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## Protect koalas 保护树袋熊

动物保护人士呼吁澳大利亚政府把树袋熊列入国家一级保护动物。自然资源保护主义人士担心由于疾病，气候改变及生态环境的破坏让树袋熊步入绝种的危机。请听 **BBC** 记者 **Phil Mercer** 的报道。

The number of koalas in Australia is unclear but conservationists estimate there are about 100,000 in the wild. They believe that the population is continuing to fall because of various **threats**, including a disease that causes blindness and **infertility**. The building of homes and roads is also eating away at their habitat.

The Australian government is being urged to declare the koala a threatened or **endangered** animal. This would give federal authorities the power to protect these **furry** marsupials from development.

The Environment Minister Tony Burke has asked a **panel** of experts for more information detailing areas where koala populations are **in trouble**. He is expected to make a final decision in the next couple of months.

Phil Mercer, BBC News

## Questions

1. How many koalas do conservationists think are in the wild?
2. One disease found in koalas are causing what kind of symptoms?
3. Are koalas currently identified as endangered specie in Australia?
4. When will the Australian government make a decision on the proposal?

## Answers

1. How many koalas do conservationists think are in the wild?  
*Roughly 100,000 koalas are in the wild.*
2. One disease found in koalas is causing what kind of symptoms?  
*Koalas could become blind or infertile.*
3. Are koalas currently identified as an endangered species in Australia?  
*No. They are not currently on the endangered species list.*
4. When will the Australian government make a decision on the proposal?  
*Hopefully in two months time there'll be a decision.*

## Glossary

<b>conservationists</b>	自然环境保护主义人士
<b>estimate</b>	估计数字
<b>threats</b>	威胁因素
<b>infertility</b>	不孕症
<b>eating away at</b>	逐渐磨损或消耗
<b>endangered</b>	濒临绝种的
<b>furry</b>	长毛绒的
<b>panel</b>	专家组
<b>in trouble</b>	陷入困境