

BOS Support for Assessors & Local Government

BOS Webpages update and restructure & Essential tips for preparation and review of Biodiversity Development Assessment Reports (BDARs)

Wednesday 28th April 2021, 2:00 PM – 3:00 PM



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DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING, INDUSTRY & ENVIRONMENT

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Improving usability and navigation with a revised, stakeholder-centric structure

- Driven by consultation and Subject Matter Expert contribution
- BOS pages consolidated and restructured based on stakeholder use

About the Biodiversity Offsets Scheme



How does the Biodiversity Offsets Scheme work?

When does the Biodiversity Offsets Scheme apply?

Transitional arrangements

BioBanking

Biodiversity certification

What are biodiversity credits?

Credit obligations

Generating and selling biodiversity credits

Biodiversity Conservation Trust

Biodiversity Offsets Scheme contacts

Biodiversity Offsets Scheme support

Bushfire rebuild exemption

Local government and other decision makers



The role of local government and other decision makers

Local government and other decision maker support

Lodging an offset obligation

Assessing biodiversity impacts of Part 5 activities

Seeking concurrence for a reduced credit obligation



About the Biodiversity Offsets Scheme

The Biodiversity Offsets Scheme is the framework for offsetting unavoidable impacts on biodiversity from development with biodiversity gains through landholder conservation agreements.



Local government and other decision makers

Local government and other decision makers are key partners in the conservation and management of biodiversity and threatened species in New South Wales.



Accredited assessors

Under the Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016, assessors must be accredited to apply the Biodiversity Assessment Method.



Landholders and developers

The Biodiversity Offsets Scheme may apply to a local development that needs development consent, or to vegetation clearing that doesn't need development consent.



Offset obligations and credits trading

The Biodiversity Offset Scheme creates a biodiversity credits market, providing incentives to protect biodiversity values for future generations.



Resources, tools and systems

Your one-stop shop for Biodiversity Offsets Scheme resources



WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO DO?

Trade offset credits and obligations >



Find forms >



Access public registers >



Find an accredited assessor >



Need help?

Contact us



About the Biodiversity Offsets Scheme

Local government and other decision makers

Accredited assessors

Applying for assessor accreditation

Renewing accreditation

Assessor resources

Biodiversity Assessment Method 2020

Biodiversity experts

Assessor quality assurance and feedback

Landholders and developers

Offset obligations and credits trading

Resources, tools and systems

Accredited assessors

Under the Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016, assessors must be accredited to apply the Biodiversity Assessment Method.

The accreditation scheme is designed to ensure that the Biodiversity Assessment Method (BAM) is applied by people with appropriate ecological skills, knowledge and experience, and a demonstrated understanding of the method.

The Department of Planning, Industry and Environment (the Department) is responsible for accrediting assessors under the scheme. The detailed arrangements for the accreditation scheme are set out in the [Accreditation Scheme for the Application of the Biodiversity Assessment Method Order 2017 \(PDF 868KB\)](#).

Find out more

- [Find an accredited assessor](#)
- [Applying for assessor accreditation](#)
- [Renewing accreditation](#)
- [Assessor Resources](#)
- [The Biodiversity Assessment Method 2020](#)
- [Assessor quality assurance, feedback and complaints](#)
- [Assessor questions and answers](#)

When do you need an accredited assessor?

You will need an accredited assessor whenever a development or an activity triggers the Biodiversity Offset Scheme (BOS) or if a landholder wants to enter into a Biodiversity Stewardship Agreement.

The BAM is only required for some developments or activities, and only where the impacts of a proposal trigger thresholds established by the Biodiversity Conservation Regulation 2017. This means that suitably qualified ecological consultants, who may not be BAM accredited assessors, can undertake other work related to the *Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016*, such as carrying out a test of significance or determining whether the impacts of a proposal trigger thresholds for assessment under the BAM.

For more information about when the BOS is triggered by a development or an activity and the BAM should be applied to the assessment of the impacts on biodiversity, visit [When does the Biodiversity Offsets Scheme Apply?](#). For more information about entering into a Biodiversity Stewardship Agreement visit [Biodiversity Conservation Trust](#).

Find an accredited assessor

[ACCESS THE REGISTER](#)

Biodiversity Offsets Scheme support

Need help?

Use our enquiry form to get help, give feedback or ask a question about the Biodiversity Offsets Scheme.

Visit [Biodiversity Offsets Scheme support](#).

About the Biodiversity Offsets Scheme 

Local government and other decision makers 

Accredited assessors 

Landholders and developers 

Offset obligations and credits trading 

Resources, tools and systems 

The Biodiversity Values Map and threshold tools

Biodiversity Offsets and Agreement Management System

Biodiversity Offsets Scheme glossary of terms

Biodiversity Offsets Scheme fees

Biodiversity Offsets Scheme forms

Biodiversity Offsets Scheme Support webinars

Resources, tools and systems

Your one-stop shop for Biodiversity Offsets Scheme resources

Data tools and systems 

FAQs 

Forms and fees 

Guidelines 

Legislation 

Public registers 

Updates and bulletins 

User guides and manuals 

Support videos and webinars 

Biodiversity Offsets Scheme support

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Visit [Biodiversity Offsets Scheme support](#).

Commonly used acronyms

BAM – Biodiversity Assessment Method

BOAMS – Biodiversity Offsets Agreement Management System

BAR – Biodiversity Assessment Report

BCT – Biodiversity Conservation Trust

BSSAR – Biodiversity Stewardship Site Assessment Report

BSA – Biodiversity Stewardship Agreement

BDAR – Biodiversity Development Assessment Report



BOS webpages will have a new URL address

- Links in documents and emails will no longer be correct
- Saved pages / browser favourites will need to updated
- Scheduled for release next month
- Email notification 1 week prior to release



We want to hear from you

- Survey on website use late 2021
- Provide feedback any time via

Was this page helpful?

Yes

No

BOS Support for Assessors & Local Government

Essential tips for preparation and review of Biodiversity Development Assessment Reports (BDARs)

Wednesday 28th April 2021, 1:00 PM – 2:00PM



Karen Caves

Senior Project Officer, Offset Assessment and
Systems team
Department of Planning, Industry & Environment



Acronyms

Acronym	Meaning
BDAR	Biodiversity Development Assessment Report
BSSAR	Biodiversity Stewardship Site Agreement Report
BCAR	Biodiversity Certification Assessment Report
BAR	Biodiversity Assessment Report
BAM	Biodiversity Assessment Method
TBDC	Threatened Biodiversity Data Collection (BioNet)
BAM-C	BAM Calculator
PCT	Plant Community Type
BOAMS	Biodiversity Offsets and Agreements Management System
TECs	Threatened Ecological Communities
SAII	Serious and Irreversible Impacts
EIS	Environmental Impact Statement
EPBC Act	Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act
BC Act	Biodiversity Conservation Act

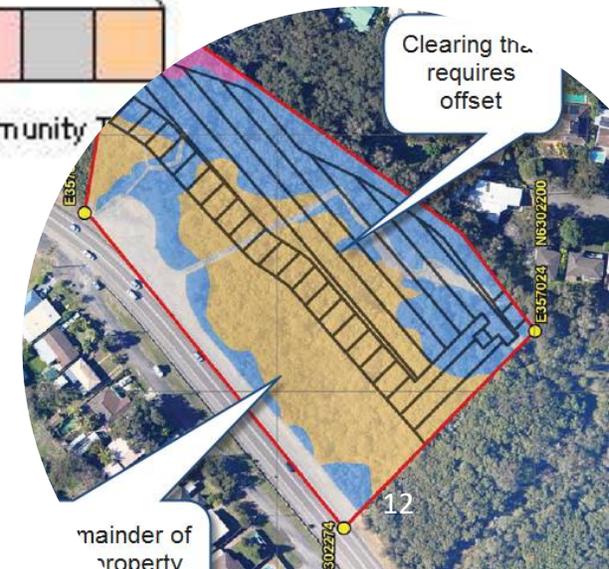
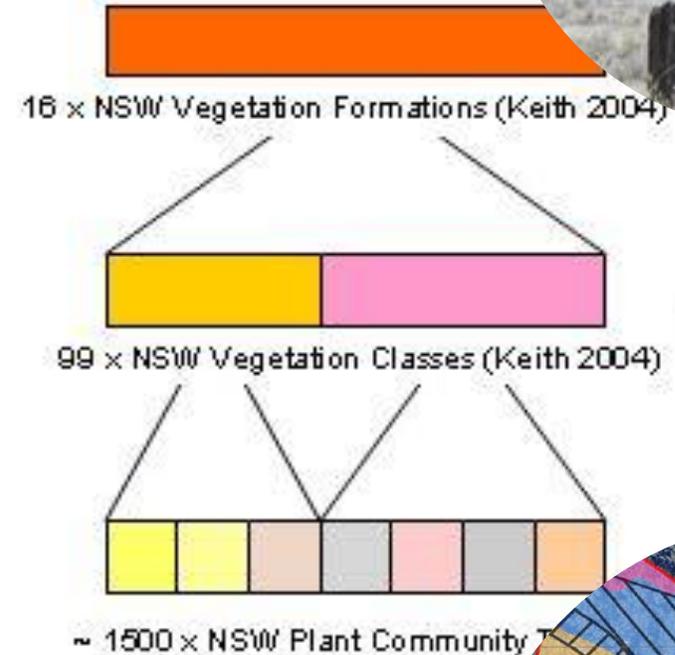
Overview

1. Stage 1 –
 - PCT identification and habitat suitability assessment
2. Stage 2 – Impact assessment
 - Avoid and minimise
 - Indirect and prescribed impacts
 - Serious and irreversible impacts (SAII)
3. Lodging a BDAR - Digital files, BOAMS
4. What's in the pipeline to help



BAM Stage 1 – Plant Community Type (PCT)

- Selection must be justified - not always clear cut
- Explanation of how the PCT/s was determined
 - use of maps, diagnostic tools, supporting information
- All data sheets, analyses etc included for the consent authority
- Mapping PCTs and TECs is a requirement
- Upcoming - East Coast PCT classification



BAM Stage 1- Habitat suitability assessment

- Documenting decisions to remove threatened species from candidate/predicted lists:
 - Steps 2 and 3 in Chapter 5 of the BAM
 - Include the reason, Geographic limitations, habitat constraints absent, species is vagrant, or microhabitats/habitat constraints are degraded
 - BDAR should contain justification and evidence for removal of species from the list, not just the reason
- Documenting survey techniques and effort

Assessment Response to management Vegetation type RFS

Filters

Biodiversity Credit Class

Patch size

Percent native vegetation cover

Are paddock trees important habitat?

Comments

Habitat Constraint Breeding

Burrows

Caves

Cliffs

Claypans

Dunes

Habitat Constraint Foraging

Burrows

Caves

Cliffs

Claypans

Dunes

General Notes

Any impacts on breeding habitat could be considered potentially serious and irreversible. The is retained as dual credit because foraging habitat is broad ranging but breeding habitat is highly specific. Additionally, selected <1 for average number of offspring because females do not give birth every (often miscarry etc).
All breeding habitat including the cave, or other features, used for breeding and the area immediately surrounding this feature must be mapped. Species polygon boundaries should have a 100m radius buffer around an accurate GPS point location centred on the cave/feature entrance.

Survey

Months of Survey Breeding

January June October
 February July November
 March August December
 April September N/A
 May

Unit of measure

Avoid and minimise

- s6.12 of the BC Act
- Advice in BAM Operational Manual – Stage 2
- Applies to direct, indirect and prescribed impacts
- Consider the FULL project life cycle
- Measures described in BDAR including maps
- Include minimisation/mitigation in conditions of consent



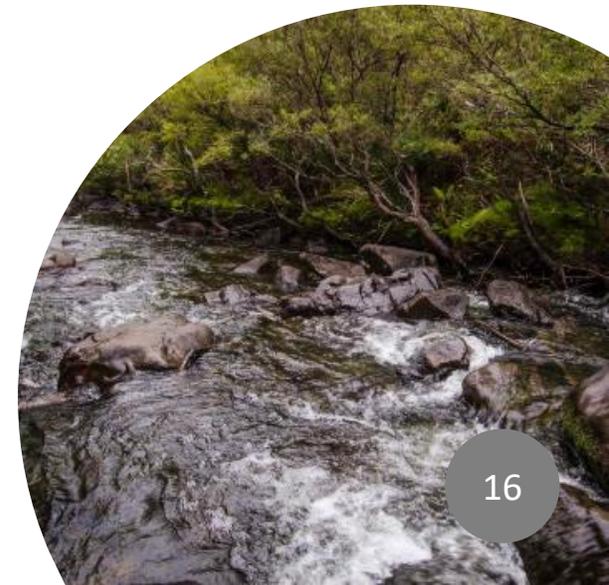
Indirect impacts

- Include a chapter on indirect impacts
- Identify all indirect impacts and entities impacted
- Describe the nature, extent, duration and consequences of the impacts on biodiversity
- Consider retiring biodiversity credits to offset indirect impacts that are not avoided or adequately minimised





Prescribed impacts



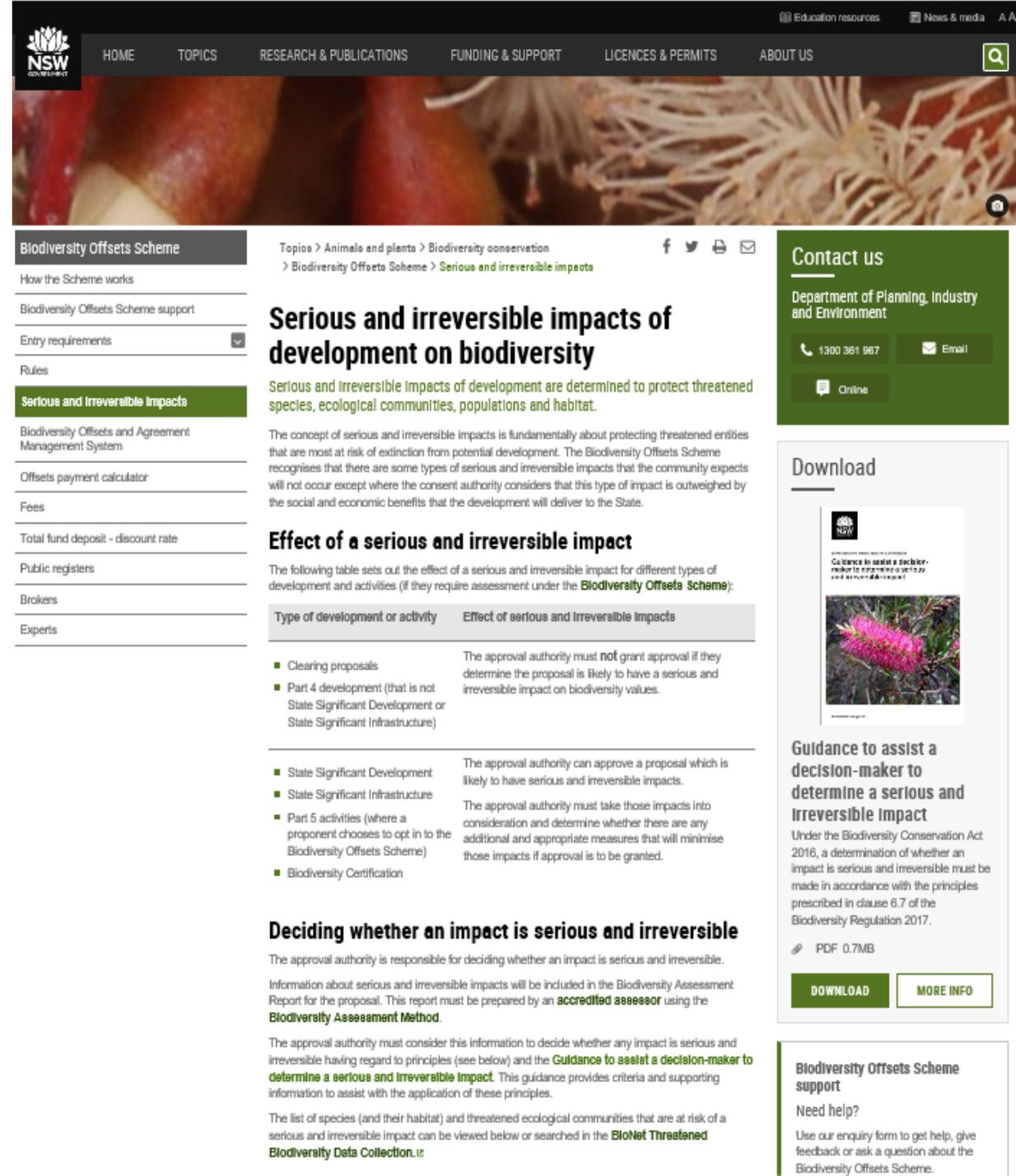
Prescribed Impacts

- Separate chapter on prescribed impacts
- List of entities likely to use/inhabit the feature/s
- Nature, extent and duration of the impact
- Importance of the feature/s to the persistence of the entity and consequence if the impact proceeds
- Mitigation, which may include use of ‘additional biodiversity credits’ or other ‘compensatory measures’
- Identify prescribed impacts in species polygons



Serious and irreversible impacts (SAII)

- Provided for in the BC Act and Regulation & BAM
- DPIE has assessed all listings against principles/criteria
- Additional criteria in the BAM for entities at risk of SAII **must** be addressed
- Some changes between BAM2017 and BAM2020
- Guidance to assist a decision-maker to determine a serious and irreversible impact



The screenshot shows the NSW Government website page for the Biodiversity Offsets Scheme, specifically the section on 'Serious and irreversible impacts of development on biodiversity'. The page includes a navigation menu, a breadcrumb trail, and a table detailing the effects of various development activities. A sidebar on the right provides contact information and a download link for a guidance document.

Biodiversity Offsets Scheme

How the Scheme works
 Biodiversity Offsets Scheme support
 Entry requirements
 Rules
Serious and Irreversible Impacts
 Biodiversity Offsets and Agreement Management System
 Offsets payment calculator
 Fees
 Total fund deposit - discount rate
 Public registers
 Brokers
 Experts

Topics > Animals and plants > Biodiversity conservation
 > Biodiversity Offsets Scheme > Serious and irreversible impacts

Serious and irreversible impacts of development on biodiversity

Serious and Irreversible Impacts of development are determined to protect threatened species, ecological communities, populations and habitat.

The concept of serious and irreversible impacts is fundamentally about protecting threatened entities that are most at risk of extinction from potential development. The Biodiversity Offsets Scheme recognises that there are some types of serious and irreversible impacts that the community expects will not occur except where the consent authority considers that this type of impact is outweighed by the social and economic benefits that the development will deliver to the State.

Effect of a serious and irreversible impact

The following table sets out the effect of a serious and irreversible impact for different types of development and activities (if they require assessment under the **Biodiversity Offsets Scheme**):

Type of development or activity	Effect of serious and irreversible impacts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clearing proposals Part 4 development (that is not State Significant Development or State Significant Infrastructure) 	The approval authority must not grant approval if they determine the proposal is likely to have a serious and irreversible impact on biodiversity values.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> State Significant Development State Significant Infrastructure Part 5 activities (where a proponent chooses to opt in to the Biodiversity Offsets Scheme) Biodiversity Certification 	The approval authority can approve a proposal which is likely to have serious and irreversible impacts. The approval authority must take those impacts into consideration and determine whether there are any additional and appropriate measures that will minimise those impacts if approval is to be granted.

Deciding whether an impact is serious and irreversible

The approval authority is responsible for deciding whether an impact is serious and irreversible. Information about serious and irreversible impacts will be included in the Biodiversity Assessment Report for the proposal. This report must be prepared by an **accredited assessor** using the **Biodiversity Assessment Method**.

The approval authority must consider this information to decide whether any impact is serious and irreversible having regard to principles (see below) and the **Guidance to assist a decision-maker to determine a serious and irreversible impact**. This guidance provides criteria and supporting information to assist with the application of these principles.

The list of species (and their habitat) and threatened ecological communities that are at risk of a serious and irreversible impact can be viewed below or searched in the **BioNet Threatened Biodiversity Data Collection**.

Contact us
 Department of Planning, Industry and Environment
 1300 361 967
 Email
 Online

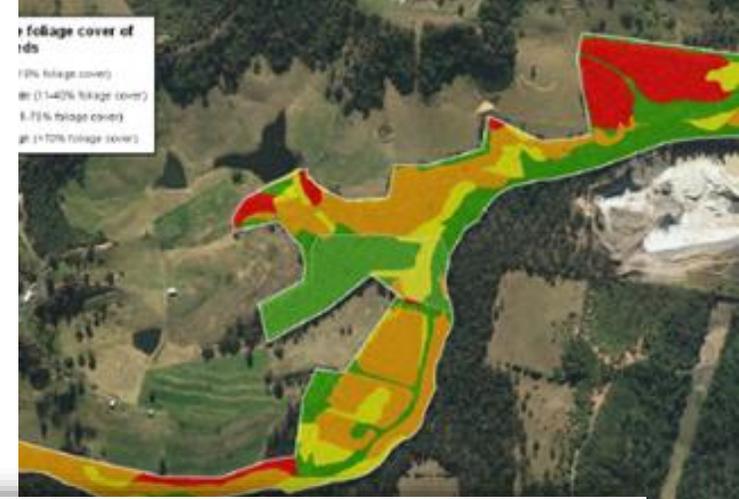
Download
 Guidance to assist a decision-maker to determine a serious and irreversible impact
 PDF 0.7MB
 DOWNLOAD MORE INFO

Biodiversity Offsets Scheme support
 Need help?
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Lodging BDARS - Tips

- Minimum requirements listed in Tables 24 to 26 of the BAM.
- Digital data must be supplied – either upload in BOAMs or direct to consent authority
- Supply digital shapefiles/polygons in ESRI compatible format
- Finalise your case in BOAMs and check the credit report has a status of finalised
- Process to meet certification in accordance with Section 6.15 of the BC Act



Site sheet #	1 of	Date	/ /	Survey name		Plot identifier	
Recorders				IBRA region		Veg zone ID	
'Datum	Coordinate system	<input type="checkbox"/> Projected <input type="checkbox"/> Geographic	MGA zone		'X coordinate		'Y coordinate
Location description <small>descriptive notes to locate site without grid reference</small>							
'Plot dimensions	For composition & structure (400m ²): 20 m x 20 m For function (1000m ²): 20 m x 50 m			'Orientation of midline from 0 m point	Magnetic*		Photo #
Datum: AGD66, WGS84, GDA94, GDA2020 or Other (specify). MGA Zone (for Projected coordinate, system only): 56 (Coastal NSW), 55 (Central NSW or 54 (Western NSW), X/Y coordinate: Long/Lat (for Projected coordinate, system), Easting/Northing (for geographic coordinate, system)							
Vegetation integrity <small>Composition and structure sum values may be completed after entering data into available tools. It is not required while in the field</small>							
Composition (400 m ² plot)		Structure (400 m ² plot)		Function (1000 m ² plot)			
Total count of native plant species (richness) in each growth form group (not individual plants within each growth form)	Sum values	Sum of native plant species by growth form group	Sum values (%) (may sum to >100%)	'Tree stem size class (DBH)	If data are to be used as more appropriate local data i.e. to generate local benchmarks, stems must be counted		
Trees (TG)		Trees (TG)		80 + cm	Count		
Shrubs (SG)		Shrubs (SG)		50 – 79 cm	Count (best practice)/tick	If large tree benchmark size >50 cm, count	
Grasses etc. (GG)		Grasses etc. (GG)		30 – 49 cm	Count (best practice)/tick	If large tree benchmark size > 30 cm, count	
Forbs (FG)		Forbs (FG)		20 – 29 cm	Count (best practice)/tick	If large tree benchmark size > 20 cm, count	
Ferns (EG)		Ferns (EG)		10 – 19 cm	Count (best practice)/tick		
Other (OG)		Other (OG)		5 – 9 cm	Count (best practice)/tick		
Total high threat weed cover				%	'Tree regeneration <5 cm	Tick	
				'Length of fallen logs	Tally space	Total	m
				'Hollow bearing trees	Tick		
Vegetation integrity - function cont. (five 1 m ² plots)		'Litter cover (%)	Bare ground cover (%)	Cryptogam cover (%)		Rock cover (%)	
Subplot score (% in each)		a b c d e	a b c d e	a b c d e		a b c d e	
Average of the 5 subplots							
<small>These attributes require consideration of site observations and may be completed after field work:</small>							
Vegetation class		'Large tree benchmark size		20/ 30/ 50/ 80 DBH	Confidence	H/ M/ L	
Plant community type (PCT)		EEC		Tick	Confidence	H/ M/ L	

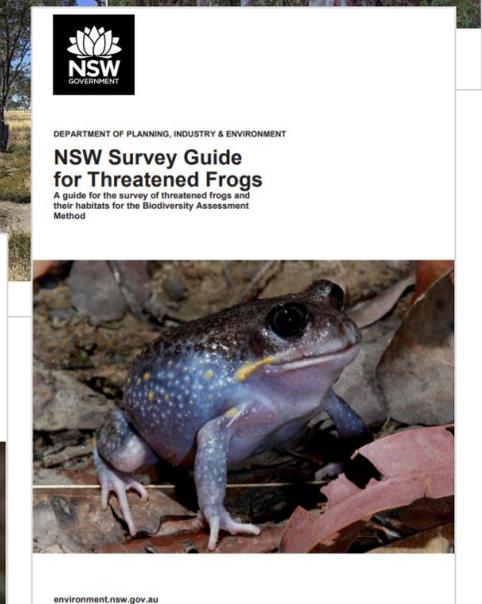
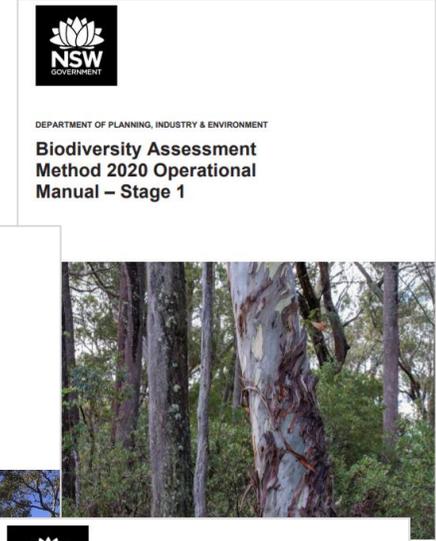


Resources.....

- Updated BAM 2020 Stage 1 Operations Manual
- Guidance for local government on undertaking a critical review of a Biodiversity Development Assessment Report
- Guidance for local government on preparing conditions of consent from the Biodiversity Development Assessment report
- Tables 24 – 26 of Appendix K in BAM 2020 – which lists the minimum requirements for a BDAR

In the pipeline.....

- **Updated Stage 2 - Operational Manual**
- **Additional survey taxa guides**
- **Updated flora survey guide**
- **Up-dated BAM-C User Guide**
- **BDAR TEMPLATE this year!**



Q&A

This session will not be included in the webinar recording.

Written questions and answers will be attached to the online webinar recording.

Questions asked during these webinars also contribute to the development of the [Assessor Q&A](#) page, future webinars and other Biodiversity Offsets Scheme supporting resources.

Thankyou for your participation

Webinar recordings will be available to view online on the [BOS Support webinars](#) page.

For further support, contact us via the [BOS Support](#) page.