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1. Publication of Guideline for Assessing Severely Burnt Sites

The Guideline for applying the Biodiversity Assessment Method at severely burnt sites Biodiversity Development Assessment Reports & Biodiversity Certification Assessment Reports (the Guideline) has been published and it is available on the [Assessors Resources webpage](#) (see 'Other guidelines').

The guideline has been prepared in response to extent of land that has been burnt in the catastrophic 2019/20 bushfire season. This guideline defines severely burnt vegetation and provides technical guidance for application of the Biodiversity Assessment Method (BAM) on proposed development and clearing sites impacted by severe and catastrophic bushfires. Essentially the guide provides a range of approaches to assist an assessor apply the BAM and prepare a Biodiversity Development Assessment Reports & Biodiversity Certification Assessment Reports (BDAR/BCAR). The guide provides for different approaches depending on whether the site has been fully or partially affected by severe fire, and whether any assessment information was collected prior to the fire event. The guideline has been prepared in response to requests from assessors for this information and aims to support the assessment of biodiversity values that, due to the impact of severe bushfire, are difficult to identify for the purposes of applying the BAM.

We are also extremely grateful for the comments that we received from assessors on earlier drafts.

2. Biodiversity Assessment Method Support webinar – Applying the Biodiversity Assessment Method to severely burnt sites

To support the release of the guideline, the next BAM Support webinar will explain the different approaches and data sources set out in the the Guideline.

Title: Catastrophic bushfire and the assessment of biodiversity values: guidance on applying the BAM to severely burnt sites.

Description: Following severe and catastrophic bushfire, such as those experienced in the 2019–2020 season, the biodiversity values assessed by the BAM can be significantly altered. The Guideline defines severely burnt vegetation and provides technical guidance for application of the BAM on proposed development and clearing sites impacted by catastrophic bushfires. This session will provide an overview of this new guideline including key decision points regarding its application, key technical modifications in applying the BAM, and the tools and support available to accredited assessors and local government

When: Wednesday 18 March 2020, 12:00–1:00 PM (AEDT)

Presenter: Penelope Rogers, Senior Project Officer Ecosystem Assessment, Biodiversity & Conservation Division, Department of Planning, Industry and Environment

Registration coming soon. Email invitations to the upcoming webinar will be sent out next week.

Visit the [BAM Support webinar page](#) to find out more about the webinar series, get involved in future sessions and catch up on past topics.

Contact us at BAM.support@environment.nsw.gov.au to provide webinar suggestions, recommend future topics or troubleshoot issues relating to webinar registration or access.

3. Version 9 of the Biodiversity Values Map

Version 9 of the Biodiversity Values (BV) Map was published on the 26 February 2020. This update involved changes to the land included on the BV Map which can be viewed in the [Biodiversity Values Map and Threshold \(BMAT\) Tool](#). The updated spatial data is available through the [SEED Portal](#).

Changes to the areas on the BV Map

Landholder – initiated map reviews

Changes (removal and additions) arising from thirty map reviews have been incorporated into the BV Map.

Refinement of old growth and rainforest mapping

Refinements have been made following landholder-initiated map reviews and Private Native Forestry Property Vegetation Plan reviews.

Update of core koala habitat mapping

Addition of 672 ha of core koala habitat mapping from the Coffs Harbour, Lismore and Port Stephens Comprehensive Koala Plans of Management.

Changes to SAll entity mapping due to the update of the NVR Category 1 – exempt land.

The Biodiversity Offsets Scheme (BOS) does not apply to category 1 – exempt lands. The category 1 layer has been updated and has led to a net removal of 425 ha from the BV Map across 11 SAll entities.

Changes to *Genoplesium insigne* mapping

The variable midge orchid (*Genoplesium insigne*) is a critically endangered plant and a SAll entity. Since the last BV map update, 13 landholder-initiated map reviews involving this

species have been determined. While undertaking these reviews, the species expert examined the species mapping in areas around the map review sites. This has led to the removal of 37 ha and the addition of 11 ha from the species mapping. These 'local changes' are in addition to the changes as a result of the landholder-initiated map reviews.

Removal of biocertified land in Mount Gilead Stage 1

The BOS does not apply to biocertified land. Biocertification of Mount Gilead Stage 1 was conferred on the 28 June 2019. This has led to the removal of 20 ha from mapping of two critically endangered ecological communities.

Colour changes

New areas that have been added to the BV Map are shown as dark purple for 90 days.

This update is 90 days since the V8 update published on 27 November 2019. The small number of areas that were added to the BV Map in the V8 update have been changed from dark purple to pink and now apply.

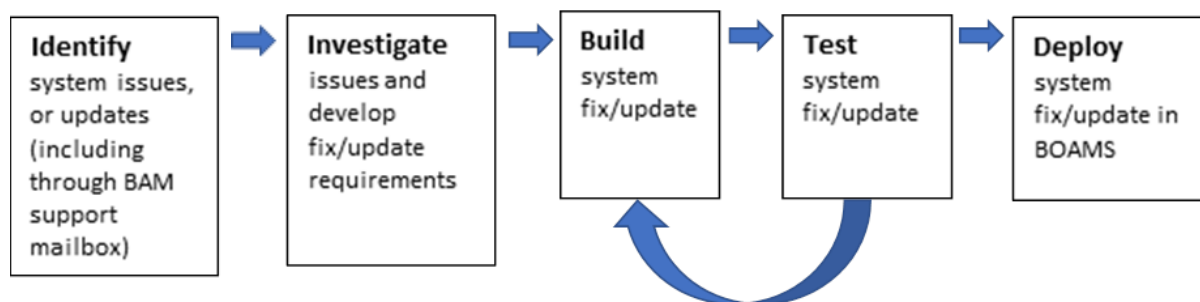
If you have an enquiry about the BV Map, please contact the Department at map.review@environment.nsw.gov.au or on 02 6360 9000.

4. Systems information and updates

Biodiversity Offsets and Agreement Management System (BOAMS) is built using a Salesforce program platform. In mid-February, Salesforce performed some global security setting updates which may have impacted on your use of BOAMS at that time. Some users reported system generated errors and glitches accessing BOAMS. With the cessation of testing and implementation of the global setting changes, we expect that most issues should now be resolved.

We acknowledge the frustration that issues with BOAMS can cause and thank you for your cooperation in reporting them to us via the BAM Support Mailbox. We appreciate your assistance and patience as we investigate and resolve them.

The following process flow outlines our approach to BOAMS issues and updates.



Timeframes associated with the process vary with the complexity of the issue/update and the corresponding system change. For complex problems or solutions, multiple testing events and/or close liaison with IT experts during system development and building may be required. The testing phase is important to ensure that the fix/update adequately addresses the issue and does not create additional problems in the system.

The table below gives an indication of priority system changes we are working on, and their current status in the process flow.

Project	Description	Current status
Integration of Biodiversity Offsets Payment Calculator (BOPC) back into Tab 8 BAM-C	The last release of the BOPC in late 2019 led to technical integration issues between the BOPC and BAM-C systems.	Test – recent testing highlighted further work is required.
Consent Authority viewer access to BOAMS and BAM assessments	Functionality to enable consent authorities to view a submitted case in BOAMS.	Build – plan for testing in March 2020.
Regular import of biodiversity data into the BAM – C	The next data import into BAM-C will include updates to information held in Threatened Biodiversity Data Collection (TBDC), geographic limitations and benchmarks.	Investigate – plan for deployment on 17th April 2020. Note: Please report any omissions or inaccuracies to the BAM Support Mailbox so that they may be considered for inclusion in this update.

5. First audit of Accredited Assessors is underway

The Department has commenced the audit of Accredited BAM Assessors certified under the *Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016*.

In the coming months, audits will be undertaken of assessors across the state that have lodged a BDAR as part of the Development Application (DA) process with councils.

In accordance with section 20 of the Accreditation Scheme for the Application of the Biodiversity Assessment Method (BAM) Order 2017, the audit may check:

1. compliance by an accredited person with the conditions of their accreditation, or
2. biodiversity assessment reports prepared by an accredited person, or
3. the application of the BAM by an accredited person.

As previously advised, this audit will seek to assess compliance, identify opportunities for education and ongoing scheme improvement, as well as identify areas that the Department may target for future audits.

The first audits are within the Hunter and Central Coast (HCC) Region. The Department is working closely with HCC Councils to obtain all records for DAs that have triggered the BOS. Several BDARs from the HCC Region have already been selected to be audited, with more to be selected over the coming weeks.

Thank you to assessors who have already been notified of the audit and have been cooperative in the provision of GIS (geographic information system) shape files, survey datasheets and other required documentation.

We will continue to provide you with updates on the audit as it progresses.