

# Biodiversity Offsets Scheme Update No. 35

7 March 2025

**Welcome to issue No. 35** of the Biodiversity Offsets Scheme Update.

This monthly newsletter is one of the ways in which we communicate and help support the implementation of the Biodiversity Offsets Scheme. You can keep up to date [via our website](#) and view our [past newsletters here](#). 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.

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## General updates

### Commencement of legislative amendments to the Biodiversity Offsets Scheme

As of 7 March 2025, most provisions of the *Biodiversity Conservation Amendment (Biodiversity Offsets Scheme) Act 2024* have commenced. The Amendment Act was passed by Parliament in November 2024 and introduces reforms to the scheme in line with the Government's commitments as set out in the [NSW plan for nature](#).

A summary of the reforms, and an explanation of what the changes mean for stakeholders is attached.

Some provisions, specifically those relating to the assessment of genuine measures taken to avoid and minimise biodiversity impacts (Schedule 1 items [21], [22], and [25] of the Amendment Act), are yet to commence as they require supporting regulations to be developed.

Government is currently developing amendments to the *Biodiversity Conservation Regulation 2017* to operationalise some of the reforms in the Amendment Act and to deliver other commitments in the NSW Plan for Nature. The department will undertake public consultation as part of this process and intends to commence public consultation in the first half of 2025.

More information on the reforms is available on [the department's website](#).

Please contact the [BOS helpdesk](#) if you have any questions.

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

The list of threatened entities at risk of SAIL was updated on 8 January 2025 to include the addition of two species (*Numenius madagascariensis* and *Sannantha whitei*) following the NSW Threatened Species Scientific Committee determination that the species are considered critically endangered. The updated list of entities at risk of SAIL is available on the [Serious and irreversible impacts webpage](#).

## Achievement of 25,000-hectare 2024–25 BSA area target

A major milestone was reached in early January 2025, with the target of 25,000 hectares for Biodiversity Stewardship Agreements (BSAs) approved in 2024–25 being achieved and exceeded. This achievement comes just seven months into the financial year. Thank you and congratulations to all landholders, accredited assessors and DCCEEW staff involved in identifying suitable BSA sites, preparing BSA applications and reviewing and approving BSAs.

## The BioNet Web Service performance upgrade has been successfully deployed

### Why did this happen?

The focus of developments under BioNet Next Generation Stage 1 is to improve system functionality, user experience and facilitate seamless data submission, access, and consumption. In a recent release launched on 14 February, a major application and database update was delivered to significantly improve system reliability and query performance of the Web Service.

### How will these changes affect you?

BioNet Web Service performance has been markedly improved.

Existing workflows remain supported. Review the new [Developer guidelines](#) and adopt small changes to your client tools to take full advantage. Updated [Power Query quick guide](#) and [Release notes](#) are available, data standards to follow shortly.

During peak usage, the Web Service may queue the queries. We recommend you increase your client-side time-out limits and automate retries to improve delivery.

For any general support or repeated issues, reach out at [bionet@environment.nsw.gov.au](mailto:bionet@environment.nsw.gov.au).

## For credit owners and buyers

### Application fee waivers ended 31 December 2024

The fee waivers for biodiversity stewardship agreement (BSA) applications and BSA variation applications came to an end on 31 December 2024.

As of 1 January 2025, fees for these applications apply in line with the regulation. Please see the [department's website](#) for further information.

Advice on payment of application fees will be provided to landholders when the BSA application is submitted. Please email [stewardship@environment.nsw.gov.au](mailto:stewardship@environment.nsw.gov.au) if you require further information.

## Updated BOS transfer and retirement application forms

Updated BOS transfer and retirement application forms have been published on the [department's website](#). Applicants are encouraged to use the updated forms now.

A transition period is in place to 31 March 2025, during which applicants can submit either the pre-update forms or the updated application forms.

All applications submitted from 1 April 2025 onwards must use the updated application form. If an outdated form is used after this date, the department will request that it be resubmitted in the updated form.

## New BOS transfer and retirement application guide

A BOS transfer and retirement application guide has been published on the [department's website](#).

The guide consolidates existing information and guidance for applicants. It outlines the information required by an application, how to obtain this information and how the department will process an application.

## Format of proof of identity for transfer, retirement, and credit equivalence applications

Applicants are requested to please provide proof of identity documents in separate files from the application form and other supporting documents. This assists the department to manage and dispose of identity documents.

## BCT Credit Tender 24-02 is wrapping up

The BCT has finalised offers to purchase credits from successful bids in Credit Tender 24-02. We have started sending notifications for unsuccessful bids and expect to have completed notifications by mid-March.

A tender outcomes report will be published on our [Biodiversity Offsets Program outcomes](#) webpage by **26 March 2025** before the next tender opens.

## The next BCT Credit Tender 25-01 opens 2 April

We are pleased to announce that Credit Tender 25-01 will open for bids for 2 weeks on **2 April 2025**. The [Wanted Credits List](#) and Participants' guide will be published one week prior on 26 March. Details for the tender are published on our [Credit Tenders](#) website and announced by email to contacts on the BCT's Biodiversity Offsets Program mailing list. If you have any questions about the tender, please email us at [offsets@bct.nsw.gov.au](mailto:offsets@bct.nsw.gov.au).

## Register early to participate in Credit Tender 25-01

Applicants are required to sign up for the [BCT's Offsets Portal](#) to participate in Credit Tender 25-01. Users are required to register before logging in with a password and one-time verification code sent to their email. This step helps safeguard against common cyber security threats.

Further information, including a user guide, can be found on our [Credit Offer Portal website](#). If you have any questions about registering, please email us at [offsets@bct.nsw.gov.au](mailto:offsets@bct.nsw.gov.au).

## For accredited assessors

### Accredited Assessor and Compliance Assurance

The Accreditation Reset team has been responding to complaints and feedback that have been submitted in relation to biodiversity assessment reports (BARs) prepared by accredited assessors. In the current financial year, the team has received 14 complaints. Common themes of complaints include insufficient justification and evidence for the findings of decisions for Plant Community Types and Threatened Ecological Community allocation, exclusion of species, and targeted surveys in BARs. Sufficient justification would provide alternative options that were clearly documented and explained.

In line with the [Accredited Assessors Complaints and Feedback Management Policy](#), the Accreditation Reset team is actively dealing with complaints and feedback and will be progressing appropriate actions where required.

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