

# Meeting minutes

## Koala Advisory Council

### Details

<b>Subject</b>	Koala Advisory Council Meeting No. 3
<b>Chair</b>	Mark Townend
<b>Meeting type</b>	Council meeting
<b>Date and location</b>	30 April 2019 State Library of Qld – Meeting Room 1B
<b>Timing</b>	12.00 pm to 3.00 pm
<b>Distribution</b>	External

### Council attendees

<b>Name</b>	<b>Organisation</b>
Chris Aston	Planning Group, Department of State Development, Manufacturing, Infrastructure and Planning
Gemma Plesman	Wilderness Society
Isabel Tarrago	Cultural Heritage, Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships
Jonathan Rhodes	University of Queensland - School of Earth and Environmental Sciences, Centre for Biodiversity and Conservation Science
Kirsty Chessher-Brown	Urban Development Institute of Australia
Kristy Gooding	Natural Assets and NRM, Local Government Association of Queensland
Marina Vit	MOSAIC Property Group
Mark Townend	RSPCA Queensland
Brent Smith, on behalf of Kirstin Kenyon	Conservation and Biodiversity Operations, Department of Environment and Science
Mick Stephens	Timber Queensland
Ramses Zietek	Program Delivery and Operations, Department of Transport and Main Roads

## Speakers

Name	Organisation
Robert Hughes	A/Executive Director, Conservation and Biodiversity Strategy, Department of Environment and Science
Beth Clouston	Director, Conservation and Biodiversity Policy, Department of Environment and Science
Catherine George	Manager, Koala Policy and Oversight, Department of Environment and Science
Peter Latch	Director, Terrestrial Threatened Species, Department of Environment and Energy
Zoe Kemp	Manager, Offsets Review, Department of Environment and Science

## Apologies

Name	Organisation
Al Mucci	Dreamworld Wildlife Foundation
Cameron Costello	Quandamooka Yoolooburrabee Aboriginal Corporation
Julie McLellan	Healthy Land and Water
Rosie Booth	Australia Zoo

## Items

Item #	Discussion
1.	<b>Welcome from Chair</b>
2.	<b>Apologies</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Apologies were received for the following members:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Al Mucci</li><li>○ Cameron Costello</li><li>○ Julie McLellan</li><li>○ Rosie Booth</li></ul></li><li>• Kirstin Kenyon was not able to attend and Brent Smith attended as a proxy</li></ul>
3.	<b>Conflict of Interest</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• DTMR reinstated their departmental portfolio conflict of interest</li></ul>
4.	<b>Koala Conservation Strategy</b> <p>An overview of the draft South East Queensland Koala Conservation Strategy was provided and Council members provided feedback, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Overarching feedback was that the draft Strategy was too broad, and did not provide clear, specific and realistic targets</li><li>• Need to make sure that the Strategy is not a duplication of the Koala Expert Panel report</li><li>• Need to make sure that both habitat protection and the other key threats are being addressed in a suite of changes</li><li>• Need to clearly show how the new koala habitat mapping has been developed</li><li>• The Council requires more detailed consultation on the Strategy, mapping and regulatory amendments prior to the package being released for public consultation</li><li>• In response the Department committed to:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Link responses back to the Koala Expert Panel report</li><li>○ Be more specific about timeframes</li><li>○ Clarify the role of Priority Areas for Koalas</li><li>○ Provide further details on the restoration, threat management and monitoring programs</li><li>○ Make better use of existing knowledge of community attitudes and behaviors</li></ul></li></ul>
5.	<b>Rehabilitated koalas and koalas in imminent danger policies</b> <p>A representative of the Department of Environment and Science presented a summary of the draft operational policy, <i>'Release of rehabilitated koalas and the take and release of koalas in imminent danger'</i>. The Council discussed this and the following points were made:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• This policy addresses circumstances where an individual koala may require assisted dispersal as a reactive solution to an animal welfare issue</li><li>• A broader translocation review will be undertaken, which will investigate circumstances when a proactive solution may be required to translocate for population management purposes</li><li>• Need to make sure that the process for the release of rehabilitated koalas is streamlined, as koalas are currently spending too much time in captivity awaiting approval for release</li><li>• Further consultation will be undertaken on this policy</li><li>• The department will circulate a paper recently published using koala hospital data</li></ul>
6.	<b>National Recovery Plan (Koala)</b> <p>An overview of the work being undertaken on the national recovery plan for koalas was provided. The Council discussed this and the following points were made:</p>

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- The combined koala populations of QLD, NSW and the ACT were listed as a threatened species nationally in 2012 and is therefore protected as a matter of national environmental significance under the *Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act)
  - The Australian Government is leading the development of a national recovery plan for the list koalas in collaboration with the relevant state governments
  - There is the opportunity to make sure that the Strategy aligns with this national recovery plan
  - The Council will be provided an opportunity to provide feedback on the draft national recovery plan
  - It is proposed that the draft koala recovery plan will be released for the statutory three-month public consultation period in July 2019
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### **Environmental Offsets**

The Council discussed review being undertaken on the Queensland Environment Offsets Framework this and the following points were made:

- The Queensland Government is undertaking a comprehensive review of Queensland's Offsets Framework
  - To inform this review the government released a discussion paper
  - The department has received written submissions on the discussion paper, and held face-to-face sessions and workshops
  - Transparency has been raised as a key issue, with stakeholders wanting to know where offsets are delivered
  - Other key concerns raised include:
    - the relationship with commonwealth offsets
    - a lack of clarity over conservation outcomes
    - the lack of land and participating landholders
  - There is a need to deliver offsets in a more strategic way
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### **National Parks (UDIA)**

The representative of the Urban Development Institute of Australia presented an idea to create a SEQ National Park/s for the conservation of koalas. The Council discussed this and the following points were made:

- The Queensland Government has previously invested in the acquisition of land and the program was relatively expensive and provided minimal habitat for koalas
  - Areas of National Park are less important for koalas, as the majority of koalas occur on private land, as that is where most of the core habitat for koalas occurs
  - There was a clear indication in the Koala Expert Panel consultation that the community still wanted koalas to be protected in their urban backyard
  - Consideration should be given to prioritising revegetation projects to areas adjacent to protected areas in increase connectivity
  - DES to produce an analysis paper on this idea for the next meeting
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### **Planning for future meetings**

- Targeted consultation should occur on the draft Strategy and proposed interim regulatory amendments
  - The Council will reconvene to discuss the Strategy before it is publically released
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### **Nominations of matter for future meetings**

- DTMR are currently undertaking an analysis of road hotspots – an update on this work will be on the agenda for the next meeting
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### **Endorse Communiqué**

- The communiqué was approved by the Koala Advisory Council
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## Action

Item #	Action	Responsible	Status	Due Date
1	Circulate the causes of decline paper based on koala hospital data	DES		14 May 2019
2	Prepare consideration on National Parks and opportunities for koala conservation	DES		August 2019

## Next meeting

<b>Date</b>	20 May 2019
<b>Time</b>	2-4pm
<b>Location</b>	State Library