

FEDERAL KOALA LISTING "NOT ENOUGH"

Conservationists have welcomed the State Labor Party's support for federal threatened species listing for the koala, but warn it will do little or nothing to help local koalas.

Spokesperson for the Chipstop campaign, Harriett Swift says that a federal listing would be good, but on its own will do nothing for far south koalas living in State Forests.

"This is because the principal Commonwealth law Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation (EPBC) Act 1999 protecting threatened species does not apply in State Forests," Ms Swift said.

"Virtually all of our local koalas are in State Forests and thus would not benefit from any Commonwealth listing."

"All of our State Forests are covered by Regional Forest Agreements (RFAs) and the current law falsely assumes that these provide sufficient protection for threatened species."

"We have seen time and time again that threatened species prescriptions are either useless or are flouted by State logging agencies."

"Since the commencement of the RFAs there have been hundreds of instances of threatened species rules being breached either by Forests NSW or by logging contractors."

"A license to log is a license to kill and harm threatened species, to say nothing of the more common animals such as wombats and lyrebirds which are not protected at all."

In NSW, State Ministers have demonstrated their contempt for the welfare of forest animals by suspending the normal protection offered by the State's own threatened species listing in order to facilitate logging in endangered animal habitat."

While we welcome Labor Spokesperson, Luke Foley's support for the koala's listing, it is only very recently that a State Labor government permitted logging in koala habitat in Bermagui and Mumbulla forests. If Mr Foley really wants to help ensure the survival of the koala he should persuade his federal colleague to end the EPBC Act exemption for RFA areas.

Federal Environment Minister, Tony Burke is expected to announce his decision on the koala list at the end of this month.

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