

Biodiversity Offsets Scheme Update No. 28

3 June 2024

Welcome to issue No. 28 of the Biodiversity Offsets Scheme Update.

This monthly newsletter is one of the ways we communicate and help support implementation of the Biodiversity Offsets Scheme. You can keep up to date [via our website](#) and view [past newsletters online](#). The Biodiversity Conservation Trust's (BCT) twice-yearly newsletter is another source of information, you can find on 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, monitored Monday to Friday from 10 am to 4 pm.

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DCCEEW News

New Nature Markets and Offsets Division

A new Nature Markets and Offsets Division has been established within Biodiversity, Conservation and Science in the NSW Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW), bringing together the Credits Supply Taskforce, the Biodiversity Offsets Scheme Branch, and other nature markets and natural capital functions.

The new division will continue to deliver Taskforce programs. The key contacts on these programs remain the same, and there is no reduction in staffing with this change.

If you have any questions about the new division, please don't hesitate to contact us via [the Biodiversity Stewardship Mailbox](#).

Scheme support for local government

New tool to assist local government to determine entry into the Biodiversity Offsets Scheme

The [NSW local government Biodiversity Offsets Scheme entry navigator](#) guides you through key considerations to determine if a clearing or development proposal should enter the scheme and require a Biodiversity Development Assessment Report (BDAR).

The navigator is targeted to local council assessment officers and is also available to stakeholders who are seeking information for development and clearing proposals. After answering the questions and submitting your response, you will receive a report via email. This report will summarise your answers and suggest next steps related to the scheme.

[You can access the navigator on the Biodiversity Offsets Scheme webpage](#)

The navigator is interactive, tailoring case-specific questions to your proposal and complementing guidance provided in the [Biodiversity Assessment and Approval Pathways for Local Government](#).

The navigator should be used for guidance only. Ultimately, scheme entry decisions are the responsibility of the consent or determining authority.

General updates

The NSW Biodiversity Outlook Report 2024 is now available

The [NSW Biodiversity Outlook Report 2024](#) was released 8 May 2024. The report shows that biodiversity in New South Wales is in decline, with habitat loss being a key driver of the decline.

The outlook report features data and case studies from a variety of internal and external sources, including vegetation mapping, threatened species assessments and species survey records. It covers the status of biodiversity and ecological integrity in New South Wales and is based on a world leading, peer reviewed, scientific process.

As part of the evolution of the outlook report, new indicators for Community Appreciation, Invasive Species, Conservation Areas and Climate Resilience have been included.

The outlook report is unique in its scale and provides us with crucial information which can help inform our response to the biodiversity crisis.

View the [NSW Biodiversity Outlook Report 2024 online](#).

Learn more about the Biodiversity Indicator Program and download a copy of the outlook report by visiting the [program webpage](#).

Nomination process for entities at risk of a serious and irreversible impact has restarted

Nominations are now progressing, after being paused in June 2023. Our initial focus will be on progressing nominations received to date.

The department's list of entities at risk of a serious and irreversible impact is not exhaustive or definitive. A decision maker may require consideration of a threatened entity not on the department's list.

More information on serious and irreversible impacts and the nomination process is available on our website [Serious and irreversible impacts | Biodiversity Offsets Scheme | Environment and Heritage \(nsw.gov.au\)](#).

Scheme fees update 2024-25

Scheme fees have been updated for the financial year 2024–25. The fees are reviewed annually to reflect the Consumer Price Index (CPI). The new scheme fees apply from 1 July 2024. Biodiversity stewardship agreement (BSA) application fees continue to be waived until 31 December 2024, reducing some of the cost for landholders to establish a biodiversity stewardship agreement.

Biodiversity Stewardship Agreements update

As of 30 April 2024, there have been **42 new BSAs approved in the 2023-24 financial year**, covering **20,616 hectares**.

Since July 2022, a total of 83 new BSAs have been approved, covering **42,562 hectares** and creating a total of **458,126 biodiversity credits**, which represent significant growth in species and ecosystem biodiversity values.

Stewardship Support Program update

The **Stewardship Support Program** received **101 applications** when it closed for new applications on 15 May. The program provides eligible landholders with free biodiversity assessment of their proposed BSA sites. Applicants will be notified of outcomes by 15 August 2024.

For accredited assessors

Ecological Monitoring Module – Implementation of BSAs

Biodiversity outcome monitoring aligned to the BCT [Ecological Monitoring Module](#) (EMM) has been a required component of BSA management plans and associated Total Fund Deposit (TFD) since March 2021.

As part of providing support, and to ensure efficient data collection and management, the BCT is inviting any accredited assessors who have been engaged by a landholder to coordinate implementation of a BSA Management Plan, to get in touch via the [BCT Ecological Monitoring and Research Mailbox](#).

Accredited assessors can access the BCT's mobile data collection tools, training and support. The BCT can also answer questions on EMM, given that the process is relatively new for most assessors. Additional training and communications materials for accredited assessors and landholders is being planned for July. You can register your interest in advance via the [BCT Ecological Monitoring and Research Mailbox](#).

Updates to threatened entity data in BioNet

DCCEEW is currently undertaking the annual review of data in BioNet and the Threatened Biodiversity Data Collection (TBDC). This is to ensure Biodiversity Assessment Method (BAM) assessments are supported by the best available information for threatened entities.

Please note:

- Inconsistencies may occur between BioNet and the Biodiversity Assessment Method Calculator (BAM-C) due to an 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 (Interim Biogeographic Regionalisation of Australia) subregions.
- Inconsistencies may impact new, in-progress and finalised assessments that are reopened.
- Assessors will be able to manually add species to candidate species lists in the BAM-C. For instructions on adding species to candidate species lists in the BAM-C, please refer to section 4.5 of the [BAM-C user guide v2.0](#).
- Assessors may only remove species from candidate species lists in accordance with the BAM or where evidence is provided in the Biodiversity Assessment Report to demonstrate removal is consistent with current BioNet data.

Reminder to frequently update BioNet power queries

A reminder for assessors using BioNet Threatened Species power queries as an alternative way to access information from BioNet data collections.

A Power Query must be refreshed to allow you to obtain the most up-to-date data from BioNet via the BioNet OData Web Service. We encourage accredited assessors to regularly refresh any power queries they may be using to ensure the data provided is consistent with the data in the Biodiversity Assessment Method Calculator (BAM-C), Threatened Biodiversity Data Collection (TBDC) and Vegetation Information System Classification (VISC).

- BioNet power queries can be accessed via [the Environment and Heritage Publications website](#)
- Downloaded BioNet Power Queries contain instructions in the 'Read Me' tab on how to refresh their data.

Reminder to use the mandatory BSSAR and management plan templates

The new Biodiversity Stewardship Site Assessment Report (BSSAR) and Management Plan templates released in December 2023 are mandatory when completing and submitting BSA applications.

[Request the BSSAR and Management Plan templates.](#)

For credit owners and buyers

Advertise in the *Biodiversity credits catalogue*

Owners of biodiversity credits can submit information for the next edition of the *Biodiversity credits catalogue* using the [catalogue advertiser's form](#).

The catalogue connects buyers of credits with sellers and showcases the sites where credits are created.

The third issue of the catalogue is available online to view and share: [Biodiversity credits catalogue – Issue 3 March 2024](#)

BCT Credit Tender 24-01 – Record participation!

BCT Credit Tender 24-01 applications are in, and we have received a record number of credit offers – 35% more than the last tender.

Eligible credit offers will progress to the Evaluation Panel next week for recommendation of value-for-money bids as outlined in the [Participants Guide](#). We expect to start making offers to purchase successful credit offers in July, so keep an eye on your mailbox.

If you have any questions about the Tender, please email [the Biodiversity Offsets Program Mailbox](#).

The Supply Fund's next reverse auction opens in June

The next Credits Supply Fund reverse auction will open on 19 June 2024. Bids will be accepted from existing credit owners, BSA applicants, and landholders who have a site assessment report from an accredited assessor confirming the credit types present on their site.

The target list of credits we are seeking will be included in the Participant's Guide, available on the 19 June.

More information about the upcoming reverse auction and results from the February 2024 Reverse Auction can be found on the [Supply Fund webpage](#).

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