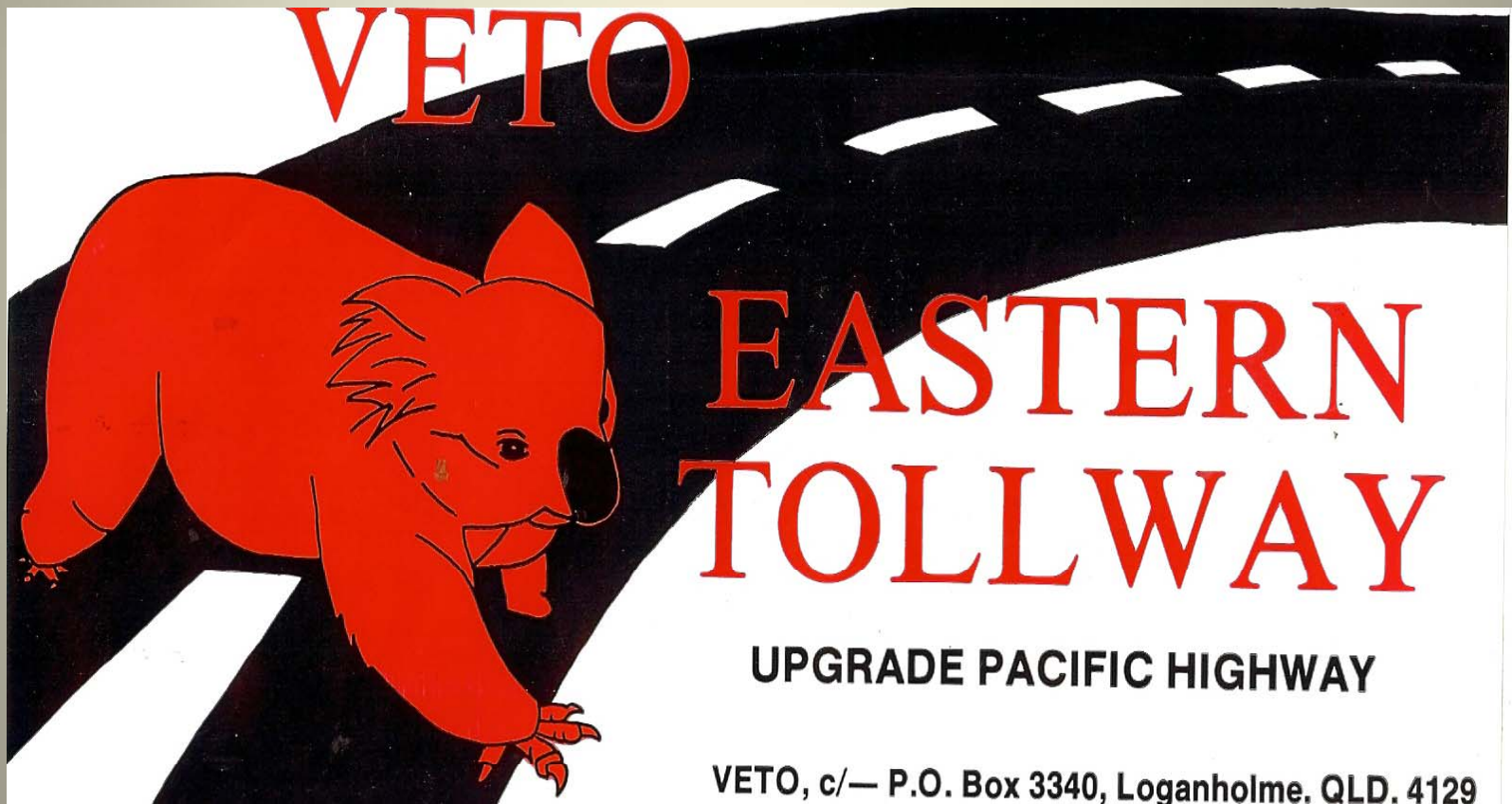


# KAMPAIGNING FOR KOALAS

Hanging on for  
dear life.....



1995



**VETO**

**EASTERN  
TOLLWAY**

**UPGRADE PACIFIC HIGHWAY**

VETO, c/— P.O. Box 3340, Loganholme. QLD. 4129

2009

Courier Mail 17/7/09

# Koalas doomed, warns ex-minister

**Brian Williams**  
ENVIRONMENT REPORTER

SOUTHEAST Queensland's celebrated koala colony is doomed unless human population growth is reined in, former sustainability minister Andrew McNamara warned yesterday.

Mr McNamara, who will address a Queensland Conservation Council meeting on population growth today, said there was no question that loss of habitat caused by development was the key cause of a crash in koala numbers over the past decade.

"They are on the road to extinction in this part of the world as long as their habitat keeps being cleared," he said. "The more of us there are, the fewer of everything else there is."

And the former member for the state seat of Hervey Bay believes his successor as Sustainability Minister, Kate Jones, has little chance of being able to stem the species' decline if the human population continues to expand.

Mr McNamara said when he was minister he had struggled to get population growth on to the public agenda or into policy, despite it being the root cause of planning problems at state and federal level.

"We don't talk about it in government," he said. "It's a massive blind spot."

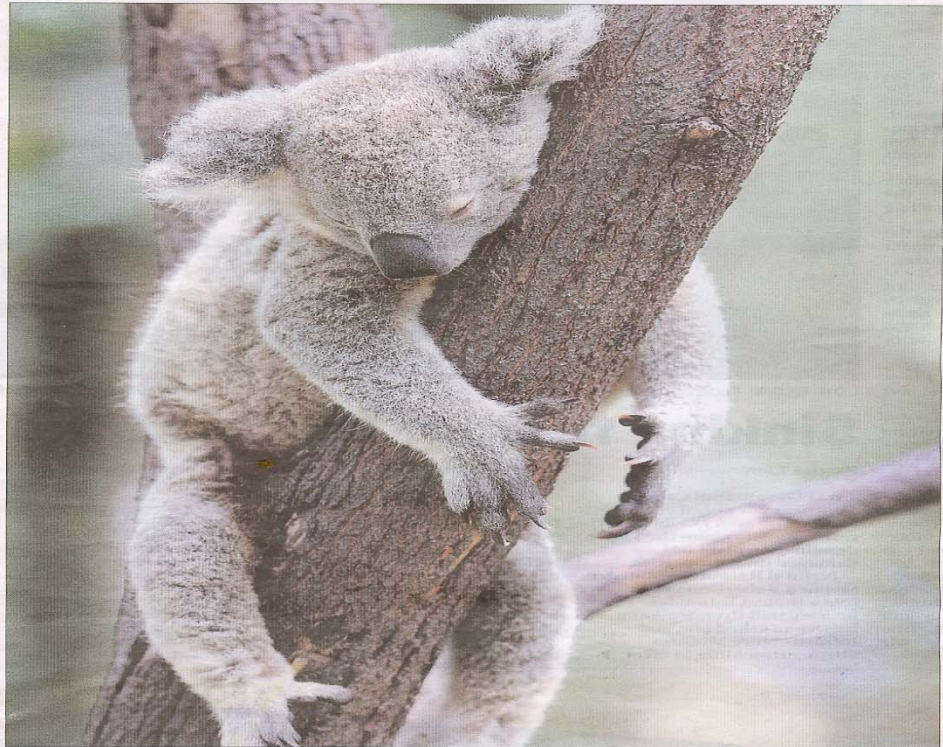
Similarly, he said the Federal Government's Emissions Trading Scheme was a futile exercise.

"Every day, the front pages are covered in variations of the same problem," Mr McNamara said.

"Traffic congestion, overcrowding on trains, waiting lists in our hospitals, housing affordability, social alienation in urban sprawl, declining koala numbers, reef run-off or global warming, there is only one problem... us."

In 1994, the Australian Academy of Science said a population of 23 million should be Australia's limit. But more recently, scientist Tim Flannery suggested the nation's carrying capacity could be as low as eight to 12 million.

Despite this, the baby bonus and high immigration rates combined last year to push Australia — with 21.5 million people — high up the population growth league.



**OUT ON A LIMB:** Queensland's koalas are losing their battle with humans. **Picture: Luke Marsden**

Annual growth was 1.7 per cent, compared with 0.9 per cent in the US, 0.3 per cent in the UK, India 1.6 and Indonesia 1.2.

Australia was expected to pass 100 million inhabitants by 2100.

Mr McNamara said the poorest

nations were mostly characterised by large populations, in the 50 to 200 million range. This showed population growth was not a harbinger for economic growth.

Rather, evidence suggested high growth was associated with de-

clining relative per capita GDP.

The Queensland Conservation Council celebrates its 40th anniversary this weekend, with a dinner at the Gabba tomorrow night and talks at the Queensland Museum on Sunday.

# *SO WHAT HAS HAPPENED?*

- 1995 ALP lose Government
- Strong reaction against SPP1/95
- State Planning Policy watered down
- SEQRP takes over responsibility for Koalas
- Business as usual
- Fragmentation of Koala lobby

# WHAT SHOULD HAPPEN?

- Keep on keeping on
- But GET SERIOUS
- Get in the face of politicians
- Provide fodder for media
- Get dirty and act dirty
- Good guys get nothing

# Political Landscape

- Local – Redlands / Logan / Brisbane
- State – Next Election 2012!
- State Opposition – Absent!!
- Federal – Fiddle whilst Rome burns
- **Direct Action – It is down to you**