

# Biodiversity Offsets Scheme Update No. 13

23 February 2023

**Welcome to Issue No. 13** 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 still protecting our environment. The NSW Government remains committed to improving and refining the scheme. Keep up to date with the latest improvements, news and information [via our website](#).

This monthly newsletter is one of the ways in which we communicate and help support the implementation of the scheme. We welcome your feedback on how we might improve our communication. Please submit your suggestions [here](#). You can also check out 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 [Publications 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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## Credit supply and demand updates

### Credits Supply Fund soon to launch second reverse auction

From **Monday 27 February 2023**, the Credits Supply Fund will commence its second reverse auction since operations commenced in October 2022.

This auction will expand participation to allow landholders who have not yet submitted a Biodiversity Stewardship Agreement (BSA) application to bid alongside BSA applicants and established credit owners. These landholders will need to provide a report from an accredited assessor confirming the credit types present on their site, and the approximate area in hectares of each. This will increase the pool of credits available for purchase by the taskforce. Credits purchased will then be sold to proponents to meet upcoming credit obligations.

### Important dates

- Auction will open on **Monday 27 February 2023**
- Auction will close on **Monday 13 March 2023**
- Results of the auction will be known by **Monday 17 April 2023**
- Credits purchased by the taskforce will be made available for sale to proponents from **May 2023 to November 2023**

By buying credits, the Supply Fund will help secure offsets faster, and increase the number of sites in active management with landholders receiving annual management payments. More information and notice of future reverse auctions and opportunities to buy credits from the Supply Fund will be announced via the [Credits Supply Fund webpage](#). If you have any questions or receive any queries in relation to the Credits Supply Fund, please direct these to [SupplyFund@environment.nsw.gov.au](mailto:SupplyFund@environment.nsw.gov.au).

### Sell credits to the BCT – the BCT’s largest ever state-wide Biodiversity Credit Tender opens 5 April

The BCT website now features information on the [April 2023 state-wide Credit Tender](#). From Wednesday 5 April, applicants can offer the BCT a selling price for their biodiversity credits.

This Tender opportunity is available for hundreds of credit types across the state for a total of over 30,000 biodiversity credits. It also seeks to purchase credits for the Growth Centres and Cumberland Plain Conservation Plan programs in Western Sydney.

### Important dates

- Applications open on **Wednesday 5 April 2023**
- All bids must be submitted by **11:59 pm Friday 28 April 2023**
- The BCT's Wanted Credits List for this Tender will be available from **Wednesday 29 March 2023**. Find more information about using the BCT's Wanted Credits List [here](#).

## BOS Support Webinars

### Improving delivery of BSAs webinar

On Tuesday 21 February 2023, the Credits Supply Taskforce (taskforce) delivered a webinar to discuss improvements in the delivery of BSAs and boosting the supply of in-demand credits. The webinar covered a variety of changes and improvements, including fee waiver, a streamlined application form and opportunities for pre-submission meetings.

The webinar also covered how the taskforce would like to work with assessors and landholders to improve efficiency in preparing a BSA, opportunities to fast-track finalisation of an approved BSA and the work currently underway to improve the layout and content of the management plan. The recording of the webinar, including questions and answers from the Q&A panel discussion, will be published on the [BOS Support Webinar](#) page by mid-March.

### East Coast PCTs transitional arrangements – Webinar recording now available

A recording of the recent BOS support webinar, presenting the transitional arrangements for Biodiversity Assessment Method Calculator (BAM-C) updates to East Coast PCTs and Version 1.2 benchmarks, is now available for download. Questions and answers during the webinar have been documented and will be published shortly, including a list of useful web links for guidance resources referred to during the webinar. The recording for BOS Support Webinar 32 – Transitional arrangements for East Coast PCTs and Version 1.2 vegetation integrity benchmarks can be [viewed here](#).

## Operational updates

### Proposed development certified under clause 34A must be assessed for biodiversity impacts

If a certification for proposed development has been granted under clause 34A of the Biodiversity Conservation (Savings and Transitional) Regulation 2017 (S&T Regulation), biodiversity impacts must be assessed as they would have been before the introduction of the *Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016* (BC Act). This includes considering whether there is likely to be a significant impact on threatened species, populations or ecological communities or their habitats in accordance with the now repealed section 5A of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (7-part test) and, if necessary,

preparing a species impact statement. For more information please see our webpage: [Clause 34A certification](#).

## Policy updates

### NSW Government response to Parliamentary Inquiry into the scheme

The NSW Government has tabled its response to the 19 recommendations made by the Parliamentary Inquiry into the integrity of the Biodiversity Offsets Scheme. The final report, including recommendations, and the NSW Government response can be found on the [Parliament of NSW website](#).

The NSW Government response addresses all 19 recommendations, with 7 supported, 5 supported in principle, and 7 noted.

The NSW Government is committed to continuously improving the scheme through our Integrated Improvement and Assurance Program (IIAP), independently overseen by Mr Mike Mrdak AO. The inquiry recommendations, together with the Audit Office report on the scheme released in August 2022, will contribute significantly to informing our evolving IIAP.

## General scheme updates

### Free local government training sponsorship

The department is offering free sponsorships for local government staff to access a tailored scheme eLearning program until June 2023. The eLearning will help with an understanding of the fundamental concepts of the BC Act, scheme, Biodiversity Assessment Method (BAM) and council roles and responsibilities in the scheme. More than 330 participants have been funded since commencement and the department has extended the sponsorship offer. For information and to apply, please go to Greencap's [Biodiversity Offsets Scheme Training webpage](#), download an [EOI form](#) and send to [bos.helpdesk@environment.nsw.gov](mailto:bos.helpdesk@environment.nsw.gov).

### Important habitat map (IHM) reminder

A reminder that for candidate species credit and dual credit species where the Threatened Biodiversity Data Collection (TBDC) indicates that an IHM identifies the species credit component, the assessor must confirm whether the subject land is within an area identified on the IHM. IHMs are available to accredited assessors via the Map Viewer on the BOAMS landing page. Local government decision-makers may request the mapping via the BOS Help Desk mailbox on [BOS.helpdesk@environment.nsw.gov.au](mailto:BOS.helpdesk@environment.nsw.gov.au).

If the subject land for a proposal is part of an area mapped as important habitat for a species, the species is considered present and the part of the subject land that is within the important habitat map forms the species polygon used to generate species credits (BAM section 5.2.5, Box 2). Any remaining, unmapped habitat used by the species on the subject land is assessed for ecosystem credits.

For species with IHM that are at risk of a serious and irreversible impact (SAIL) (e.g. Swift Parrot, Regent Honeyeater, Plains-wanderer and Curlew Sandpiper), the area mapped as important habitat is the area identified as a potential SAIL and section 9.1 of the BAM must be addressed in the Biodiversity Development Assessment Report (BDAR).

## Update to the SAIL list

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

## Reminder to submit SAIL nominations

SAIL nominations are encouraged where data clearly indicates that the current published SAIL list is incorrect. The nomination forms for a [threatened species or endangered population or Threatened Ecological Community \(TEC\)](#) can be used to:

- Add an entity to SAIL listing
- Remove an entity from SAIL listing
- Modify the current SAIL principles for which the entity is listed
- Provide feedback on an entity currently being publicly displayed.

All nominations received before May 2023 will be considered for anonymous display and public comment prior to review by the department.