



Biodiversity Offsets Scheme Local Government Update No. 2

18 May 2020

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1. Mailing list subscriptions and Local government resources webpage

Welcome to our second update supporting local government to implement the Biodiversity Offsets Scheme (BOS).

For future reference, you'll find these updates on the Environment, Energy and Science (EES) [Support for implementing biodiversity reforms webpage](#).

Should you be interested in also receiving BAM Assessor Updates where the focus of our support is assessment of biodiversity impacts and the biodiversity assessment method (BAM), please contact us at bam.support@environment.nsw.gov.au and ask us to add you to the BAM Assessor Updates mailing list. Alternately, you can access those updates on the EES [Assessor resources webpage](#).

2. Test of significance in the context of rebuilding from bushfire

The test of significance (section 7.3 of the *Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016*) is one of the triggers that decide whether the biodiversity offset scheme applies to a development. The test of significance is only relevant to threatened species, threatened ecological communities or their habitats.

In the context of rebuilding after the 2019–20 bushfires, a test of significance is not required if the consent authority is satisfied that the footprint of the home to be rebuilt and any asset protection zone does not contain a threatened species, an ecological community or their

habitats. A proponent and the consent authority can use the following resources to support this decision:

- threatened biodiversity profile search for lists of threatened species and ecological communities by region, habitat and type of species
- BioNet for Atlas of records of species and communities in the local area
- previous ecological assessment reports for the property.

The Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2000 requires the applicant to give an indication of whether development is likely to significantly affect threatened species.

Best practice entails documenting any analysis or information relied upon to support a decision that threatened species, threatened ecological communities or their habitats do not occur in the areas to be affected by the rebuilding proposal.

If a test of significance is required, it does not need to be performed by an accredited assessor. The guidelines recommend that it is undertaken by a suitably qualified person.

3. Biodiversity Values Map update on 27 May 2020

The next update of the Biodiversity Values (BV) Map will occur on the 27 May 2020 and will see the removal of building footprints from the BV map statewide.

To allow for positional accuracy of the building footprints layer, an area of 5 metres from the external boundary of the footprint will also be removed. This will ease certain impediments to the development approval process where the inaccuracy of the BV Map on building envelopes is an issue.

4. Regent honeyeater important areas – update

Mapped important areas for the regent honeyeater have been expanded to include some larger buffers and new breeding records. We are currently working to provide direct access to the mapping via the Biodiversity Offsets and Agreement Management System (BOAMS) for registered consent authority users.

In the meantime, important area map enquiries can be directed to bam.support@environment.nsw.gov.au.

5. Threatened plants survey guide – revised

Section 6.5.1.3 of the BAM requires that species surveys are undertaken in accordance with the threatened species survey guidelines published by the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment, including the NSW Guide to Surveying Threatened Plants 2020.

The revised Guide replaces the 2016 version (version 1) and is available for download on the EES Assessor resources webpage.

6. BOS Support webinars

Two Biodiversity Offsets Scheme (BOS) Support webinars were held on Wednesday 20 May and Tuesday 26 May:

- The first was about applying for an assessment of reasonable equivalence. Vanessa Owen (Senior Project Officer in the Conservation Programs Team, DPIE) outlined the circumstances where an assessment of reasonable equivalence for existing biobanking credits and biobanking credit obligations may be necessary and provided an overview of the assessment process.
- The second was about BOS support for local government. This webinar provided an overview of the roles that different stakeholder groups have in the BOS, including local government (LG), and then outlined the various resources available to support the work of LG in the BOS.

BOS Support is a series of webinars that support the role of local government and accredited assessors in the NSW Biodiversity Offsets Scheme.

You can also view this Update in your browser at [Mailchimp](#).

The information contained in this publication is based on knowledge and understanding at the time of writing (18 May 2020). However, because of advances in knowledge, users are reminded of the need to ensure that the information upon which they rely is up to date and to check the currency of the information with the appropriate officer of the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment or the user's independent adviser.

Environment, Energy and Science (EES), Department of Planning, Industry and Environment
Locked Bag 5022, Parramatta NSW 2124; Phone: 1300 361 967 (EES enquiries);
Email: info@environment.nsw.gov.au; Website: www.environment.nsw.gov.au
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