



# NATIONAL BIODIVERSITY OFFSETS CONFERENCE 3.0

*From offsetting to nature positive*

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Photo by David Francis



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Presentation materials  
| [accessible here](#)

## ABSTRACT

### **My initial impressions of the NSW BAM and what it's doing for my career and nature positive opportunities.**

Through the lens of an Ecologist three years into their career, working in NSW in the era of implementation of the Biodiversity Assessment Method (BAM) and Biodiversity Offsets Scheme (BOS), it is evident that these systems are ambitious in achieving their desired 'no net loss' outcomes. As the Commonwealth is striving for a 'net positive' outcome, capturing an understanding of the affected, holistic ecosystem is becoming increasingly critical. The NSW system currently faces a dramatic reduction in the range of scientific data captured by consultants and therefore artificially limits the ability to achieve net positive outcomes, in part due to the narrowing of species targeted for survey and also because of categorical approaches. Through the investigation of numerous case studies and their threatened species surveys, BAM-C applications, and offsetting outcomes, it is clear there are several key faults in the current system's capability of achieving a net positive outcome. These faults include a reduction and redundancy of census-style approaches to fauna surveys; an application of rigid parallel traverse based threatened flora searches; a lack of acknowledgement of high value habitat which may not be currently interlocked with threatened species requirements; assessor bias; and a lack of required recognition of consideration of supplementary legislation, particularly the NSW Fisheries Management Act 1994. These case studies have identified current BAM produced datasets are lacking information on the holistic ecosystem as well as obtaining limited to no knowledge of a range of near-threatened species. This presentation explores the implications of these current faults within the BAM and the ways in which the consequences they pose in hindering the achievement of a nature positive outcome in NSW biodiversity legislation and policies. Even with limited career experience, it is apparent that various aspects of the BAM system must evolve to ensure nature positive outcomes.

## SPEAKER BIOGRAPHY

Alexandra Cottle is a young Ecologist with three years of experience in the industry. She has been heavily involved in numerous projects requiring assessment under the current Biodiversity Assessment Method (BAM). These include several Biodiversity Development Assessment Reports (BDARs) and Biodiversity Stewardship Site Assessment Reports (BSSARs). During her short career experience, she has undertaken many BAM field assessments as well as aided in the BAM Calculator assessments and delivery of the reports. Her green perspective has formulated many questions on the effectiveness of the BAM in achieving its goal and ways in which it can be improved for the future.