

12<sup>th</sup> February 2019

**Private Native Forestry Review**

**Locked Bag 6013**

**ORANGE NSW 2800**

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Dear Sir/Madam,

I write on behalf of Bangalow Koalas Inc. a community driven not-for-profit incorporated association formed to provide stewardship for our local koalas in the Northern Rivers. Our purpose is to educate, involve and inspire the community in advocating for, protecting and supporting our local Koala population.

Our goal is to create a Koala Wildlife Corridor forming a linkage of habitat from Byron Bay towards Lismore, allowing Koalas to move more safely across the local landscape.

Bangalow Koalas works together with private landholders, local Landcare groups and the Byron and Lismore Councils to achieve this community-driven habitat corridor outcome.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on how the Private Native Forestry Review can meet the objectives and scope set out in the Review's Terms of Reference (TORs). Bangalow Koalas Inc. interest in Private Native Forestry (PNF) is focused on the threat it poses to koalas generally and in the Northern Rivers Region where we are creating the corridor.

After having read the TORs I have little confidence that the interests of the wildlife that live in our forests are being addressed. Additionally, I cannot see how it aligns with the NSW Koala Strategy. To me, it seems clear that the TORs are prioritising harvesting with a view to industrial expansion and that recognition of the environmental values of the private forest estate are almost an afterthought.

PNF's threat to koalas has been long acknowledged, for example in the *NSW recovery plan for the koala* (2008) and the Senate's Environment and Communications References Committee report, *the koala - saving our national icon* (2011). Numerous well-documented community reports of koala habitat destroyed by non-complying operations carried out under the *Forest Operation Plan Guidelines - Private Native Forestry Code of Practice for Northern NSW* have confirmed the extent of the threat. With nearly 40% of New South Wales's remaining native forests on private land and their harvesting viewed as providing 'a key resource for the NSW Forestry Industry', plus the fact that PNF applies to any area of NSW other than those identified in section 60ZS of the *Local Land Services Act*, there is little room for optimism about the long-term outcomes for koalas.

For these reasons we support and commend to you EDO NSW's submission to the Review (24 January 2019) and its 25 recommendations which, if adopted, will at least give some hope for the long-term future of koalas – an outcome supported by the overwhelming majority of residents.

The NSW Government's primary responsibility should surely be to protect the long-term health of all our forests and the wildlife that live in them. As the Government has locked our public forests into another 20 years of industrial logging, native forests on private land are now absolutely critical for the Koala's long-term survival in a warming world. PNF de-regulation and self-assessment will simply hasten extinction of this amazing and iconic animal, as well as all the other wildlife that inhabit these forests.

This is the time for the government to give our koalas some hope that only it can do by adopting the EDO's recommendations in their entirety.



Yours faithfully  
Linda Sparrow  
President