



# The Hon. Tony Burke MP

## MEDIA RELEASE

Minister for Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities

10 FEBRUARY 2011

### **Decision date on koala threatened species listing extended**

Federal Environment Minister Tony Burke has extended the due date for a decision on whether to add the koala to the list of nationally threatened species.

Mr Burke said he had extended the decision until October to take into account any findings from a Senate inquiry into the status, health and sustainability of Australia's koala population.

It follows advice from the Threatened Species Scientific Committee that there was not enough data about Australia's koala population to inform a decision.

"Koalas are an iconic Australian animal, they hold a special place in the hearts of Australians and I have taken this decision carefully," Mr Burke said.

"The Committee found that the national koala population is variable with too many in some areas and declining populations in others.

"Information on koala populations is sparse and patchy, which makes estimating national population size and trends challenging.

"The Committee noted that existing data on koala populations is patchy at best and inadequate to make this judgement at this time.

"That's why the Gillard Government supports the Senate inquiry to assess the threats to and management of koalas across the country."