

Hello Koala Supporters

Attached is a copy of Dr Steve Phillips submission to Council re the Draft Tweed Coast Comprehensive Koala Plan of Management. He has given me permission to pass it on to environmental groups and others who may be able to further the koala cause. Below is my summary of what I have identified as the key points in his submission. We should consider how Dr Phillips' submission can best be used to achieve the best outcome for the Tweed Coast koalas. Please let me know if you come up with any ideas.

- Koala recovery can only be achieved by promptly and assertively dealing with the processes driving decline (not just talked about or delegated to some future strategy).
- More dead koalas from road strike will be the outcome as a result of a 5 year program of works that can only be implemented if and when funding becomes available.
- Equal priority should be given to rapid infilling of gaps with koala habitat trees in existing and critically important habitat areas such as Black Rocks, which is fundamental to the survival prospects for this crucial koala population hub.
- To see the Black Rocks issue increasingly trivialised as not of a sufficiently high priority demonstrates a complete disregard for the severity of the challenges ahead of the Tweed Coast koalas.
- A transparent assessment methodology should be included in the CKPoM to determine whether trees remain or stay when approving developments, rather than relying on the discretionary powers of Council officers.
- The dire situation of the Tweed Coast koalas warrants abandonment of such considerations as preferred koala tree removal from areas being used by koalas.
- The Department of Planning's 1ha exclusion rule should not be allowed in Koala Management Precincts, which has not been challenged up front by the CKPoM.
- Monitoring of the Tweed Coast koala population should allow for two inter-generational assessments in order to increase the chances of a successful intervention to stop localised extinction.

Concluding Remarks:

- There is an urgency for assertive action by identifying inadequacies that - for the most part - can be readily rectified if the will is there.
- It would be encouraging if the CKPoM included Council commitment to actively fund/contribute to and/or participate in the trialing of new Wireless Identification Device technology in known koala road-kill black spots.
- It would be encouraging if the CKPoM included an illustrated Figure detailing the extent of gap-filling across the remaining range of koalas across the entire Tweed Coast, along with a commitment to have localities such as Black Rocks planted out within the first 3-5 years of the Plan.

- It would be encouraging if the CKPoM included a safety net to enable more aggressive intervention measures to be put in place if ongoing, intra-generation decline was persisting.

- The CKPoM does not meet the challenge outlined in the Tweed Coast Koala Habitat Study: *The future for the Tweed Coast koalas is bleak unless a concerted, coordinated and multi-disciplined approach is taken.*

Kind regards

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