1. The Premier and the Minister for Sustainability, Climate Change and Innovation announced in August 2008 that there was a crisis in koala numbers in South-east Queensland (SEQ), primarily in the urban footprint of the South East Queensland Regional Plan 2005 - 2026 (SEQ Regional Plan). The Premier also announced the formation of a specialised Koala Taskforce to investigate and report on this issue.
2. A Koala Response Strategy has been developed based on an analysis of the Koala Taskforce report recommendations.
3. Cabinet endorsed the Government koala crisis response plan in response to the Koala Taskforce report, including:
* introduction of compulsory acquisition powers for koala habitat outside the urban footprint in SEQ;
* a long-term goal of achieving a net gain in mature and actively regenerating koala habitat across SEQ by 2020;
* a commitment that there will be no loss of protection for any existing mapped koala areas through the review of the SEQ Regional Plan, noting that in relation to master planned areas this may require some flexibility to allow these developments to proceed whilst appropriately considering koala habitat values;
* a comprehensive koala mapping project for SEQ be completed in the next six months with the results to be incorporated in a draft State Planning Policy to be released for consultation;
* re-consideration of the status of koalas as regionally vulnerable once mapping is completed;
* the urgent making of the State Planning Regulatory Provision;
* a freeze on the disposal and clearing of State-owned land in SEQ not needed for urgent social infrastructure until an assessment is made of the koala habitat values on each site;
* the State Planning Policy and the expansion of the koala offset policy being directed towards mitigating reductions in koala populations within the urban footprint whilst consolidating and rejuvenating larger habitat precincts outside the footprint to provide longer term protection;
* commit to koala-friendly design for all new main road construction and upgrades and pilot the retrofitting of koala crossings on existing main roads at mortality hotspots. The location of the retrofits would be informed by habitat mapping and the best available science;
* encourage Councils across SEQ to consistently regulate dogs through the development of a model local law for ensuring dogs and koalas are separated at night;
* develop a habitat acquisition/rehabilitation strategy based on the new mapping to achieve a net gain of habitat in the long term; and
* develop an enhanced community engagement and monitoring/reporting program.
1. *Attachments*
* [Draft South East Queensland Koala State Planning Regulatory Provisions](Attachments/draft-koala-reg-provisions.pdf)
* [Regulatory Map](Attachments/seq-koala-habitat-1-7.jpg)