

# Exploring the economic opportunities for environmental work on farms

## Why environmental work?

There are many reasons why farmers undertake environmental projects on their farm, for example:

- Altruistic (eg. more vegetation cover and connectivity for wildlife)
- Improving productivity through efficiencies (eg. changing land use on low productivity land, improving infrastructure for stock management to lower labor costs)
- Biosecurity (eg. Boundary buffers)
- Improving land values.
- There are usually a suite of productivity co-benefits even if the motive is purely altruistic.
- However, there are costs to undertake these projects in the cost of infrastructure (fencing, trees etc.) and opportunity costs (lost productivity).



There are some ways available to offset those costs.

### Landcare Tax Concessions



Many works for environmental benefit are fully tax deductible if you are funding them yourself, and the Tax Office has a series of advice factsheets on them. Make sure your accountant is aware of these. There are also tax concessions for holders of in-perpetuity conservation covenants, as well as rate concessions with Local Government.

Some links for more information

<https://www.agriculture.gov.au/agriculture-land/farm-food-drought/natural-resources/landcare/tax>

<https://www.dcceew.gov.au/environment/biodiversity/conservation/covenants>

## Business/Product Accreditation or Certification



Work that contributes to formal certification may assist in branding/marketing, increase market access or price premiums and bring economic benefit that way. Some examples are:

- Climate Active (for carbon neutral businesses)
- Accounting for Nature (environmental certification)
- Climate Friendly (sustainability accreditation)
- Deforestation accreditation

## One-off Grants and subsidies



There are many small and medium size grants that are administered by Foundations, Trusts and other organisations that may be available from time-to-time eg. Birdlife Australia, Norman Wettenhall Foundation, World Wildlife Fund. Not all are available to individual landholders but by working with your local Landcare group you may be able to access them.

Keep in touch with your local Landcare group and agencies to see opportunities.





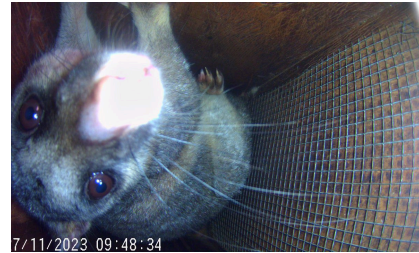
# Private Land Conservation

## Land for Wildlife

This is a voluntary program that is offered for landholders wanting some support with managing their land for biodiversity. It doesn't require any formal on-title agreement but gives access to support through newsletters and a landholder network around the state of people interested in preserving land for wildlife. There are sometimes grant programs associated with it that can help offset the costs of managing the land. For more information visit <https://cen.org.au/projects/land-for-wildlife/>. HLN is an accredited deliverer of this program.

## NSW Biodiversity Conservation Trust

A range of voluntary opportunities in Private Land conservation are available to landholders outside of the credits markets and are an opportunity to access income and management funding for looking after native vegetation for habitat on-farm. <https://www.bct.nsw.gov.au/>



## Environmental/Natural Capital Markets

Policy is shifting towards the use of market-based systems, rather than grants, to achieve environmental change through the market exchange of credits. Environmental markets are relatively young but are developing fast. To get started there are a few key tools and websites to visit:

The **Australian Carbon Credit Unit Scheme (ACCU's)** is the regulated Carbon credit market in Australia. <https://cer.gov.au/schemes/australian-carbon-credit-unit-scheme>

The **Nature Repair Market scheme** is the Australian Government's Biodiversity market mechanism based on biodiversity credits <https://cer.gov.au/schemes/nature-repair-market-scheme>

### NSW Biodiversity Offsets Scheme – Biodiversity stewardship agreements

The NSW government operates a biodiversity credits scheme that is looking for native vegetation areas in the state to increase the credit supply for developments.

Consult your local Landcare group or Natural Resource Management agencies and to keep in touch and get support around these opportunities.

## Tools

PlanR (<https://planr.gov.au/>) is the Australian Government's tool that is available to explore your carbon and biodiversity opportunities under the Clean Energy Regulator.

The LOOC-C (<https://looc-c.farm/>) Tool is a tool developed by CSIRO to explore landscape options and opportunities for carbon abatement that can help estimate the potential for soil carbon sequestration on your property.

Credits near me app <https://www2.environment.nsw.gov.au/topics/animals-and-plants/biodiversity-offsets-scheme/maps-systems-and-resources/credits-near-me>