

BIODIVERSITY OFFSETS IN NEW ZEALAND

How should we measure their effectiveness?

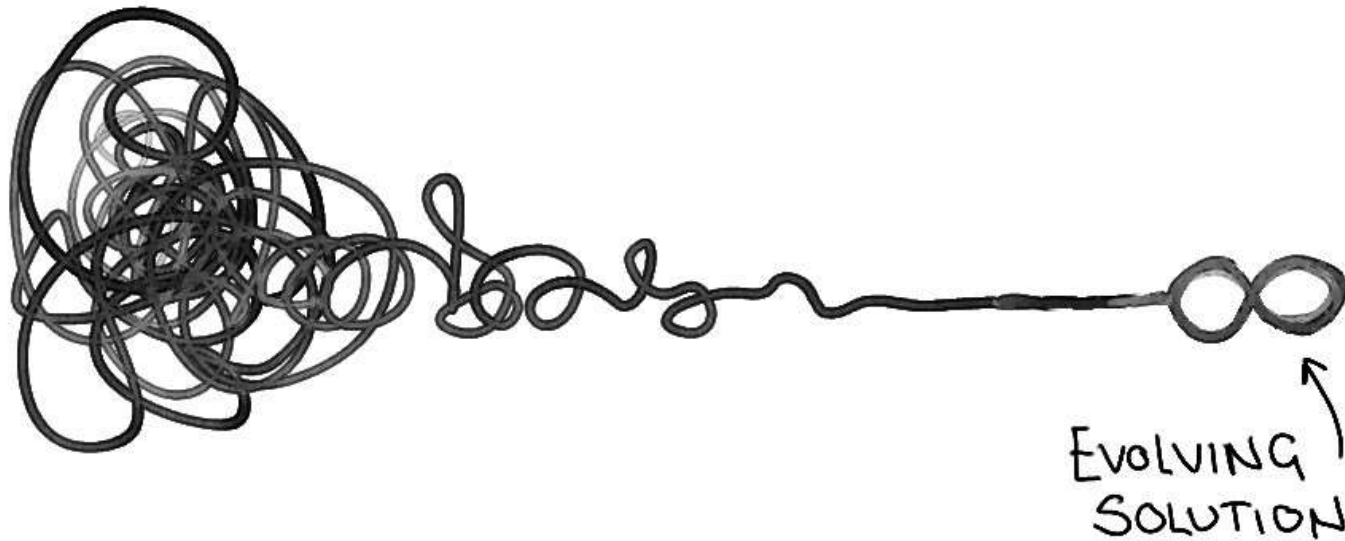


Dr Jamie Steer on behalf of the Biodiversity Working Group

Acknowledgments

- **Our project team:** Jenny Fuller & Craig Bishop (Auckland Council), James Griffin (Northland Regional Council), Ellie McNae (Environment Canterbury), Jamie Steer (Greater Wellington Regional Council)
- **Our contract team:** Fleur Maseyk & Marie Brown (The Catalyst Group), Graham Ussher (RMA Ecology), Gerry Kessels (Kessels Ecology), Mark Christensen (Natural Resources Law)

Are offsets the wicked solution?



Overview

1. What are biodiversity offsets?
2. Are they required under the RMA?
3. How do we differentiate them from other effects management actions?
4. How do we measure and secure them?
5. How should they be monitored and enforced?

What is biodiversity offsetting?

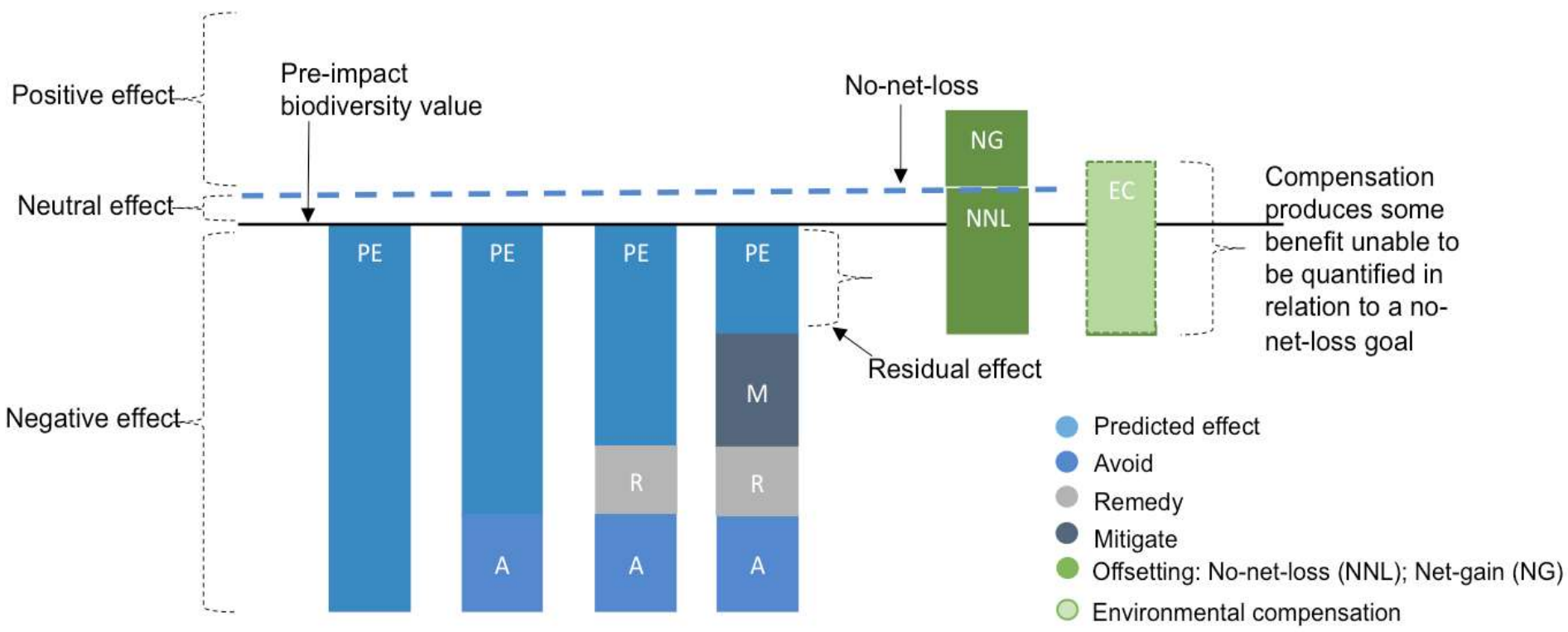
“Measurable conservation outcomes resulting from actions designed to compensate for significant residual adverse biodiversity impacts arising from project development after appropriate prevention and mitigation measures have been taken. The goal of biodiversity offsets is to achieve no net loss and preferably a net gain of biodiversity on the ground”
(BBOP, 2009).

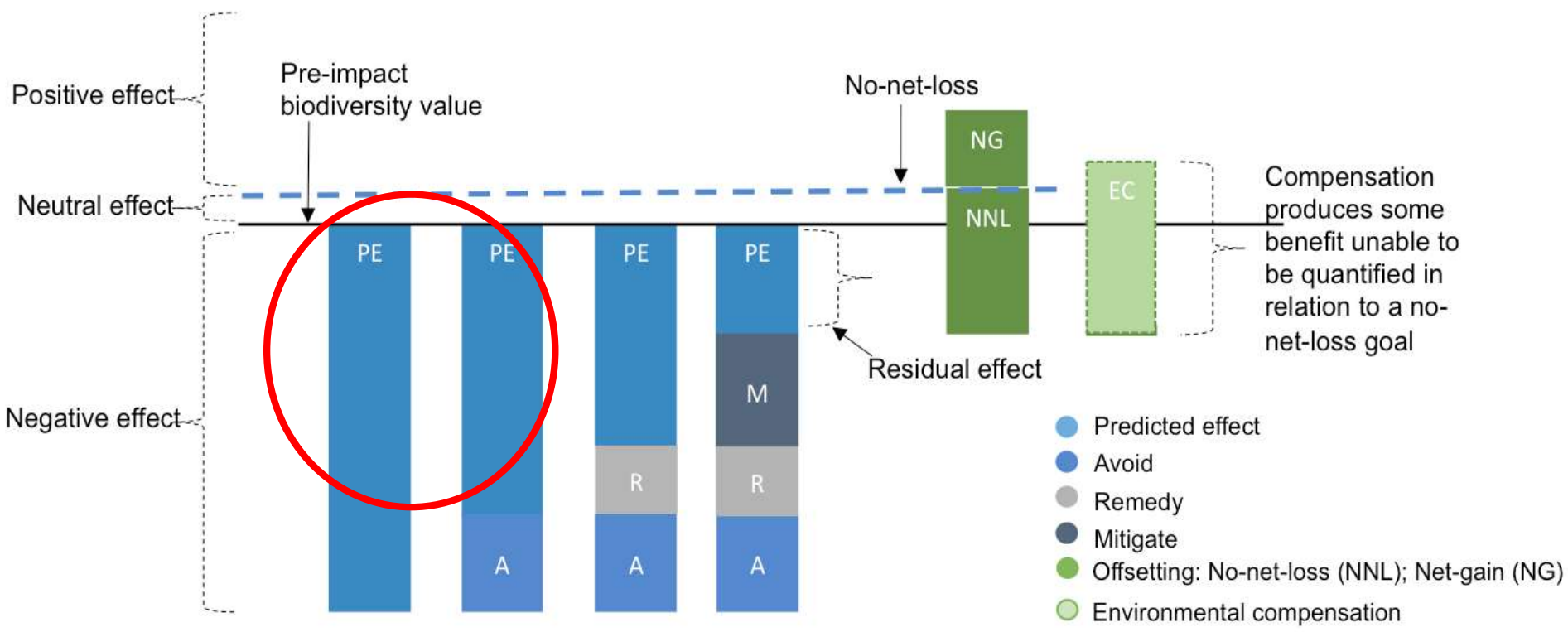
What is biodiversity offsetting?

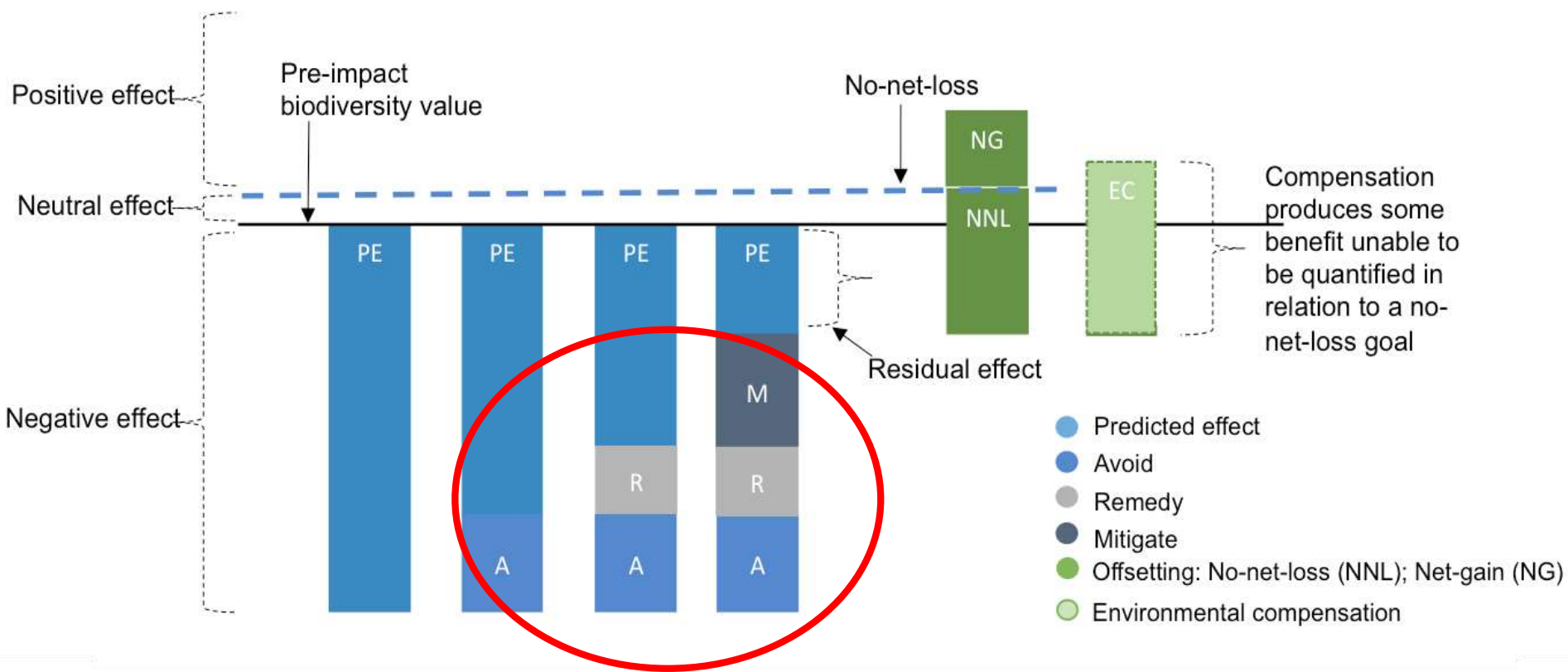
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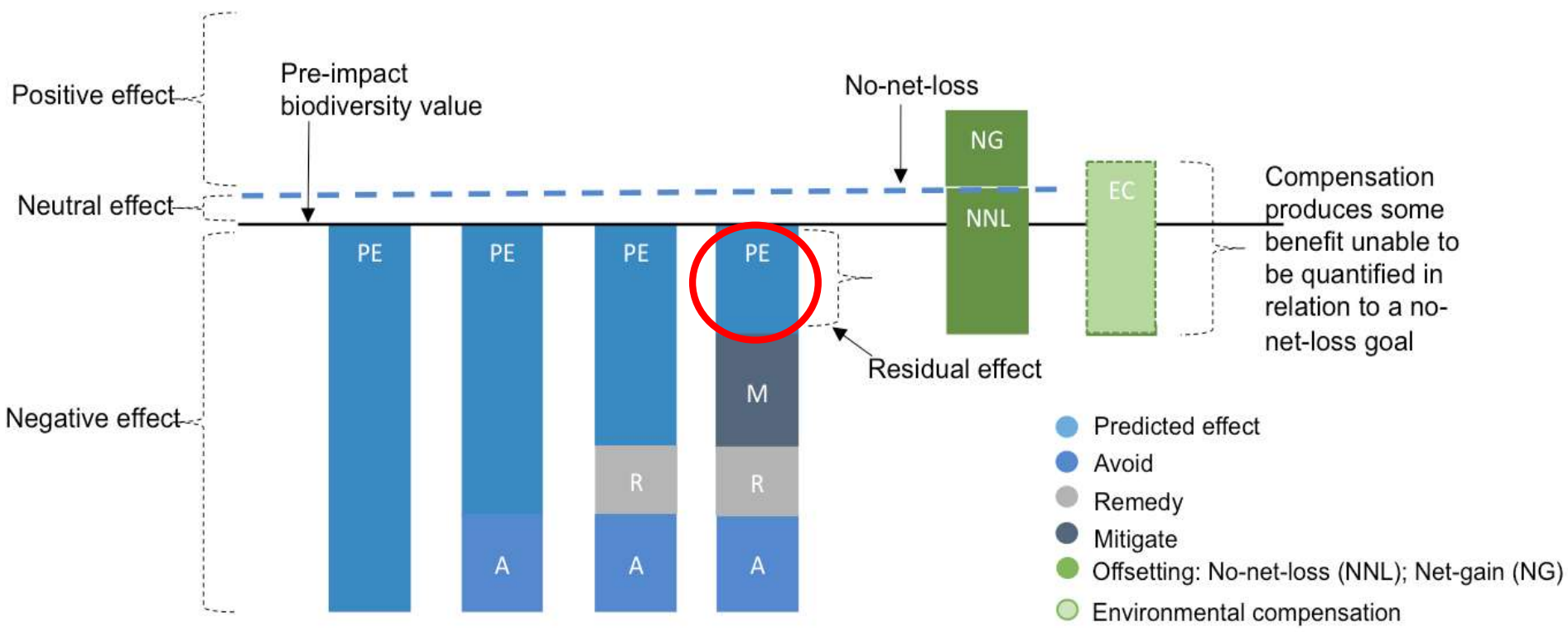
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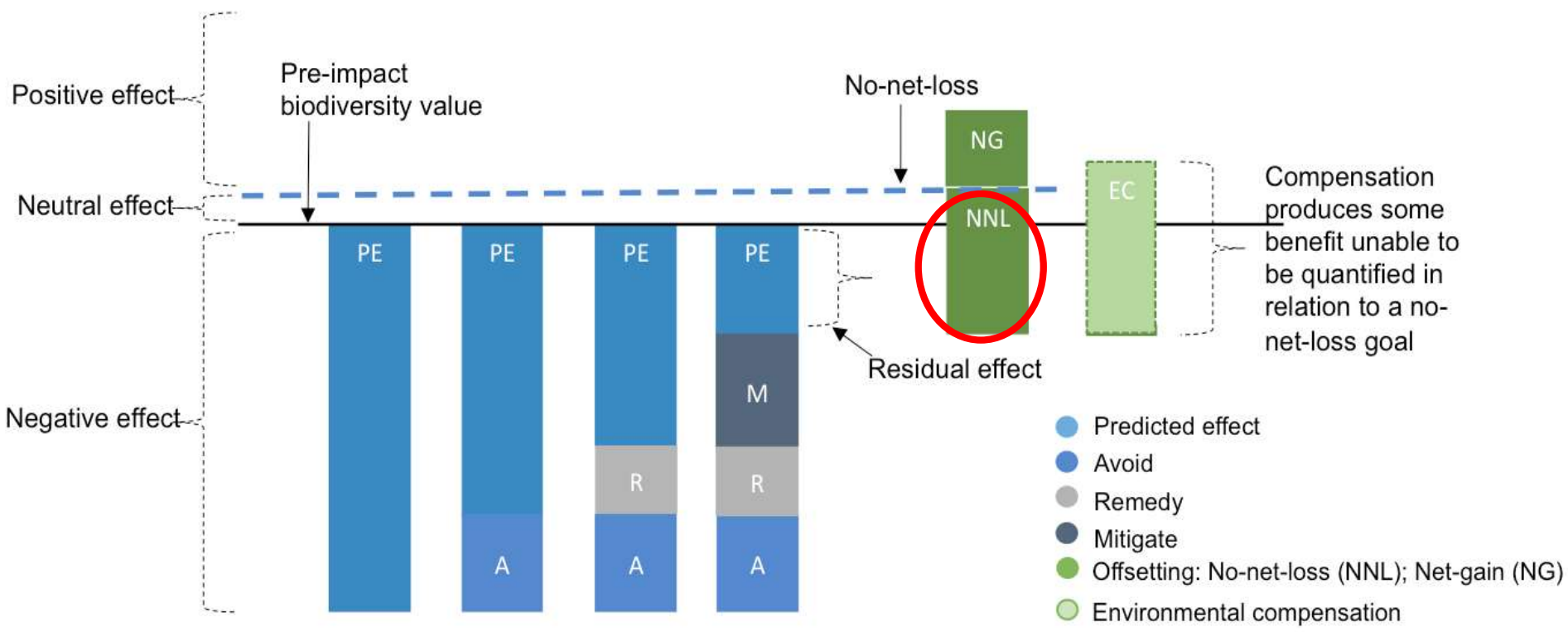
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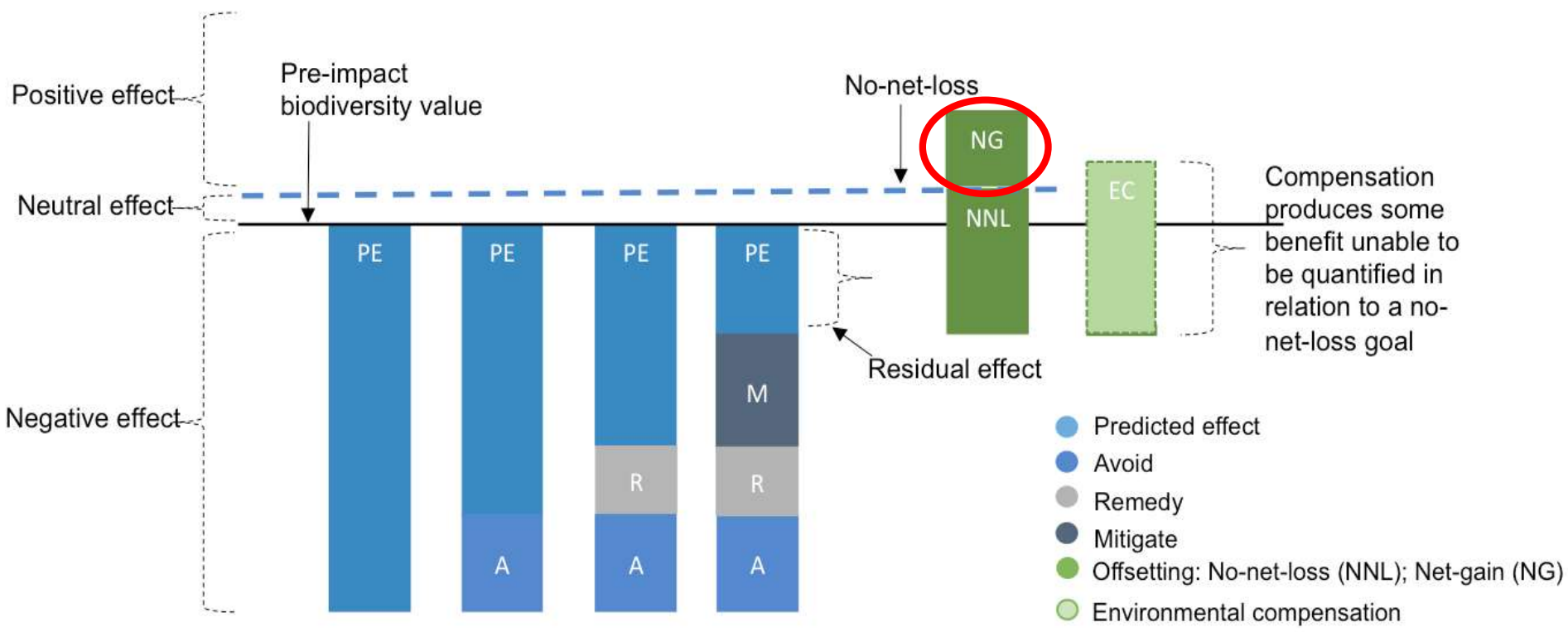


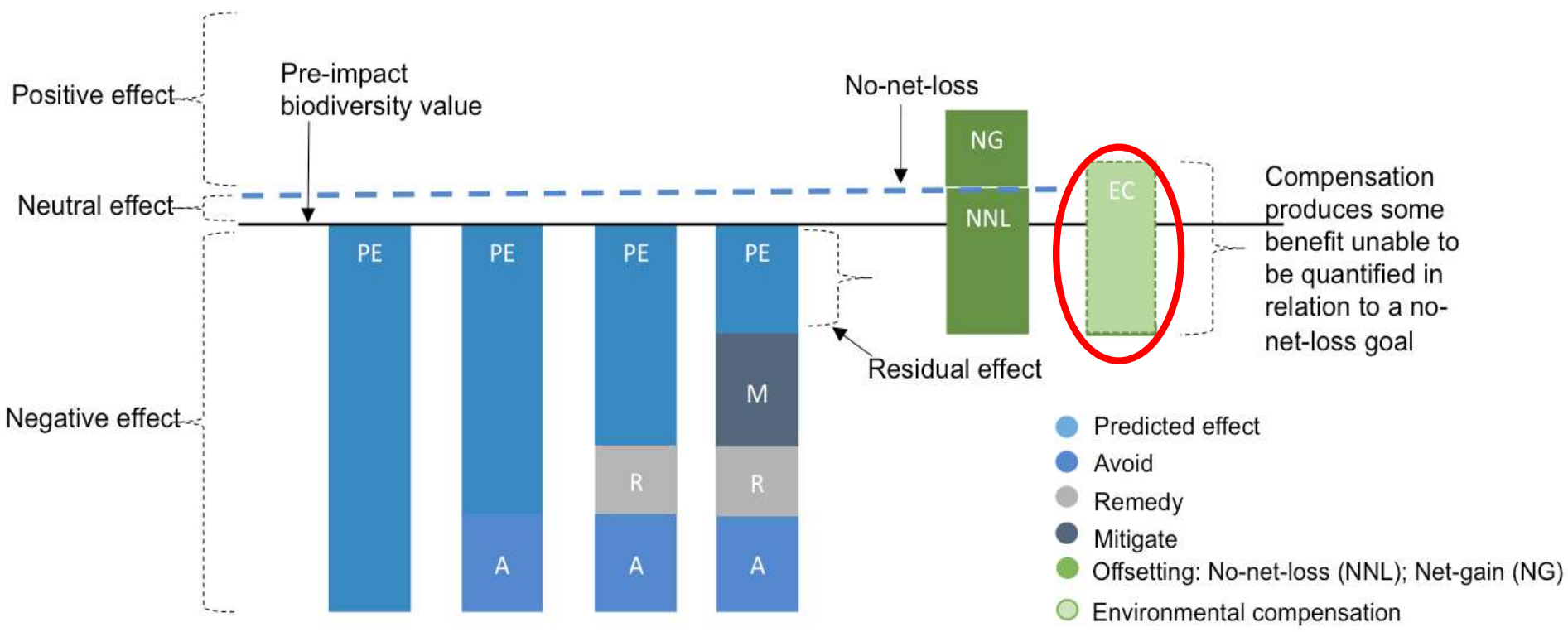






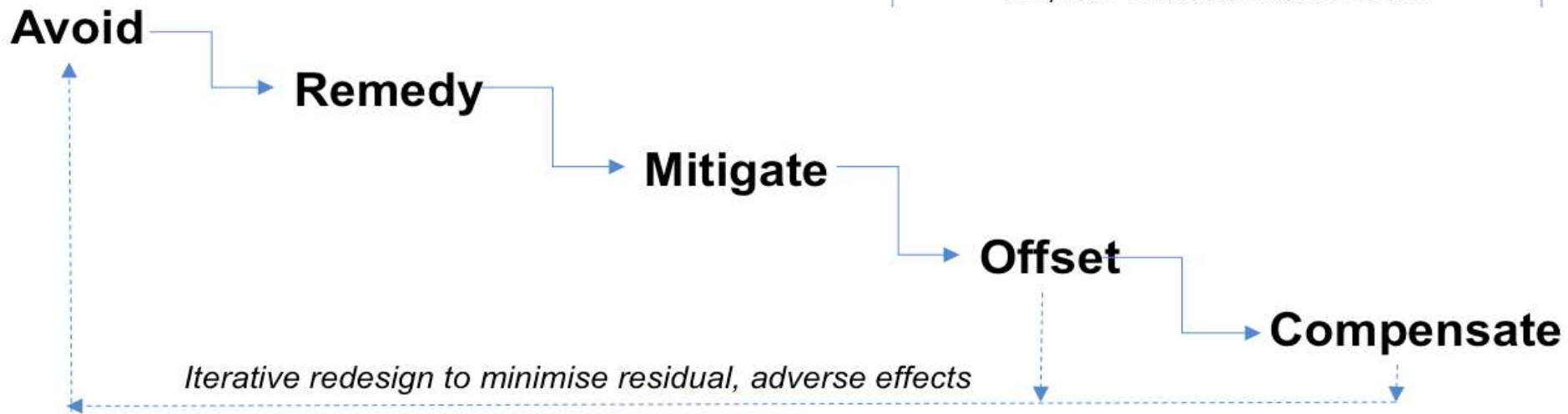






Avoid, remedy, mitigate define the size & nature of residual adverse effects

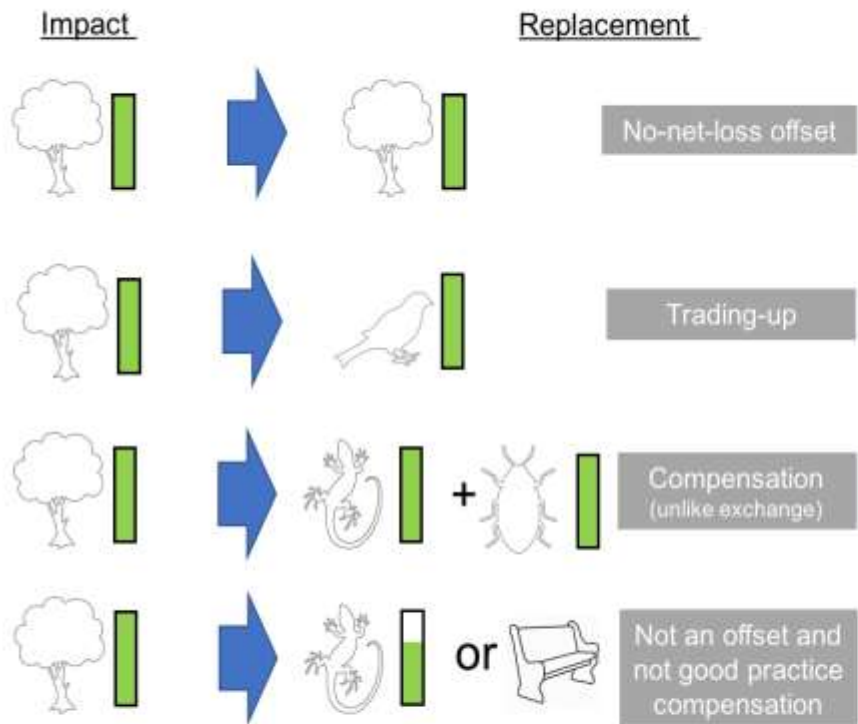
Response to residual adverse effects



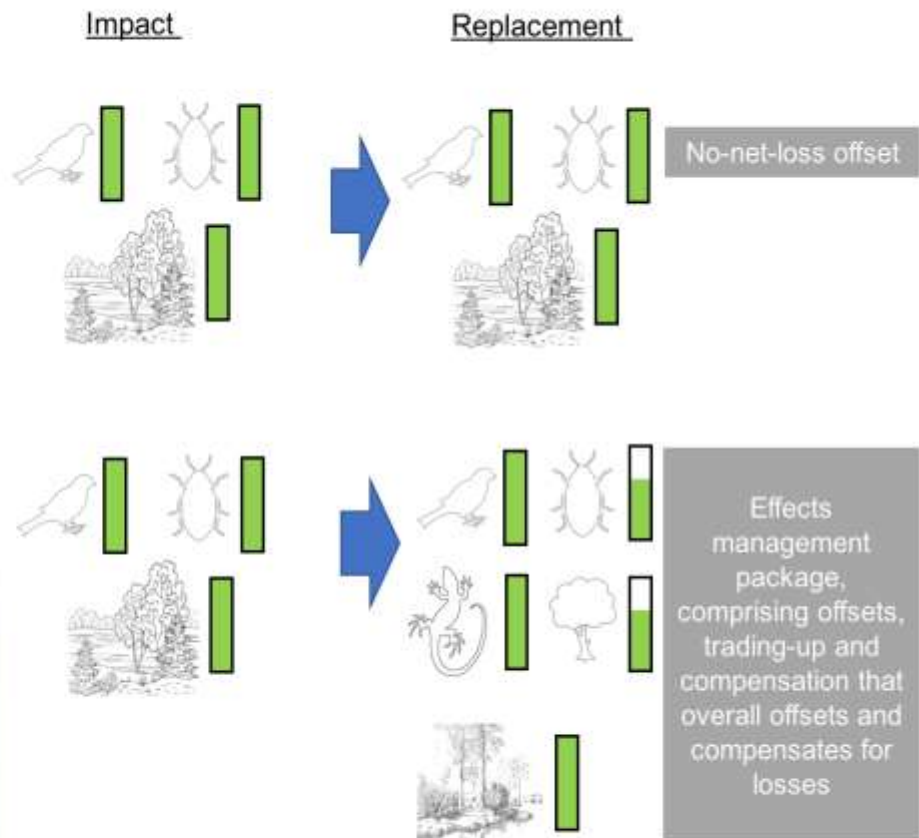
Is offsetting required under the RMA?

- No, but consent authorities must have regard to any proposals by applicants for the purpose of ensuring positive effects
- Can be considered under:
 - Section 104(1)(a) which requires the consideration of positive effects
 - Section 104(1)(ab) which provides for positive measures
 - Sections 168(a)(3)(a) and 171(1)(b)

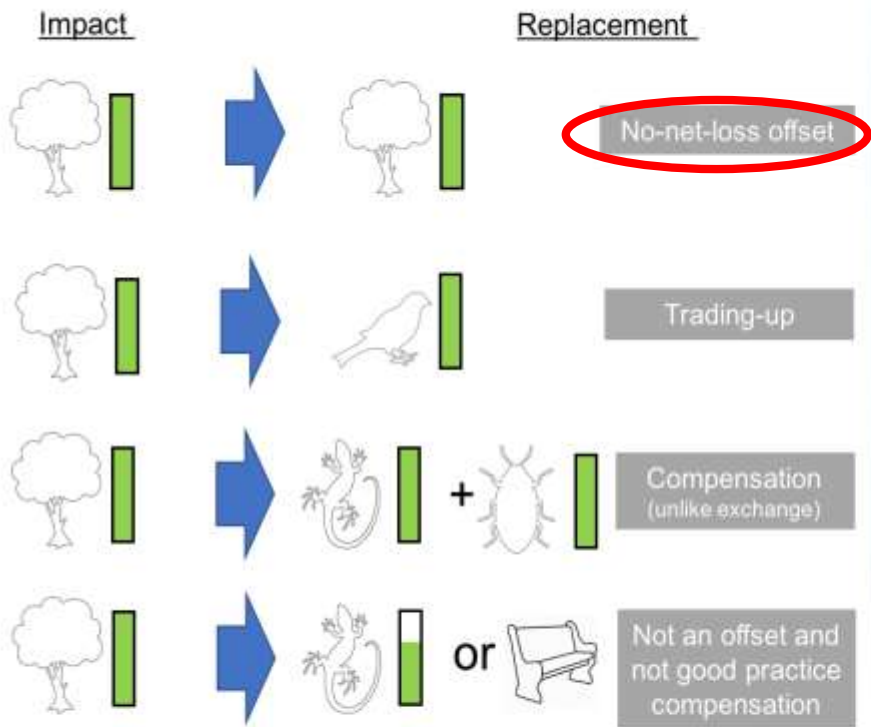
For individual biodiversity values



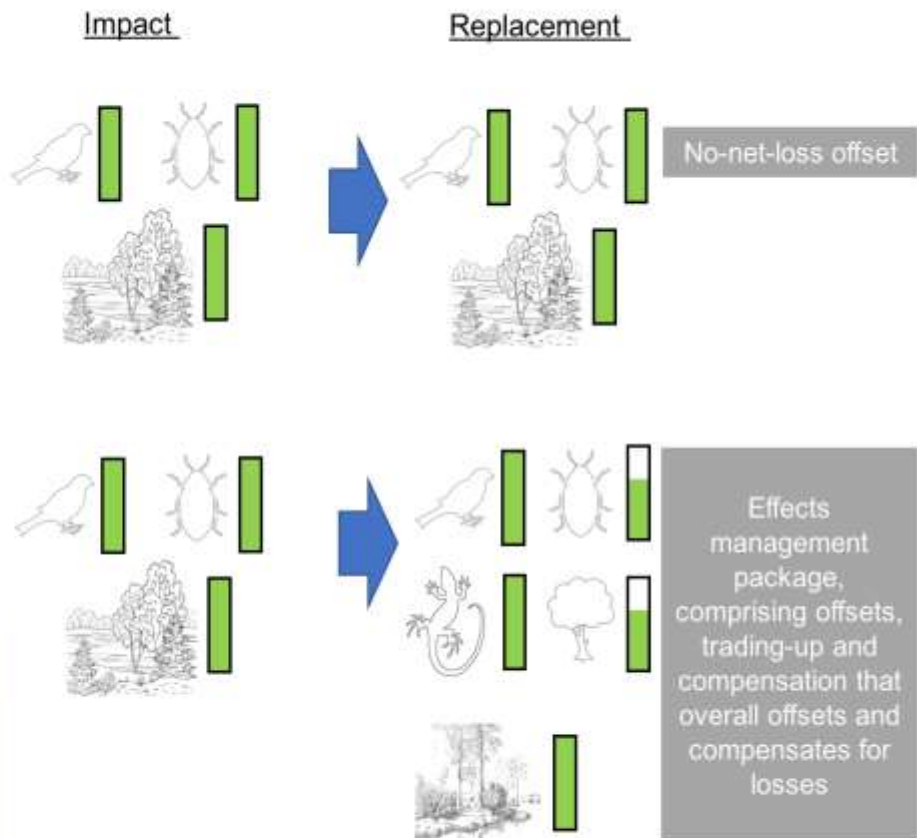
For biodiversity values across a project



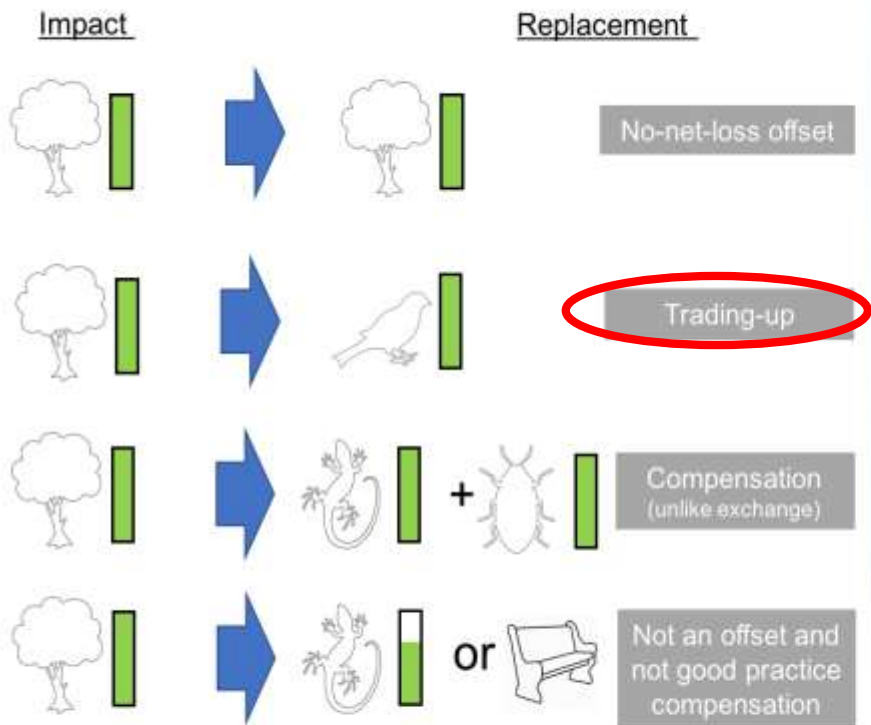
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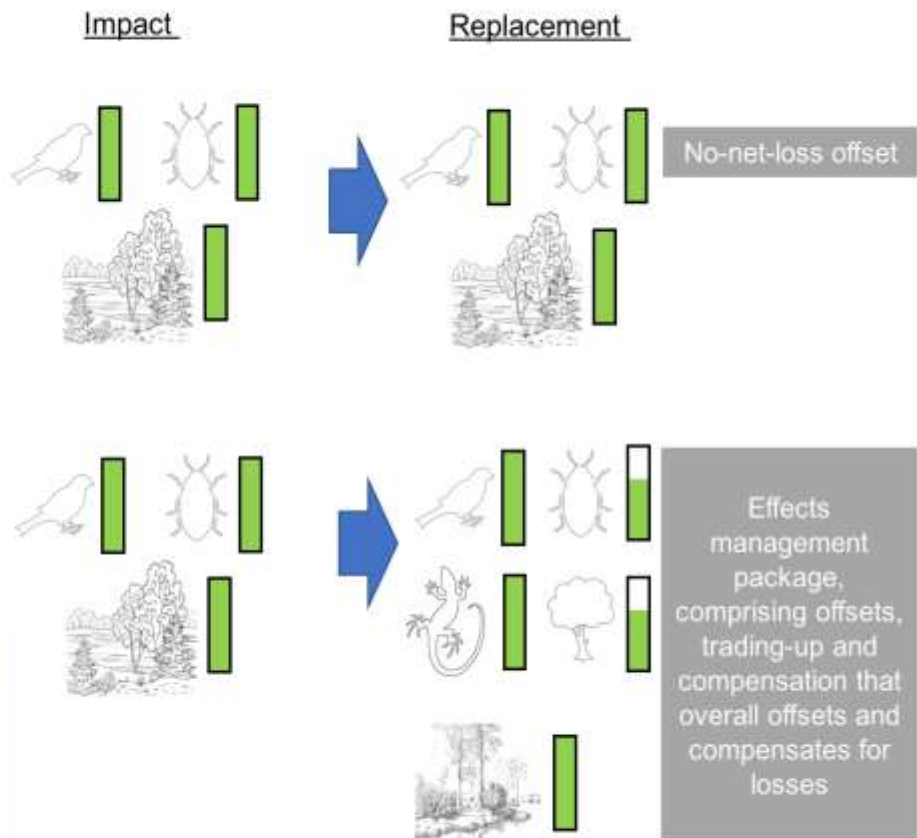
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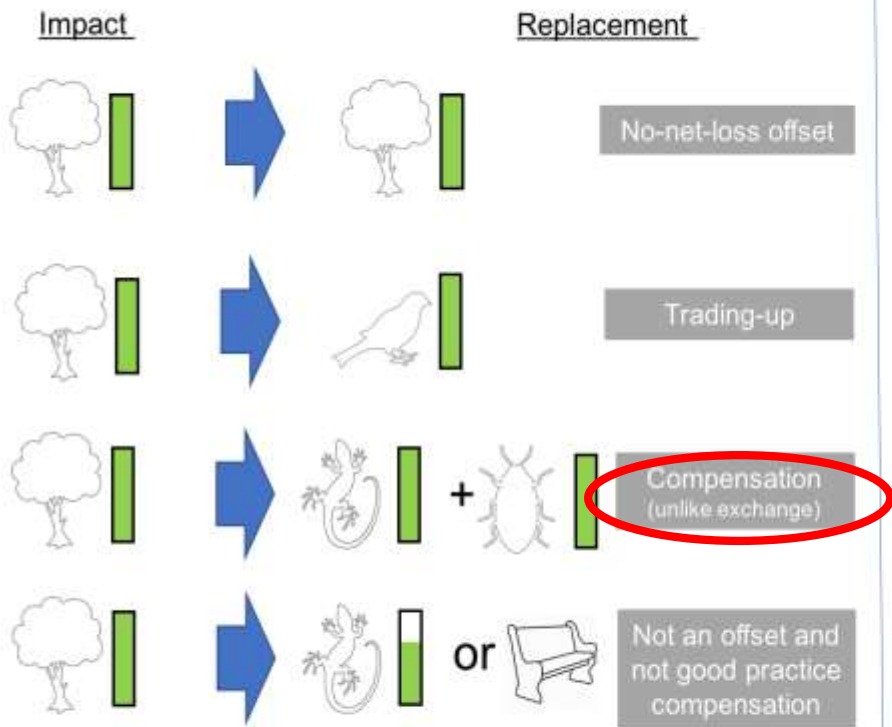
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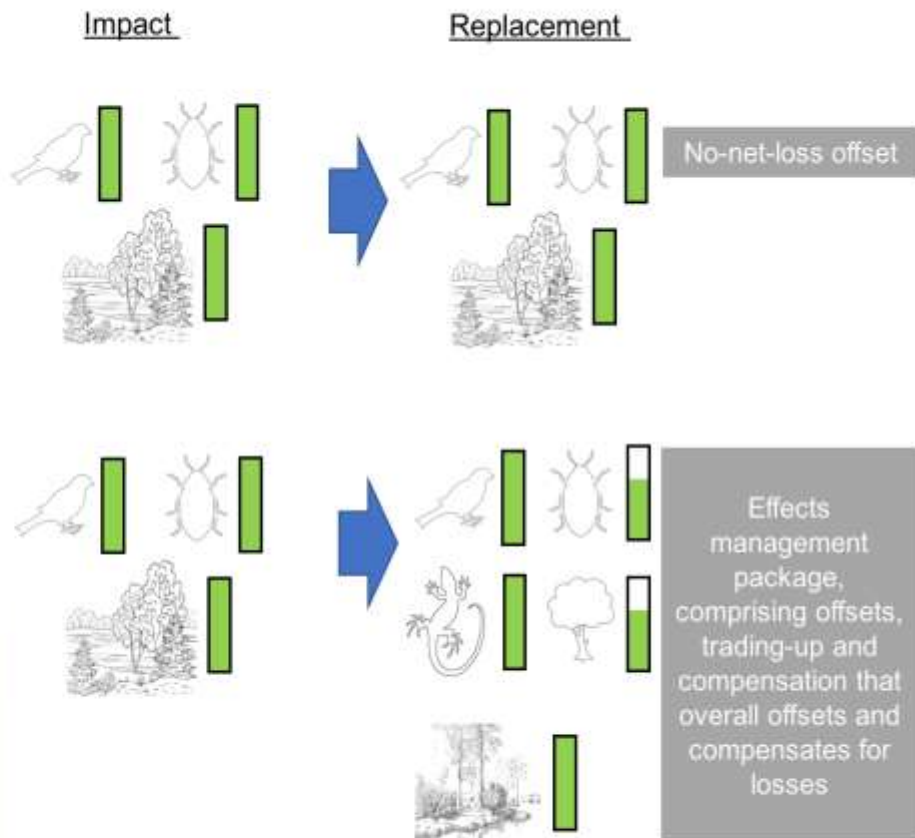
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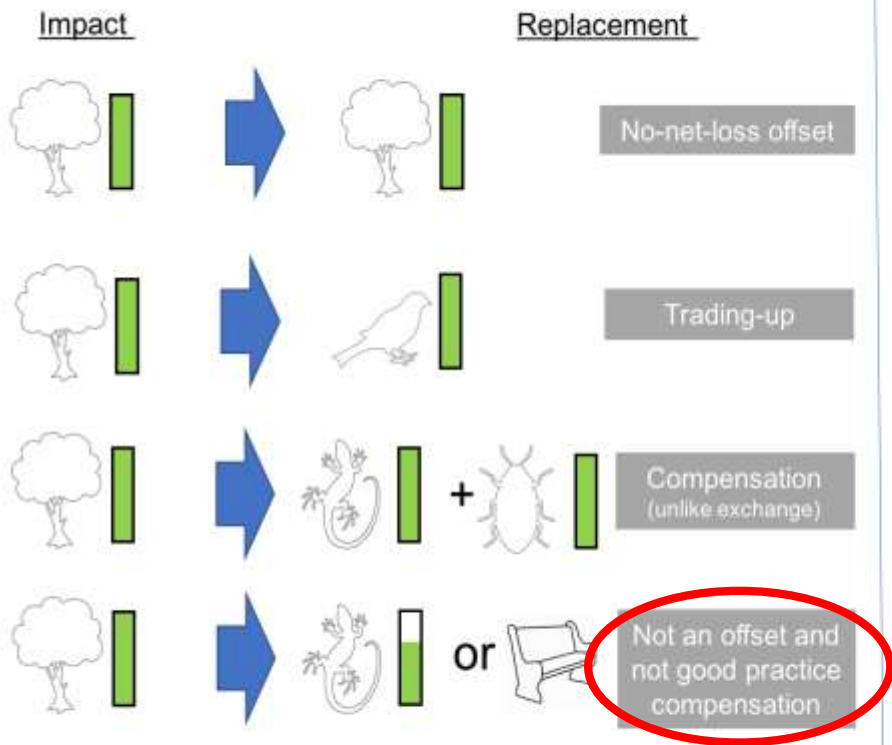
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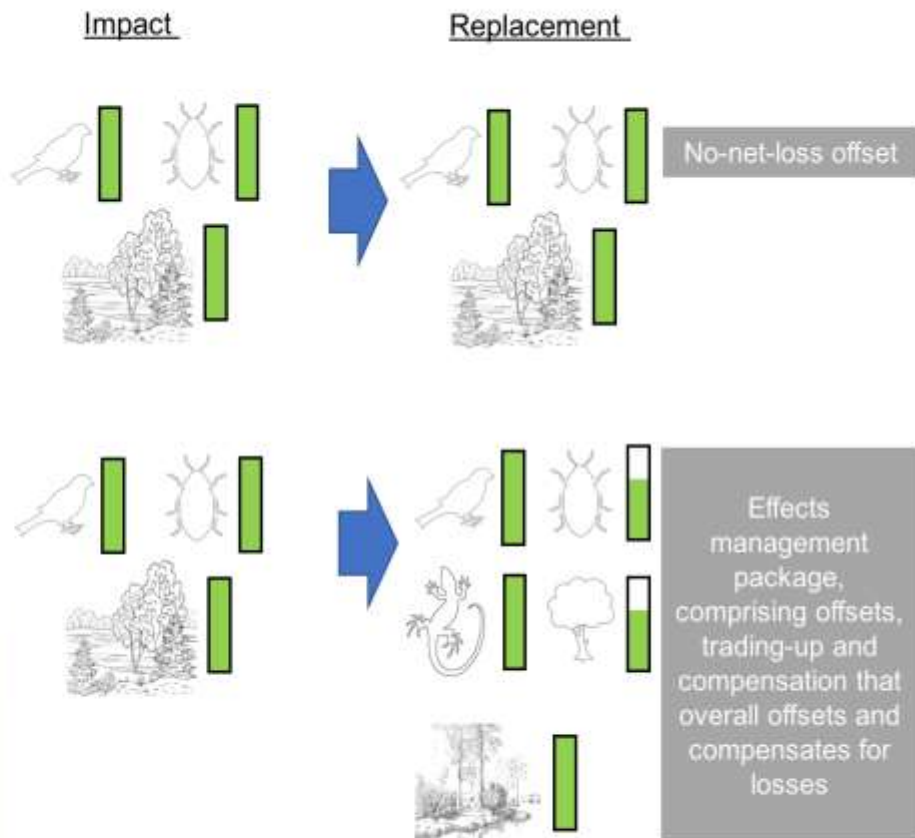
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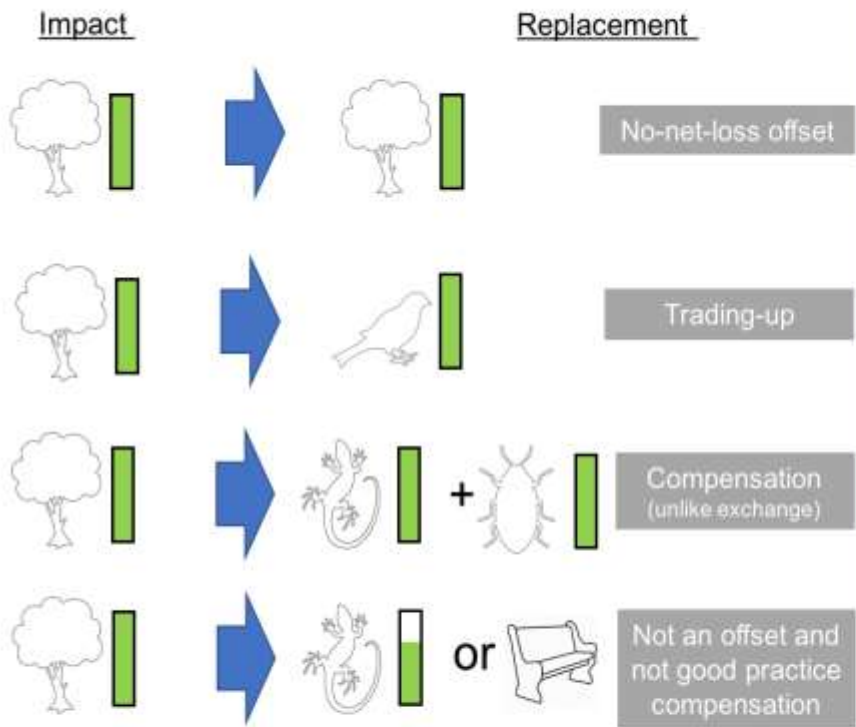
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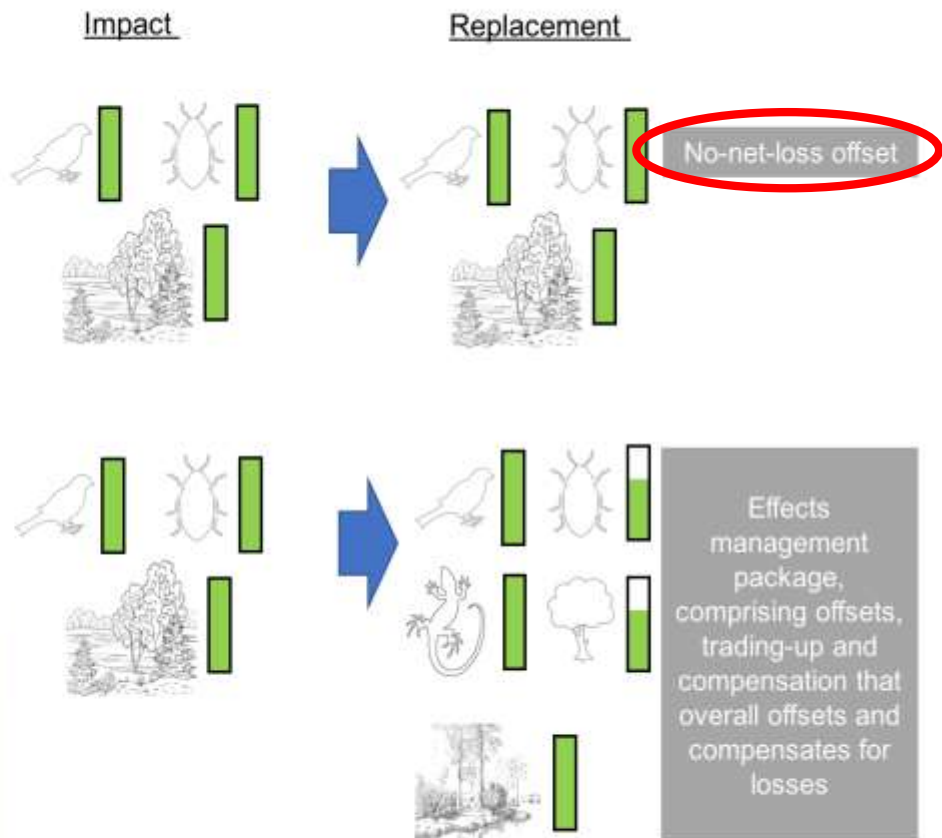
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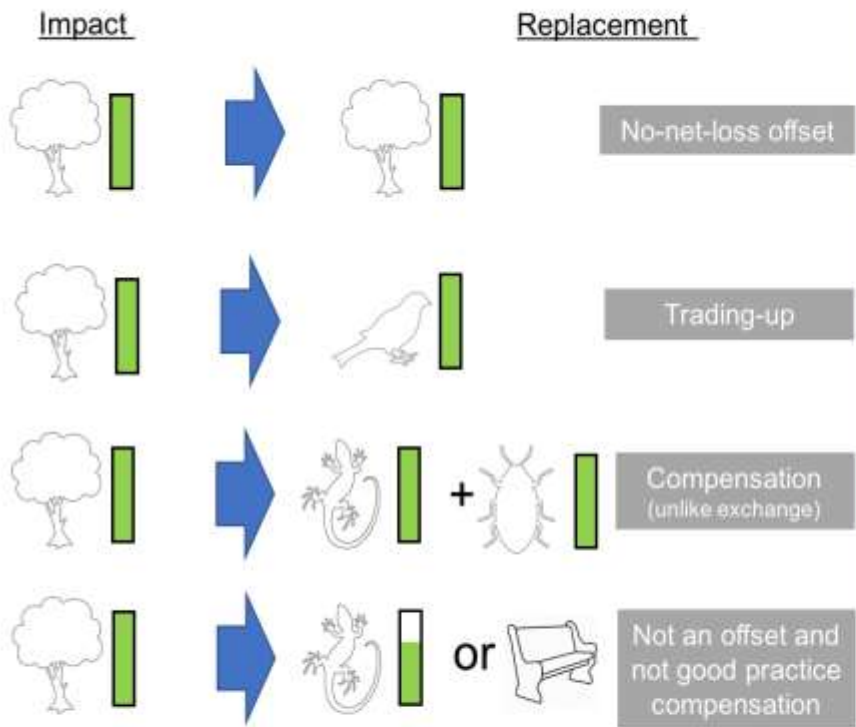
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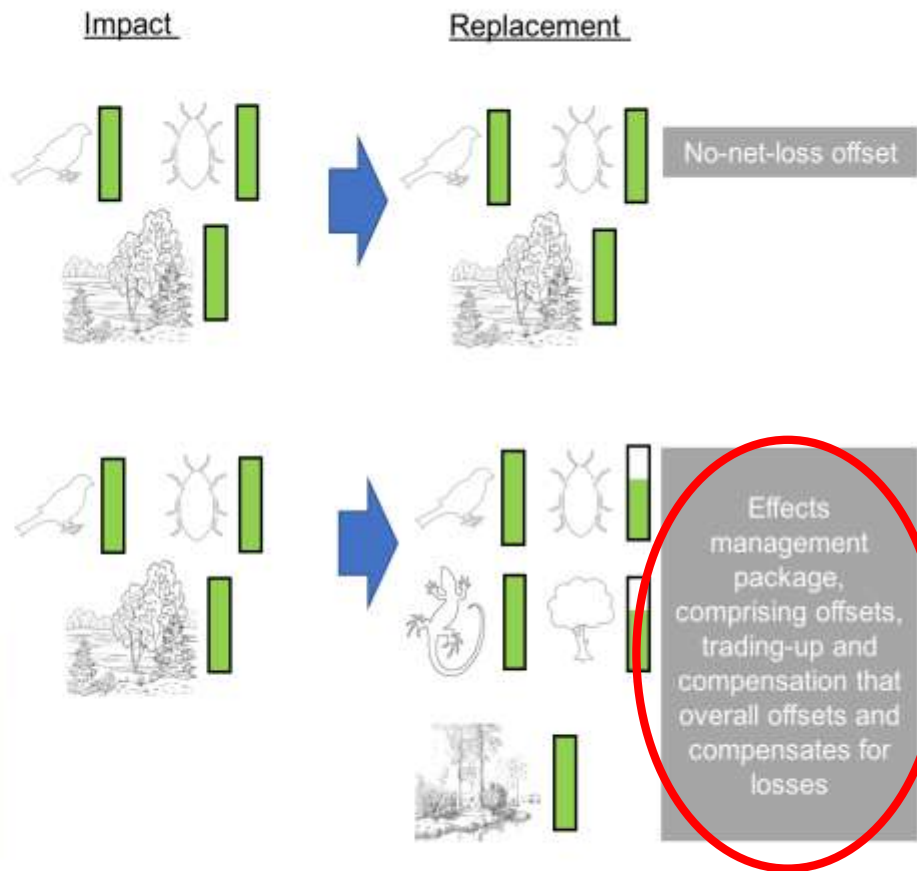
For biodiversity values across a project



For individual biodiversity values



For biodiversity values across a project



Equivalence of type requires identifying and maintaining valued biodiversity

Equivalence of amount requires seeking no-net-loss of area and condition, separately, of valued biodiversity

Equivalence over time requires achieving offset benefits within an appropriate timescale (e.g. 35 years or less)

Equivalence over space encourages offset sites to be located close to impacts, unless better conservation outcomes can be obtained elsewhere

Equivalence of biodiversity exchange

What level of proof is required?

- Factors that contribute to the level of proof required include:
 - The level of conservation concern
 - The likelihood of offset success
 - The complexity of biodiversity affected

How can offset gains be secured?

How can offset gains be secured?

- Early, ongoing and detailed engagement



How can offset gains be secured?

- Placing of permanent protection covenants over offset site



How can offset gains be secured?

- Ensuring that consent conditions stipulate the management activities that can happen



How can offset gains be secured?

- Ensuring that governance of the offset is clearly laid out



How can offset gains be secured?

- Where applicable, the use of financial bonds



How should we monitor offsets?

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- Allow for the explicit accounting of the biodiversity elements of interest

How should we monitor offsets?



- Allow for effort to be 'fit for purpose'

How should we monitor offsets?



- Be user-friendly and produce easily understandable outputs

How should we monitor offsets?



- Integrate assessments of risk and uncertainty of offset delivery

How should we monitor offsets?



- Include the ability to be applied to the habitat type of interest

Compliance and enforcement

- Early conversations between the applicant and the council to set expectations
- Sufficient technical expertise available to undertake the project requirements
- A detailed plan being required at the time of granting rather than submitted at a later date

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What is the call to action?



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1. Look out for the guidance!

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2. Sign up for one of the workshops

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1. Look out for the guidance!
2. Sign up for one of the workshops
3. Share the knowledge