

NSW Biodiversity Conservation Trust

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NSW Biodiversity Conservation Trust Business Plan 2021-24

Our purpose

Partnering with landholders to enhance and conserve biodiversity

Our vision

Vibrant private land conservation areas protecting our unique and diverse plants and animals

Our aims

Our aspirational aims over the life of our four-year business plan are to:

- enter 400 private land conservation agreements with landholders
- secure 200,000 hectares of new conservation areas
- protect examples of another 50 unique under-represented NSW Landscapes



About BCT

Statutory Trust

- Established by the NSW Biodiversity Conservation Act, with affairs managed by an independent Board.
- Enters into statutory agreements with private landholders.
- Delivers a Commonwealth approved covenant program.

Biodiversity Conservation Investment Strategy

- BCT private land conservation investment is guided by a scientifically based government approved strategy.
- Programs are designed to protect and fund management of highest biodiversity priorities, delivering strategic outcomes and best biodiversity value for money.

Private land conservation funding

- NSW Government has close to \$250 million invested in private land conservation in NSW
- The scale of the biodiversity crisis means Government cannot address this challenge alone.
- The BCT is seeking to accelerate private land conservation by attracting private finance, through corporate partnerships and donations

The NSW Biodiversity Conservation Trust is managing **2261 conservation agreements** with landholders over **2.3 million hectares**, representing **2.8% NSW**

- 1127 in-perpetuity PLC agreements with landholders over more than 381,000 hectares
- 369 permanent offset agreements over more than 94,590 hectares
- 774 term or revocable agreements across more than 1.78 million hectares (do not count as part of the National Reserve System)



Our Programs

The BCT delivers five main programs:

- Landholder Support Program
- Conservation Management Program
- Conservation Partners Program
- Biodiversity Conservation Education Program
- It also has specific functions within the Biodiversity Offsets Scheme, which is delivered by NSW Department Planning & Environment



BCT Conservation Management Program

- Landholders enter a conservation agreement with BCT that is registered on the title of land. The program offers landholders an opportunity to secure an additional revenue stream to protect, restore and manage native vegetation and biodiversity on their land.
- BCT has a statutory endowment fund that supports inflation indexed annual conservation management payments to Landholders. \$239.9 million has been invested to support Landholders with conservation management action.
- The program is well subscribed and has enabled uptake of private land conservation in priority biodiversity areas such as the highly cleared landscapes of the NSW sheep-wheat belt.

BCT Conservation Partners Program

- Landholders enter conservation agreement or wildlife refuge agreement with BCT.
- Landholders are supported by grants to manage conservation areas - activities such as weed and pest control, fencing to control access from stock; and addressing impacts from fires and floods. \$5.33 million has been approved to support conservation management action.
- The program is over-subscribed by conservation minded landholders across the state.



Biodiversity Assessment

- Measuring biodiversity is core business of the BCT.
- The BCT biodiversity assessment metric enables comparative assessment of biodiversity value across sites, supporting best biodiversity value for money investment.

Ecological Monitoring

- The BCT Ecological Monitoring program enables assessment of management effectiveness, biodiversity gain and informs adaptive management
- Informs evaluation and reporting of ecological outcomes at site, regional and state scales

Landholder Support and agreement auditing

- Ongoing management – land management advice, grants, agreement auditing
- Education and empowerment - supporting landholder networking, delivering resources and training





The BCT is seeking to **accelerate** private land conservation through **innovative approaches** and partnerships with corporate and philanthropic investors

The BCT Co-investment prospectus was launched to accelerate existing PLC program areas and delivery mechanisms:

- Revolving fund
- Large scale conservation projects
- Aboriginal partnerships
- Biodiversity plus carbon projects
- Targeted programs to protect endangered species and ecosystems



Biodiversity
Conservation
Trust



Large scale conservation project - Gayini Nimmie-Caira

A partnership with Aboriginal landholders, the Nari Nari Tribal Council, the Nature Conservancy (supported by philanthropic investment), the Murray Darling Wetlands Working Group and University NSW.

The NSW Government has committed \$42M in perpetuity for the ongoing protection and management of the land.



The BCT potentially has **market-ready opportunities** for landholders to engage in the **Nature Repair Market**

These include opportunities to:

- Enable landholders with existing or new (unfunded) Conservation Partner agreements to access the market – to fund active management and restoration and expand the pool of interested landholders.
- Enable landholders who cannot participate in our (funded) Conservation Management agreements because our programs are oversubscribed to access the market
- Use conservation agreements as a method to certify co-benefits in carbon projects



The Nature Repair Market could be strengthened through the following BCT recommendations

- The Commonwealth establish a method under the Nature Repair Market that accredits conservation agreements and other in-perpetuity covenants established through existing state-based schemes.
- The Commonwealth work with the BCT to ensure the Biodiversity Assessment Instrument aligns with the BCT's best practice assessment metric and ecological monitoring module used in NSW.

The BCT's delivery of private land conservation is vital to achieving nature positive outcomes and 30 by 30 targets



