

<b>Survey Name:</b>	Priorities Action Statement amendments
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<p>It is difficult not to be totally cynical as to the veracity of the NSW State Government's program to save koalas. Despite alternative routes being available, and much urging from local citizens, the current Govt has pushed ahead with a highway upgrade cutting through a very important koala habitat near Ballina, dividing a koala population that helps maintain and support diversity in lesser populations either side.</p> <p>The reason seems to be simply that arable land is given value by this Government but biodiversity, notably koalas, is given zero value. The signal given to the state electorate is that koalas might get some help as long as it costs neither land nor money.</p> <p>So we get a report from the Chief Scientist, no doubt in earnest, recommending lots of sensible ideas, and we get a public relations propaganda campaign laying out the report's findings and suggestions and the planned state project that should follow, but we know it will come to nothing of value. We saw an almost identical propaganda campaign before the changes to the Native Vegetation Act last year, but when the 'draft' was taken out of public view, none of the thousands of the public's submissions were reflected in the final text, nor were the expert panel's recommendations reflected in it, AND it went straight into Parliament as a final draft without any of the public being able to see or comment on it before it was legislated.</p> <p>So it matters little that the State Govt says it will map the koala populations, because the EPA/ForestCorp alliance is pushing for 100,000ha of forest to be open for clearfelling; because when the priority forest habitats were proposed as the Great Koala National Park to give some credibility to koala conservation, the current Govt members declared those forest habitats to be too valuable for logging and jobs to dedicate to saving koalas. Again, the value of biodiversity is zero to this Govt despite the greenwashing evident in the title of the new Biodiversity Conservation Act, which despite Govt assurances to the contrary will likely lead to large-scale clearing through giving landholders the power of evaluating conservation values of vegetation, when they have a vested interest to disregard such value and are poorly qualified to know the value of native species and biodiversity. The State has over 1,000 threatened species but the Govt shows zero acceptance of humans depending on other species to support our own existence.</p> <p>The electorate is becoming very jaundiced regarding Government greenwash and promises when reality demonstrates we were having the wool pulled over our eyes yet again.</p> <p>The Chief Scientist's recommendations are a very good start, but the essential requirement necessary is honesty of Government in delivering what it pretends is its intent.</p>	