



3 March 2017

Koala Strategy Submissions
PO Box A290
SYDNEY SOUTH NSW 1232

Dear Sir/Madam

Koala Strategy Submission

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the development of a NSW Koala Strategy. Bathurst Regional Council offers the following comments for your consideration:

1. Based on incidental sightings there are several known Koala populations in the Bathurst LGA, but there is a poor understanding of Koala population numbers, distribution and trend in the Bathurst LGA.
2. There is a lack of accurate vegetation mapping in the Bathurst LGA which would allow identification of core and or potential Koala habitat. Improved vegetation mapping is therefore needed and better understanding of preferred Koala habitat for the plant community types found in the Bathurst LGA.
3. There is a lack of knowledge regarding the uniqueness of Koala populations in the Bathurst district. Are they genetically distinct from other NSW populations?
4. Mapping of koala habitat and corridors in Bathurst LGA is needed for use in land use planning and development assessment.
5. While Council sees the review of the current SEPP 44 as a positive move, particularly in relation to expanding the tree species lists and updating the definitions of Koala Habitat, the NSW Government should consider a fundamental review of SEPP44 as the proposed changes do not appear to address a number of failings of the current system including:
 - a) failure to achieve mapping of Koala habitat across the State,
 - b) does not impose consistent management actions,
 - c) Rural Land clearing is not covered by the SEPP. Under the Local Land Services Amendment Bill 2016, new Native Vegetation Codes could allow rural land clearing of hundreds of hectares of native vegetation at a time without development consent and therefore without reference to the Koala SEPP. Clumps of paddock trees can also be cleared under existing ministerial orders and under future Codes. While Council understands Koala habitat would be excluded from clearing, the current lack of adequate mapping of Koala habitat across much of the State and the timing of

- commencement of the new native vegetation provisions leaves unmapped Koala habitat at great risk of clearing.
- d) Major projects are not covered by the SEPP
 - e) Part 5 development not covered by the SEPP
6. It is not clear how the NSW Koala Strategy is going to interact with the revised SEPP 44.
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7. Funding for mapping and the preparation of comprehensive management plans for LGA's is a significant barrier, particularly in smaller rural and regional Councils.

If you have any queries in relation to this submission please contact Ms Deborah Taylor, Sustainability Strategy Officer, Department Environment Planning and Building Services, on 6333 6276

Yours faithfully



J E Bingham
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ENVIRONMENTAL, PLANNING & BUILDING SERVICES