

The Australian

Koala listing another example of government 'greentape', says Campbell Newman

- by: Ben Packham
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Queensland Premier Campbell Newman says listing koalas as an endangered species is another example of government green tape.

Source: The Courier-Mail

THE inclusion of koalas on the nation's list of threatened species has been condemned as a fresh example of federal government "green tape" by Queensland Premier Campbell Newman.

He said the announcement threatened Queensland jobs, just a fortnight after Julia Gillard vowed to streamline environmental approvals, would cost jobs in the state's construction industry.

"The federal government says one thing, and then goes and does another," he said.

"And it's more needless duplication, it's more mindless green tape, it's more delay and obstruction from Canberra, and I just ask the Prime Minister to go and have a long hard look at what her government (is) trying to achieve because this is counter to what she announced to the nation only a few weeks ago."

Federal Environment Minister Tony Burke said koala populations in Queensland, NSW and the ACT would be listed as vulnerable under national environmental laws.

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

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

He said the decision followed rigorous scientific assessment by the Threatened Species Scientific Committee, which

had gathered information from koala experts over the past three years.

Koala populations across the nation were declining, he said, with the populations in some states faring worse than others.

He said the koalas in Queensland, NSW and the ACT were "very clearly in trouble".

Mr Newman said he was concerned the change would slow development in the state.

"As soon as I heard about this, I immediately was very, very worried," he said.

"Not for developers, but I was worried for the carpenters and joiners, the sparkies, the plumbers, the concreters - the people who have been in the industry who have been doing it tough."

Mr Newman said koalas were already well protected in Queensland and if the federal government wanted to do more to protect the animals, it should have approached the state government to come up with a plan.

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