

\$1.2m KOALA RECOVERY PROGRAM A "JOKE" WHILE BERMI LOGGING CONTINUES

The Government's \$1.2 million koala recovery program launched on Sunday morning (30 November 2008) has been described as a "joke." The plan, launched by Environment Minister Carmel Tebbutt aims to "rehabilitate the marsupials' habitat and come up with strategies to protect them from threats."

Spokesperson for the Chipstop campaign against woodchipping, Ms Harriett Swift says that one of the biggest threats to the koala on the far south coast is the logging of Bermagui forest.

"How can the Minister keep a straight face as she launches this plan while the logging of koala habitat at Bermagui is in full swing?" she says.

Ms Swift says that logging of Bermagui forest is destroying a critical corridor between the last two known koala populations on the far south coast.

"If the species is to have a future here, the precautionary principle must be applied," she says.

"A young koala was sighted and photographed almost directly across the road from where the logging started and another new sighting was recently reported in Mumbulla forest."

"The sick joke is compounded by the fact that the Bermagui logging will almost certainly cost NSW taxpayers more than it will return in royalties to Forests NSW.

"Minister Tebbutt could actually save taxpayers money and help the koala by stepping in to halt this logging" Ms Swift says.

30 November 2008

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