

Tony Burke MP

Minister for Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities

You are here: [Tony Burke](#) » [Media centre](#) » [Media releases 2012](#)

The Hon Tony Burke MP

Minister for Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities

Koala protected under national environment law

Media release
30 April 2012

Environment Minister, Tony Burke, has today announced Australia's most at-risk koala populations need to be included on the national list of threatened species.

Minister Burke has decided to list koala populations in Queensland, New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory as vulnerable under national environment law.

"Koalas are an iconic Australian animal and they hold a special place in the community," Mr Burke said.

"People have made it very clear to me that they want to make sure the koala is protected for future generations.

"My decision to list the koala under national environment law follows a rigorous scientific assessment by the Threatened Species Scientific Committee which gathered information from a variety of experts over the past three years.

"Koala populations are under serious threat from habitat loss and urban expansion, as well as vehicle strikes, dog attacks, and disease.

"However, koala numbers vary significantly across the country, so while koala populations are clearly declining in some areas, there are large, stable or even increasing populations in other areas.

"In fact, in some areas in Victoria and South Australia, koalas are eating themselves out of suitable foraging habitat and their numbers need to be managed.

"But the Queensland, New South Wales and Australian Capital Territory koala populations are very clearly in trouble, so we must take action.

"That is why the scientific committee recommended to me to list the Queensland, New South Wales and Australian Capital Territory populations as threatened, rather than to list the koala as nationally threatened across its full range."

Mr Burke said the Gillard Government had committed \$300,000 of new funding under the National Environmental Research Program Emerging Priorities to find out more about koala habitat.

"This funding will be used to develop new survey methods that will improve our knowledge of the quality

of koala habitat using remote sensing, and help fill important data gaps to enhance our understanding and ability to protect the species," Mr Burke said.

"The new funding is in addition to more than \$3 million we have invested since 2007 to ensure the resilience and sustainability of our koala population."

For more information on the koala listing go to

www.environment.gov.au/biodiversity/threatened/species/koala or http://www.environment.gov.au/cgi-bin/sprat/public/publicspecies.pl?taxon_id=197.