

2014 Regional Snapshot

Are our groundwater resources being sustainably used?

The Adelaide and Mount Lofty Ranges NRM region relies on groundwater for agricultural production and domestic use. Groundwater also sustains a range of ecosystems.

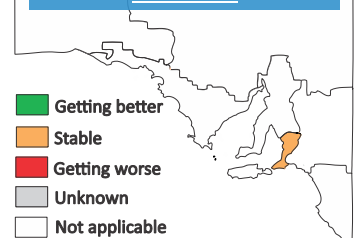
Excessive use of groundwater can cause water levels to drop and salinity to increase, which can impact industries and degrade water-dependent ecosystems, particularly if [climate change](#) impacts on rainfall patterns and reduces the rainfall needed to refresh groundwater aquifers in the future.

The groundwater resources we rely on the most and those that were at the greatest risk of degradation are now [prescribed](#) with sustainable use limits defined in [water allocation plans](#). These plans ensure water resources will be able to provide for us in the future. There are 5 prescribed groundwater management areas in the Adelaide and Mount Lofty Ranges NRM region (map below), which are made up of 13 separate groundwater resources (aquifers) that have sustainable limits determined for water use.

This report card assesses if groundwater resources are used within their sustainable limits, based on [groundwater status reports](#) and water allocation plans. The water levels and salinity of groundwater are reported [here](#).



Trend in the use of prescribed groundwater resources



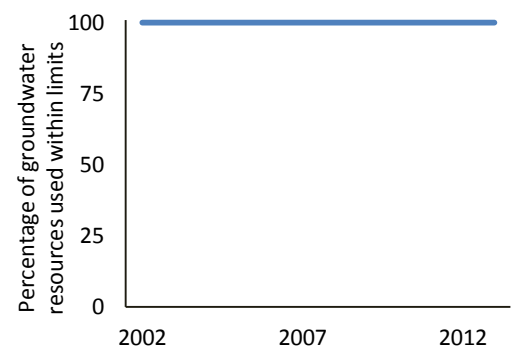
State target
Maintain the productive capacity of our natural resources

Trend (2009-13) Stable Groundwater resources have been used within sustainable limits since 2002

In the Adelaide and Mount Lofty Ranges NRM region, there are 5 prescribed groundwater resource areas: the [Northern Adelaide Plains](#), the [Central Adelaide](#) and the [McLaren Vale](#) Prescribed Wells Areas, and the [Barossa](#) Prescribed Water Resource Area, which each have 1 aquifer, and the [Western Mount Lofty Ranges](#) Prescribed Water Resource Area, which has 2 aquifers. The sustainable limit for Northern Adelaide Plains, McLaren Vale, and Western Mount Lofty Ranges areas is determined every year by the amount of rainfall received.

Trends in the sustainable use of groundwater resources are stable.

Since 2002, all prescribed groundwater resources have been used within sustainable limits (graph on right).

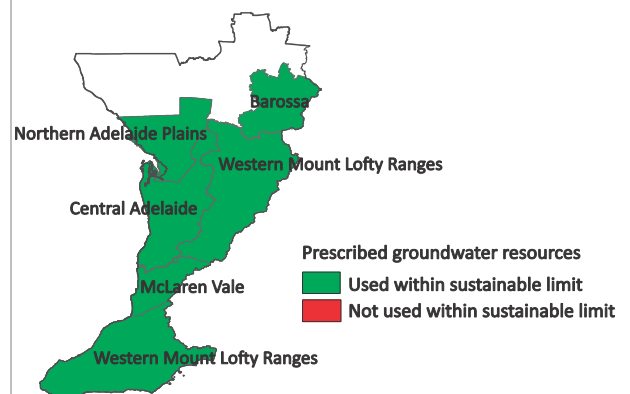


Where we are at (2013) Good Prescribed groundwater resources were all used within sustainable limits

In 2013, all of our groundwater resources in the Adelaide and Mount Lofty Ranges NRM region were used within their sustainable limit (map on right). Licensed use of water in these areas ranged from about 52 per cent of the limit in Northern Adelaide Plains, to about 67 per cent in the McLaren Vale Prescribed Wells Area.

Sustainable use limits are being revised for the Barossa Prescribed Water Resource Area. Use of groundwater from this resource was considered sustainable in 2013.

Managing our prescribed groundwater resources within their sustainable limits relies on consistent and timely measurements of rainfall, water levels and water use.



Reliability of information ★★★★★ Very Good

Further information: [Technical information for this report](#) and reports on the [status of South Australian water resources](#)