



Department of Planning and Environment

# Biodiversity Offsets Scheme Update No. 16

22 May 2023

Welcome to Issue No. 16 of the Biodiversity Offsets Scheme Update.

The Biodiversity Offsets Scheme (the scheme) enables the impacts of development on biodiversity to be avoided, minimised, and offset. The scheme provides a consistent, transparent, and scientifically credible way for development to proceed while protecting our environment. Keep up to date with the latest news and info [via our website](#).

This monthly newsletter is one of the ways in which we communicate and help support the implementation of the scheme. You can [view our past newsletters](#). The Biodiversity Conservation Trust's (BCT) twice-yearly newsletter is another source of information, you can find it at the BCT's [Publication website](#).

For other enquiries on the scheme, contact the dedicated scheme Help Desk team:

- Help Desk Line 1800 931 717, staffed Tuesday to Thursday from 10 am to 4 pm
- Help Desk mailbox, [BOS.helpdesk@environment.nsw.gov.au](mailto:BOS.helpdesk@environment.nsw.gov.au), monitored Monday to Friday from 10 am to 4 pm.

## In this update

### Accredited assessor updates

- Reminder: Assessing habitat suitability for threatened species
- New changes to threatened entity data in BioNet
- Update to the serious and irreversible impacts (SAII) list
- Urgent reminder: Submit credit transfer and retirement applications asap

### For landholders: Credit supply and demand updates

- Sell credits to the BCT – Wanted Credits List available now
- Continued improvements to BSA resources
- Landholder workshop in Wagga Wagga

### Aboriginal engagement strategy

### Upcoming event

- Online forum for local government: Linking BSAs to strategic planning with a focus on inland councils | Thursday 25 May 2023

## Accredited assessor updates

### Reminder: Assessing habitat suitability for threatened species

Assessors **must** follow the steps defined in Section 5 of the Biodiversity Assessment Method 2020 (BAM 2020) when excluding threatened species. Species cannot be excluded from assessment at any step based on:

- Opinion on presence/absence unless provided in an expert report by a nominated species expert under Box 3 of the Biodiversity Assessment Method (BAM)
- Opinion on microhabitats unless justified by peer-reviewed literature (see BAM 5.2.3(2)(i))
- The lack of species records within a given distance from the subject land (note: BAM-C filters BioNet records when auto-populating the species candidate list).

### New changes to threatened entity data in BioNet

As mentioned in BOS Update No. 15, data in BioNet and the Threatened Biodiversity Data Collection (TBDC) is being reviewed to ensure BAM assessments are conducted using the most current available information for threatened entities.

#### The following impacts may occur:

- Inconsistencies may occur between BioNet and the Biodiversity Assessment Method-Calculator (BAM-C) due to unavoidable delay in importing any resulting BioNet updates from the review into the BAM-C
- Such inconsistencies may occur for candidate species lists produced by the BAM-C due to updates to: species associations for Plant Community Types (PCTs); and species distribution across IBRA subregions
- Inconsistencies may impact new and in-progress assessments
- For details of known inconsistencies between BioNet and the BAM-C, please refer to the accompanying PDF Release Notes – New changes to threatened entity data in BioNet.

#### Please note:

- At all times, the data in the BAM-C is to be used in an assessment and is considered correct. However, assessors should continue to access BioNet for the most current information
- Assessors will be able to manually add species to candidate species lists in the BAM-C. For more information about changing candidate species lists in the BAM-C, please refer to the 'Biodiversity data' tab of the Assessor questions and answers webpage
- Assessors may only remove species from candidate species lists in accordance with the BAM or where evidence is provided in the Biodiversity Assessment Report (BAR) to demonstrate removal is consistent with current BioNet data.

## Update to the serious and irreversible impacts (SAIL) list

The list of threatened entities at risk of SAIL has been updated to include the addition of the tree *Eucalyptus benthamii* (Camden white gum) following the NSW Threatened Species Scientific Committee determination that the species is considered critically endangered. The updated list of entities at risk of SAIL is available on the [SAILs of development on biodiversity webpage](#).

## Urgent reminder: Submit credit transfer and retirement applications asap

If biodiversity credits need to be transferred or retired prior to 30 June 2023, then credit transfer and retirement applications must be submitted as soon as possible and no later than 5:00 pm Friday 26 May 2023. Any applications received after this date will likely be processed from 3 July 2023 onwards.

When completing an application to transfer or retire biodiversity credits, applicants must allow time for:

- any due payment of the Total Fund Deposit to the Biodiversity Conservation Trust
- the application fee to be received and cleared by the department.

You can read more information on offset credits transactions, including the usual timeframe to process an application and the review process. If you have any queries about this reminder, please contact [boscredits@environment.nsw.gov.au](mailto:boscredits@environment.nsw.gov.au).

### Please note:

- there is currently a high demand for credit transfer and retirement applications to be finalised before the end of the financial year. The department will advise applicants if any application cannot be processed by 30 June 2023
- the department will make every effort to expedite an application where the applicant advises a deadline and provides a completed application and supporting documents
- the department can also review draft (non-executed) applications
- the standard timeframe for the department to review and respond to a draft application is 5 business days. This is to ensure the application is complete and accurate before it is signed by people with the appropriate legal authority.

## For landholders: Credit supply and demand updates

### Sell credits to the BCT – Wanted Credits List available now

The Biodiversity Conservation Trust's (BCT) [Wanted Credits List](#) and [Participants' Guide](#) is now available for the [May 2023 Statewide Credit Tender](#). Information about how to use the Wanted Credits list is available [here](#).

### Important dates

- The Tender opened to accept bids on **Wednesday 17 May 2023**
- All bids must be submitted by 11:59 pm **Wednesday 7 June 2023**.

## Continued improvements to BSA resources

The Credits Supply Taskforce (Taskforce) continues to make improvements to make it easier for landholders to enter Biodiversity Stewardship Agreements (BSA). This includes providing additional resources and tools for landholders and accredited assessors. This was discussed in more detail recently during an online forum for accredited assessors focused on resource development. A recording of the online forum is available via the following link: [Watch Online Forum for Accredited Assessors: BSA resources and supporting tools.](#)

## Landholder workshop in Wagga Wagga



On Thursday 4 May 2023, the Taskforce delivered a workshop for local landholders in Wagga Wagga, in collaboration with NSW Farmers to engage with stakeholders in regional areas. The workshop introduced landholders to the scheme and credits market, explored setting up a BSA, selling credits and what is involved in a management plan and included guest speakers with active BSAs.

There is growing interest in generating and selling biodiversity credits from landholders and farmers from all over New South Wales. Another workshop was held on Wednesday 17 May in Dubbo. The Taskforce also plans to run a workshop in Armidale in the near future.

## Aboriginal engagement strategy

The Taskforce is currently developing an Aboriginal engagement strategy to ensure culturally aware and informed communication and engagement with First Nations landholders, business owners, communities, and Local Aboriginal Land Councils. The Taskforce will be working across government agencies and with Local Aboriginal Land Councils and other stakeholders in the development of this strategy.

If you would like further information on the strategy, it will be made available on the Taskforce's website upon completion, or you can email the Taskforce at [Stewardship@environment.nsw.gov.au](mailto:Stewardship@environment.nsw.gov.au)

## Upcoming event

### Online forum for local government: Linking BSAs to strategic planning with a focus on inland councils | Thursday 25 May 2023

The next online forum for local government will focus on linking BSAs to strategic planning with a focus on inland and regional NSW. Another forum on the same topic will be presented in July with a focus on coastal areas of New South Wales.

The upcoming forum will be held on **Thursday 25 May 2023, from 2.00 pm – 3.00 pm.**

[Register here for the Online Forum for Local Government: Linking BSAs to strategic planning with a focus on inland and regional NSW.](#)

All stakeholders and councils are welcome to attend.

Environment and Heritage Group, Department of Planning and Environment, Locked Bag 5022, Parramatta NSW 2124. Phone: 1300 361 967 (environment and national parks enquiries); email: [info@environment.nsw.gov.au](mailto:info@environment.nsw.gov.au); website: [www.environment.nsw.gov.au](http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au).  
EHG 2023/0202 May 2023.