

# Biodiversity Offsets Scheme Update No. 9

30 September 2022

**Welcome to Issue No. 9** 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. You can keep up to date with the latest improvements, news, and information [via our website](#).

This monthly newsletter is one of how we communicate and help support the scheme's implementation. We welcome your feedback on how we might improve our communication. Please submit your suggestions in [our survey](#). You can also check out past newsletters on the [Biodiversity Offsets Scheme updates page](#).

The Biodiversity Conservation Trust's (BCT) twice-yearly newsletter is another source of information; you can find it at the BCT's [Publication website](#).

For other enquiries on the scheme, contact the dedicated scheme Help Desk team:

- Hotline 1800 931 717, staffed Tuesday to Thursday from 9:30 am to 4:00 pm
- Help Desk mailbox, [BOS.helpdesk@environment.nsw.gov.au](mailto:BOS.helpdesk@environment.nsw.gov.au), monitored Monday to Friday from 9:00 am to 5:00 pm.

Please share this update with your colleagues and clients.

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# New Biodiversity Conservation Fund (BCF) Charge System commences on 17 October 2022

A [new Biodiversity Conservation Fund \(BCF\) Charge System](#) commenced on **17 October 2022**. The BCT held a webinar on **11 October 2022** to explain the new BCF Charge System and to answer any questions you might have.

The Biodiversity Conservation Trust (BCT) will use the new BCF Charge System to determine the amount a proponent may pay into the BCF to meet their biodiversity offset obligation.

The BCF Charge System will replace the existing Biodiversity Offsets Payment Calculator (BOPC), which will cease to operate from 17 October 2022. BOPC prices will be valid until midnight 16 October 2022.

The BCT developed the new BCF Charge System following an extensive stakeholder consultation process. The new system aims to better reflect the costs to landholders of supplying credits and the costs to the BCT of sourcing credits. This will ensure that the BCF remains financially sustainable and will provide greater certainty and price stability, particularly among credit types with minimal trades.

There will be changes in price between the existing BOPC and the new BCF Charge System. Prices for some credit types will be lower, prices for other credit types will be higher, and the prices for some credit types will remain similar. For the first 12 months, any increases to prices for credits that are \$5,000 or more under the existing BOPC will be capped at 20%. This will enable a staged transition to full pricing under the new system.

You can view a copy of the ministerial order giving legal effect to the BCF Charge System on the [NSW Legislation website](#). For more information about the charge system, including a consultation report, rules and datasets, please visit the [BCT website](#).

## Credits Supply Taskforce and Fund update

Consultation on the [Biodiversity Credits Supply Fund](#) (the Fund) operating protocol closes on **30 September 2022**. The Fund is expected to start buying credits from mid-October and selling credits in November. Credits available for sale through the Fund will be cheaper than prices set by the BCF Charge System.

To increase the supply of credits, the Taskforce has now approved 7 new Biodiversity Stewardship Agreements (BSAs) and is seeking to finalise more stewardship agreements as soon as possible. The Taskforce has put on additional staff and created a new case management team to support progress on BSAs and improve customer experience. We are also streamlining the BSA process to remove unnecessary steps. If you are involved in a current BSA application, please see what you can do to get this progressed quickly or speak to your case manager if you need help.

Through the Taskforce's [Stewardship EOI](#), biodiversity assessments will begin in October. Where there is potential to generate in-demand credits, the biodiversity assessment will be at no upfront cost to the landholder, with repayment to occur when credits are sold. Proposals by accredited assessors to undertake this work are currently being reviewed.

# Biodiversity Conservation Trust (BCT) Ecological Monitoring Module field training days

The Biodiversity Conservation Trust's (BCT's) [Ecological Monitoring Module](#) (published in 2020) guides the planning and implementation of biodiversity monitoring on Biodiversity Stewardship Sites (BSAs), with monitoring plans aligned to the [EMM Operational Manual](#) being a requirement of all new BSA applications.

The BCT will be running additional Ecological Monitoring Module (EMM) field training days in the below locations. Attendance is free –register your interest via the relevant EventBrite link.

- [\*\*Tuggerah – Thursday 27 October 2022\*\*](#)
- [\*\*Dubbo – Wednesday 2 November 2022\*\*](#)
- [\*\*Wagga Wagga – Wednesday 16 November 2022\*\*](#)

Each session will include:

- monitoring plan development for BSA applications
- hands-on training in implementation of key EMM methods (focusing on those not covered in the BAM)
- the opportunity for questions and discussion with BCT staff on EMM and other aspects of BSA establishment.

Additional information on each session, including agenda, venue and logistics, will be provided to registered participants.

For any questions, please contact [james.brazillboast@bct.nsw.gov.au](mailto:james.brazillboast@bct.nsw.gov.au).

## Biodiversity Values Map update

The [Biodiversity Values Map and Threshold \(BMAT\)](#) tool version 14 is now published.

Changes are outlined on the [Biodiversity Values Map webpage](#). The updated spatial data is available through the [SEED Portal](#). Landholders, or their agents, who consider the biodiversity values mapped on their property are incorrect, can apply for a Biodiversity Values Explanatory Report and Map Review. Information and enquiry forms are available on the [Biodiversity Values Map Review webpage](#). For any queries, contact [map.review@environment.nsw.gov.au](mailto:map.review@environment.nsw.gov.au) or call 02 8000 0258.

This new version includes updates to align with the Regent Honeyeater important habitat map, published in the [Biodiversity Offset Assessment Management System map viewer](#). The mapping of several Serious and Irreversible Impact (SAII) species has been updated, along with the addition of new mapping for several species.

For more information on the Biodiversity Values (BV) Map and the development application process, please see this [factsheet](#) on the BOS website.

If you have any further questions, please contact [BOS.Helpdesk@environment.nsw.gov.au](mailto:BOS.Helpdesk@environment.nsw.gov.au).

## Update: Revised eastern NSW PCT's in the Threatened Biodiversity Database Collection (TBDC)

The revised eastern NSW Plant Community Types (PCTs) are now updated in the TBDC under the Vegetation tab in BioNet Atlas. The update to the BioNet Atlas removed decommissioned PCTs from view, which continue to apply in the BAM-Calculator (BAM-C).

To find which threatened species are associated with decommissioned NSW PCTs, use the [Threatened Species to Plant Community Type BioNet power query](#), which lists threatened species associations for both decommissioned and revised PCTs in eastern NSW.

This refreshable excel spreadsheet is an alternative way to access BioNet Atlas and BioNet Vegetation Classification data.

Revised eastern NSW PCTs are not yet available in the BAM-C and will not apply to the scheme until 2023.

For more information on the transitional arrangements, please visit the [Introduction of revised Plant Community Types in eastern NSW to the Biodiversity Offsets Scheme](#) webpage. The webpage will be continually updated with further information as it becomes available.

## Biodiversity Offsets Scheme video series

The Environment and Heritage Group (EHG) has developed a series of videos to support local government staff working with the scheme. The last 3 videos in the series; 'Threatened species test of significance', 'Native vegetation clearing' and 'Biodiversity certification' have been published and are now available on the [Local government and other decision maker support](#) web page.

These videos are a useful resource for local government and planning and those who have previously received training on or are new to the scheme.

You can view the video series on the [Local government and other decision maker support page](#).

# When do Biodiversity Development Assessment Report (BDAR) waivers apply?

BDAR waivers apply to development that is state significant development (SSD) or activities that are state significant infrastructure (SSI) as per section 7.9 of the *Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016* (BC Act).

BDAR waivers do not apply to local Part 4 development where council is the consent authority. Local Part 4 development that exceeds the scheme thresholds and/or the test of significance must be assessed in accordance with the Biodiversity Assessment Method (BAM), and a BDAR is required. For more information, see: [the Biodiversity Assessment and Approval Pathways for Local Government](#).

For more information about BDAR waivers for SSD or SSI please visit the [Biodiversity development assessment report waiver page](#).