

# KOALAS AND 2023 NSW STATE ELECTION: RESULTS FROM TEC/NCC SURVEY OF KEY PARTY POLICIES ON KOALAS

		
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The NSW results and rankings are drawn from the responses of the NSW Government, ALP and the Greens. In summary:

 The Government relied on its current policies (NSW Koala Strategy; funding; land acquisitions; Georges River Koala Reserve) which exclude a Great Koala National Park and did not agree to remove development loopholes that are leading to habitat removal particularly in the Sydney Basin.

$\frac{1}{2}$  The ALP agreed to create a Great Koala National Park (after consultations); to protect wildlife corridors across all land tenures; faster gazettal of a Georges River Koala National Park; and to strengthen environmental protections, stop run away land clearing and fix the biodiversity offset scheme.

 The Greens were most supportive promising a moratorium on the clearing of Koala habitat; introduction of a Koala Protection Bill with clear powers that prohibit the destruction of Koala habitat; and a \$1bill land acquisition fund.

Questionnaires were also sent to candidates, including independents, in key urban seats (Lane Cove, Manly, North Shore, Pittwater, Wakehurst, Willoughby). The amount of response varied and a broader set of results for these seats can be found [here](#).

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## POLICY DETAIL

## LIBERAL

## ALP

## GREENS

### 1) Protect koala habitat by:

- **Transferring core koala habitat to national parks, including the Great Koala National Park proposal (175,000 ha), the Sandy Creek Koala Park proposal (6988 ha), and the Georges River Koala Park proposal (4000 ha)**
- **Protecting the Sydney Koala Greenbelt**

The NSW Liberal and Nationals Government is committed to doubling the koala population by 2050. To support this, the NSW Liberal and Nationals Government in 2022 delivered more than \$190 million dollars for the NSW Koala Strategy, which is already well underway and is the single largest investment in any species by any government in Australia.

- The Strategy is already being implemented around NSW and focuses on more than 30 actions under four themes:
1. \$107.1 million for koala habitat conservation, to fund the protection, restoration, and improved management of 47,000 hectares of koala habitat
  2. \$19.6 million to supporting local communities to conserve koalas
  3. \$23.2 million for improving the safety and health of koalas by removing threats, improving health and rehabilitation, and establishing a translocation program
  4. \$43.4 million to support science and research to build our knowledge of koalas.

Labor is committed to saving koalas and other threatened species by protecting their habitat. We are going to create a Great Koala National Park. We have allocated \$80 million to establish the park including 140,000ha of national parks and the assessment of 176,000ha of state forest. Labor will also protect the wildlife corridor on Sydney Water land at Woronora Heights by transferring the land to the National Parks and Wildlife Service, and assess all public land in the area to identify and protect wildlife corridors connecting the local national parks.

- A Minns Labor Government will save the koala population in south west Sydney by establishing a Georges River Koala National Park on public land between Glenfield and Appin. As part of this plan, Labor will also:
- Create a koala care centre to support local volunteer wildlife carers already on the ground rehabilitating sick and injured koalas,
  - Establish protective infrastructure like wildlife exclusion fencing along roadways and adequate koala-friendly road crossings, and
  - Work with other landholders to maximise the protection of wildlife corridors and identify further additions to the National Park.

Habitat by mapping, protecting and expanding existing koala corridors.

- Ending Native Forest Logging
- Empowering Local Councils to Protect Koala Habitat
- Create a \$1 billion fund to purchase at-risk koala habitat and corridors.
- Enable councils to refuse development applications that threaten koala habitat identified in a CKPOM.

[You can read the Greens full koala plan here.](#)

## POLICY DETAIL

## LIBERAL

## ALP

## GREENS

- **Imposing stricter controls on land clearing including for urban development, throughout the Sydney Basin Bioregion**
- **Complete mapping of koala habitat by the end of 2023**
- **Mandate the making of Koala Plans of Management to be gazetted by 2024**

The NSW Liberal and Nationals Government has recently secured an additional 3,157 hectares of high quality koala habitat across seven properties for the national parks estate. These seven properties are in addition to the 7,608 hectares already acquired for koala habitat through the current and previous NSW Koala Strategy.

There are extensive planning controls in place to limit the impact of development on koala habitat in the Sydney Basin, as well as requirements under federal and state environmental regulation. The NSW Koala Strategy identifies South-west Sydney as a priority for immediate investment and on-ground actions have already rolled out including habitat restoration, vehicle strike mitigation works, habitat mapping and funding for Landcare. The NSW Liberal and Nationals Government will also establish a 1,830-hectare Georges River Koala Reserve as part of the Cumberland Plain Conservation Plan to protect important koala habitat.

Labor's plan to save koalas from extinction in NSW will also use partnerships, planning, cooperation, and the levers of government to:

- Complete the National Parks and Wildlife Service 'National Parks Establishment Plan' to identify key habitat and wildlife corridors and expand protected areas into the future.
- Convene a koala summit with all key stakeholders to review and refocus the NSW Koala Strategy to ensure it is a legitimate recovery plan for koala populations across NSW.
- Ensure the statutory review of the Biodiversity Conservation Act strengthens environmental protections, stops run away land clearing, and fixes the biodiversity offset scheme.
- Work cooperatively with landowners (public agencies, First Nations people, Councils, farmers and other private land holders) to develop ways to protect key habitat through partnerships & investment on all types of land.

Work cooperatively with the Commonwealth Government to meet the objectives of the Threatened Species Action Plan 2022-2032 and the 30 per cent protected areas by 2030 commitment to meet the goal of no new extinctions.

See previous slide

# KOALAS AND 2023 NSW STATE ELECTION: RESULTS FROM TEC/NCC SURVEY OF KEY PARTY POLICIES ON KOALAS (CONTINUED)

## POLICY DETAIL

**2) Maintain, expand and restore linking corridors by mandating minimum 250m wide with average of 425m wide corridors through strategic and local plans and planning policies generally.**

## LIBERAL

In 2020, the Office of the NSW Chief Scientist and Engineer (OSCE) formed an independent expert panel to provide advice on the protection of the Campbelltown Koala population. A further panel was established in 2021 to provide additional advice and included 31 principles to be applied to protect koalas in the southern Sydney region.

The Department of Planning and Environment supported all 31 principles and reviewed all koala corridors to meet the recommended width for function of koala habitat. All corridors now meet the average width recommended by the OSCE, except for a small areanot feasible due to existing development.

## ALP

Labor will, where possible, act as quickly as possible to protect koala habitat, as well as protecting wildlife corridors and building protective infrastructure like fauna road crossings and wildlife exclusion fencing as recommended by the NSW Chief Scientist and Engineer. As part of this work, we would also focus our environmental agencies towards landscape scale preservation and restoration of wildlife corridors across land tenures while working with all landowners, including First Nations people, farmers, local councils, and public agencies to develop better incentives to keep trees in the ground.

NSW Labor will strengthen and refocus the current NSW Koala Strategy to turn it into a genuine recovery plan for koalas while working closely with the Federal Labor Government to deliver targeted koala protections and funding.

## GREENS

Yes, the Greens support this.

# KOALAS AND 2023 NSW STATE ELECTION: RESULTS FROM TEC/NCC SURVEY OF KEY PARTY POLICIES ON KOALAS (CONTINUED)

## POLICY DETAIL

## LIBERAL

## ALP

## GREENS

### **3) Remove development loopholes (ie. discretions)**

- **a. Gazette an environmental veto (koala gateway) for koala habitat on all development applications, including state significant development by bolstering safeguards in assessment and determination processes.**
- **b. Address ongoing concerns with the operation and implementation of the Koala SEPP. Strengthening the 'serious and irreversible impacts' mechanism.**

No response.

See above for response to 1) in this section

Yes the greens support these asks.  
The Greens will also:

- Introduce a Moratorium on the Clearing of Koala Habitat
- Introduce a Koala Protection Bill with clear powers that prohibit the destruction of Koala