

Koalas in struggle for survival

Brian Williams

ENVIRONMENT REPORTER

THE Federal Government will have little choice but to list the koala as threatened after the release yesterday of a damning Senate report into the iconic species.

Australian Koala Foundation chief executive Deborah Tabart said the report's recommendations – supported by Labor, Opposition and Greens senators – were so strong it was difficult to see how the Government could ignore them.

In its report, the Senate committee told the Threatened Species Scientific Committee it had to rethink its advice to Federal Environment Minister Tony Burke that koalas should not be listed as threatened.

Conservation groups have been fighting to have the koala listed, especially in Queensland where its numbers have crashed.

The inquiry made 18 recommendations including that scientists review advice in light of inquiry evidence and that the Government review its land holdings which contain habitat and consider koalas in the sale of land. Mr Burke said he was working through the recommendations.