

Christine Coates
[REDACTED]
CORAKI NSW 2471
[REDACTED]

24 August 2012

Native Vegetation Regulation Review
Office of Environment and Heritage
Level 12 PO Box A290
SYDNEY SOUTH NSW 1232

native.vegetation@environment.nsw.gov.au

To Whom It May Concern:

Submission on the review of the Native Vegetation Regulation 2005: Private Native Forestry and Koalas

This submission concerns the review of the Private Native Forestry Code of Practice and the Native Vegetation Regulation 2005 currently underway, with particular emphasis on saving the koala.

On Monday evening this week I caught a few minutes of Four Corners, broadcast on the ABC at 8:30pm. Although I viewed only a small portion of the program what I saw was heart breaking, damning evidence that the current regulations, 'safeguards' in place concerning land clearing and logging are in no way adequate. Koala populations in the state of NSW and SE Queensland are unlikely to survive unless major changes are made to how their habitat is protected, under what conditions land clearing and logging are allowed.

I am no scientist. I have no qualifications as an ecologist, biologist or environmentalist. I believe that governments and their legislation, regulations, guidelines et cetera, are all that comes between the current tenuous situation in which the remaining koala populations exist, and their survival. My understanding is that Koalas are now a "threatened" species in NSW and SE Queensland, declared so by the Federal government. The two documents under review must be developed and finalised in a form that will ensure not only the survival of the species but allow the remaining koala populations to thrive.

My guess is that your office has received submissions from persons who are 'ecologists', biologists, environmentalists, who have put forward suggestions that spell out in detail what steps are necessary to provide a future for the wild koala populations. Please take into account their submissions and produce final versions of the Private Native Forestry Code of Practice and the Native Vegetation Regulation that include their expert advice. Otherwise koalas in the wild will meet the same fate as the Tasmanian tiger. This would be a tragedy, a national disgrace.

As a resident in the Northern Rivers I am acutely aware of the predicament of the few remaining koala colonies. Their habitat is under siege from development and forestry, be it state or privately managed. For koalas to be protected the documents under review must be strong and comprehensive. And they must be adhered to. Auditing of any activity that jeopardises their habitat must be honest.

I send this submission in the hope that it will be read, its contents taken seriously. And then appropriate action ensue.

Sincerely yours

Christine Coates