



# Frequently asked questions: advanced offsets

## Question 1: What is an advanced offset?

Advanced environmental offsets are a supply of offsets for future use, transfer or sale by proponents or offset providers. Unlike conventional offsets, which are generally put in place to compensate for the residual adverse impacts of an action **following** approval, advanced offsets are implemented **prior** to any impact occurring. This increases the ecological benefit of the offset; thereby reducing a proponent's overall offset liability.

Further information about advanced offsets is on the Department's website.<sup>1</sup>

## Question 2: What should I do if I have an advanced offset proposal?

If you are **about to start or have started a proposed advanced offset**, then:

### CHECK

- » check that your advanced offset captures the information required by the advanced offsets criteria (see Question 4)

### NOTIFY (OPTIONAL)

- » notify the Department that you are developing an advanced offset proposal (see Question 5)

### COMPLETE

- » complete your advanced offset proposal and capture the information required by the advanced offsets criteria (see Question 4)

### SUBMIT

- » submit your advanced offset proposal to the Department for assessment and nominate the specific action that the offset is for (see Question 6).

If you have **completed an advanced offset**, then:

### CHECK

- » check that your advanced offset has captured the information required by the advanced offsets criteria (see Question 4)

### SUBMIT

- » once you have captured all of the information required by the advanced offset criteria, submit your advanced offset to the Department for assessment, nominating the specific action that the offset is for (see Question 6).

### Question 3: When will I find out if my proposed advanced offset is approved?

The Minister for the Environment (or delegate) decides whether an advanced offset is suitable to offset the significant impacts of an action after the action has been determined to be a controlled action.

The decision may be made at the same time or after the decision about approval of the action is being made.

### Question 4: What information do I need to provide when submitting an advanced offset proposal?

Advanced offset proposals need to be well planned and monitored to demonstrate their conservation benefit. To enable a proposal to be formally considered through the assessment and approval process it must contain certain information. This is set out in the '[Criteria for advanced offsets](#)' fact sheet.<sup>1</sup>

### Question 5: How do I notify the Department that I am about to start or have started an advanced offset proposal?

If you wish to notify the Department that you are about to start (or have started) an advanced offset, please email [epbc.referrals@environment.gov.au](mailto:epbc.referrals@environment.gov.au) and include:

- name, contact details and ABN/CAN (if applicable) of the person/organisation proposing to undertake the advanced offset
- location of the advanced offset (i.e. the state/territory)
- matters of national environmental significance that the advanced offset aims to benefit
- the start date for the proposed advanced offset.

The Department will use this information to evaluate the proposal. The notification may also serve as evidence that your offset activities commenced on or after 16 July 2000 and that the primary purpose of the offset activities is to protect or manage a matter of national environmental significance.

Notifying the Department that you have started your advanced offset does not guarantee the proposal will be approved as an advanced offset. Please note that the Department will not assess your proposal until the associated action has been determined to be a controlled action.

### Question 6: When and how can I submit an advanced offset proposal for assessment to the Department?

Advanced offset proposals should only be submitted to the Department:

- as a part of a referral for a proposed action under Part 7 of the EPBC Act (if you think that the proposed action is a controlled action) (**referral stage**) or
- during the assessment of a controlled action under Part 8 of the EPBC Act (**assessment stage**) or
- when you wish to use your advanced offset to satisfy conditions attached to an approved action under the EPBC Act (**post approval stage**).

At the referral stage, please include your advanced offset proposal with your referral form.

At the assessment or post approval stage, submit your advanced offset proposals directly to the Director of the section managing your action. Include the EPBC number of the action for which you wish to use your advanced offset (e.g. EPBC 2016/9999) and the words 'EPBC Act advanced offsets proposal'.

### Question 7: What will happen after I submit my proposal to the Department?

The Department will **check** if you have provided the required information for your advanced offsets proposal (see advanced offsets criteria) and **notify** you whether your advanced offsets proposal has met the information requirements and therefore can be assessed.

The Minister (or delegate) makes the final decision on whether an advanced offset is adequate to compensate for the residual significant impacts of an action.

<sup>1</sup> [www.environment.gov.au/epbc/publications/policy-statement-advanced-environmental-offsets-under-epbc-act](http://www.environment.gov.au/epbc/publications/policy-statement-advanced-environmental-offsets-under-epbc-act)