



Speech by

Hon. Lindy Nelson-Carr

MEMBER FOR MUNDINGBURRA

Hansard Thursday, 7 June 2007

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Koala Habitat Mapping

Hon. LH NELSON-CARR (Mundingburra—ALP) (Minister for Environment and Multiculturalism) (10.15 am): Four local governments in south-east Queensland have received EPA funding to map koala habitat in their areas. This is a key step to conserving this species that is vulnerable in the state's south-east. The EPA has allocated a total of \$126,832 for koala habitat mapping to Caloundra City Council and to a syndicate comprising Caboolture Shire Council, Pine Rivers Shire Council and Redcliffe City Council.

Koala habitat mapping is a key commitment under the koala plan that the state government put in place last year and will identify previously unmapped habitat areas within south-east Queensland so additional protective measures can be put in place where needed. Over four years the EPA will offer local governments in south-east Queensland the chance to apply for funding to undertake koala habitat mapping on a dollar-for-dollar basis. This is the first of four funding rounds and I would like to congratulate the successful applicants.

These four councils have now engaged consultants to work with their officers to estimate koala distribution and abundance. This mapping data, due to be completed by June 2009, will allow koala habitat areas to be protected from inappropriate development. These koala population surveys will assist local governments to undertake planning actions to protect koala numbers in their shires. They will also allow the EPA to expand its work with councils to assess proposed development against koala conservation criteria. The mapping, which will use scientifically accepted methods, will be undertaken by people with expertise in conducting fauna, flora or ecological assessments of a site and skills in koala detection and eucalypt identification.

The 2007-08 funding round has opened for applications. South-east Queensland local governments have been advised that they have until 31 August 2007 to apply for the second round of koala habitat mapping funding. I congratulate local councils for working closely with the state government and helping protect this vulnerable species.