Biodiversity Offsets Program

What Is the Biodiversity Offsets Program?

The Biodiversity Conservation Trust (BCT), through its Biodiversity Offsets Program:

- assists landholders wishing to enter into Biodiversity Stewardship Agreements over their land, to conserve their land, and to generate and sell biodiversity credits; and
- secures offsets on behalf of participants who make payments into the Biodiversity Conservation Fund.

How do Biodiversity Stewardship Agreements work?

If you are a landholder, company or local council you may wish to enter a Biodiversity Stewardship Agreement (BSA) that will generate biodiversity credits for sale. BSAs are voluntary agreements between the BCT and a landholder to permanently protect and manage an area of land to improve its biodiversity values. BSAs enable you to generate biodiversity credits, which you can sell to:

- a developer; or
- to the BCT; or
- to other interested parties.

There are a number of steps when seeking to enter into a Biodiversity Stewardship Agreement, and landholders should check the offsets page on the BCT website for more information.

What are biodiversity credits and how do they work?

Biodiversity credits are generated by landowners who commit to enhance and protect the biodiversity values on their land through a Biodiversity Stewardship Agreement.
What is the NSW Biodiversity Offsets Scheme?

The NSW Biodiversity Offsets Scheme was designed under the Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016 and is administered by the Office of Environment and Heritage. The scheme aims to avoid, minimise and offset the impacts on biodiversity values from development.

The offset scheme establishes a market-based system where impacts from development on one site can be offset by gains in biodiversity at another site. Biodiversity impacts and gains are calculated in biodiversity credits. Credits are traded between buyers and sellers on the market.

Biodiversity credits represent the expected improvement in biodiversity that will result from the protection and management of the site.

There are two main groups of credits: ecosystem credits and species credits. Biodiversity credits can then be sold to developers or the BCT to offset the impacts of development occurring elsewhere. The credits could also be sold to those seeking to invest in conservation outcomes, including philanthropic organisations or government. The sale of biodiversity credits generates ongoing permanent funding for the management of the site. The sale may also generate a profit for the landowner.

What is the Biodiversity Conservation Fund?

The Biodiversity Conservation Trust manages the Biodiversity Conservation Fund. This Fund allows developers or other participants to make payments into the Fund for their biodiversity credit obligations. The BCT then takes on the obligation to purchase or find these biodiversity credits.

How do I find out more information?

More information about the BCT's programs is available on the BCT website: www.bct.nsw.gov.au.