

# Facts sheet – inland koalas

- In the iconic Pilliga Forest koala numbers have crashed from around 10,000 to less than 100 in only twenty years (Kavanagh and Barrott 2001; Paull 2012).
- In the Gunnedah, the "Koala Capital", numbers are down significantly (Lunney *et al.* 2012)
- In the southern highlands, Riverina, northern tablelands and the Darling Plains once widespread koala presence has shrunk to a few core areas and very occasional sightings.
- In inland NSW, causes for these declines have been attributed to ongoing dry conditions (Adams-Hoskings *et al.* 2011; Allen *et al.* 2010), increasing habitat fragmentation (DECC 2008) through ongoing habitat removal (mainly through land clearing and mining developments), degradation of remnants (DECC 2008) (mainly through forestry and rural development) and declining tree condition (Crowther *et al.* 2013).
- In April 2012 the Koala was listed as vulnerable under Federal law following the Senate Committee of Inquiry into 'The koala – saving our national icon'
- Fact sheet on Koala populations and vulnerable listing – Federal Govt – ref [www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary\\_Business/Committees/Senate/Environment\\_and\\_Communications/Completed\\_inquiries/2010-13/koalas/report/index](http://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/Senate/Environment_and_Communications/Completed_inquiries/2010-13/koalas/report/index)
- The latest monster coal mine supported by the State Government, the Shenhua Watermark Project near Breeza in the Gunnedah area, has privately owned woodland that is home to some 250 koalas (Cumberland Ecology 2013).

## References

- Adams-Hosking, C., Grantham, H.S., Rhodes, J.R., McAlpine, C. (2011). Modelling climate-change-induced shifts in the distribution of the koala. *Wildlife Research* 38: 122–130
- Allen, C.D., Macaladyb, A.K., Chenchounic, H., Bacheletd, D. (2010). A global overview of drought and heat-induced tree mortality reveals emerging climate change risks for forests. *Forest Ecology and Management* 259 (4): 660–684
- Crowther, M., D. Lunney, J. Lemon, E. Stalenberg, R. Wheeler, G. Madani, K. Ross & M. Ellis (2013). Climate-mediated habitat selection in an arboreal folivore. *Ecography* 37(4), 336-342.
- Cumberland Ecology (2013). Watermark Coal Project Response to Submissions. Appendix E: Revised Koala Management Plan. Prepared for Shenhua Watermark Coal Pty Ltd.
- Department of Environment and Climate Change. (2008). NSW Recovery Plan for the Koala (*Phascolarctos cinereus*). DECC, Sydney.
- Kavanagh, R.P. and Barrott, E.M. (2001). Koala populations in the Pilliga Forests. *Perfumed Pineries: Environmental history of Australia's Callitris forests* (Dargavel, J., Hart, D. and Libbi, B. eds), pp. 93-103.
- Lunney, D. Crowther, M.S., Wallis, I., Foley, W.J., Lemon, J., Wheeler, R., Madani, G., Orscheg, C., Griffith, J.E., Krockenberger, M., Retamales, M. and Stalenberg, E. (2012). Koalas and climate change: a case study on the Liverpool Plains, north-west New South Wales. Pp 150 - 168 in 'Wildlife and Climate Change: towards robust conservation strategies for Australian fauna'. Edited by Daniel Lunney and Pat Hutchings, 2012. Royal Zoological Society of NSW, Mosman, NSW, Australia.
- [www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary\\_Business/Committees/Senate/Environment\\_and\\_Communications/Completed\\_inquiries/2010-13/koalas/report/index](http://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/Senate/Environment_and_Communications/Completed_inquiries/2010-13/koalas/report/index)
- <http://www.environment.gov.au/biodiversity/threatened/publications/factsheet-koala-populations-queensland-nsw-act-national>