

Queensland

## Koalas facing extinction in 50 years

- by: **Matthew Fynes-Clinton**
- From: **The Courier-Mail**
- April 14, 2012 12:00AM
- **13 comments**

**KOALA populations have crashed to the extent that many experts believe the iconic creatures will have all but vanished within 50 years.**

"There'll be small remnants hanging on," says Clive McAlpine, a leading landscape ecologist from the University of Queensland and spokesman for the pre-eminent Koala Research Network.

"But I think they'll be sort of functionally extinct."

If possible, an even bleaker picture is painted by his colleague Hugh Possingham - a decorated mathematician-biologist and director of the university's Spatial Ecology Lab.

"It will end up," he forecasts, "with the koala being like the panda.

"There'll be 1800 of them scattered around, we'll have captive breeding programs, they'll be in zoos, and it will cost \$100 million a year to keep them chugging along."

How could this have happened?

And moreover, does the approaching catastrophe stand any hope of salvation?

**For the full story grab a copy of QWeekend in *The Saturday Courier-Mail*.**