

Koala group rejects private breeding proposal

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Adrienne Francis

Some koala stakeholders in Australia say they would not support moves to commercialise the species in order to conserve it.

Some scientists and farmers are calling for state and federal governments to do more to allow private landholders to manage, breed and trade koalas across state borders.

Over the last 20 years koala numbers in New South Wales have dropped by a third, but there are large numbers in Victoria and South Australia.

The Australian Koala Foundation's Deborah Tabbart says she would support incentives to encourage conservation on private lands, but not moves to commercialise wildlife.

"If those landholders sought to say sell koalas, then I am totally against that," she said.

In a statement, Australia's Environment Minister Tony Burke says national guidelines for relocating koalas are being developed and decisions are likely to be based on genetics, disease risk and the availability of suitable habitat.



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