

A koala is clinging to a tree trunk on the left side of the image. The background is a soft-focus green forest. In the bottom right, there is a dark brown rectangular shape, possibly a shadow or a tree hollow.

Labor

**LABOR'S
PLAN**
to establish
**AUSTRALIA'S FIRST
GREAT KOALA
NATIONAL PARK**

A message from **LUKE FOLEY, NSW LABOR LEADER**

When I first learned that the koalas of NSW's north coast are under threat of regional extinction I was deeply troubled.

Loss of habitat, disease, road accidents and dog attacks are sending the population plummeting.

How can we call ourselves a civilised society if we stand by and watch the slow loss of the iconic koala in northern NSW?

Something serious needs to be done. It cannot be token. I don't want to tell my grandchildren that my generation allowed the koala to disappear.

A NSW Labor Government will create the Great Koala National Park. This is an Australian first - a koala conservation reserve modelled on China's internationally famous panda reserves.

I want to lead the nation, by creating in NSW national parks explicitly to protect our remaining koala populations.

I want to acknowledge the hard work and advocacy of community groups that have stood up for the koalas of northern NSW and helped track the decline of koala populations.

Labor is proud of its legacy of national park creation and is committed to continuing the task of protecting our native animals.



Luke Foley
NSW Labor Leader



LABOR'S PLAN *to establish* **AUSTRALIA'S FIRST** **GREAT KOALA NATIONAL PARK**

The koala is Australia's most loved and iconic native animal, an instantly recognisable symbol of Australia and an integral part of our cultural heritage.

In the state's north, the koala is under serious threat. Without committed action we will be the generation responsible for the regional extinction of the koalas of northern New South Wales.

Koala numbers in NSW, Queensland and ACT have plummeted by a third in 20 years. Under NSW law koalas are listed as vulnerable to extinction. Koalas in northern NSW and Queensland are on the Federal threatened species list. Habitat loss caused by land clearing and urban development has resulted in koalas disappearing from 75% of their former range. We cannot save the koala with kind words and token actions, we must act to protect its diminishing habitat.

Despite the koala being the second most recognised animal in the world, behind the Chinese Panda, no nationally recognised reserves have been set aside in Australia to ensure the protection of the koala in the wild.

In China reserves covering 1 million hectares of the panda's bamboo forest habitat have been established and provided with World Heritage listing. Visitors from around the world are attracted to China's panda reserves.

A NSW Labor Government will create the Great Koala National Park.

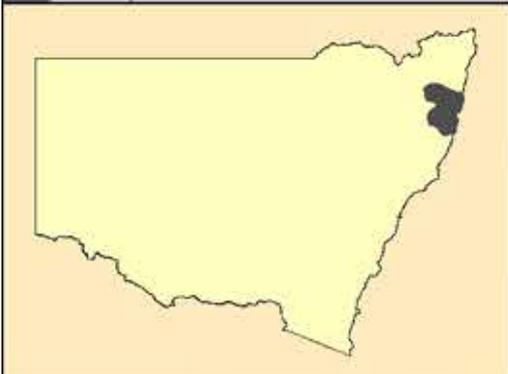
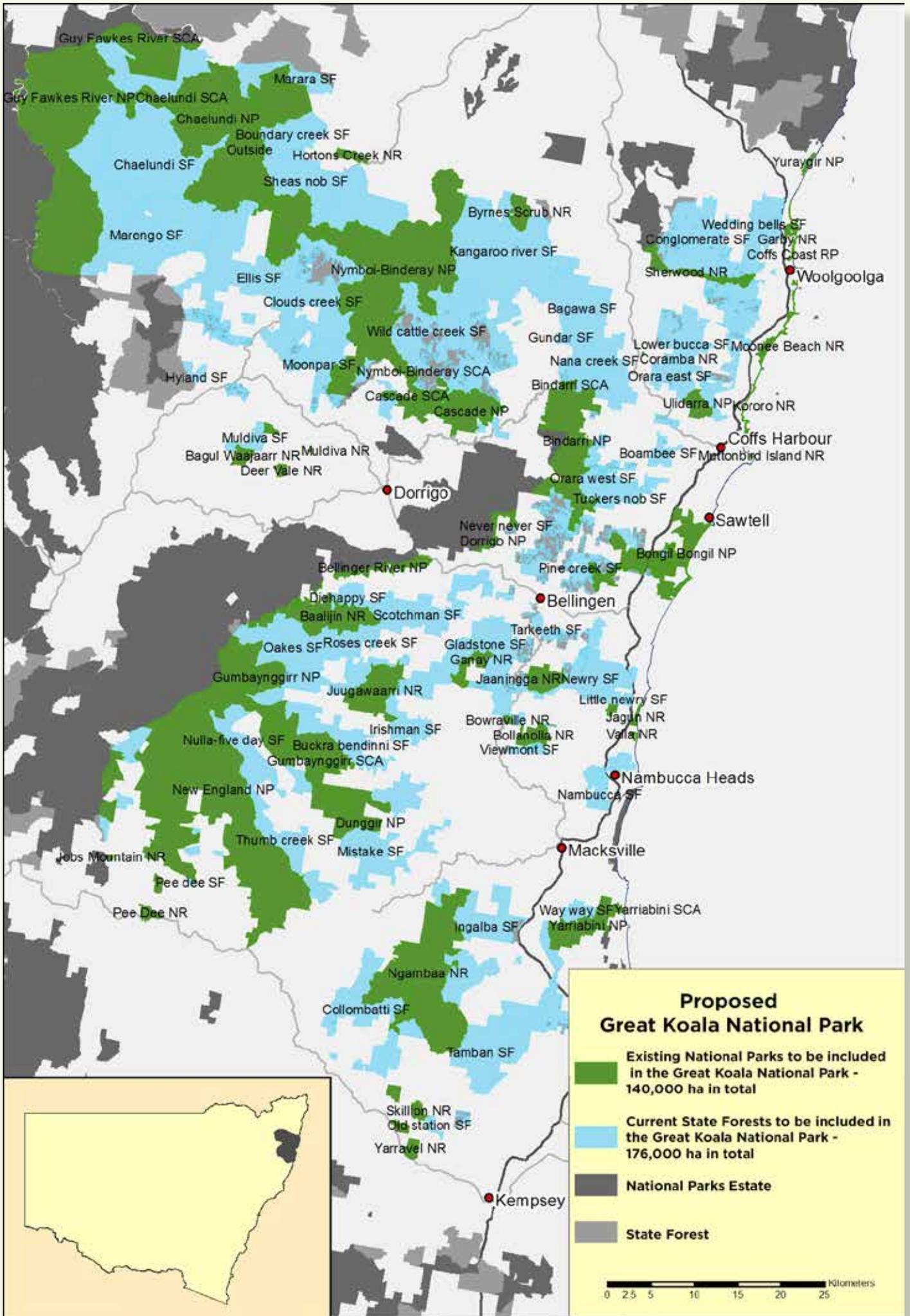
This significant new national park will stretch over 315,000 hectares of public land inland from Coffs Harbour from the Macleay River, near Kempsey to Woolgoolga and encompass 140,000 hectares of existing reserves.

It will protect the Bellingen-Nambucca-Macleay and the Coffs Harbour-Guy Fawkes koala meta-populations. The Great Koala National Park will protect public land, both state forests and already existing reserves in the range of these two koala populations. It will create a mosaic of parks.

The Great Koala National Park is estimated to contain 20%, or 4,500 of NSW's remaining wild koalas. Australia's first Koala National Park will protect eucalypt forest and rainforest.

Furthermore, the Great Koala National Park is home to 33 other threatened species including the glossy black-cockatoo, spotted-tailed quoll, parma wallaby, yellow bellied glider, Hastings River mouse and long-nosed potoroo.





LABOR'S COMMITMENT TO *building* THE NORTH COAST TOURISM INDUSTRY

A NSW Labor Government will develop infrastructure in the Great Koala National Park to support “koala tourism.” This will include a koala trail and consideration of other attractions including a Gateway Visitor Centre and Koala Hospital.

As the koala cuddling at the recent G20 meeting in Brisbane illustrated, foreign visitors love koalas! Over 70% of foreign tourists identify seeing a koala as something they really want to do while in Australia.

In 2003 Gillespie Economics estimated that \$225 million in business turnover and 1600 jobs were generated by the north coast National Parks.

Several million people visit our magnificent National Parks in northern NSW each year. During their stay they spend money on local produce, eat in local restaurants and stay in local caravan parks and motels. The Great Koala National Park will build the nature-based north coast tourism industry.

Infrastructure in the new park will include a “koala trail”, allowing visitors the chance to glimpse a koala in its natural habitat.

Labor will also conduct a feasibility study into incorporating a koala hospital and interpretative centre into a Gateway to the Great Koala National Park Visitors Centre.

There is a possible site adjacent to the Pacific Highway identified as a rest area by the RMS but as yet undeveloped. This site could be incorporated into the Great Koala National Park and house the hospital and interpretive centre as a gateway to the Park. It could be linked to the existing Dorrigo Rainforest World Heritage Rainforest World Heritage Visitor Centre.

There is a need for a koala hospital in the area as there is not one north of Port Macquarie. Koalas are constantly in need of care after dog attacks and road accidents. This could become the regional centre for care and rehabilitation for koalas. Visitors would be able to appropriately view recovering koalas at the hospital.



BUILDING A *sustainable* TIMBER INDUSTRY

A NSW Labor Government will ensure impacts on the native forest industry are limited, and any necessary timber buy backs and adjustment packages are available.

Private forested land and existing timber plantation around the Park will be unaffected by the Great Koala National Park and will provide continued wood supply to key businesses.

In June 2014 the NSW Government bought back 50,000 m³ of native forest timber allocation in recognition of the lack of sustainability of the timber industry on the north coast. This reduction in forestry activity can allow the creation of reserves. The Coalition has not chosen to do this, but rather to leave areas open for logging later.

Labor will ensure this reduction in logging activity will help create the Great Koala National Park. Labor will negotiate with the local timber industry, unions and other key stakeholders to buy-back any necessary additional timber allocations. Labor will ensure any impacts on the native forest industry are minimised and if required compensation and assistance packages negotiated with anyone affected by the decision.

Furthermore NSW Labor is committed to assisting the native forest industry to innovate, find new markets and new products.

Labor will consult widely and give locals a voice in the establishment of the Great Koala National Park.



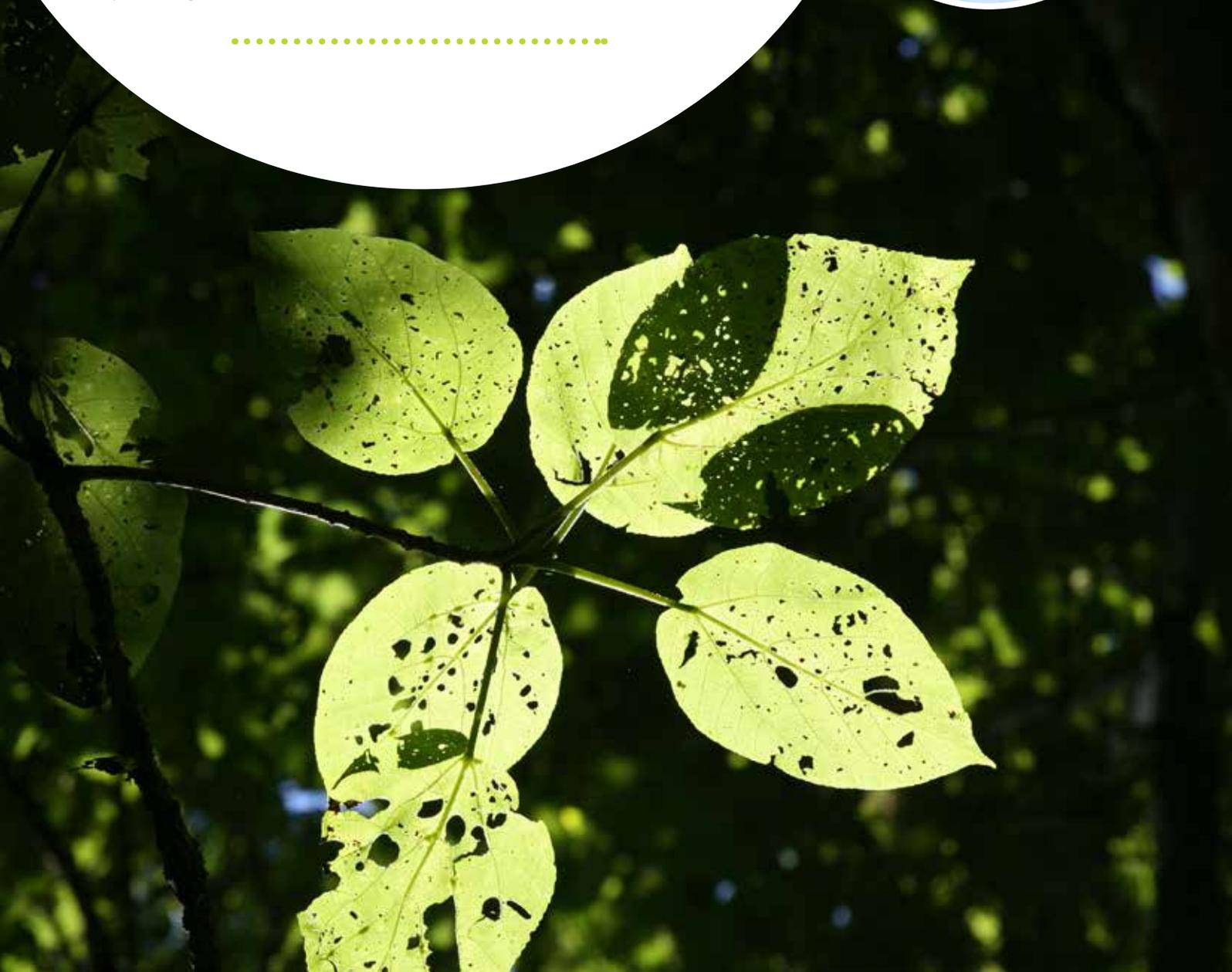
LABOR'S COMMITMENT TO

establish THE GREAT KOALA NATIONAL PARK is part of our commitment to Building the New South Wales National Parks Estate.

On behalf of New South Wales Labor, we declare that:

1 LABOR IS COMMITTED TO BUILDING A FULLY COMPREHENSIVE, ADEQUATE AND REPRESENTATIVE PUBLIC RESERVE SYSTEM IN NEW SOUTH WALES.

International scientific consensus confirms that a large national parks system, managed primarily for conservation, is the central piece of an effective biodiversity protection regime. We celebrate the conservation achievement of the New South Wales national parks system.



2

THE JOB OF BUILDING THE PUBLIC RESERVE SYSTEM IN NEW SOUTH WALES IS INCOMPLETE.

Many ecosystems are underrepresented in the national parks estate. To conserve the full diversity of this state's landscapes, fauna and flora and to protect places of important Aboriginal and non-indigenous cultural heritage, more parks and reserves are needed.

An elected Labor Government will pursue the following priorities, that were identified in the New South Wales National Parks Establishment Plan 2008, for building the national parks estate:

- unrepresented ecosystems and habitats, particularly those most under threat from climate change, future development pressures or loss of natural river flows
- wetlands, floodplains, lakes and rivers
- critical landscape corridors which facilitate the daily and seasonal movement of animals across the landscape and the intergenerational translocation of plants and animals in response to gradual environmental changes, such as climate change,
- lands within important water catchments that protect important downstream aquatic ecosystems, such as high conservation value coastal lakes, wetlands, streams, estuaries and coastal near-shore marine environments
- culturally important places with aesthetic, historic, scientific or social value, with particular focus on places of cultural importance to Aboriginal people
- places of geological significance
- areas important for effectively and efficiently managing existing reserves and which buffer reserves from surrounding land uses and climate change.

WE CHALLENGE THE LIBERAL AND NATIONAL PARTIES TO MAKE THE SAME COMMITMENT AS LABOR TO BUILDING THE NSW NATIONAL PARKS ESTATE.

We note that Labor in government added 3.07 million hectares of land to the national parks estate between 1995 and 2011.

To date, the current Coalition Government has added only 51,490 hectares of land to the national parks estate since coming to office in March 2011. At this rate, it will take them 228 years to match what Labor did in sixteen years.



3

LABOR IS OPPOSED TO COMMERCIAL LOGGING, AMATEUR HUNTING AND GRAZING OF HOOFED ANIMALS IN OUR NATIONAL PARKS ESTATE.

These activities are incompatible with the management of public reserves for the conservation of our native flora and fauna.

The principal objects of the National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974 are the conservation of nature and the conservation of objects, places or features (including biological diversity) of cultural value within the landscape.

These activities will not be allowed to occur under a New South Wales Labor Government.

We commit to defending, protecting and building the world class New South Wales national parks system.

