

Rules for Allocating Species to Categories in the Biodiversity Conservation Fund Charge System

Purpose

The *Biodiversity Offsets Payment Calculator Order 2022* (the **Calculator**) establishes the offsets payment calculator under section 6.32(1) of the *Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016*.

This document sets out the rules for determining how species will be allocated into the categories for the purposes of Part 4.2 of the Calculator. Species for these rules include species listed as Vulnerable, Endangered and Critically Endangered and populations listed as Endangered where the species is not listed as Vulnerable.

The rules for allocating species to a species credit price category are as follows:

1. Relative Cost Categorisation

- 1.1 Each species is allocated a category for relative costs, determined for each of the three criteria in Table 1.
- 1.2 In allocating the relative cost category for a species the Trust will consider:
 - a) the published survey guidelines for the Biodiversity Assessment Method (BAM) and the BCT's Ecological Monitoring Module (EMM)
 - b) the cost of management actions within existing Biodiversity Stewardship Agreements (BSAs) already identified for species credits
 - c) the key threats and management actions data available from Threatened Biodiversity Data Collection (TBDC)
 - d) the actions within Saving our Species (SoS) Conservation Projects that are necessary at BSA sites.
- 1.3 The Trust may also consider an expert review considering the factors outlined above.
- 1.4 The Trust will apply the highest category from any of the three criteria in Table 1 when categorising the species Survey, management and monitoring cost in the Species Credit Pricing Category in part 4 of the Calculator.

Table 1: Criteria to assess the survey, management and monitoring cost category for a threatened species

Relative Cost Criterion	Cost Category		
	Low (M1)	Moderate (M2)	High (M3)
Initial Survey	survey can be conducted any time of year; simple survey method; number of sites and or census/100 hectare is relatively low; detectability is high	in between low and high	narrow survey window and species cryptic; expensive or specialised survey method; number of sites/census to confirm presence is high and/or detectability is very low
Management Actions	management outcomes can be achieved using required actions in the BAM only	management outcomes can be addressed through actions that are likely to require ARMA* which specifically benefit the species	management outcomes required to obtain gain are ARMA that are highly expensive and/or difficult and/or experimental/unproven
Monitoring	no monitoring required by EMM; simple method; census levels/100 hectare is relatively low; detectability is high	in between low and high	narrow survey window and species cryptic; expensive or specialised survey method; census to confirm presence is high and/or detectability is very low

*ARMA = Active Restoration Management Actions described in the BAM

2. Difficulty to Offset Categorisation

- 2.1 Each species is allocated a category for difficulty to offset, determined for each of the four criteria in Table 2.
- 2.2 In allocating the difficulty to offset category for a species the Trust will consider:
- Threatened Biodiversity Data Collection (TBDC) information on geographic distribution and population size
 - Maps available in the TBDC and analysis of NSW Bionet threatened species records to determine the number of populations off park
 - If the species is identified as subject to Principle 4 on the Serious and Irreversible Impact (SAII) list maintained by DPE.
- 2.3 The Trust may also consider an expert review considering the factors outlined above.
- 2.4 The Trust will apply the highest category from any of the four criteria in Table 2 when categorising the species Difficulty to Offset in the Species Credit Pricing Category in part 4 of the Calculator.

Table 2: Criteria to assess the difficulty to offset category for a threatened species

Difficulty to Offset Category			
Difficulty to Offset Criterion	Low (D1)	Moderate (D2)	High (D3)
Geographic Distribution	known from greater than six locations and/or an AOO > 500 km ² or EOO > 5000 km ²	known from three to six locations and/or an AOO < 500 km ² or EOO < 5000 km ²	known from less than three locations and/or an AOO < 10 km ² or EOO < 100 km ² .
Population Size	More than 1000 individuals; or more than 10000 individuals where threats are known	50 to less than 1000 individuals; or 250 to less than 10 000 individuals if threats are known	less than 50 individuals; or less than 250 individuals where threats are known
Number of populations available for offsets	More than 10 populations off park	6-10 populations off park	Less than 6 populations off park
SAII Principle 4	SAII Principle 4 does not apply		SAII Principle 4 applies

Notes:

AOO = area of occupancy

EOO = extent of occurrence

Off park = outside the National Park and State Forest estate

SAII Principle 4 = The impacted species or ecological community is unlikely to respond to measures to improve its habitat and vegetation integrity, and therefore its members are not replaceable