

1. Release Notes – regular data update in BAM-C
2. Regent honeyeater important areas – update
3. Threatened Plants Survey Guide – revised
4. Bilateral Agreement
5. Webinar – Applying for an assessment of reasonable equivalence
6. Biodiversity Offsets Scheme Credits transfer/retire form
7. Systems update
8. Biodiversity Conservation Trust update

1. Release Notes – regular data update in BAM-C

The data import will occur at 5pm on Tuesday 28 April. Please see attached release notes on how to update any affected proposals in the BAM-C.

2. Regent honeyeater important areas – update

In response to an external peer review of the method the Department used to establish the original important habitat area map for the regent honeyeater, the layer has been amended based on the recommendations accepted by the Department and identifies an additional 120,000 hectares of land.

The additional areas include recent breeding events recorded by the Australian National University (ANU) which include areas of the Warragamba Dam catchment and an extension of the buffer for those breeding records outside of areas identified by the National Recovery Plan, particularly in the Widden Valley, Mudgee-Wollar. The updated layer and map method will be available via the map viewer in Biodiversity Offsets and Agreements Management System (BOAMS) from Wednesday 29 April.

3. Threatened Plants Survey Guide – revised

The *NSW Guide to Surveying Threatened Plants* (2016) has been revised to reflect new information and feedback from users. The revised *NSW Guide to Surveying Threatened Plants 2020* is available for download on the assessor resources page on the Department's website.

The 2020 (Version 2) publication replaces the 2016 (Version 1) for the purpose of section 6.5.1.3 of the Biodiversity Assessment Method (BAM) which, requires that a species survey must be undertaken in accordance with the threatened species survey guidelines published by the Department including the *NSW Guide to Surveying Threatened Plants*.

Survey guides establish a minimum survey effort, standard survey techniques and advice on implementation of the BAM requirements for credit generation (e.g. design of the species polygon). If applied correctly, they ensure a level of confidence in survey outcomes, reducing the need for consent authorities to request further information from the proponent/assessor and thereby streamlining the approval process.

1. Release Notes – regular data update in BAM-C
2. Regent honeyeater important areas – update
3. Threatened Plants Survey Guide – revised
4. Bilateral Agreement
5. Webinar – Applying for an assessment of reasonable equivalence
6. Biodiversity Offsets Scheme Credits transfer/retire form
7. Systems update
8. Biodiversity Conservation Trust update

3. Threatened Plants Survey Guide – revised

4. Bilateral Agreement – streamlining NSW and Australian Government Biodiversity Assessments

The NSW Biodiversity Offsets Scheme (BOS) has been endorsed by the Australian Government for assessment and offsetting of all projects requiring approval under the Commonwealth *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act). This was achieved via an amendment to an existing Bilateral Agreement with the NSW Government and formal endorsement of the Biodiversity Offsets Scheme (BOS) under the Australian Government's EPBC Act Condition Setting Policy. Proponents will need to meet their offset requirement for EPBC listed entities in accordance with [clause 6.6A of the Biodiversity Conservation Regulation](#), by retiring like-for-like credits, paying into the Biodiversity Conservation Fund or funding a conservation action.

More information on the amended Assessment Bilateral Agreement and Australian Government endorsement of the BOS is available at [Streamlining NSW and Australian Government Biodiversity Assessments](#).

The Department is planning to hold a Biodiversity Assessment Method support webinar in late May to further discuss the implementation of the Commonwealth's endorsement of the Biodiversity Offsets Scheme.

Assessment Bilateral Agreement

The Assessment Bilateral Agreement streamlines the assessment process for major projects that require both New South Wales and Australian Government environmental approvals. Under the Agreement, the NSW Government will continue to assess major projects on behalf of the Australian Government and recommend whether they should be approved under the EPBC Act. The Australian Government remains the decision-maker for the EPBC Act approval, considering the assessment report prepared by the Department.

Amendments to reflect the new NSW biodiversity and planning laws and improvements in the operation of the Agreement were finalised on 24 March 2020. These changes include:

- like-for-like offsetting is required for Commonwealth listed entities impacted by a controlled action
- projects by public authorities which are not state significant are no longer subject to the agreement
- actions in Commonwealth areas or by Commonwealth agencies are eligible for assessment under the Agreement where suitable as agreed by both the NSW and Australian governments.

1. Release Notes – regular data update in BAM-C
2. Regent honeyeater important areas – update
3. Threatened Plants Survey Guide – revised
4. Bilateral Agreement
5. Webinar – Applying for an assessment of reasonable equivalence
6. Biodiversity Offsets Scheme Credits transfer/retire form
7. Systems update
8. Biodiversity Conservation Trust update

3. Threatened Plants Survey Guide – revised

4. Bilateral Agreement – streamlining NSW and Australian Government Biodiversity Assessments

Australian Government endorsement of the NSW Biodiversity Offsets Scheme

The Assessment Bilateral Agreement only covers major projects (that is, where the NSW Government is the consent authority). To achieve streamlining benefits for all NSW proponents that use the Biodiversity Offsets Scheme and need approval under the EPBC Act, the Australian Government has endorsed the Biodiversity Offsets Scheme under its [EPBC Act Condition-setting Policy](#). This means that NSW proponents who need an EPBC Act approval can use the NSW BOS to assess and meet their biodiversity offset requirements.

Proponents are still required to meet the Commonwealth like-for-like offsetting standard. However, they now have the option of meeting that standard via:

- purchasing and retiring credits available via the public register
- establishing their own offset site and retiring credits
- paying into the Biodiversity Conservation Fund (BCF)
- funding a conservation action
- delivering mine site ecological rehabilitation

Where the Biodiversity Conservation Fund is used, it is the proponent's responsibility to notify the Biodiversity Conservation Trust (BCT) that their payment is for a controlled action. The BCT is then required to meet the Commonwealth offset standard, either by retiring like-for-like credits or funding conservation actions that are listed in the *Ancillary rules: Biodiversity conservation* actions, or other conservation measures approved by the NSW Minister for Energy and Environment that directly benefit the entity impacted.

Where an action will impact on a Commonwealth listed entity that is not listed under NSW law, the Australian Government will set the assessment requirements and consent conditions for that entity. The NSW Government is considering options to assess all Commonwealth listed entities under the Biodiversity Offsets Scheme. This will avoid separate offset requirements and further streamline assessments.

1. Release Notes – regular data update in BAM-C
2. Regent honeyeater important areas – update
3. Threatened Plants Survey Guide – revised
4. Bilateral Agreement
5. Webinar – Applying for an assessment of reasonable equivalence
6. Biodiversity Offsets Scheme Credits transfer/retire form
7. Systems update
8. Biodiversity Conservation Trust update

5. Webinar – Wednesday 20 May 2.00pm–3.00pm: applying for an assessment of reasonable equivalence

Vanessa Owen (Senior Project Officer in the Conservation Programs Team, DPIE) will outline the circumstances to which an assessment of reasonable equivalence for existing Biobanking credits and Biobanking credit obligations may be necessary and provide an overview of the assessment process

Click here to register: [BAM Support: Applying for an assessment of reasonable equivalence - BioBanking credits and the Biodiversity Offsets Scheme](#)

6. Biodiversity Offsets Scheme credits transfer/retire forms

New application forms for the transfer and retirement of biodiversity credits created by the Biodiversity Offsets Scheme (BOS) are now available.

The forms include the new credit classes and require all persons selling, retiring or buying credits to have their identity verified. Once received, the Department will create accounts in the BOAM system on behalf of new account holders.

The new application forms to transfer and retire BOS credits are available online on the [Biodiversity Offset Scheme Transactions page](#).

Completed applications should be submitted to BOSCREDITS@environment.nsw.gov.au.

We encourage all applicants to ensure that the application forms are complete and accompanied by the relevant information required. Incomplete applications will delay the processing time.

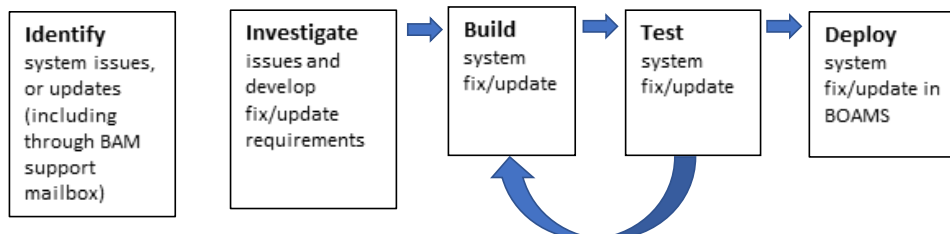
Please note these forms **do not** apply to transfer and retirement of BioBanking credits.

1. Release Notes – regular data update in BAM-C
2. Regent honeyeater important areas – update
3. Threatened Plants Survey Guide – revised
4. Bilateral Agreement
5. Webinar – Applying for an assessment of reasonable equivalence
6. Biodiversity Offsets Scheme Credits transfer/retire form
7. Systems update
8. Biodiversity Conservation Trust update

7. System information and updates

Thanks for your effort in reporting Biodiversity Offsets and Agreements Management System issues via the Biodiversity Assessment Method support mailbox. We understand the impact these issues can have on your work. See the table below which shows the current status of priority system changes.

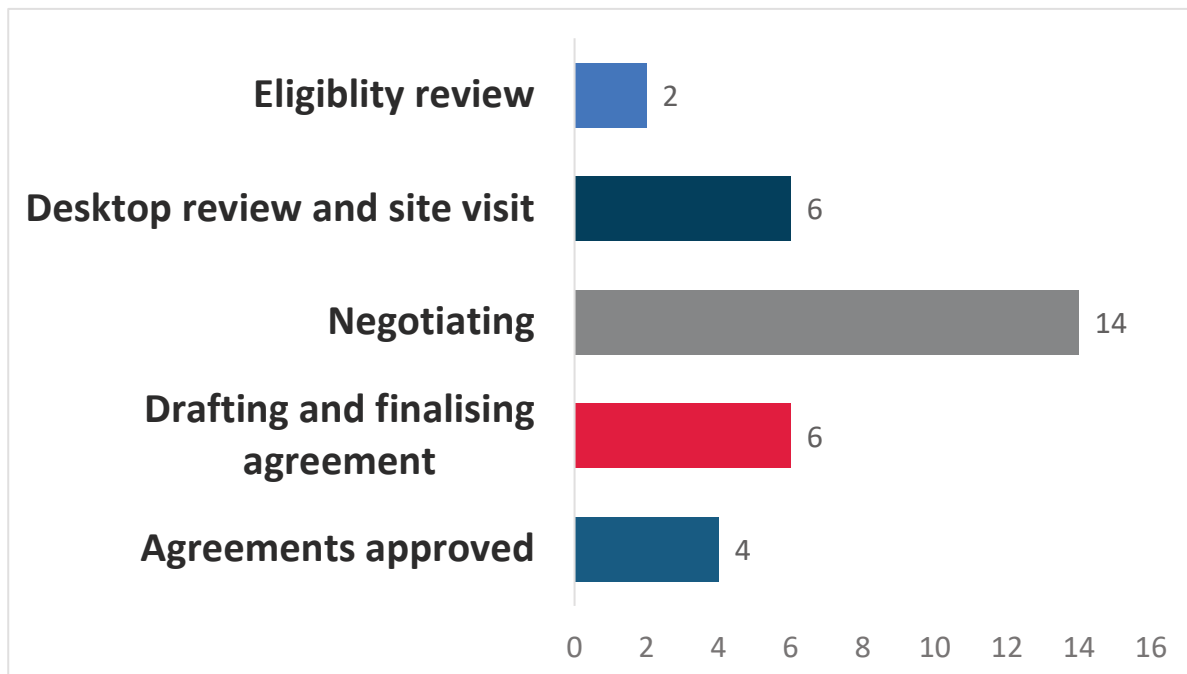
Description	Current Status* see flow diagram below
Consent Authority BOAMS access stage 2; Automated notification emails, Important Area Map view feature for consent authority users.	Investigate
Regular BAM – C data import; Updates information held in Threatened Biodiversity Data Collection (TBDC), geographic limitations and benchmarks.	Deployed 28 April
Lot/DP field updates; Lot/DP fields added to child cases and locked when case status is 'Submitted' to tie to credit transactions. Amend from fully open, manual field for tighter verification and assurance purposes.	Test
Planned work on improving usability of BAM-C; Work is planned through May and June to include new or improve existing functions. This includes Ability to add additional vegetation zones for threatened ecological communities (TEC) and non-TEC variants of a single plant community type (PCT). Amendments to streamlined assessment module. Modifications to streamline credit reports.	Investigate



1. Release Notes – regular data update in BAM-C
2. Regent honeyeater important areas – update
3. Threatened Plants Survey Guide – revised
4. Bilateral Agreement
5. Webinar – Applying for an assessment of reasonable equivalence
6. Biodiversity Offsets Scheme Credits transfer/retire form
7. Systems update
8. Biodiversity Conservation Trust update

8. Biodiversity Conservation Trust update

The Biodiversity Conservation Trust (BCT) is currently processing or has approved 32 Biodiversity Stewardship Agreement applications. A break-down of the status of the applications is shown below.



Four agreements have been approved and the biodiversity credits are now available on the public register. Additional credits approved under a variation to a Biobank Agreement have also been issued.

Accredited assessor survey

The Biodiversity Conservation Trust will shortly be sending out a survey to all Accredited Assessors following up on a 2019 survey which aimed to scope BSA application submissions across New South Wales.

In order for the BCT to provide a customer focused service and process BSA applications in a timely way, we are seeking your input. Accredited Assessors are a key stakeholder for the BCT and we would like to work closely with you to ensure the most efficient process possible.

© Department of Planning, Industry and Environment, 4 Parramatta Square, 12 Darcy Street, Parramatta NSW 2150. Phone: 1300 361 967; email: info@environment.nsw.gov.au; website: www.environment.nsw.gov.au.

The information contained in this publication is based on knowledge and understanding at the time of writing (28 April 2020). However, because of advances in knowledge, users are reminded of the need to ensure that the information upon which they rely is up to date and to check the currency of the information with the appropriate officer of the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment or the user's independent adviser.