



A conference organised by the  
Wando Conservation & Cultural Centre Inc, Narrabri  
and supported by the  
NSW Nature Conservation Council,  
taking place on Gomeroi Traditional Land

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*Who should attend?  
environmental governance professionals, academics, ecologists,  
environmental scientists and conservationists*

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**Organised by:**



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# BIODIVERSITY OFFSETS: Problems and Consequences

CONFERENCE PROGRAMME, Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2025  
The Crossing Theatre, Narrabri

- 8:30AM Welcome to Country  
Uncle Neville Samson, Gomeroi Elder and Traditional Custodian of the Leard Forest
- 9:00AM Introduction to conference  
Chair **Mr James Ryan, Environmental Lawyer, Stringybark Legal**
- 9:10AM **KEYNOTE SPEECH.** “Nature conservation vs Biodiversity Offsetting and Nature Repair: is the new wave of nature monetisation saving or sacrificing threatened species and ecosystems?”  
**Mr Brendan Sydes, National Biodiversity Policy Lead, Australian Conservation Foundation**  
*Speaking from Dja Dja Wurrung Country in Central Victoria*
- 9:50AM “Is the new NSW Biodiversity Conservation Act going to repair the biodiversity offsets problems? Lessons from Parliamentary Inquiries and the NSW Audit Office”  
**The Hon Sue Higginson MLC (Greens), NSW Legislative Council, Chair, Legislative Council Committee Portfolio Committee No. 7 - Planning and Environment Biodiversity Conservation Amendment (Biodiversity Offsets Scheme) Bill 2024**
- 10:30AM Morning tea
- 10:50AM “Enforcement failure is regulatory failure – barriers to the legal enforcement of biodiversity offsets conditions and opportunities for nature disclosure under some of the new sustainable finance requirements”  
**Ms Kirsty Ruddock, Managing Lawyer, Safe Climate Corporate & Commercial team, Environmental Defender’s Office**
- 11:30AM “Koalas cheated by inadequate legislation, inadequate ecological assessments, deceptive offsets, and power imbalances within planning processes: the problems, consequences, and what best practice should look like”  
**Ms Maria Matthes, Threatened Species Conservation Ecologist, Healing History and Koala rescuer, researcher, advocate and educator**

- 12:10PM **PANEL DISCUSSION. “Biodiversity calculators, counterfactual scenarios and other methods. Are the mechanics of biodiversity offsetting adequate in identifying the ‘value’ of disturbed and undisturbed land.”**
- Mr Brendan Sydes**  
**Ms Kirsty Ruddock**  
**The Hon Sue Higginson MLC**  
**Ms Maria Matthes**
- 1:00PM LUNCH
- 2:00PM “Leard State Forest: Maules Creek offsets, false mapping, lack of ground-truthing and other abuses of science”  
**Mr Phil Spark, Ecologist, North West Ecological Services**  
**Ms Wendy Hawes, Director and Ecologist, The Envirofactor Ecological Consultancy**
- 2:30PM “What the Maules Creek blasting prosecutions tell us about offset fallacies”  
**Ms Anna Christie, Research Officer, Wando Conservation & Cultural Centre Inc, co-founder of Leard Forest Research Node**
- 3:00PM “Proposed expansion of Maules Creek and Boggabri Mines and the Leard Regional Biodiversity Strategy update. How they make a mockery of the biodiversity schemes”  
**Ms Elizabeth Laird, Maules Creek community member**  
**Ms Roselyn Druce, Maules Creek community member**
- 3:30PM Afternoon tea
- 3:45PM “Citizen science and why community monitoring is an essential part of ground-truthing and ecological verification”  
**Ms Chris Schuringa, The Sunrise Project, former Campaign Coordinator, Victorian Forest Alliance and veteran of the [Goongerah Environment Centre](#), Victoria**  
**Mr Scott Daines, South East Forest Rescue Inc**