwen Evans](#)
To: [IPCN Enquiries Mailbox](#)
Subject: Submission to the IPC regarding the Vickery Extension Project
Date: Friday, 10 July 2020 5:11:46 PM

Bronwen Evans

bronwenje@gmail.com

11/186 Forbes Street,

Darlinghurst, 2010, NSW

Objection.

I am a practicing Veterinarian and share holder of some property on the Darling River. I oppose the Vickery Extension Project.

As you may be aware the NSW Parliamentary Inquiry into koala Populations and Habitat has been handed down on Tuesday 30th June. It found that koalas will be extinct by 2050 without serious government intervention.

Our iconic koala is the canary in the coal mine for our environment.

In the inquiry there are a few findings particularly relevant to whether the Vickery Extension should be allowed, as habitat loss is the greatest cause for extinction. It therefore stands to reason that to save the koala we need to save its habitat. Koala habitat is not a eucalyptus tree in isolation, it is one part of an intricately entwined web of life.

We need to note some pertinent findings regarding habitat loss which would occur if the extension is granted. I reference the Inquiry results

Finding 2

That, given the scale of loss to koala populations across New South Wales as a result of the 2019- 2020 bushfires and without urgent government intervention to protect habitat and address all other threats, the koala will become extinct in New South Wales before 2050.

Finding 4

That the fragmentation and loss of habitat poses the most serious threat to koala populations in New South Wales.

Finding 5

That the future of koalas in the wild in New South Wales cannot be guaranteed unless the NSW Government takes stronger action to prevent further loss of koala habitat.

Finding 6

That climate change is having a severe impact on koala populations by affecting the quality of their food and habitat.

Finding 7

That climate change is compounding the severity and impact of other threats, such as drought and bushfires, on koala populations.

Finding 14

Translocation is an unproven way of protecting koala populations from the impacts of development and should only be used as a last resort. Further research needs to be undertaken to assess its methodology and effectiveness.

The recommendations also outline why the extension should be denied.

Recommendation 11

That the NSW Government factor in climate change as a key consideration in the drafting of all relevant legislation and planning strategies and ensure climate change mitigation is a core component of all strategies to save the koala in New South Wales.

We really need to implement the recommendations especially those outlined below.

Recommendation 34

That the NSW Government review the impact on koala habitat of the application of regulated land and self-assessment frameworks under the *Local Land Services Act 2013*.

Recommendation 37

That the NSW Government review the *Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016* in relation to the Biodiversity Offsets Scheme with particular regard to:

- amending its objectives to ensure all offsets meet the standard of 'no net loss or better'
- prohibiting the ability to offset high quality koala habitat
- ensuring all offsets are 'like for like'
- imposing location restrictions on koala offsets
- removing the ability to make payments in lieu of offsets
- removing the ability of mining companies to delay offsets until project completion.

Heat stress is well documented to adversely affect animal health in many areas especially reproduction. In species who have their testes outside the body, in a scrotum, do so they can regulate the temperature for sperm production. With higher ambient temperatures and increased reflected heat from ground not shaded by or covered with vegetation these male animals will have decreased fertility. The female reproductive tract, the ovarian pool of follicles and their enclosed oocytes are highly sensitive to hyperthermia.

Climate change means that we need to be taking extreme care that projects undertaken move towards protecting the variety of life so that the koala, humans and all life can survive into the future

Until our laws are strengthened to truly limit or prohibit the destruction of habitat, our native species and their habitat will continue to be at risk and their numbers will continue to decline in NSW, possibly to the point of extinction.

Yours Sincerely

Dr Bronwen Evans

BVSc, N3018