

**MEDIA RELEASE**

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# **Luke Foley MLC**

**Shadow Minister for Environment and Climate Change**

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*Thursday, 27 October, 2011*

**ENVIRONMENT MINISTER CLAIMS "LOGGING PROTECTS KOALAS"**

**BREAKS ELECTION PROMISE TO PROTECT KOALAS**

Environment Minister, Robyn Parker today defended her decision to break a key election promise to protect the koala – and extraordinarily claimed her decision to allow logging in key koala habitats would actually help the national icon.

Under questioning in Budget estimates today, the Environment Minister unbelievably claimed:

*"Logging protects koalas."*

*(Robyn Parker, Hansard, Thursday, 27 October 2011)*

The recent Commonwealth Senate Inquiry into the status, health and sustainability of Australia's koala population found that NSW and QLD koala populations are markedly declining, with declines of 80 per cent in some areas.

The Coalition's election policy promised that:

*"We will protect threatened species across NSW, including better protections for koalas."*

*(Liberals and Nationals Protecting our Environment election policy document, 2011)*

"The O'Farrell Government has completely disregarded its election promise to protect koalas and given the green light to logging in key koala habitats across NSW," Shadow Minister for Environment and Climate Change, Luke Foley said today.

"Instead of protecting koalas, Environment Minister Robyn Parker has refused to stop logging in the Boambee State Forest near Coffs Harbour.

"The Boambee State Forest is a key habitat for the largest coastal koala population left in eastern Australia.

"Robyn Parker has also refused to stop logging in the State's south east forests, with the Bermagui State Forest currently being logged.

"This is an important corridor between the Mumbulla and Kooraban State Forests, two of the last breeding grounds for koalas on the south coast. Scientific experts advise these koalas may represent one of only two small reservoirs of the native genotype of all the Victorian and South Australian koalas left today.

"NSW needs an Environment Minister willing to stand up for the declining koala population in our State and protect their remaining habitats."

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