

**MEDIA RELEASE: CRITICAL SOUTH EAST KOALA POPULATION UNDER IMMEDIATE THREAT FROM LOGGING , JANE GARCIA, 05.10.2011**

One of the most critical populations of koalas in Australia is under threat from logging in Bermagui State Forest in the state's south east, according to the Nature Conservation Council of NSW.

Logging operations have started in a corridor of largely mature forest containing koala feed-tree species forming a vital habitat corridor for the last remaining population of koalas in the south east region. The traditional owners of these Aboriginal-managed national parks support the addition of the proposed logging area to the national parks as they are part of the same cultural landscape.

"Despite its election promise of a specific focus on koala protection, the NSW government has shown itself unwilling to protect this iconic species by logging an important habitat corridor for the last remaining koala colony in the state's south east," Nature Conservation Council of NSW, Chief Executive Officer, Pepe Clarke said today.

"Although koala numbers are dangerously low in the region, they are still breeding in Mumbulla and Kooraban forests, with a good chance of recovery should their habitat be left undisturbed. This koala habitat corridor improves the chances of younger koalas connecting with each other, maximising the chance of successful breeding over coming years.

"A recent Federal inquiry made a strong case for listing the koala on the threatened species list as vulnerable to extinction. The International Union for the Conservation of Nature has also expressed concern over the future of our koalas, listing them as one of the species most under threat from climate change," Mr Clarke said.

Full media release attached.

Nature Conservation Council of NSW, Chief Executive Officer, Pepe Clarke, is available for comment.

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