

# Biodiversity Offsets Scheme Update No. 45

9 March 2026

Welcome to issue No. 45 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](#). You can find the Biodiversity Conservation Trust's (BCT) newsletter on the [BCT's Publication website](#).

For other enquiries on the scheme, contact the dedicated scheme Help Desk team via the [BOS Customer Portal](#).

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# General scheme updates

## Biodiversity Stewardship Agreements

In this financial year, 24 Biodiversity Stewardship Agreements (BSAs) have been approved to date, securing more than 18,300 hectares for protection and restoration. A total of 32 applications have progressed through assessment and agreements issued for signing.

Revised resources to support landholders and Accredited Assessors to prepare BSA applications currently being developed include:

- Updates to the BSSAR and Management Plan templates
- A new Management Plan Handbook that compiles key considerations, guiding principles, worked examples, and quick-reference checks aligned with each section of the Management Plan template.

Further detail on these will be communicated in future editions of the BOS Update.

## Stewardship Support Program

The next round of the Stewardship Support Program (SSP) will open in April 2026 and will focus on improving the supply of species credits, prioritising sites in the Hunter-Central Coast, Central West Orana and South West renewable energy zones. Building on the existing supply of ecosystem credit types in these regions, this round of the program will focus on adding species credits to existing or submitted agreements. The process will involve:

- conducting targeted surveys at sites with strong potential to produce in-demand species credits, and
- preparing variations to agreements to add species credits.

## The Wentworth Group has released a NSW blueprint

The Wentworth Group has recently released its NSW blueprint for a landscape-scale approach to conservation. The blueprint sets out recommendations to improve landscape conservation in NSW, and highlights the need to coordinate regional and state-wide land management efforts. The Central West Orana conservation investment strategy is given as an example of having a coordinated approach to achieve conservation goals, including priority investment areas where investment can have the greatest impact, helping to focus funding to protect and restore biodiversity values, and link natural assets. The department has published a conservation investment strategy for the Central West Orana, Hunter and South West regions.

## Progress on Central West Orana transmission project

The [second progress report](#) for the Central West Orana Transmission Project Strategic Offset Delivery Agreement (SODA) has been published. These quarterly reports cover progress on offset delivery, expenditure, and other work to deliver the offsets under the SODA. More information on how SODAs achieve strategic outcomes for conservation is on the [SODA webpage](#).

## Biodiversity certification of Albury Local Environmental Plan

Biodiversity certification of the Albury Local Environmental Plan (LEP) 2010 has been extended by 2 years, over a reduced area of land in the Thurgoona Wirringa Precinct. The Biodiversity Values Map will incorporate these changes at the next update, currently scheduled for April 2026. Biodiversity certification for the Albury LEP will expire on 24 February 2028. More information can be found on the [register](#) of biodiversity certification orders.

For land that is no longer biodiversity certified, development proposals need to consider if the Biodiversity Offsets Scheme applies. More information is available on the [When the Biodiversity Offsets Scheme applies webpage](#).

# For accredited assessors and local government

## Renewable Energy Biodiversity Support

The Renewable Energy Biodiversity Support (REBS) team is part of the Department's commitment to accelerating delivery of renewable energy projects. REBS is a specialised team established in 2025 that:

- Provides expert advice on biodiversity assessments specific to renewable energy projects
- Engages directly with accredited assessors and proponents to speed up biodiversity assessment, from project initiation through to approvals
- Helps proponents to reduce impacts and offset costs
- Resolves issues quickly based on experience with other major projects
- Supports proponents to meet regulatory requirements and deliver sound environmental outcomes.

High priority energy projects will have full support from the REBS team. Other energy projects are still able to access advice. Please contact REBS to confirm the support available for your project [rebs@dcceew.nsw.gov.au](mailto:rebs@dcceew.nsw.gov.au).

## Upcoming accredited assessor training courses

Registration is now open for accredited assessor training courses in 2026, with courses scheduled for March, May, July, September and November. For more information about

initial training to become accredited, please visit the [training requirements webpage](#). If you are considering becoming an accredited assessor please read the [accreditation criteria](#) and ensure you meet the technical requirements.

Renewal training courses have been scheduled for March, April, June, August and October in 2026. You can register for training via your account in Biodiversity Offsets and Agreement Management System (BOAMS) in the 3-month period before your accreditation is due, or reach out to the [bos.training@environment.nsw.gov.au](mailto:bos.training@environment.nsw.gov.au). More information can be found on the [renewing your assessor accreditation webpage](#).

## BOS Systems: new functionality and data

To enhance user experience with BOS systems, the following changes are being made:

- The new Biodiversity Assessment Report (BAR) Tables Report from the Biodiversity Assessment Method Calculator (BAM-C) went live on 25 February, providing BAM-C data in formatted tables to help users prepare and review information.
- The Biodiversity Assessment Method Calculator (BAM-C) will be updated in April 2026 with necessary updates to threatened biodiversity data, including:
  - 23 new species into the BAM-C
  - 42 species with BioNet TBDC 'Ecological data' changes
  - Changes to the department's serious and irreversible impacts list based on the recent nomination round and expert elicitation for 23 recently listed species
  - Entity-Plant Community Type and -IBRA subregion association changes edited in BioNet since the last BAM-C update in October 2024.
  - These updates may result in changes to in-progress assessments, and we recommend finalising cases by the 31 March 2026 to avoid your case being impacted. Detailed release notes will be provided to support assessors. If you have any queries, please contact the [BOS Help Desk](#).

## BioNet: Species Sightings

The new [Species Sightings Web Service](#) and [Species Sightings Data Standard](#) are now available on the [BioNet Web Service](#). These upgrades align with national standards and improves the accuracy of date- and time-based species queries. It also prepares for the upcoming systematic survey data service in coming months.

As the new entity set, *SpeciesSightings\_CoreDataExtended*, includes more fields, unfiltered queries may run slightly longer. The current *SpeciesSightings\_CoreData* set will remain available for six months before retirement.

We encourage users to begin adopting the new entity set to take advantage of its improved structure and functionality.

## Complaint and feedback management

Feedback on accredited assessors is part of the operation of the accreditation scheme, and helps to ensure accredited assessors continue to meet accreditation requirements. In this financial year, we have received 27 feedback submissions on accredited

assessors. Out of these, 19 are closed with action taken in 7 cases. Another 8 are continuing through the review process.

We also regularly share issues identified from this feedback so that accredited assessors can take an active interest in quality assurance on their own work, and avoid similar issues arising in their work. Recent issues from this feedback process are:

- *Certification of Biodiversity Assessment Reports (BARs)*: Assessors must inform clients that certified BARs linked to development applications must be submitted within 14 days of certification, in line with section 6.15 of the Act. This ensures assessment information and credit calculations are current when submitted.
- *Application of the avoid minimise and offset hierarchy*: Assessors must clearly set out in the Biodiversity Assessment Report how potential impacts on biodiversity values have been avoided, in line with Section 3.1 of the BAM Operational Manual.

The Complaint and Feedback Management Policy and the Compliance and Assurance Framework have been updated recently. You can find the full documents here:

- [Accredited assessors complaints and feedback management policy](#)
- [Compliance and assurance framework for accredited assessors](#)