

## **Cumberland Plain Conservation Plan**

Please accept this submission from the Sutherland Shire Environment Centre, an organisation whose interests extend well beyond the boundaries of the Shire and into its regional and bio-regional areas. SSEC strongly objects to the use of the Cumberland Plain Conservation Plan as a model for future development planning. SSEC raises these specific points:

1. The plan fails to consider the importance of 'holistic planning' as clearly stated in the Chief Scientist Koala Report. Many species threatened by the proposed increases in development and population do not live in "dedicated areas", such as the draft Plan recommends.

Species move. Corridors are vital for survival. And if the plan is to help species to have a "thriving, liveable" environment, corridors are a fundamental requirement. Pockets of bushland surrounded by housing are not sufficient. Species move. Islands of bush would bring extinction. Without corridors, there is no conservation. A plan without corridors is not a conservation plan at all.

For example, the colony of koalas that moves along George's River corridor, across Holsworthy and then pops up in here in the Sutherland locales is the same colony as that which exists in the Cumberland Plain. The colony needs to continue to expand in every direction in order to remain robust. The same colony can move from the Royal National Park to the Blue Mountains if corridors are managed properly and habitat is nurtured.

2. The destruction of critically-endangered woodland happens up-front. The payback happens over some unnamed period and will NOT be equivalent to the bushland that is removed. Up to 25 species of flora and 25 species of fauna already threatened will be further endangered. This is not 'conservation'; instead, the Plan pushes vulnerable species towards extinction.
3. SSEC is sure you don't miss the irony of degazetting a NPWS Nature Reserve in order to create a road. This is outrageous.

Sutherland Shire Environment Centre calls out your brazen, unethical, under-funded and anti-evidence attempt to name this as a conservation plan. It is obvious that the 'Conservation Plan' is a development plan. SSEC asks that this draft Plan be withdrawn and replaced with a plan that is founded on principles of ecological sustainability.

Yours faithfully

Tassia Kolesnikow

Chair